

There Goes The Neighbourhood

Gentrification and marginality in modern life

by

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Abstract

Gentrification is the term applied to the process whereby middle-class people move into working class areas in the inner city, either residential areas, or old warehouses or sweatshops. This thesis seeks on the one hand to explain gentrification as the consequence of the development of domestic technologies, and on the other to understand it as a metaphor rooted in the characteristic experience of marginality in modern life.

Debate over the causes of gentrification have polarized around two themes: that gentrification is the consequence of the rise of a new middle class heralding the onset of a post-industrial or post-modern society; or that gentrification is just another example of the contradictions underpinning capitalist development (in this case, the contradiction between the value of a building and the value of the land on which it sits - the rent gap hypothesis). This thesis argues that the falling cost of domestic technologies such as washing machines and vacuum cleaners has made it possible to bring the value of housing services which can be supplied by a Victorian house into line with the value of the housing services provided by the most modern house. Gentrification is then explained as a consequence of the middle classes taking advantage of the opportunity offered by these developments.

In contrast to the explanations currently dominating the gentrification debate, this thesis therefore argues that gentrifiers gentrify because they *can*, and not because they *have to*. Consequently, the explanation of gentrification has nothing to do with questions of class, nor indeed of gender. Gentrification is a transient, not a cyclical phenomenon, and would have occurred whether the process was carried out entirely by women or entirely by men.

The currently dominant explanations of gentrification argue that gentrifiers gentrify because they have to as they are subject to forces beyond their control: the rise of post-industrial society; or the reappearance of accumulation crises in capitalist urban development. These explanations are then left with the problem, not of explaining the existence of gentrification in those inner-city areas where it does occur, but in explaining its absence from all those other inner-city areas in which it does *not* occur, since they are couched in such general terms that they could apply to every member of the middle classes or to every inner city area, not just those associated with gentrification. These explanations of gentrification therefore over-estimate its quantitative significance, also.

The fact that this over-estimation occurs is however of great interest. Using arguments

derived from Robert Park and Raymond Williams, this thesis suggests that the reason for this is that gentrification touches on many characteristic insecurities of modern life. Gentrification therefore has resonances far wider than its quantitative significance would suggest. 'Gentrification' is a metaphorical expression, derived from 'gentry', the rural landowning classes. Gentrification can best be understood, therefore, in terms of attempts to realize an Arcadian (and class) vision of the 'country': a stable retreat in the very heart of the everchanging and often threatening 'city'. Insofar as gentrification represents a particular strategy for dealing with a universally experienced condition, the study of gentrification illuminates the way we live now.

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Preface

For years, I have been dreaming of what I would write on these pages. However, even in these days of desktop publishing, perhaps especially *because* of these days of desktop publishing, printing out seems fated always to take place on the midnight before the thesis is due at the binders. So the luxury of considered reflections will have to wait for another day.

The idea that domestic technologies were the key to understanding gentrification was one that gradually expanded from a couple of paragraphs in the initial draft of this thesis. I'm not sure where the idea originally came from, but I can remember vividly the arrival of domestic technologies in our own house. When I was just a small boy of 4 or 5, our family became the first in our road to get central heating. The plumber's name is George and he had a mate, Harry, a big spider who helped him with all the tricky work underneath the floorboards. Harry was kind of shy though, we never did meet him. I can remember the excitement of our first washing machine also. In those days, the Hoover salesman let you try the machines out at home, so there was great excitement for a couple of weeks as various machines came in and out of the house. I had my heart set on the Keymatic, but we got the twin-tub instead. Being the eldest son in a family with two working parents, I was soon inducted into the mysteries of its operation.

Domestic technologies later came into my life in quite different ways. After I left college, I spent a year as a driver for Debenhams, delivering furnishings and domestic appliances all over Essex and the surrounding counties. The washing machines were the worst: a hundredweight of concrete in a tin with nothing to grip that wasn't either too slippery or too sharp to hold on to. You never got a tip for a washing machine either. Mostly, they were for the young households on the new housing estates that were springing up all over the county at that time; machines and carpets. Furniture came later: those deliveries did not have any particular association with any type of development. Also all my brothers are in the building trade, Liam is a bricklayer, David a site manager, and Jack an electrician. As our family grew, and no-one seemed to be leaving home, we were also the first family in our road to have an extension on our house. All the brothers worked on it. Liam fell off the roof! For all these reasons, I suppose, I could never simply see the conversion of houses from working class to middle class occupancy simply as a social transition, with no labour involved in the process.

Having the idea was one thing, working it up into a Ph.D thesis was quite another. Caught in political crossfire between the LSE and the ESRC, I lost my funding after only one year of effective study. I had to continue part-time, working at times up to eighty

hours a week as a sound and lighting engineer, and fitting in my studies whenever I could. If it had not been for the support of three people in particular I would never have been able to carry on. First and foremost was Professor, now Lord Meghnad Desai, whose belief in my ability to finish far outweighed my own and, it often seemed, everybody else's. As important as the moral support he provided was the material support also. If he had not got me the job at the UN, I doubt I would have ever been able to give up the rock and roll and devote the full-time labour on this project which it desperately needed to bring it to a conclusion. Secondly, Mrs. Maureen Biancardi, my former manager at the University of London Union gave me all the Responsible Autonomy anyone could wish for, in juggling work and academic commitments. I hope I repaid her faith over the five years we spent working together. Last but not least, I would like to pay tribute to my landlord's agent, Mrs. Christine Clark; never knowing when the rent is going to be paid, but, in her faith that it will be paid, the provider of as much ontological security as a drawer full of mortgage deeds. I owe her a lot more than rent.

As to academic support, Lord Desai was particularly helpful in aiding me develop my analysis of the economics of gentrification. For every 'good cop', however there has to be a 'nasty cop' also. Filling that thankless role was my principal supervisor, Dr. Simon Duncan. If I would never have got as far as have without Lord Desai's support, I would never have achieved the quality of work necessary for a Ph.D submission without the discipline supplied by Dr. Duncan's unwaveringly critical comments. Despite all the anguish provoked by those comments, I am extremely grateful to have the benefit of the experience and advice of the man whose presence at the LSE attracted me to pursue a Ph.D there, when I had the pick of any institution in the country. Doing a Ph.D is a character-forming experience after all! In particular, it was he who put me on the track of the changing nature of the class relations in domestic service, and all the implications that had for the development of domestic technologies and gentrification. Without that insight, I would never have hit on the idea that gentrification depends on a breakdown in the classic filtering process, and not a new stage in that process, thus enabling me to fit the final piece in the jigsaw and to escape from the blind alley in which I had been stuck for some time.

I should also like to place on record my thanks to Dr Peter Wicks and Dr Brian Linneker for their helpful comments on my economic model of gentrification, Dr Wicks for his suggestion that I extend the analysis to include a government sector, and Dr Linneker for making me bring out the role of mortgage finance institutions in the model more clearly.

Finally, I would like to mention Kate and Bill, my mum and dad. I don't think they've

ever really understood what's driven me on for all these years with so little to show for it. All I can say to them, as I sit here looking at this small pile of paper, and they sit there looking at me is that only they and I know how much I owe them, and to remind them, in the words of Bruce Springsteen, that with every wish, there comes a curse.

1 Clearing the ground: gentrification, cultural materialism and modernity

This thesis makes a simple point about gentrification: gentrifiers gentrify because they can. That it takes so many pages to do so is because the assumption in the gentrification literature is overwhelmingly that gentrifiers gentrify because they have to. Debates in gentrification studies all revolve around the assumption that gentrification represents a form of class constitution and that gentrifiers engage in gentrifying behaviour as a result of the imperatives of class constitution and/or class membership. Gentrification will only be explained once gentrifiers' behaviour is related to these imperatives of class, no matter what opinion may be taken on the processes and issues at stake in class constitution.

I completely disagree. In their anxiety to situate the explanation of gentrification in questions of class composition, the participants in the gentrification debate have neglected to examine the material resources available to gentrifiers, resources which only became available immediately prior to the onset of gentrification, and which therefore gave gentrifiers the ability to gentrify which they heretofore lacked.

Another way of describing the aims of this thesis is that it seeks to reverse the assumption that gentrification can be used as a synecdoche for modern society, a part which may be taken to stand for the whole. Not only is this illicitly to claim prior knowledge of the character of the society in which gentrification occurs (cf. R. Williams 1977 p80), but it also immediately directs attention away from the specifics of gentrifiers' actions, which then are seen merely as ciphers for the wider issues of class and social change.

I argue that the basic causes in the explanation of gentrification have nothing to do with class, nor indeed gender. Consequently the study of gentrification cannot be used as it is now, a proxy in debates pitting Marxist versus Weberian explanations of social change.

Class issues, I argue, only arise in gentrification through the operation of hegemony, with 'hegemony' defined from a cultural materialist perspective as an active process of presenting capitalist exploitation as the natural and therefore inevitable condition of modern life (R. Williams 1977, Jackson 1989). The problem of modernity is therefore a recurring theme in this thesis. Prominent sociologists such as Giddens (1981, 1985 1990) and Mann (1986, 1988), have argued for a 'neo-Weberian' analysis of modernity as a phenomenon in its own right, incorporating other sources of social power, notably, the state, military power, and industrialism, as well as capitalism. While their arguments

and insight are used in the course of this thesis, I intend to maintain an economic orientation to the explanation of gentrification as a phenomenon of modernity. I believe that this gives a more focused and plausible dynamism to accounts of social change and that the remainder of this thesis will bear out this belief. Furthermore, maintaining this orientation supplies a hitherto lacking component to cultural materialist descriptions of contemporary life.

Cultural materialism attempts to develop the concerns of Marxism in a more consistent manner than traditional historical materialism. It is based on a critique of 'base-superstructure' metaphors in traditional Marxist historical materialism. This metaphor employs an imagery of determinant base and reflected superstructure. The base is the economy. The superstructure contains an indeterminate number of levels, but is usually understood to be the arena of politics, civil society, ideology, psychology, aesthetics and culture and so forth. These metaphors are widespread, long-lasting and persistent. They dominate the language of the gentrification debate, as Chapter 2 demonstrates.

Cultural materialism may also be described as a radical attempt to place the question of agency at centre stage. The problem with the base-superstructure metaphor is that it separates production from the culture in which that production is undertaken. It separates it from what is held to be the determining active economic 'base', and puts it in what is held to be the determinate passive social 'superstructure'. It then attempts to show how culture 'reflects' economic organization. Use of the base-superstructure metaphor, with its unwarranted sundering of the integrated totality of social life into separate idealistic categories, severely inhibits discussion of questions of agency in social phenomena.

Cultural materialism is also very pertinent to many of the traditional concerns of human and social geography. Raymond Williams often described it as the basis for a truly human ecology. By making the material production of culture central to the analysis of social life, cultural materialism enables one satisfactorily to unite structure and agency, form and content, material and symbolic production, to arrive at an understanding of gentrification in terms of changes in the material production of culture which includes all these dualisms under one heading (cf. Cosgrove and Jackson 1987 19.2).

In the cultural materialist perspective, culture is not a simple passive response to, or reflection, typification or mediation of events occurring autonomously in the base (R.Williams 1977). Rather it is the very medium in which those events occur.

To paraphrase Stuart Hall, culture is the medium through which people transform the mundane phenomena of the material world into a world of significant symbols

to which they give meaning and attach value.

(Cosgrove and Jackson 1987 19.2, 101)

I argue in this thesis that gentrification is one such transformative cultural process and can fruitfully be analyzed using cultural materialist principles.

In rejecting base-superstructure, cultural materialism historically has concentrated on restoring agency to the elements formerly trapped in the superstructure such as fine arts, literature, fashion, leisure pursuits and lifestyles, in particular the lifestyles of minority, counter- or sub- cultures (Hall 1988, Jackson 1989, Dickens 1990). The identification of agency in the elements of the base has been sorely neglected. While literary and cultural theory have been reconstituted and incorporated into the cultural materialist perspective, economic theory has remained quite excluded. This is not only ironic, given the integrative potential of cultural materialism, it is also dangerous to the materialist aspect of cultural materialism. Hence, my insistence on maintaining an economic orientation to the thesis.

I argue that in economic terms, agency is demonstrated through consumer choice, demand issues in other words, and that these can be incorporated into Marxist economic theory by recasting Marx's definition of subsistence at the social rather than the individual level. This shift in focus renders redundant the belief that class position determines class consciousness in a linear unmediated fashion. These results have immediate consequences for theorizing gentrification, since they also render largely redundant the debate over the relative merits of Marx and Weber's accounts of class constitution in which accounts of gentrification have played such a prominent role in the last decade.

The introduction of demand issues into Marx's economic theories allows for a view of money as the medium of both structure and agency in capitalist society, since money is only required in an economy which has to face the problem of effective demand (Keynes 1937). We are all forced to work for money, to reduce ourselves and our relations with one another to abstract labour, but at the same time possession of money allows us to make choices, and therefore to display agency (Redfern 1987, 1992).

Chapter 2 shows how agency has been poorly served in the gentrification debate, despite appearances and/or protestations to the contrary by the participants. It appears to have been treated more or less in the same way as in the old behavioural studies of economic location, i.e., as random noise obscuring the precise motivation, but not as fundamentally altering the way in which the structuring of that motivation is achieved.

On the one hand, gentrification is regarded as a phenomenon of postindustrial society, evidence of a new middle class. The rise of a new middle class, it is held, directly contradicts Marx's prediction of the progressive reduction of all classes in society to just two, bourgeoisie and proletariat. On the other, gentrification is regarded as a manifestation of switches and flows in circuits of capital, governed by trends in neighbourhoods' lifecycles.

Just to confuse matters, however, a substantial body of Marxist thought has accepted in principle the postindustrialists' criticisms of the capital logic and theoretical eclecticism of the neighbourhood lifecycle model. Consequently a left version of the postindustrial thesis has grown up, known as the 'production of gentrifiers' approach. It concentrates on the social class origins of gentrifiers, rather than their consumption behaviour in the processes of gentrification. A consensus has therefore emerged in the literature that once the left and right versions of the postindustrialist approach can be merged together an explanation of gentrification can be found. It is this consensus that this thesis challenges.

Making this challenge also means confronting the proposition that gentrification can be used to stand for the nature of society as a whole. Chapter 3 illustrates the dangers inherent in this proposition, in particular as they are expressed in the postindustrialist consensus. Gentrifiers, in this literature, are treated as though they were some kind of New Age Daleks roaming the streets of the inner city, intoning "Gentrificate! Gentrificate!!".

These bizarre conceptions derive from the insistence that gentrification is a form of class constitution. Confronting this insistence in turn means confronting some of the most deeply held beliefs in the sociological literature, in particular the fundamental explanatory model in sociology, characterized by Pahl (1989) as SCA, structure - consciousness - action. Chapter 4 reviews this model and argues that there is no such thing as the middle class any more. What is called the middle class is not a class but a status group. However, this argument is made from a Marxist rather than a Weberian perspective, based on the arguments concerning the redefinition of subsistence along the lines described above.

Issues in the gentrification debate are characteristically framed in realist terminology, although much of this terminology is misapplied by the gentrification debate, as Chapter 2 shows also (cf. Warde 1991). These problems are compounded by the debate's commitment to the synecdochal qualities of gentrification and to SCA. Having argued that gentrification cannot be used as a synecdoche for modern society, nor can it be

interpreted in terms either of realism or class, it is naturally incumbent upon this thesis to provide an alternative context in which the behaviour of gentrifiers might be interpreted. This is the purpose of Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 5 argues that since there are no class distinctions to speak of in the gentrification process, attempting to develop class categories to explain actors' behaviour in the gentrification process is a waste of time. It is a particular waste of time to attempt to develop such categories in respect of gender relations, in gentrification as elsewhere. If Marx's (or indeed Weber's) categories of class do not adequately cover all areas of experience of social life, the solution is to develop accounts of these other areas of experience, not to multiply class categories indefinitely.

This latter, ironically, is the normal strategy of many so-called realists; ironic because the term 'realist' was originally coined in opposition to 'nominalist' in a dispute, going back to the ancient Greeks, over the processes of categorization. One of the greatest of mediæval realists, William of Occam, encapsulated realist doctrine in his famous Razor: "the number of categories ought not indefinitely to be multiplied"; yet this doctrine is exactly what self-described realist analyses of gentrification continually contradict in their desire to develop new class categories to explain social change.

Another topic which has exercised the gentrification debate is the question of post-modernism. Chapter 2 examines how the debate has treated this issue. I argue that post-modernism, if it can even be said to exist, is really a revival of early modernism. Gentrification is by definition therefore a study in modernity, because we all live under conditions of modernity. Chapter 5 also examines the broader aspects of this proposition.

The fundamental condition of modernity, I argue, following Alexander (1989), is a loss of meaning from our lives. The requirement to have to make sense of our lives, to give our lives meaning, dominates modern life in an historically unprecedented manner. This existential need to make sense of our lives, I go on to show, not only dominates debates in social science over questions of structure and agency, but is in fact the fundamental rationale underlying social science. If the social structures of modernity were not impervious to meaning, questions about agency would not even arise.

Questions of agency themselves, I argue, are dominated by the quasi-religious insistence that our lives do have meaning, that we can make a difference: quasi-religious, because it is a consoling vision of ourselves. On the one hand, social science offers us the consolations of religion in a world which has seen the death of God and the loss of meaning. Social science promises to show us that there is a rationale behind it all, for the

way we behave and the ways in which we are forced to behave. Where once we had the will of God, now we have economic or social forces, equally mysterious, equally surpassing of human understanding and equally impervious to human control. But on the other, there is a fundamental paradox, that we should need social science at all to investigate the way we live our lives. Sayer, I think, offers a brilliant resolution of this paradox when he states that under capitalism, "reification is a social process, not a mere category error" (D.Sayer 1991 p65). If, in other words, social science has taken the place of religion in the modern world, "a religion in which man is at once the worshipper and the god" (Durkheim, quoted in D.Sayer 1991 p80), this is because of the very modernity of the modern world.

Nonetheless, as Sayer also points out, if reification is a social process, reification is not therefore to be condoned. This insistence in social science, that our lives do have meaning and that social science must organize its concepts of agency around this, must be recognized for what it is, what Nietzsche terms a "homesickness", a desire to find or at least to organize a place for ourselves in the world (Connolly 1988): the longing to comfort the sense of loss felt by all such as Auden's "poor in their fireless lodgings, throwing down the sheets/ Of the evening paper", for whom "Our day is our loss", and who plead for society's scientists to

show us
History the operator, the
Organiser, Time the refreshing river.

W.H Auden *Spain* 1937
(Mendelson 1977 p211)

Brilliant as Sayer's formulation is, therefore, I do not think that it can be taken as the whole explanation. To recognize this insistence is however to begin to be able to deal with it. Displays of agency are also displays of an independent consciousness. Understanding the formation of that consciousness is therefore fundamental to defining the ways in which agency may be said to be exhibited. Cultural materialism however rejects psychological explanations of the formation of consciousness, arguing that they take for granted the separations of individual and society, subjectivity and sociality, and culture and material production in modern life, separations which cultural materialism is particularly concerned to problematize and overcome (R.Williams 1977).

Williams makes a plea for the revival instead of a sociology of consciousness, which he argues was a fundamental concern of the classical sociology of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1977). In answering that plea, in Chapter 6, I rely heavily on the work of Robert Park. I show that Park's writings may be interpreted as summarizing classical sociology, being principally concerned with developing just such a sociology of

consciousness as formed under conditions of modernity. I show how Park's interests and concepts, in particular, his concept of the marginal man, may be reconciled with R. Williams' principles of cultural materialism.

The concept of the marginal man, Park's most original contribution to sociology, was developed in the context of immigration into the United States. Defined as a man living on the margins of two cultures, of the Old World and the New and encapsulating all the problems of modernity, the marginal man nonetheless held out the promise of their resolution. I argue that the experience of standing on the margins of two cultures is the experience of us all in modern society. To be more precise it is the experience of the proletariat in capitalist society, partially incorporated into and partially excluded from capitalist society (Cleaver 1979). The homesickness Nietzsche talks about may then be understood as being generated by the memory of the experience of the formation of consciousness in socialization, given the experience of its alienation under capitalism. The formation of consciousness in socialization is at the same time the process of acquiring status as a person, an individual-in-society. Park eloquently demonstrates the paradox that where we feel most at home is where our status as persons, the recognition of our worth, our meaningfulness for others, is most taken for granted and where therefore we feel freest from the pressures of maintaining status and therefore freest to act like little children. But the experience of the modern world, characterized by mobility in the present and an indeterminate future, continually undermines that sense of security which allows us not to worry about status. The very attempt at creating a home in the modern world however can undermine the attempts of others to do the same. A sense of place is also a sense of status, 'place' in society. The creation of a place for some, can and does therefore undermine the status of others.

Gentrification can obviously therefore be interpreted as one such place-making strategy, in which the potential for conflict over the meaning invested in a place and the status this will grant to different groups is particularly high. However, the condition of modernity described in Chapter 5 does not simply affect gentrifiers, but everyone living in the modern world. The specificity of the causes of gentrification must still be made clear, otherwise the argument would be thrown back on the production of gentrifiers argument. Where the production of gentrifiers approach held postindustrialism or postmodernism responsible for the mysterious creation of this strange new segment of the middle class, this thesis would now be arguing that modernity had created them instead.

Chapter 7 shows that the explanation of gentrification rests on something that all previous accounts of gentrification have taken for granted, namely the very possibility of being able to improve a property. Gentrification could not have occurred if, to use the jargon of

economists, technical progress in the supply of housing services had not become disembodied through the development of domestic technologies, so that the flow of housing services from older properties could be brought up to the standards of the new. Given these circumstances, and given the mechanisms of capitalist housing finance (where the availability of investment funds for improvements depends not on returns to investment, but on the incomes of the borrowers), the explanation of gentrification then reduces to a routine economic problem of maximization under constraint. Gentrification is a subset of displacement, itself a subset of home improvements.

To argue that gentrification depends on the existence of domestic technologies however throws a lot of weight onto the development of domestic technologies as an explanatory variable. Chapter 8 shows how the history of the development of domestic technologies has been accompanied by the widest ramifications in the development of class relations and perceptions of privacy and the self. The development of domestic technologies characterizes the development of the social relations of capitalism in extremely significant and largely unexplored ways. The circumstances under which housing was provided before the widespread application of domestic technologies is vital to an understanding of gentrification. Housing which requires a specific complement of servant labour to run it cannot 'filter down' through income cohorts as it ages. Whatever other limitations there might be to the process of filtering down, this one is crucial to the explanation of gentrification. If housing can filter down, then although there may exist the possibility for displacement led improvements, there can be no possibility of gentrification occurring.

Gentrification, it is widely accepted, involves a substantial gap in income between those displaced and those moving in. Filtering down would preclude that possibility occurring. The middle-class housing which is to be gentrified must have been abandoned totally to the working class, as soon as its first occupants quit it, thus creating a discontinuity between the income of the present occupier and the age and/or structural quality of the dwelling. I show that abandonment will occur if there are fixed co-efficients in the production of housing services with servant labour, and competitive markets in domestic labour. These conditions existed in Victorian London, thus creating, a century ago, the one essential prerequisite for gentrification, abandonment, not filtering down.

The history of the development of domestic technologies is also the history of the development of suburbia. I argue, with N. Smith (1982), that gentrification cannot occur without suburban development, not so much however for the reasons that Smith offers, namely the development of the rent gap, but because it produced the residential social segregation by status, another condition of modernity which is also essential to

gentrification, and which has never been highlighted in the gentrification debate.

Chapter 9 then looks at the processes of gentrification in modern times. It tries to place gentrification in the context of wider trends in the economy and society, something which is rarely attempted in gentrification studies. It compares trends in owner occupation, house prices and social composition in Islington since 1951 with those in London and Great Britain as a whole. It shows how gentrification has proceeded as the ratio of the prices of domestic technologies to housing has fallen dramatically since the Second World War. However, this has been in a political context in which rehabilitation of the existing housing stock through the promotion of owner occupation has been at the top of the agenda (Merrett with Gray 1982).

Chapter 9 also uses comparative analyses of Islington, the City and Greater London, and Great Britain as the basis of a discussion of the impact of changing gender relations on the gentrification process. Somewhat controversially, it argues that changes in gender roles and relations have no bearing on the explanation of gentrification, for much the same reason as class has no bearing on the explanation of gentrification, namely that, like class, gender issues in gentrification are universally theorized in terms of the standard sociological SCA model.

Indeed, although the participation of high-status women actively involved in gentrification has increased dramatically over the thirty years 1951-1981, their absolute numbers have been so low, that it can only be concluded that gentrification would have occurred whether or not women were financially involved in the process at all.

The real issue is not therefore the proportion of men to women in the process, but the extremely low numbers of properties actually or potentially affected by gentrification. Gentrification would have occurred whether or not *men* were financially involved in the process. This highlights the final paradox of gentrification studies. Why is so much time and attention devoted to this gentrification when quantitatively it is of such little significance? Chapter 10 considers this question by way of a conclusion to the thesis.

Clearly, part of the answer is to be found in the insecurities of modernity chronicled in Chapters 5 & 6, the need to achieve status, to give life meaning and purpose in the modern world; goals which can be achieved through the creation of a place, but which have the potential for conflict with others who have similar but exclusive ambitions for themselves. Gentrification has wider resonances because it touches on fears and anxieties within us all, which is why, as I argue in Chapter 3, analysis of gentrification is in general hopelessly compromised, because no such analyst likes either the process or

those undertaking it. Gentrification therefore tends to be analyzed in terms of metaphors for sin, aliens and disease. However, since the condition of modernity is also the subjective experience of capitalism, which means in effect, the experience of class, these fears and resonances are experienced in class specific ways, that is in terms of dominating and incorporating hegemonies. Using Williams' analysis of metaphors of the country and the city in the history of English literature (R.Williams 1973b), I argue that the resonances of the very term 'gentrification', as well as the activity itself, arise out of the 'country' way of seeing and not seeing social relations, and that it is a process of bringing 'country' relations back into the 'city'. Since 'gentrification' is a metaphorical expression itself, gentrification is not simply a process of creating a place, but of a specifically country place; situated in the midst of the wicked city, yet one in which any suggestion of exploitative class relations is kept firmly out of the picture. It creates a haven of rest and security by the use of the language and concepts of a dominating hegemony, which it also helps sustain; an echo chamber through which the resonances of gentrification can be felt in contexts far wider than its limited quantitative impact would suggest.

As an instance of hegemony at work in the operation of a capitalist housing market, gentrification gives a particular class-meaning to the displacement of working class people from existing property and their replacement as occupiers of this property by middle class people. Gentrification represents concern about identity translated through the operation of hegemony into concerns about class. To explain why gentrification occurs then, it is necessary to engage this hegemonic representation of gentrification, not simply to reproduce it in our theoretical schema. Only then is it possible both to explain gentrification and to understand its significance in modern life. Gentrification is not about class constitution but about identity and status under conditions of modernity, where all that is solid melts into air.

2 The gentrification debate: a false closure?

2.1 Introduction

The gentrification debate has been dominated by concepts developed in a predominantly Anglo-American literature (though see Clark, 1988 on Sweden, and Logan, 1985 and Jager, 1986 on Australia). In this chapter, I chart the course of this debate, and in particular the rise of the postindustrialist consensus in gentrification studies which followed the appearance of Rose's seminal article on rethinking gentrification from a Marxist perspective (Rose 1984).

Hamnett's periodic and able reviews (Hamnett & P.Williams 1979, Hamnett 1984, 1991) document the change in the treatment of gentrification from an interesting phenomenon in the history of urbanization to an instance of the ongoing class struggle in theory, to use Althusser's memorable formulation (Althusser 1971). This transformation of the terms of the debate complicate exposition. There has been considerable evolution both in the internal characteristics of the debate itself and in the arguments, taken from debates in social theory at large, which have been marshalled in support of the various positions taken in the internal debate.

These external debates, which include production versus consumption as alternative bases for class formation, the relative status of structure versus agency in social explanation, Marxism versus Weberianism, the very nature of society itself, are substantial, and ones which must be addressed in any serious account of gentrification. So as to impose some order on the material therefore, if discussion is not to become unmanageable, this chapter therefore concentrates on the internal debate. Chapters 3 through 6 concentrate on the external debates.

Gentrification is held to be of interest for the light it throws upon these external debates. In fact the opposite is the case. Gentrification can be understood only after the issues raised by these wider debates have been addressed. The strategy, followed by all who engage in the gentrification debate, of arguing *from* gentrification *to* modern society (whose characteristics, it is implied, we already and otherwise know and agree on - R.Williams 1977, p80, see below), is doomed to failure, as Chapter 3 will show, and needs to be reversed, along the lines presented in Chapters 4, 5, & 6.

The belief that gentrification does provide a message for our times has polarized the debate into left and right, or radical and liberal camps. On the radical side, there are the Marxist theories of gentrification led by N.Smith (1979a 1987a 1987b). Leading the

liberals are the humanist, often explicitly anti-Marxist theories promoted by Ley (1980, 1986, 1987). However, Hamnett appears to speak for a general consensus (cf. Clark 1988, Mills 1988), when he argues that each of these theories are only partial ones, which can and should be fitted together to provide *the* explanation of gentrification. Even the feminist criticisms of the neglect of gender issues in the gentrification debate does not challenge this aspect of the consensus:

gentrification entails the differentiation of a new urban middle-class from other elements of the middle-class engaged in suburban or ex-urban strategies
(Bondi, 1991, p193)

Bondi's only complaint is that the gentrification debate has not sufficiently considered the role of women in these class differentiation strategies.

It is the purpose of this chapter to initiate the challenge to this consensus. The gentrification debate claims to highlight questions of structure and agency in social life (N.Smith & P.Williams 1986), but the way it conceptualizes gentrification, it rules agency out of the picture. The direction the gentrification debate is now taking, it will never be able to answer the fundamental questions of why, when and where (Hamnett 1991).

Jackson notes that "explanations of... gentrification are often divided into the demographic-ecological and the political-economic" (1989 p56). I prefer to use a slightly different classification: neighbourhood lifecycle or postindustrialism. Neighbourhood lifecycle I define as the hypothesis that physical change in the urban fabric at large promotes social change in the neighbourhood. Postindustrialism I define as the hypothesis that social change at large promotes physical change in the neighbourhood. The reason for preferring this classification is that it brings out better the influence of past ideas on urbanization and urban growth in the gentrification debate. It is not just a rewording however: neighbourhood lifecycle and postindustrialism both contain aspects of demographic-ecological and political economic explanations.

Prior to 1984, neighbourhood lifecycle explanations were historically more popular in US literature, whereas postindustrialism was more popular in UK discussions. However, since 1984, postindustrialism has dominated the debate. The only holdout has been N.Smith's rent gap argument. I reserve detailed discussion of Smith's arguments for the rent gap hypothesis till Chapter 7. This chapter will demonstrate that the issues in the gentrification debate are not really the claims of structure versus agency, but base versus superstructure. Chapter 3 will then discuss the context in which the models of agency employed in the gentrification debate are derived, and Chapter 4 their relation to

structure. Chapters 5 & 6 will then present an alternative account of agency and consciousness, which is also a description of the conditions of modern life. To argue that gentrifiers gentrify because they can (really do display agency) requires taking on some very profoundly held beliefs.

It is true that the categorization of behaviour into dichotomous terms such as structure versus agency may be regarded as unnecessary and unhelpful in social analysis (Shields 1990 p270ff., Redfern 1992 p50). Inadequate as the structure-agency dualism may be, however, it is hardly improved by linking it to base and superstructure. In fact, there is no role for agency at all in the base-superstructure metaphor of social organization and development, because activities which take place in the superstructure (for example the arts or local cultures) and which therefore appear to have the character of agency have then to be theorized in terms of subsidiary metaphors, as being in some way reflections, typifications or mediations of relations in the base. All developments in the superstructure must therefore be determined, in the last instance, by developments in the base (R.Williams 1977 p81).

It is true that this problem has been recognized in the past and attempts made to deal with it. Urry's (1981) categories of 'economy, civil society and the state', represent one such attempt to give agency a role within the base-superstructure framework. It is true also that there have been numerous attempts to rectify the imbalance of power between the base and the superstructure, in order to permit the superstructure some reciprocal influence over the base: for example, Althusser (1970) borrowed the concept of 'over-determination' from psychoanalysis to just this end.

However, as Williams insists (1977 p80-81), the problem does not lie in inadequate theorizing on relations *between* base and superstructure, but in the *a priori* and unnecessary *separation* of a whole way of life into idealistically conceptualized categories which are only tenuously linked to each other; the belief that production and consumption 'as such' (e.g., the economy) can be separated from the particular *forms* (culture and the arts) in which that production and consumption is undertaken (e.g., civil society). A further consequence is the multiplication of categories in the superstructure (e.g., the state). Seen in this light, Urry's strategy for overcoming the problems of base-superstructure appears to fail at the first hurdle (cf. Frankel 1983).

Use of the base-superstructure metaphor shuts off enquiry and replaces it with the demonstration of already and otherwise known truths ("What is already *and otherwise* known as the basic reality of the material social process is reflected, of course in its own ways, [in the superstructure]" - R.Williams 1977, p97). In other words, "There is a

persistent presupposition of a knowable (often wholly knowable) reality" (op. cit., p103). Superstructural elements are then of interest only as they can be fitted into (and so illustrate the nature of) this reality, not because they have any intrinsic interest in themselves. Not surprisingly they then become very difficult to operationalize. Goodwin notes Urry's lack of success "at transferring the concept [of civil society] from abstract to empirical research" (1989 p154). Post-industrialism suffers particularly from these problems, as I shall show below.

In contrast, I shall argue that the very way in which thinking about gentrification is conducted is of interest in throwing light on the way we all live today, whether we are able to gentrify or not. As a phenomenon of modern culture, gentrification (or gentrifiers) cannot be explained or understood in isolation from that culture; nor can it be defined in opposition to it, as the post-modern Other of modern society (cf. Shields 1990 p276). The fact that it is so notoriously difficult even to define gentrification (2.3.3 below) proves the point: it is not that 'gentrification is a chaotic concept', rather it is that the thinking of those who make this argument is confused (Warde 1991), because their approach presumes that gentrification has to be isolated from the whole way of life in which it is enmeshed before it can be defined.

Despite the apparent sophistication of the arguments employed in the gentrification debate, therefore, I argue that they all rely on a crude base-superstructure mode of theorizing in which neighbourhood lifecycle and postindustrialism exhibit the characters of base and superstructure respectively. None therefore give an adequate account of agency. They tend to 'over-explain'.

By 'over-explanation', I mean that if these devices did provide a handle on the gentrification process, the problem for gentrification studies would not lie in explaining the existence of gentrification in the areas where it had occurred. It would lie in explaining why it had not occurred everywhere there were (potentially) gentrifiable properties. One immediate reason for this tendency to 'over-explain' is that both explanatory devices rely on concentric zone notions of urban growth and differentiation. The roots of the neighbourhood lifecycle model are clearly to be found in the Burgess model of concentric zones. However postindustrialism displays equally close links to the Alonso model of urban differentiation (2.2.3 below).

On the other side of the coin to over-explanation in the intra-urban case, there is under-explanation in the inter-urban case. Neither post-industrialism or neighbourhood lifecycle provides any obvious reason to account for why gentrification occurs in some cities and not in others; when presumably all cities (in the advanced capitalist countries) would

experience rent gaps (N.Smith 1979a,b, Schaffer & N.Smith 1986), and/or the onset of postindustrial society. Hamnett (1991 p176) makes this point, though he does not identify the causes of the problem in the reliance on the concentric zone models of the two approaches. Rather, in line with the consensus already outlined, he sees the solution as lying in some kind of synthesis of the two approaches. Given their basic assumptions, however, it is unlikely that such a synthesis would have any greater success in specifying the occurrence of gentrification than the two approaches do separately at present.

The present consensus, can therefore be challenged in three fundamental aspects. The first is that researchers are always trying implicitly to accommodate explanation of gentrification to one of these two concentric zone models (of an already and otherwise known society). The explanation of gentrification is held to be complete once the gentrifier has been situated in their gentrified home. Consequently, questions of agency, of the "could do otherwise-ness" of human life (Giddens 1987 p220, Ollman 1971 p46) are ruled out of the picture, since, and this is the real problem, it is insisted that gentrifiers gentrify out of necessity. That necessity is itself reduced to an issue of class constitution, which is the third problem. Gentrifiers, knowing themselves to be different as a class, 'need', in one way or another to engage in gentrifying behaviour. Thus the third problem brings us back to the first and to the second. I have said that these are three basic problems; another way of describing them would be insistences. Because all three are so intertwined and mutually supportive, it takes quite an effort of resistance to challenge them, even to identify them *as* problems. This chapter therefore merely engages in the process of identification.

2.2 Lingering traces in the explanation of gentrification: neighbourhood lifecycle and postindustrialism

In this section, I detail the ideas underlying neighbourhood lifecycle and postindustrialism. Both types of explanation emphasize structure at the expense of agency (cf Hamnett 1984 pp296-297 on life cycle models and p304 and p313 on postindustrialism; see also Rose 1984). I begin with neighbourhood lifecycle explanations, as they existed until around 1984, the year of Hamnett's first solo review of the literature, and Rose's exposé of "mix'n'match" methods in Marxist explanations of gentrification.

2.2.1 The debate to 1984: lifecycle models of gentrification

According to N.Smith and P.Williams (1986), early research on gentrification tended to take causes for granted and concentrate on effects. This was because the effects "were taken by many to be a timely answer to inner-city decay" (op. cit. p4). Gentrification was thus to be welcomed for its ability to combat the apparently inevitable drift into decay and abandonment over the course of the neighbourhood lifecycle. While postindustrialism sees gentrification as a process which overcomes the operation of neighbourhood lifecycles, the neighbourhood lifecycle approach itself sees gentrification as one more stage in the lifecycle itself. Decay and abandonment are no longer the final stages of the lifecycle, but merely transitional states. Examples include Ahlbrandt and Brophy (1975), Lang (1982), N.Smith (1979a,1982, 1987a, 1987b), P.Smith and McCann (1981).

Lifecycle approaches can therefore be found in both Marxist and non-Marxist work. The lifecycle approach is however particularly noticeable in North American explanations of gentrification, of whatever theoretical orientation. Hamnett (1984 p296) quotes Hoover and Vernon's (1959) five stage "cycle of growth, decline and (potential) revitalization and renewal" as the origin of thinking on the subject of gentrification as a stage in the lifecycle of a neighbourhood. However, according to P.Smith and McCann (1981), the idea itself dates back to Mackenzie's contribution to 'The City', the manifesto of the Chicago School of Sociology (Park, Burgess and MacKenzie, 1925), and it demonstrates the continuing influence of the Chicago School of Sociology in analyses of urban form and process.

Two ideas dominate in the concept of neighbourhood lifecycle. The first is that the lifecycle is inevitable in the history of a neighbourhood. Following the use of the term 'life' cycle, this inevitability is due to an implicit conception of the unit of analysis, be it a city or city block, in terms of its being an organism. Thus Ahlbrandt and Brophy (1975) present a stage cycle beginning with 1) "healthy viable neighbourhoods", proceeding via 2) "incipient decline" 3) "clearly declining", 4) "accelerated decline" and ending with 5) "abandonment". The medical analogy employed by calling neighbourhoods "healthy" or "viable", clearly betrays the organicism implicit in such thinking. Based on Ahlbrandt and Brophy's ideas, Lang (1982) goes so far as to use the term 'triage' in discussing housing policy options for residential neighbourhoods. 'Triage' is the exercise of medical judgement on a battlefield to decide which injured soldiers have a reasonable chance of survival if treated and those who would have no chance even after treatment. It is therefore a policy of selective abandonment of neighbourhoods deemed "hopeless cases".

The second idea dominant in neighbourhood lifecycle ideas is that the cycle works itself out in economic terms. This too originates in the Chicago School of sociology. Competition between groups leads to residential differentiation of communities, or 'natural areas'. This competition takes place at the economic level (Ley 1983b). Thus the natural expression of the natural life of the neighbourhood is in terms of house prices.

Lang (1982) argued that urban lifecycle was the paradigm in urban theory. Using Ahlbrandt and Brophy's classification, he explained the onset of incipient decline as occurring "when a neighbourhood starts to lose its competitive edge". The loss of competitive edge shows that the neighbourhood is beginning to lose the vigour of youth and starting to weaken. However, the evidence for this weakening lies in the house prices which the properties can command, indicating the extent to which the community inhabiting the neighbourhood is able to compete with other communities.

P.Smith and McCann summarize these themes:

As houses age, ... they tend to become less competitive within the city's expanding housing market; and as their competitiveness declines they are filtered-down through groups of lower and lower status (population succession), initially for owner-occupation, but later for rental occupancy. This is explained in two ways: lower-status groups cannot afford to own their own homes, and, as maintenance costs rise for an ageing housing stock, the absentee owners are forced to crowd more tenants into their buildings in order to secure an economic return. Dwelling conversions (land use succession) are thus associated with a firmly entrenched pattern of economic and social decline which in turn is hastened by the conversion process. Eventually, structural deterioration becomes pronounced and, in its "abandoned" state, the neighbourhood is reduced to a place of last resort; its buildings have little value and their sites are no longer considered

to be in economic use.

(P.Smith and McCann 1981 p540)

The processes involved make structure dominate over agency. Smith and McCann observe that:

Although cautionary notes are introduced, to the effect that decline can be arrested in its early stages, and neighbourhoods improved, the planning orientation of the models causes attention to be concentrated on the phenomenon of progressive deterioration as a fate that cannot be avoided *unless* preventative measures are taken...

Either the market must then take steps to "recapture" their value, by redeveloping them for productive use, or if it fails to do so (because of lack of demand), public intervention must be appealed to. The two processes of residential land use change are therefore accorded distinctive phases in the succession sequence, conversion as the symptom of decline and redevelopment as its cure.

(ibid. - emphasis in original)

Thus the role of agency is essentially reactive. The operation of the structural effects are toward decline and abandonment.

In N.Smith's rent gap model, the description of the visible effects of the processes at work echoes the sequence described by P.Smith and McCann. These are:

new construction and first phase of use, landlordism, blockbusting and blowout, redlining, abandonment. [In N.Smith 1979a] the sequence was incorrectly described as a depreciation cycle rather than a devalorization cycle. Depreciation refers strictly to changes in price whereas devalorization is a deeper economic process implying the loss or negation of value as a necessary part of the valorization process.

(N.Smith 1982 p147)

This 'deep economic process' is as inexorable as the processes of organic decay depicted in 'conventional' accounts, although from a Marxist frame of reference.

2.2.2 *Postindustrialism*

While "the loss of a neighborhood's competitive edge" (Lang, 1982) implies the existence of other neighbourhoods, the tendency of neighbourhood lifecycle analysis is to concentrate upon changes internal to the neighbourhood itself. The focus of postindustrialism by contrast is upon changes in society at large which have imposed gentrification upon certain neighbourhoods. The coming of postindustrial society, it is held, has created a new middle class; whose novelty lies in the fact of its residing in the inner city, rather than with the old middle class in the suburbs (Ley 1980, 1987a).

Postindustrialism is appealed to by all sides in the debate. The principal difference between left and right interpretations is whether it represents a new stage in capitalist

development or the beginning of its end. The difference is essentially one of scale. The liberal right argues that the change in social organization which has brought about gentrification is a fundamental one. Social analysis should not therefore continue to be in thrall to nineteenth century concerns (cf. N.Smith & P.Williams 1986 p5). The form in which consumption is undertaken is held now to be of greater importance than that in which production is undertaken. The left interpretation of these changes is in terms of class composition and re-composition in a changing but still fundamentally capitalist society (Dickens and Savage 1987, Friedman 1977, Massey 1984, Meiksins 1986, and Walker 1984).

2.2.3 Postindustrialism and neighbourhood lifecycle as fundamental alternative hypotheses in the explanation of gentrification

Participants in the gentrification debate do not describe their positions on gentrification in terms of the definitions offered here. Nonetheless, it may be seen that ultimately they all fall into one of these two camps. Hamnett (1984), for example, identified 5 types of explanations for gentrification then extant in the literature. These were:

- 1) the impact of city size, and changes in the trade-off between preference for space and accessibility;
- 2) changes in the demographic and household structure of the population;
- 3) lifestyle and preference shifts;
- 4) changes in relative house price inflation and investment;
- 5) changes in the employment base and occupational structure of certain large cities;

(Hamnett 1984 p298)

Hamnett's 5 categories can be reclassified under the headings of the two definitions presented above: explanations 1 and 4 would come under 'neighbourhood lifecycle' and 3 and 5, 'postindustrialism'. Explanation 2 could come under either heading, depending on whether the changes in demography or household structure are regarded as autonomous or as deriving from postindustrialism.

N.Smith, operating from an explicitly Marxist perspective, also offered 5 reasons for the occurrence of gentrification:

- (a) suburbanisation and the emergence of the rent gap;
- (b) the deindustrialisation of advanced capitalist economies and the growth of white collar employment;
- (c) the spatial centralisation and simultaneous decentralisation of capital;
- (d) the falling rate of profit and the cyclical movement of capital;
- (e) demographic changes and changes in consumption patterns;

(N.Smith 1986 p22)

Smith's reasons (a) and (d) are examples of 'neighbourhood lifecycle', whereas (b) and

(e) are responses to the question of the existence of postindustrial society. Again (c) could fall under either heading depending on the causes attributed to the phenomenon in question.

To see how these models act as alternatives under both conventional and Marxist analyses of gentrification, it is useful to compare those factors discussed by N. Smith (1986, p22) and Hamnett (1984, p298) which it can be argued come under the postindustrial hypothesis (categories 2,3 & 5 for Hamnett; b,e & c for Smith):

Hamnett	N. Smith
Changes in employment base	De-industrialisation
Changes in occupational structure	Growth of white-collar employment
Changes in demographic and household structure	Demographic changes
Lifestyle and preference shifts	Changes in consumption patterns
	<hr/>
	Centralization and decentralization of capital

Where Hamnett refers merely to 'changes' and 'shifts', typical of the postulates of postindustrialism, N. Smith's categorization can be re-arranged into a definite sequence, which it is possible to subsume under the general heading of "centralization and decentralization of capital". However that sequence is one which would be not be opposed by the proponents of a postindustrial society (N. Smith and P. Williams 1986 p5-6).

N. Smith and P. Williams (1986 p4) identified 5 major themes in the gentrification debate:

- (a) production-side versus consumption-side explanations;
- (b) the question of the emergence of a "post-industrial" city;
- (c) the relative importance of social structure vis-à-vis agency in the gentrification process;
- (d) is there a new middle class and what is its role?
- (e) what are the costs of gentrification now and in the future?

The first four of these themes also reduce ultimately either to questions of neighbourhood lifecycle or to the transition to postindustrial society. On the first theme, N. Smith and P. Williams argue that there has been a transition from lifecycle empiricist explanations of gentrification to ones involving a "wider framework" including changes in family structure, the role of women in the labour force, and the expansion of the educated middle classes. If their point is taken, however, then themes (b), (c) and (d) may be seen simply as elaborations of theme (a); that is, they reduce ultimately to either neighbourhood lifecycle processes or the transition to postindustrial society.

The fifth theme, the costs of gentrification, does not address itself to accounts of the origins of gentrification, but the answer given will depend on the explanatory framework adopted. If neighbourhood lifecycle explanations are preferred, then the question will tend to be posed in terms of property values. If a postindustrialist perspective is preferred, the question will tend to be posed in terms of personal or social costs, including the costs placed upon those displaced. The assessment of costs is thus more likely to be optimistic in neighbourhood lifecycle, compared to postindustrial explanations.

As noted, choice of the explanatory device on which to rely has not been simply a matter of theoretical or political preference. The same explanatory frameworks occur in both Marxist and non-Marxist accounts of gentrification. Rather, the significant difference in whether neighbourhood lifecycle or postindustrialism was adopted as the basic explanatory framework appears to have depended more on geography than on political persuasion. To quote Mao Zedong, ideas do not "drop from the skies"; nor are they "innate in the mind". Rather "they are innate in social practice" (Robinson, 1973, p1). The planning systems in the UK and the USA have played important roles in framing theoretical orientations.

In the US and Canada, planning issues are framed in terms of how social changes may best be accommodated within physical structures, and planning decisions are implemented via land-use controls, namely zoning regulations. Urban planners assign socio-economic activities to different parts of the city, and as long as the building erected conforms to the use specified in the zoning ordinance, construction cannot be prevented (Grant 1982). If an area is zoned for single family dwelling, then buildings erected there must be occupied by single families only. Only single families are permitted to live in a single family area, unless the city passes a variation in the zoning ordinances (Zukin 1982). Zoning variations however apply to a specified area, not to a specified building. They always therefore affect a whole neighbourhood, and are nearly always politically contested.

This planning environment, where subdividing a single family dwelling and letting it into multifamily occupancy is much more difficult than in the UK, is therefore very conducive to neighbourhood lifecycle interpretations of social change in neighbourhoods (cf. P.Smith & McCann 1981). If housing is no longer 'suitable' for the middle classes, it cannot simply be subdivided and let out for working class occupancy. Consequently, it becomes run down and eventually abandoned. It is not therefore the organic underpinnings of the neighbourhood lifecycle concept which explains neighbourhood

decline but the planning context in which it is situated. Gentrification studies in the US and Canada continually discuss struggles over zoning ordinances, and thus the involvement of the city authorities in the gentrification process (N.Smith 1979b, Cybriwsky, Ley and Western, 1986, Mills 1988).

In the UK by contrast, planning issues are framed in terms of how existing physical structures may best be modified to respond to changing circumstances, with planning decisions implemented via physical development controls, placed on each building separately (Grant 1982). UK physical planning regulations do also determine the type of building which may be erected in any area, but they are much less specific about its use. Three buildings side-by-side may be required to look identical, but one may be a single family dwelling, the next subdivided into flats, and the third used as office accommodation. Since the planning philosophy in the UK is one of overseeing the adaptation of physical structures to accommodate social change, postindustrialism, where physical change also appears to follow social change, would appear much more obvious interpretation of neighbourhood change than in the US or Canada.

Since every building requires a development permit, changes in use of an existing building affect only its immediate neighbours and are rarely politically contested at local authority level. Political struggle over gentrification tends to be conducted in terms of plans for improving the residential environment, traffic schemes and the like, rather than with changes in land use policy (Ferris 1972, P.Williams 1976, Pitt 1977). The only major exception to this generalization is the case of the gentrification of London's docklands (A.Smith 1989). There however, gentrification is occurring on land specifically *zoned* for the purpose, the London Docklands Enterprise Zone. The emphasis in UK studies is on changes in the relative status of tenures, changes in tenure, and changes in financing of tenures as explanations of gentrification (Hamnett & Randolph, 1986, Williams 1976). Again, this tends to be taken for granted, and ascribed to differences in political or theoretical awareness. Nonetheless this is because the immediate problems of trying to secure a change in use of a building are nowhere near as severe as they are in the US or Canada. The planning context in the UK is equally important in setting the agenda for gentrification studies in the UK as that in the US or Canada. It is why UK gentrification studies tend to look at gentrified properties, whereas US gentrification studies look at gentrified neighbourhoods.

The gentrification debate still operates within the traces of the original context set by the Chicago school of urban sociology, even though explicit reliance on its principles has faded away. Their notion of social organization as human ecology always contained the metaphor of base and superstructure. The theoretical basis of neighbourhood lifecycle

has been traced to the Burgess model of urban growth and residential differentiation (2.3.1 above). However postindustrialism also has its origins in a model of urban growth and residential differentiation. It can be traced to the Alonso model (Alonso 1964). Alonso's model too can be traced to the concerns of the Chicago school of urban sociology. The debate on gentrification can then be interpreted as one over the best place to locate gentrification, with postindustrialism placing gentrification in the superstructure and neighbourhood lifecycle placing gentrification in the base.

Alonso's model of urban differentiation (Alonso 1960, 1964), describes residential differentiation in terms of the bid rent curves of rich and poor people, that is how much each group is prepared to pay to occupy a particular location. Bid rent curves slope down away from the city centre as the city residents, who are bidding to maximize their use of land, trade off land costs against the value of their commuting time, measured in terms of their wage rates. The shape of their respective bid rent curves means that poor people will tend to live in the centre of the city and rich people on the outskirts.

Inner city gentrification, of course, challenges the conclusion that such a pattern of residential segregation by income with the poor in the centre and the rich in the outskirts is the inevitable result of competition for urban land. However as Rose points out:

The problem with this line of critique is that to point out that the phenomenon of gentrification has confounded the predictions of land-market theorists about land values and land uses in the inner city as Smith (1982 page 141) does, does not amount to a critique of the theoretical underpinnings of land-market models.

(Rose 1984, p49 fn 1)

Neoclassical land-market models are underpinned by the 'comparative statics' approach to modelling economic change. Two equilibrium situations are considered, which differ in one single characteristic, for example the presence or absence of a tax on land. One equilibrium is called 'before' and the other 'after'. The presence in the one of the characteristic under investigation (the tax) and its absence in the other is then held to account for the differences between the two equilibria, and hence to account for change over 'time' (imposing or removing the tax leads to a change from the one equilibrium to the other - see Harcourt 1972 for a critique of this procedure). Gentrification would then be explained by a change in the characteristics of the good to be maximized:

It is quite possible to model or predict that the inner city will be inhabited by wealthy people within a neoclassical framework. All that is needed is to replace a 'space maximising' criterion with a 'free-time maximising' criterion (Harvey, 1972). To do this it is not necessary to alter the underlying assumptions of consumer sovereignty and purely exogenous changes affecting 'tastes and preferences'.

(Rose 1984, p49 fn 1)

Postindustrialism tries to account for precisely such changes in maximization criteria. Like neo-classical economics, it too is divided into 'before' and 'after' states: 'before' - industrialism, and 'after' - postindustrialism. There is the same exogenous change in 'tastes and preferences'. 'Before', everyone wants to live in the suburbs, 'after' they all want to live downtown.

The consensus in the gentrification debate is that an explanation of gentrification depends on unifying neighbourhood lifecycle and postindustrialist approaches. In fact they already share a common perspective, that of neoclassical economics, and a common, positivist, epistemology (cf Rose, 1984 p47). Postindustrial explanations have made all the running in the gentrification debate subsequent to 1984. However, as might be imagined, the explanatory potential of both models is extremely limited: so limited in fact that it is surprising to see that they have continued to dominate the literature.

2.3 The debate since 1984: the rise of the postindustrialist consensus

As noted, the focus of postindustrialism is upon changes in society at large which have imposed gentrification upon certain neighbourhoods. The focus upon wider social changes as an explanation of gentrification is one to which both Marxists and conventional explanations of gentrification subscribe. However postindustrialism is often quite explicitly anti-Marxist in its intentions. The explanation of gentrification then becomes little more than a peg on which to hang a critique of Marxist theorizing in general and this critique is typically couched in terms of an advocacy of the importance of agency over structure.

The anti-Marxist proponents of the postindustrialist hypothesis of gentrification are led by David Ley who, with a number of colleagues at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, established during the 1970's a school of 'humanistic geography' (Duncan & Ley 1982, 1983, Ley 1982, 1987b, Ley & Samuels 1978). 'Humanistic geography' is extremely concerned with the status of agency in social explanation, that human beings should be treated humanly. Ley has argued on a number of occasions (notably Duncan & Ley 1982, Ley 1982) that Marxism is in principle incapable of so treating its agents because of the ontological status of class in Marxism and the holistic claims this requires (Duncan & Ley 1982, p38) - what would now be described as its totalizing metanarrative (Connor 1989).

The postindustrialist interpretation of gentrification forms a very important part of this

critique. Gentrification demonstrates most clearly the rise of a new middle class, both in the very public manner in which they consume their housing (Jager 1986, Raban 1974, Hamnett & P.Williams 1979 - cf. N.Smith & P.Williams 1986 p6), and also in the fact that, in espousing inner city locations for their pursuit of their public display of housing consumption, they buck the trend of up to 200 years of capitalist urbanization which has always associated new forms of housing consumption with new developments on the outskirts of a city (Hamnett 1984). This, they argue, has the gravest implications for Marxist social theory for three main reasons.

First, the continued existence of a middle class is fundamentally compromising for the status of Marxist explanation as a whole (Duncan & Ley 1982 p48). Further, the fact that there has been a rise of a *new* middle class contradicts the Marxist claim that capitalist society is in a process of evolution toward just two classes: capitalists and workers (Ley 1982).

The second is that this class is defined, not in production, as Marxists would have it, but in consumption: as society makes the transition from industrial to postindustrial society, this class moves away from an concern with questions of production to those of consumption. Gentrifiers are, in this view, the shock troops in the shock of the new, the coming of postindustrial society (Mills 1988).

Third and finally, postindustrialists argue that their account of gentrification is one which, because of its emphasis on consumption issues, supplies a much needed emphasis on the role of agency in questions of social life, a role which Marxist explanations must inevitably disregard (Duncan & Ley 1982, Ley 1980, 1982, Hamnett 1984 1991).

This interpretation of gentrification and its implications for the status of Marxist theorizing in urban analysis has been consistently challenged by N.Smith. For Smith, capitalism is above all a process of uneven development (N.Smith 1982, 1984). First World and Third World, metropolis and region, town and country, suburb and slum all stand in functionally connected but unevenly developed relations to one another. These relations are not static however, but continually evolving. Uneven development creates suburbs which depreciate in value as new suburbs are created (N.Smith 1979a, N.Smith & LeFaivre 1984). The creation of these new suburbs is itself predicated on the continued growth of wealth in the city, which translates into higher ground rents generally. Eventually a rent gap develops whereby the returns from the capitalized ground rent exceed the cost of redeveloping the buildings in the old suburbs (N.Smith 1979a). Developers take advantage of this rent gap and the middle classes respond to the

opportunities thus provided for them. In this account, gentrification is a child of capitalism, Marxist reasoning is still relevant and Marxist categories still apply (N.Smith 1988).

Smith's arguments in favour of his position have evolved considerably since the first publication of the rent gap hypothesis (N.Smith 1979a, b, 1982, 1984, 1987a). At heart, however, they still depend on the non-Marxist notion of neighbourhood lifecycle, but seek to provide it with a Marxist motor. Consequently, the right's principal criticism continues to hit Smith's arguments hardest precisely at the point which he is most anxious to defend, namely that gentrification depends on changes in production relations and not on consumer taste. Hamnett (1984, 1991) accurately identifies the weakness at the core of Smith's arguments. If gentrification is to be explained in terms of the creation of a rent gap, and developers' exploitation of this, how is it that gentrification is only to be found in a few areas of a certain number of large cities? If uneven development is the characteristic feature of a globally encompassing capitalism, as Smith would argue, why is gentrification not occurring in more places than the few in which it actually is found? Smith has never provided an answer to this question to satisfy his critics on this point.

Criticisms of Smith's arguments were so cogent that the non-Smithian left felt compelled into recognizing their force and so developed a left version of postindustrialism. Ironically, this meant accepting the postindustrialist hypothesis and providing *that* with a Marxist motor.

The non-Smithian left began by arguing that Smith's problems lay in his eclecticism rather than in Marxism in general (Rose 1984). They argued, following A.Sayer (1982), that Smith's eclecticism betrayed the fact that gentrification is a chaotic concept.

Sayer defined the notion of a chaotic concept to refer to the outcome of generalizations about social practice. Generalization groups together phenomena with merely generic similarities, as in the example of 'small firms'. Theoretically informed abstraction, it is argued, would reveal a number of distinct types of small firm, which may have little or nothing in common with each other. This habit of mind, argues the non-Smithian left, characterizes Smith's thinking about gentrification. Gentrification is a complex of processes and phenomena which cannot usefully be discussed if they are all linked together under a unitary heading such as gentrification. Attention, they argue, should be concentrated on the production of gentrifiers rather than the production (or consumption) of gentrified housing (Beauregard 1986).

The production of gentrifiers approach has been welcomed as a point of contact between

left and right (Hamnett 1991, Mills 1988). Since the focus is on gentrifiers, the right can focus on the consumption behaviour of these people, while the left can concentrate on their means of production; so that 'means of production of gentrifiers' can be used in the sense both of 'means whereby gentrifiers are produced' and 'means at the disposal of gentrifiers'. This claim of convergence permits the opportunity for the right both to isolate Smith within the Marxist camp, and to counter his criticisms of their position. Both Ley and Mills are quite skillful at employing Marxist arguments in support of their own positions. Mills (1988) for example relies considerably on R. Williams' arguments while at the same time managing to avoid all reference to the fact these arguments are addressed toward the development of Marxist reasoning (silencing "by a token inclusion" D.Sayer 1991 p5, cf. Chapter 6.4 below).

Smith's criticisms of the postindustrialists' arguments have accordingly been largely defensive (N. Smith 1987a 1987b). Ley (1987b, p468) characterizes Smith's position as an "adversarial patrolling of one's own territory". The postindustrial debate as it developed post 1984 has therefore come to form a consensus on three issues: that gentrification is postmodern; that the concept of gentrification is chaotic; and that attention should be concentrated on the production of gentrifiers. These elements are closely intertwined. Presentation of an effective criticism of them, however, requires disentangling them. Once these issues have been disposed of, we will be able to confront the fundamental presumption of the gentrification consensus, namely that gentrification represents a form of class constitution.

2.3.1 Is gentrification post-modern?

The idea that the postindustrialist explanation of gentrification is supported by arguments for postmodernism is particularly associated with the humanistic school of geography, with Vancouver, British Columbia, their favoured case study (Ley 1980, 1986, 1987a, Ley & Olds 1988, Mills 1988). In answering the question "is gentrification post-modern?", I first show how their version of the original postindustrial thesis runs into difficulties over the status of consciousness and agency, from which they thought that post-modernism could rescue them. I then show what postmodernism means to the right in the gentrification debate. Their argument, as presently constituted does not support the claim that gentrification is postmodern. Nor is there any evidence from the wider debates to support this claim. Neither therefore can it be claimed that gentrification signifies the existence of a new middle class. I am not interested here in debating the basic issue of whether gentrification does represent a form of class constitution, still less the issue of

whether a new middle class can be said to exist or not. Since the gentrification literature references these debates, they will of course have to be discussed, but in line with my strategy for dealing with the material, I am bracketing off these larger issues for discussion in Chapters 3, 4 & 5.

In his earliest account of social change in Vancouver, Ley argued that the development of the Vancouver economy had created a postindustrial city (Ley 1980). The transition had called forth a 'new middle class', which had found political expression in the liberal TEAM civic party. The main plank in the TEAM platform was a commitment to clean up (gentrify) the South side of False Creek. TEAM won power in 1976 and put these plans into action, thereby confirming the emergence of a new middle class in Vancouver, associated with the transition of the Vancouver economy to a postindustrial status. TEAM in fact lost control of the Vancouver City Council in 1980, and split up. Most TEAM members joined the conservative NPA. The NPA held power for 2 years, before losing control to the socialist COPE. The so-called new middle class therefore held power in Vancouver for only 4 years.

Ley's empirical evidence for the existence of a new middle class is weak (see also 2.3.4 below). According to Ley (1987a, p45), the "new class" is composed of "young professionals", although there seems to be nothing particularly new about them as such, "architects, teachers, university professors and lawyers", the very occupational categories who were so prominent in the 'gentrification of the bourgeoisie' in the *nineteenth* century (Stedman Jones 1974, Hobsbawm 1986). However, as "young professionals", the new middle class of 1970s Vancouver were also baby boomers. Their concentration in the ranks of TEAM seems to have been simply a matter of demographics rather than economics, i.e., the NPA represented the politics of an earlier generation, not the politics of a different class situation¹. This is suggested in Ley's account of TEAM's success:

Its momentum owed not a little to the spirit of the times in North America,
an era of protest and liberal social movements
(Ley 1987a, p45)

What was new about the Vancouver new middle class was that TEAM appeared, briefly,

¹ in British Columbia, as with many other Canadian provinces, political parties organized at the provincial/federal level do not organize at civic level - this means that contests over political organization at the civic level tends to take place via the formation of new civic parties rather than through attempts at gaining power in a local branch of a party organized to pursue national and/or provincial issues also. A conservative voter in B.C. would, if consistent, vote NPA in civic elections, Social Credit in provincial, and Progressive Conservative in national elections. These civic parties tend to be much more fissiparous than their corresponding national/provincial parties.

to speak for them.

Despite these questionmarks over the historical evidence, Ley held, and continues to hold, so far as later publications are concerned, the view that TEAM were the representatives of a new middle class who left their mark on the postindustrial (later, post-modern) urban landscape exhibited in the gentrification of False Creek (Ley 1986, 1987a).

Walker and Greenberg (1982a) invited Ley to reconsider his interpretation of this history, pointing *inter alia* to Gershuny's (1978) argument that the post-industrialist thesis confused levels of output with levels of employment, and that social prosperity still continued to depend on productivity in the manufacturing sector. Ley (1982) responded so vigorously to this invitation that he succeeded in transforming the debate from one over his post-industrial thesis into one over Walker & Greenberg's Marxism. Walker & Greenberg's response in reply (Walker & Greenberg 1982b) consequently failed to pick up on the fact that Ley had only one substantive defence to their original criticisms. This was his argument that post-industrialism does not make the all-inclusive claims which Marxists like Walker and Greenberg inevitably and erroneously imagine it to make, since the stock-in-trade of Marxist theorizing is the making of such all-inclusive claims. However, if postindustrialism is not to be understood as making the sorts of claims to universality as are made by Marxism, the question is immediately begged as to 'where did the consciousness come from?' that so inspired TEAM and its new middle class constituency.

From the Marxist perspective, such a change in consciousness would have come from the changes in the forms of production associated with the transition to post-industrial society (could such a change be shown to have occurred). However, this option was not open to Ley, since postindustrialism stresses the importance of consumption over production. Ley could not argue either that this change was due to postindustrialism itself, since this would make Ley's account of the changes in Vancouver's political scene as totalizing as any Marxist's might be. Ley in any case had denied the relevance of economic evidence for assessing his non-totalizing account of social change during the transition to post-industrial society (Ley 1982).

Ley therefore was forced to rely on Maslow's (1954) concept of the existence of a hierarchy of needs, in which more refined consumption requirements only become apparent as wealth increases. It is not difficult to see that Maslow's argument has much in common with Marx's definition of subsistence, in its historical and moral component in particular. Accordingly, it suffers from the same deficiencies, namely that it confuses

individual with social developments (see Chapter 5.5 below). As societies develop, new possibilities for production and consumption indeed open up (Pasinetti 1981), but it is not possible to infer from this that as individuals in any given society get richer, so their consumption preferences alter. Their consumption *patterns* may indeed change, but this is not the same thing as suggesting that their consumption *preferences* have altered (cf. Haddon's 1970 criticisms of Rex & Moore 1966). The shape of consumer preferences will only alter as the economy and society develops, not simply as it grows. However, as noted, Ley could not rely on this argument *and* at the same time claim that his postindustrial thesis was not all-inclusive and in this respect therefore fundamentally different from Marxism.

The only argument then left to Ley to explain the rise of liberal ideology in the postindustrial city, was therefore to infer that the post-industrial consciousness was always there and merely needed economic growth (rise in incomes) to help reveal its distinctive aspects. This strategy certainly helped him establish his claim that postindustrialism does not have the all-encompassing nature which, he maintained, Walker & Greenberg had read into his position, but only at the expense of creating another problem, not ever resolved by Ley.

If Ley's argument did hold, then he would then be in the same difficulties as those in which he regards Walker & Greenberg's as being, namely that history is sacrificed to theory. Ideology, Ley argued, reflects a "set of interests and values", which will be realized only in "distinctive historical and geographical moments" (Ley 1982 p36). This can only mean that those interests and values, and consequently *the social circumstances to which they refer*, are more or less constant throughout time. This itself could only be if there was no historical change. Ley's postindustrial account of gentrification is caught on the horns of this dilemma; either it is totalizing, or it denies the possibility of real historical change. This is of course to say nothing about the status of the argument that we really have moved beyond the era of industrial production into post-industrial consumption.

Ley's own criticisms of Walker and Greenberg may in fact be applied against his own position. He claims (1982 p36) to be interested in "evolving historical circumstances" and not "non-changing theoretical categories", unlike Walker and Greenberg. However, Maslow's arguments, on which Ley has to rely, are self-avowedly functionalist; and if any form of argument is vulnerable to the charge of commitment to unchanging theoretical categories and lack of interest in evolving historical circumstances, it is functionalism. Functionalism severely inhibits the formation of categories which can evolve with changing historical circumstances (Runciman 1969). All it needs is one

example of a society which did not follow Maslow's hierarchy of taste, for Ley's argument to be faced with the classic functionalist dilemma: either having to define this society as somehow less than a society or not a society at all; or having to change our definition to fit this new example, in which case we would have no definition at all.

To argue against Ley and Maslow therefore is not to engage in a "knee-jerk" response: to argue that these authors are "acting as apologists for the status quo" (Dickens 1990 p177). The problem is not that these authors seek to argue that "what is in fact socially derived" is "natural or necessary" (Dickens, *ibid.*). It is that, that "kernel of truth" or no, these self-avowedly functionalist explanations are tautological (Runciman 1969, cf. Chapter 7 below).

The advent of postmodernism helped rescue Ley from the horns of his dilemma. For this was a condition about which there was agreement (and disagreement) on both left and right. Thus for example the 'New Times' manifesto from *Marxism Today* (Hall & Jacques, 1989) explicitly linked the question of post-modernism to postindustrialism, *and* to a politics of identity realized through a politics of consumption (Hall, 1989 pp121-122).

Ley (Cybriwsky, Ley & Western 1986, Ley 1987a, 1987b) therefore developed his original ideas to incorporate post-modernism into his thesis, but in a manner which preserved his original position, except that now the rise of the new middle class is described as part of a more general transformation, summed up as the change to post-modern society. This thesis of a *postmodern* new middle class could then be coupled to Ley's attack on Walker and Greenberg's presumption that the postindustrialist argument involved the invocation of a total social change. Postmodernism's well-known aversion to 'totalizing practices' (Thrift 1987) was particularly appealing to the right (Harvey 1987 makes this point). However, postmodernism was also attractive to those on the left, who wished to avoid the untoward associations of postindustrialism with the 'end of ideology' and the alleged redundancy of Marxism (Soja 1989). Once the debate took on this character, it was easy to overlook the fact that none of these questions addressed the problems of explaining gentrification.

In Ley's later writings therefore, the capture of the organs of city government allowed the new middle class to create a *postmodern* landscape in Vancouver (Ley 1986). False Creek South Shore was now described as such a landscape (Ley 1987a); a landscape which was, "the expressive landscape of liberal reform" (Ley, 1987a p44), "where the new class ideology would be writ large" (Cybriwsky, Ley & Western 1986, p113).

However, Ley and his followers define modernism and postmodernism in very specific ways. Histories of modernism (Appleyard 1991, Howard 1991, Pinckney 1990, R. Williams 1990), include a very wide range of movements under this heading, but Ley reduces this tradition to a simple opposition between 'rational' modernism and 'expressive' post-modernism (although York argues that much of what was described as "rational" [in Modernist architecture] was in fact *expressive*", of function - 1980 p76). 'Rational' modernism, according to Ley, is "born of a universal logic and devoid of historical and cultural references". It displays "cultural agnosticism" and "an antipathy to historicism" (Ley 1987a, p49, p53). It is the architecture of a 'mass society' (Ley 1987a). Modernist B.C. Place, on False Creek North Shore, the site of *Expo 86*, the Vancouver World's Fair (held in 1986), is expressive of a neo-conservative 'populist' ideology of mass culture.

By contrast, "central to post-modernism" is the "maintenance of continuity, of historical and cultural symbols" (Ley 1987a, p52). Postmodern developments in False Creek South Shore are marked by a concern for continuity with the past and a concern that historical allusions do not stray into "ersatz" and "parody" (Ley 1987a p47). (York 1980 and Appleyard 1991 would strongly contest such views, as indeed do Ley and Olds 1988). The distinction between modernism and post-modernism in terms of an opposition between 'mass civilization' and 'minority culture' is a definition of a post-modernism which is inherently conservative, with both a large and a small 'c' (Pinckney 1990 p5 - see also Chapter 6 below). It is quite specific to the False Creek South Shore gentrification.

Just how specific can be seen from his assessment of the centrepiece of the Exposition, the sculpture *Highway 86*. He describes this sculpture, "full of design jokes and parodies" (p53), in Ley (1987a) as a typical example of modernist mass culture. In Ley and Olds (1988) however, this designation is reversed, without any explanation or comment: "an essential postmodern idiom, familiar yet distant" (p197-198). This later description of *Highway 86*, with its sense of irony and cool awareness of the ambiguities in the messages sent out by architectural symbols (Blanchard 1985, cf Chapter 3 below), is a far cry from the description given in Ley (1987a), where

postmodern architecture ... aims to communicate intersubjective themes,
and to acknowledge local history and culture
(Ley 1987a p44)

In Ley & Olds' definition of postmodernism, the "narrow line dividing statement from overstatement, authenticity from ersatz and even parody" (Ley 1987a p47) is now completely obliterated. B.C. Place is no longer the modernist brainchild of an insensitive bunch of car dealers turned politicians based in the far away provincial capital of Victoria,

B.C., but is now instead an example of postmodernist sophistication.

Such a flexible definition of post-modernism leaves Ley's "new middle class" in the lurch. 'Postmodernism' in Ley's hands becomes the expression, in one and the same artefact, of the ideologies both of liberal reformers and of their conservative opponents. "Ersatz and parody", which would be excesses of postmodernism in what is dubbed a liberal landscape on the South Shore, are characteristic of postmodernism in what is dubbed a 'conservative' landscape on the North. False Creek's South Shore's "sensuous landscape" is the "downtown skyline", "too good to be true" (Ley 1987a p49). On the other hand this skyline is composed of the very architectural symbols of Modernism, (the "megabuildings of a corporate society" - Ley 1987a p45) to which False Creek South Shore is, allegedly so resolutely opposed. Apparently, the lucky residents of this demi-Eden *can* have their cake and eat it. When Ley is discussing False Creek as an expression of a new class, post-industrial, post-modern urban landscape, his descriptions of False Creek South Shore do indeed celebrate the ideology he sees expressed there, just as Walker and Greenberg argued.

Ley's use of the terms modernism and postmodernism appear to be little more than convenient labels to be attached to any contrasted pair presently under discussion. Advertising passes for analysis. The condition of postmodernity loses all specificity and therefore cannot be held to account for gentrification, except in the tautological sense that if we do live in postmodern society, then all social and cultural activities undertaken in this society must by definition be postmodern.

But is society post-modern? Many would argue not (Baumann 1987, Connor 1989, Harvey 1989, Soja 1989, Cooke 1990, Dickens 1990, Giddens 1990, Graham 1990, Bondi 1991). Indeed York (1980) regarded post-modernism to have been the definitive early '70s phenomenon; and finished by punk, which, he argues, was uncompromisingly modernist in style.

According to Appleyard, Post-Modernism, as an architectural style, declared itself concerned with the question of meaning, but was contingent on, and compromised by a property boom.

...Post-Modernism - not great architecture, but curiously exemplary of a short-lived phase of architectural thought.

(Appleyard, 1991, p11)

Most theorists of the postmodern, read (and are happy to read) far too much into an architectural style. After all, the years of High Modernism were also the years of 'Stockbroker Tudor' and 'By-pass Variegated', the years of the creation of suburbia

(Oliver & al. 1981).

Many of the concerns which post-modernism claims and by which it defines itself in opposition to modernism, are concerns which were of great interest to the modernists (R.Williams 1989, Appleyard 1991, Howard 1991). Cooke (1990) quotes a use of 'post-modern' dating back over 30 years (Mills 1959). Cooke argues that

what is called 'post-modernism' is in fact a critique of 'modernism' in all its guises... Modernism and post-modernism are thus intertwined rather than irrevocably opposed.

(Cooke 1990, p331-332)

Giddens however would argue that the concept is a contradiction in terms

To speak of post-modernity as superseding modernity appears to invoke that very thing which is (now) declared to be impossible: giving some coherence to history and pinpointing our place in it.

(Giddens 1990 p47)

As noted, postmodernism has nonetheless held a certain attraction for the left. The analysis of 'New Times' is framed around a call for the construction of a left 'politics of identity', explicitly to arrest the slippage of meanings cited as the characteristic feature of postmodern society (Hall, 1989 pp121). Yet as Howard (1991) and Appleyard (1991) suggest, these concerns over the links between capital, meaning and modern life are not new, but recurrent themes in twentieth century thought.

If Appleyard, Howard and York are correct, and that was what post-Modernism was, it is curious that it has taken social theory so long to theorize it. Massey (1990) is in no doubt why this is. For her, 'post-modernism', represents a solution to a crisis for intellectuals, shunted to one side by the Reagan-Thatcher years: the debate over post-modernism is simply a way of "reclaiming the moment" (cf. Baumann 1987, Dickens 1990). The characteristic 'condition of postmodernity', "space-time compression" (Harvey 1989), is particularly a crisis for rich whit male intellectuals "jetsetters writing about the jet set". The politics of consumption are only "important now that men do the shopping".

Both modernism and postmodernism, Massey argues, "make claims toward feminism". Modernism simply claims that "feminism should be on its side", female liberation is inherent in the modernist programme. Post-modernism, taking its cue from the pastiche and ambiguity of post-modern architecture, claims to celebrate diversity, to "allow other voices to be heard", to reject 'totalizing discourses'. In fact, its discourses are "dominated by white male heterosexuals" and is "fundamentally undemocratic". It allows other voices to be heard, but "it doesn't empower or explain variety" (see also Connor 1989). Bondi (1990, p163) has similar reservations about the claims of post-

modernism to provide space for feminist discourse. In fact, her doubts extend to doubts about postmodernism's claims to provide space for any discourse.

What postmodernism appears to do is to elide rather than deconstruct a dichotomy between ideas and materiality.

(Bondi, 1990 p162)

The thesis that gentrification is post-modern can therefore be rejected for three main reasons. There is no theoretical or evidential support for Ley's arguments for a postmodern consciousness which can be associated with a new, and gentrifying middle class. There is no evidence, from analysis of the history of Modernism and post-Modernism, of a change in social conditions at large. Finally, the feminist critique of postmodernist theory is, I believe, irrefutable. Ley's championing of postmodernism as the key to understanding gentrification may in retrospect be seen as the high water mark of postmodernism in gentrification studies.

Weak as they may be, the arguments for gentrification as postmodern have however maintained their currency in the gentrification debate because of their common philosophical basis with the 'production of gentrifiers' approach; namely a concern for the status of gentrifiers as active agents. This concern manifested itself in the realist critique of neighbourhood lifecycle with its conclusions that gentrification is a chaotic concept. Before turning to the production of gentrifiers approach in detail, I next look at these philosophical underpinnings. Again, it is important to stress, I am less concerned with whether the arguments for realism are sustainable in themselves, as with the use made of these arguments in the gentrification debate. I deal with realist claims to knowledge in Chapter 3.

2.3.2 Is gentrification a chaotic concept?

The argument that gentrification is a chaotic concept owes its origins to the power of Rose's critique of "mix'n'match" theorizing about gentrification (Rose 1984). Rose accepted Marxist emphases on the fundamental importance of "the production of commodities of gentrified dwellings" (Rose 1984 p50). Equally fundamental and important however, she argued, was the question of the production of the people who gentrified. In analyses such as N.Smith's (1979a, 1982), such questions were simply "added on afterwards" (op. cit. p51). "Marxist approaches to gentrification, therefore, now need to expand and clarify their theoretical and empirical terrain" (op.cit. p57). To help them in this task, Rose drew on A.Sayer's (1982) account of chaotic conceptualization in economic geography. Citing this article, she argued, that "the terms 'gentrification' and 'gentrifiers', as commonly used in the literature, are 'chaotic

conceptions' " (Rose 1984 p62). What was worse, they were also chaotic conceptions in "extant marxist literature" (ibid.), that is to say, in Smith's rent gap accounts of gentrification. Rose's article inaugurated the 'production of gentrifiers' approach of the non-Smithian left.

In using Sayer (1982), the advocates of the 'production of gentrifiers' approach felt that they could answer the criticisms of Marxist reasoning in urban analysis, as made by Duncan and Ley (1980 1981) and Ley (1980). The notion of chaotic conceptualization to which Rose staked her critique originates with Marx (1973, p100), as Sayer himself pointed out. The problems that Ley & al. were criticizing were therefore not those of Marxism as such but of chaotic conceptualization. Sensitized to the danger of chaotic conceptualization, Marxist explanation could withstand such criticism. Having correctly identified the 'symptoms' however, I argue that Rose mistook their 'diagnosis'. Consequently, and by default, a theoretical closure (Pratt 1982) is in danger of becoming established on the basis of an unexamined development in the application of the term 'chaotic concept'; unexamined since Sayer's later work (A.Sayer 1984, 1989, 1990) is never referenced in the gentrification debate.

In fact, the 1982 article was the only one of Sayer's writings which featured the notion of chaotic conceptualization. The article itself he admits (personal communication) was intended as a trailer for his 1984 book on realist methodology. The strength of his 1982 article lay in its critique of empiricist generalization rather than its promotion of realist principles. Positivism led to chaotic conceptualization through empiricist generalization. The rational abstraction made possible by realism did not in principle suffer from those problems, as Sayer (forthcoming - i.e, Sayer 1984) would demonstrate. The article was almost too successful, however, taking on a life of its own. It is now the single most quoted reference in the geography literature (Whitehand 1991). Sayer has since found himself writing a number of (much less widely cited) articles (1989 1990), attempting to correct the inferences which he feels have been falsely drawn from his 1984 book, but which I suspect have been falsely drawn from his 1982 article; his book not having been read, or if read, read only through the perspective supplied by the 1982 article.

Consequently, the term 'chaotic conception' as introduced into gentrification studies by Rose (1984) by way of Sayer (1982) has itself developed a life of its own. Certainly, no-one in the gentrification literature who has used the term 'chaotic conception' has ever referenced anything other than Sayer (1982) as their authority for making this assertion. Beauregard (1986) quotes Rose (1984) and Sayer (1982) as the basis for his view that gentrification should be regarded as chaotic. Hamnett and Randolph (1986 p121) quote Beauregard (1986) and Mills quotes Hamnett (1984), Beauregard and Rose as evidence

of the consensus which exists on this topic

Rose argued, correctly according to the lights of Sayer's article, that chaotic conceptions arose because "they internally combine 'necessary tendencies' with 'contingent conditions' (for example the law of value combined with a particular housing stock at a particular time)" (Rose, 1984, p62). In addition however, she took this to mean that chaotic conceptualizations

obscure the fact that a multiplicity of processes, rather than a single causal process, produce changes in the occupation of inner-city neighbourhoods from lower to higher income residents.

(Rose, 1984, p62)

This illustration of the effects of chaotic conceptualization came to stand for the process itself, so that by the time Beauregard (1986) described gentrification as a chaotic concept, the principal criterion he used to justify such a claim was the complexity of gentrification, and not the circumstances under which its identification as an object of study took place. Furthermore, Rose went on to argue that, as chaotic conceptualizations, "the concepts 'gentrification' and 'gentrifiers' need to be disaggregated" (ibid.). This came to mean that a multiplicity of gentrification-like phenomena existed, which chaotic conceptualization wrongly grouped together under the one heading:

"Gentrification" has, of course, been criticised as a "chaotic concept" (Rose 1982, Hamnett 1984, Beauregard 1986), which aggregates a variety of contingently related processes under one unitary category according to commonsense definitions of the real object.

(Mills, 1988, p178)

The clear implication then is that since the term 'gentrification' is a chaotic concept, there is no such thing as gentrification in reality. However, as Warde so rightly points out,

The danger with nominating something as a chaotic conception is the tendency to imagine then that the phenomenon identified does not exist, whereas the real point is that our thinking about it is confused.

(Warde 1991, p223)

It is this tendency to imagine that gentrification does not exist which has inspired the rise of the production of gentrifiers approach. Use of the term 'chaotic conception', in this context, is danger of becoming little more than an epithet however, a means of ending discussion, not advancing analysis.

The confusion arises because the problem in gentrification studies is not 'chaotic conception' but 'base-superstructure'. Rose argued that previous Marxist work on gentrification studies had tended to replicate non-Marxist work, rather than reconceptualizing the points at issue:

Fundamental economic processes are in this view to be theorised in traditional marxist terms. Everything else, and especially 'social processes', either is theoretically derivable from the economic or is purely

epiphenomenal.

(Rose 1984 p51)

As R. Williams (1977) shows, these problems are characteristic of the use of the base-superstructure metaphor. Rose's critique of 'chaotic conceptions' in gentrification studies should therefore be interpreted as an implicit critique of 'base-superstructure' modes of thought in gentrification studies. I now turn to a discussion of this issue in Rose's article and N. Smith's commentary on it.

Rose's complaint with Marxist analysis was its claim to universality, to be "*the fundamental* starting point for theoretical and empirical work on *all* aspects of gentrification..." (Rose, 1984, p50 emphasis in original). Rose goes on to argue in effect that, if Marxism is making such claims, it ought to recognize the wider changes in the reproduction of labour power which have been responsible for the production of gentrifiers (Rose 1984, p53). Lack of such recognition, she argued

produces a type of analysis which... prevents us from asking questions about the significance of changes in reproduction that 'gentrifiers' *themselves* are bringing about, although not necessarily under conditions of their own choosing.

(Rose 1984 p54, emphasis added)

In essence Rose appeared to be arguing for a recognition of the fact that gentrifiers gentrify because they can. No sooner was this point made however, than social change at large (postindustrialism), was brought in to explain the appearance of this new social group:

Marx's own analysis appeared to equate the reproduction of labour power with the individual consumption by the working class. This seems legitimate enough for the period of early factory capitalism, about which Marx was writing, when it was primarily unskilled workers which had to be reproduced, capable of work and forced to sell their labour for a wage. However, in the present-day context of advanced capitalism, the *form* of consumption is no longer irrelevant to the reproduction of labour power. The forms consumption take become key parts of the contingencies of social reproduction. This means that the actual *work* involved in reproducing people and their labour power, outside the commodity form, does 'make a difference'.

(Rose, 1984, p55)

In an ironic echo of the right's argument therefore, there was no agency then, but there is now, and gentrification demonstrates this. Rose argues that, in Marxist theorizing about gentrification (cf. Ley 1987b):

Gentrification appears as the *only possible end state* for ... neighbourhoods, because of the immutable operation of the law of value in such built environments in the present phase of capitalism.

(Rose 1984, p53)

However her own argument falls into the same trap. By concentrating on the fraction of

the middle class who gentrify, Rose's approach tends to define gentrifiers as people who gentrify because they *must*, not because they *can*: they have after all been produced as gentrifiers.

When Rose criticized the neglect of the "significance of changes in reproduction", she used as an example, "marginal gentrifiers", who

may be able to work together to develop housing alternatives that would provide them with the same 'ontological security' (Saunders 1982) as homeownership [e.g., "nonprofit rental housing co-operatives"]
(Rose 1984 , p65 & ftn 14 *ibid.*)

N.Smith (1987a) argued that to come up with this notion of a "marginal gentrifier", Rose was forcing on 'chaos' and 'chaotic conceptions' meanings which they did not ordinarily possess. To take such a line however overlooks the fact that, in effect, Rose was arguing for the importance of the home as an alternative base for the foundations of the superstructure. For Rose 'widening the terrain' meant simply that the concept of the base should include housing consumption as well as production. Her strategy for overcoming the problems of base-superstructure is therefore only marginally different to that of postindustrialists, such as Ley, (and Saunders & P.Williams, discussed in Chapter 3). Neither strategy however addresses the real issue, which is how to overcome the limitations of base-superstructure modes of thought.

I agree with Rose's criticisms of Smith's arguments, therefore, but disagree with the conclusion she draws from these. The development of theory is not the same as the development of history. The 'form of consumption' has always been relevant to the reproduction of labour power. As Mills (1988) says, for a commodity to sell, "it must have use-value; and that use-value must be 'imaginable' - it must have cultural meaning". For Rose to try to set up this opposition between consumption as such and the *form* of that consumption would indicate that she still has not integrated the 'economic' and the 'social', despite her intentions to the contrary. Rose begins her article by criticizing the way in which Marxist accounts have simply taken over organic or neoclassical arguments of neighbourhood lifecycle (Rose 1984, p47). However, having begun by criticizing the conceptualization of the gentrification 'base', neighbourhood lifecycle, Rose only switches the argument into the 'superstructure' of postindustrialism. Lack of attention to the problems of base-superstructure fatally compromises the production of gentrifiers approach.

2.3.3 *The production of gentrifiers: a new way forward for the non-Smithian left or a dead end?*

Rose (1984) described Smith's eclecticism as a mix'n'match approach to gentrification, since, she argued, his strategy was to accept non-Marxist categorizations of the gentrification process, and then seek to match them to Marxist accounts of economic development process. I would argue however that the non-Smithian left's production of gentrifiers approach is just as eclectic as Smith's. It accepts the right's assessment of the issues at stake in the gentrification debate, but seeks to give a 'Marxist' account of these.

Rose's criticism of neighbourhood lifecycle concepts in gentrification studies ended by asking

whether marxist theorising about gentrification should be limited to the specification of preconditions for the production of gentrified dwellings, without considering the production of the 'gentrifiers', the occupants of these dwellings.

(Rose 1984, p51)

Rose began her considerations by noting that

The social and the spatial restructuring of labour processes are shaping and reshaping the ways that people and labour power are reproduced in cities.

(Rose, 1984, p55)

She interpreted this general process as implying the creation of a class of gentrifiers, derived from the nature of downtown office work, in short, postindustrialism. Relating residential locational requirements to changes in the nature of office work processes, she argued, is a useful form of analysis. However, it does not go far enough, since questions of the reproduction of labour power cannot be confined to the workplace. Nor however are they reducible to consumption practices, as the postindustrialists would suggest. "The crucial point here is that '*gentrifiers*' are not the mere bearers of a process determined independently of them." (1984 p56 - emphasis in original), that is, gentrifiers gentrify because they can, not because they have to. However, having made these useful points, Rose then relied on realist principles to find a way forward:

Their constitution, as *certain types of workers and as people*, is as crucial an element in the production of gentrification as is the production of the dwellings they occupy. *They may or may not make the process happen in particular contingent situations.*

(Rose 1984, p56 emphasis added)

The production of gentrifiers, in other words, involves the production of certain types of people with certain causal powers, which may or may not combine with particular contingently related situations to produce gentrified housing. However we never get to

know what the character of these contingencies might be. Consequently the problems facing gentrifiers appear to be the same as for any immigrant to the city (Rose 1984 p63). In Chapter 6, I shall argue that this problem is in fact the key to understanding how gentrification is a condition of modern life. However, to understand this means looking at gentrification in the context of modern life, not examining the characteristics of gentrifiers as though they were some kind of Other, by which modern life can be defined. Because it concentrates on the internal characteristics of gentrifiers as a group, who are already *and otherwise* known (cf. Chapter 2.1 above), the 'production of gentrifiers' approach begins from the wrong point. Gentrifiers as a social group are specified only through the fact that they gentrify; and who have, if not specific but unexplained causal powers, then certainly specific and equally unexplained demands, consumer preferences which are 'revealed' through gentrification. Despite its self-proclaimed concern with agency, gentrifiers must inevitably be portrayed in this approach as gentrifying because they have to, rather than because they can.

This point can be borne out by comparing two versions of the 'production of gentrifiers' approach, Beauregard (1986) on the left, and Mills (1988) on the right. Beauregard argues that three questions need to be answered to explain gentrification. First, how did potential gentrifiers come about? Second, what created potentially gentrifiable housing? Third, what caused the prior displacement of the gentrified?

Although gentrification is supposedly a chaotic process, the "characteristics of gentrifiers" remain "remarkably similar across specific instances of gentrification". Among these characteristics are situation "within the urban, professional managerial fraction of labor", delayed marriage and childrearing, and the adoption of styles of conspicuous consumption. Postponement of marriage and childrearing decisions owing to career responsibilities "facilitates this consumption, but also makes it necessary if people are to meet others and develop friendships" in "a lifetime of fluid personal relationships" (Beauregard, 1986 p44). If however relationships are indeed fluid over a lifetime, why would only certain areas of the city have drawing power? Beauregard recognizes that none of the desires and needs which he attributes to potential gentrifiers necessarily imply the selection "of an urban location over a suburban one" (Beauregard 1986 p46), and he never provides a satisfactory answer to the questions he himself raises of

why a fraction of this group elects to remain in the city rather than follow the trend of suburban out-migration... [and]...

why only *certain* inner-city areas with inexpensive housing opportunities occupied by the powerless become gentrified.

(Beauregard 1986, p46, p50)

The considerations which Beauregard lists as motivating gentrifiers would appeal to anyone looking for accommodation: "near central business districts... with amenities... architecturally interesting... inexpensive" (p46/47) - who would say no? Not that it is likely that such accommodation could ever be found - the list of site characteristics of places suitable for gentrification are so appealing, "access to a waterfront... hilltop location... spectacular view", that it would be a wonder such prime sites were ever overlooked in the first place (ibid).

It is worth comparing Beauregard's description of the characteristics of sites and housing stock suitable for gentrification, with the following quotation from Raban on the history of gentrification in Islington:

Enervated Georgian architecture suddenly becomes beautiful, after every architectural writer since their erection has glossed over them with a yawn. (Pevsner, writing about Islington in the *London* volume of the Penguin *Buildings of England* sounds positively antediluvian today; he is *bored* by the most lovely and desirable squares in the whole city...)
(Raban 1973 p86)

There is no explanation offered in Beauregard's article as to what causes such switches in architectural fashion, so that previously disregarded housing suddenly becomes "interesting" to particular fractions of the labour force. Ironically, therefore, Beauregard's theorising is exactly that kind of 'mix-n-match' analysis that Rose complained of. Beauregard has to rely on a threadbare psychologism to explain his gentrifiers' behaviour. The behaviour of potential gentrifiers is explained, not by reference to agency, as claimed, but to 'needs', 'desires' and 'inclinations', simply thrown into the account with no explanation of their theoretical or empirical status. As Warde comments "It is hard to be satisfied with such eclecticism" (1991 p225). Furthermore, in Beauregard's account, psychological explanations become functionally necessary for the explanation of gentrification. Because gentrified houses have no net curtains in the windows, for example, they are functional to the desire for that public display of wealth characteristic of gentrifiers. But conspicuous consumption is not simply an aspiration of the better-off, as the example of Harry Enfield's famous comic character "Loadsamoney!" so aptly demonstrates (Mort 1989, p161).

The central problem in the production of gentrifiers approach is the relation of 'gentrifiers' (as a distinct group) whose production can be theorised, to 'gentrification' (as a chaotic concept) whose production cannot. Beauregard's strategy for dealing with this problem is to define each component of the gentrification "scenario" separately, and then bring them together in the final act. In fact, for the production of gentrifiers, he cannot do this, having to define them in the context of a sequence of *gentrification*, not of production of *gentrifiers*. His scenario has yuppies, as it were hanging round street

corners and then local bars, and because of this behaviour precipitating a property market explosion, in which, because of the rising prices, they finally settle down and buy houses in the neighbourhood and become gentrifiers proper. Beauregard begins his account with an expressed concern for agency, but because he begins from the existence of gentrification as an accomplished fact, his account immediately denies agency any role to play in the process.

Gentrifiers have "peculiar housing needs", including the need for status and conspicuous consumption, which result in "the demand for a specific type of housing in a specific type of area" (p46/47). Rose (1984) made similar arguments. The concern for agency is little more than a cover for the fact that the reasons advanced as to why gentrifiers must gentrify are so vague. They could cover almost any housing situation, or any consumption decision generally. This results from what appears to be the misconceived attempt to define agents outside of a process, the attempt to separate the essence of consumption from the specific form of that consumption; misconceived because of the error in imagining that because gentrification is a chaotic concept (which I would dispute anyway), which cannot therefore be defined, and which does not therefore exist. Trying to define 'gentrifiers' without defining 'gentrification', however is rather like trying to define a football player without defining football: outside of its context, the definition loses its point.

Rose starts with a "loose" definition of gentrifiers, never subsequently 'tightened up'. Nonetheless, although she allows a wider range of incomes and places in the labour market into her definition than others would allow (N.Smith 1987a), she does define what a gentrifier is for her purposes. Beauregard's initial definition of gentrifier appears to be quite a lot tighter, referring to an apparently coherent group of people. On the basis of his definition however, this group cannot in fact be differentiated from non-gentrifiers; there is in fact no definition, other than the evidence that these people have gentrified, or occupied previously gentrified housing. For Beauregard, this group of people are only "potential gentry" *until* they gentrify. Gentrifiers are social atoms with a couple of electrons missing from their 'housing' ring, which makes them highly reactive with gentrifiable housing. The 'production of gentrifiers' approach is dependent on giving its agents mysterious causal powers, which react with no less mysteriously contingent events to cause gentrification. However, it would be wrong to conclude that the problem lies with the idiosyncratic version of realism espoused by Beauregard et al. Rather it lies in the unwonted separation of all the elements in the gentrification scenario, in the liberal, rather than cultural materialist approach.

For Mills (1988), as for the liberal camp generally (cf. Ley 1986), there is subtle but

significant change of emphasis. Postmodernism is here explicitly linked to postindustrialism, and the rise of a 'new class' (Mills, 1988, p183). Mills makes it clear that this New Class is a new middle class (ibid.), and that gentrification is its identifying mark (Mills, 1986, p186). In this perspective, the 'production of gentrifiers' approach is argued to have "developed out of *a reaction against* the Marxist work represented by Smith's rent-gap analysis" (Mills 1988 p178 emphasis added). Whereas Rose saw the production of gentrifiers approach as a supplement to Marxist analysis, therefore, they suggest that it is an alternative, necessary because Marxist theory cannot cope with the existence of a middle class, and the transition to post-industrial society. Consequently, Smith's revised account (N.Smith 1987a), gentrification as an example of product differentiation, "still requires an active subject, a sociology and an anthropology of gentrification" (Mills 1988 p179). An approach "which focuses on the 'production of gentrifiers' is an initial step in that direction." (ibid) .

Rose argued that to look at changes in consumption practices in this manner was just as deficient a procedure as to concentrate on changes in production relations ("the mere bearers of a process determined independently of them" - 1984 p56). By arguing that the production of gentrifiers approach is a reaction to Smith's Marxist approach, the humanistic version of 'the production of gentrifiers' approach is situated firmly in the superstructure. Thus Mills argues: "as postmodern architecture is *typified* by its social ambiguity, so too are its New Class champions" (1988, p185 emphasis added). Mills also urges that "the consumption style of gentrifiers [be treated] seriously as a *reflection* of cultural practice" (1988, p182, emphasis added). These uses of these subsidiary metaphors of typification and reflection (Chapter 2.1 above) are not just verbal slips. In Mills' article, R.Williams' discussions of hegemony are referenced many times without it ever being mentioned that for Williams, hegemony is always to be understood as a process of class domination (R.Williams 1977). It invests class relations in cultural forms. It is Williams' most powerful integrating concept, which enables the transcendence of base-superstructure metaphors altogether (Chapter 10 below). Instead, in Mills' hands, it is always referred to as "cultural" hegemony, as if style were all that mattered in questions of hegemony.

By failing to acknowledge the class connotations in Williams' use of hegemony, however, Mills' humanistic 'production of geographers' approach fails to escape the base-superstructure metaphor. In her account, economic change leads to social change and a new middle class which gentrifies. Housing production (for Rose, the necessary but not sufficient component of the 'base'), only features as a subject of architectural design and advertising copy and is analyzed only as 'postmodernist' symbol. The failure in Mills article seriously to consider economic issues, in particular the question of housing

production, probably accounts for the tone of surprise in observations such as

In the present economic climate the motive of profitable investment becomes increasingly apparent in discourse on urban change. Investment potential is clearly a consideration both for 'producers' and some 'consumers'... Explains one architect:

"They're marketing the units as a *commodity*... these days"
(ibid. - emphasis in original)

It is otherwise hard to believe that the proposition that housing is produced as a commodity in capitalist societies would appear as worthy of comment in an article published in 1988.

Postindustrialism, although it refers to a 'post-industrial' economic base, is not really interested in economic questions *per se*. In postindustrialism, as Mills' article shows, gentrification is a reflection or a typification of changes in the base. This 'base' is never very clearly specified. As noted above (2.3.1), Ley (1987b p286) calls postindustrialism a "widely used concept" and criticizes Smith (1987b) for raising a "red herring" even for asking from Ley for a description of what post-industrial society looks like. This is not simply an evasion on Ley's part. The question of the base really does not matter too much in the hall of mirrors that constitutes the superstructure. It is the idea of gentrification as evidence of change, of 'new (and post-Marxist) times' that interests postindustrialism.

N.Smith (1987a) in a wide-ranging and important response to his critics, both left and right, argued that there was no statistical evidence for the rise of a new class (the US Census and Conference Board report similar findings - International Herald Tribune May 26 1989 p12). Smith implied that such evidence could never be found, but this was of only secondary importance. According to Smith, there is no necessity for demand oriented explanations of gentrification at all. Even if "demand structures have changed" it does not "explain why these changed demands have led to a *spatial* reemphasis on the central and inner city (N.Smith, 1987, p164). Smith's answer was to couple his rent gap analysis to the regulationist approach of Aglietta and others (Hamnett 1991) to provide an account of gentrification as a capitalist strategy of product differentiation. This strategy provides him with the anthropology Mills argued his account lacked. However, as Hamnett argues, it also allowed Smith to avoid confronting his "heart of darkness: locational preferences, lifestyles and consumption" (Hamnett 1991 p185).

Smith's criticisms of the right's treatment of demand issues are valid, but he is wrong thus to attempt to avoid the question of where middle class demand comes from. The problem is not, as Smith suspects, that concern for demand issues means conceding that

a neoclassical theory of consumer sovereignty has any role to play in the explanation of gentrification, which from Smith's point of view would mean conceding that neoclassical explanations have a role to play in Marxist analysis. In fact, a concern for demand issues does not mean necessarily conceding anything to neoclassical economics at all. Neoclassical economics has in fact very little to say on how demands are formed and how demand is translated into purchases (Hollis 1981). The inadequacies of the right's consumer sovereignty oriented treatment of demand issues in gentrification studies mean that they too deny any role to agency in their explanations of gentrification. Instead of framing demand issues in terms of demand for accommodation in general, but only for gentrified property in particular (and therefore in terms of the characteristics of those who would consume it - Chapter 3 below). Accounts of demand in gentrification studies become circular: they succumb to a sort of commodity fetishism (Marx 1967, Ch1.4), in which the property itself appears mysteriously endowed with causal powers. Gentrifiers have "peculiar housing needs", including the need for status and conspicuous consumption, which result in "the demand for a specific type of housing in a specific type of area" (Beauregard 1986 p46/47) .

In this respect, the definitions arising out of the 'production of gentrifiers' approach are very similar to those of Rex and Moore's 'housing classes' (Rex & Moore 1966). Their concept of 'housing class' was criticised because it regarded current housing situation as though it were an achieved final housing situation (Haddon 1973), i.e., these housing classes were taxonomic groupings rather than substantive collectives (Barlow & Duncan 1988). In the 'production of gentrifiers' approach, 'gentrifying' is specified as a particular *form* of consumption; in other words, as a state of existence rather than as a process (N.Smith, 1987, p160).

The 'can do otherwise-ness' of agency is lost in this approach, since the research goal by definition then becomes the discovery of why gentrifiers have to gentrify, not how they can. Consequently, they also appear in the analysis endowed *a priori* with powers not given to others. The 'production of gentrifiers' approach relies on 'structure', despite its apparent concern with agents because its argument mistakes Sayer's definition of causality as necessity. Gentrifiers have causal powers, and so, the 'production of gentrifiers' approach implies, they must gentrify. Rose complained that in mix'n'match theorizing, gentrification appeared as "the only possible end state" for neighbourhoods. Ironically, the solution she proposes, begins with that end state. Everything after that becomes a rationalization of why the gentrifiers are where they are.

There is in the production of gentrifiers approach a basic functionalism, one which is common to the entire gentrification debate, in that what is being argued is that the

evidence of gentrification signifies the needs of gentrifiers to gentrify. The 'production of gentrifiers' consequently fails to come to terms with the question of agency. It has failed to breach the confines of the base-superstructure metaphor. The gentrified property is treated in this perspective as a simple 'expression' of the gentrification process, gentrification as an example of the rise to importance of the form of consumption over consumption itself (Boys 1989 makes a similar criticism in the context of the analysis of nineteenth century housing production). This 'consumptionist' approach fails to overcome the limitations placed on analysis by the 'base-superstructure' metaphor, since it does not recognize its self-imposed limits on the discussion of agency.

This is not to say that there have not been attempts to address the question of agency in gentrification analyses. This is the whole point of the 'production of gentrifiers' approach. However, none of those using this approach appear to have really considered what introducing the question of agency might mean for their conceptual frameworks. What we get from them seems to be a reinstating of the old behavioural 'imperfect optimizing' or 'satisficing' models of economic behaviour in which otherwise determinate outcomes were given fuzzy edges. However, the 'black boxes' of statistical indeterminacy were inadequate explanations of motivated behaviour, but simply attempted to replicate outcomes rather than model processes. In addition, they were also very precisely located, so that all they did was try to act as a cover for the inadequacies of the assumptions of the original, optimizing procedures. The attempts to justify the current conceptions of agency in the functionalist working back from outcomes to explanations using similar 'psychological' or 'cultural' black boxes as covers for lack of a better theoretical framework is a precise parallel of the behavioural economics approach.

Neither has there been any real examination of the relation between the processes presently relegated in gentrification studies to 'psychological' and 'cultural' explanations, and the processes conventionally regarded in liberal materialism as *the* important explanatory variables: the material production and reproduction of social life (see Chapters 3 & 10 below). In this respect therefore, the present state of gentrification analyses is not very far advanced along the road toward providing explanations of the phenomenon they seek to study. Only once these relations have properly been made can one examine how the interaction of consciousness, class or status situation, and the opportunities and constraints posed by the housing market in its present stage of historical development interact together to create gentrification.

2.4 Conclusion: Inevitability, history and agency in postindustrialism and neighbourhood lifecycle

The confusion that has arisen in the production of gentrifiers approach has been to confuse questions of 'base-superstructure' with those of 'chaotic conception'. The real problem, as Rose herself states, is not that the terms 'gentrification' and 'gentrifiers' are in *themselves* chaotic, but that these terms obscure 'chaotic conceptions' of the underlying processes involved (cf. Warde 1991), conceptions such as, say, neighbourhood lifecycle or postindustrialism. The debate on gentrification to date can then be interpreted as one over the best place to locate gentrification, with postindustrialism placing gentrification in the superstructure and neighbourhood lifecycle placing gentrification in the base.

It is for this reason that Hamnett's query continues to haunt the gentrification debate, namely, why do some areas in some inner cities become gentrified and others do not? If neighbourhood lifecycle is the dominant paradigm in urban theory, why are not all neighbourhoods which have been constructed at a similar time, and which must therefore be at a roughly similar distance from the city, at the same stage of the urban lifecycle? Similarly, if we do now live in post-industrial society with the all wider social changes it invokes, it has to be asked why are all inner city properties not gentrified, instead of only some? Who has postindustrialism been for?

This tendency to 'overexplanation' demonstrates the difficulties these explanatory devices have with the question of agency. The reasons posited for the existence of gentrification in one part of the city cannot reasonably be claimed not to exist in other similar parts. Agency once again is seen to be no more than the 'unexplained variance' in the model. It is here that the post-structuralist argument for treating theory as the positing of a system of differences rather than universals is strongest (Chapter 5 below).

The argument that gentrification should be seen in the context of wider social changes is of course undeniable, so also is the argument that it should be seen in the context of the previous history of the neighbourhoods in which it occurs. Consideration of how gentrification is theorised must inevitably be predicated on theories of wider social change, but change obviously takes place over time, and through people altering the conditions in which they find themselves. However, studies of the gentrification *process* have tended to rely on one of two explanatory devices: the one a model of an historical sequence, which loses its historical character by being presented in a cyclical, inevitable form; the other a hypothesis of social change which in fact contains no historical process at all. Consequently, therefore, there is no real sense of historical time in these

explanations, thus no real sense of historical change.

The Burgess derived neighbourhood lifecycle explanation employs a concept of 'cyclical time': stage 1 is followed by stage 2 and so on, but eventually stage 1 returns once more. Postindustrialism employs 'epochal' time, history divided into a simple 'before' and an 'after', with the split depending on an idealist definition of the significant 'moment' and disregards questions of development before or after (Williams, 1977). It shares this outlook with the neoclassical economic orientation of Alonso. In both cases, the gentrified properties' previous history is not considered.

Given the lack of a truly historical perspective, it is hardly surprising that in both lifecycle and postindustrial accounts, the role of agency is minimal compared to structure. Agency is the process by which both agents and structures are produced and reproduced in historical time. The inevitability and predictability of gentrification in both types of account makes agency redundant as an explanatory variable in gentrification studies. Although the postindustrial thesis posits a new middle class whose emergence/existence is evidenced in the gentrification process, the emergence of this new class seems from examination of this literature to have been a peculiarly painless process. The only suggestion that gentrifiers might face difficulties comes in Rose's discussion of 'marginal gentrifiers' (Rose 1984). Even that could be subsumed under the general heading of difficulties faced by first time buyers, a literature which in this context goes back to Barbolet (1969). There are no struggles recorded in this academic literature, either over gentrifiable housing, directly, or over other issues which find expression in the market for gentrifiable housing; certainly not as compared with the struggles recorded for example by Pitt (1977) or Power (1973) over gentrification in Islington.

It is 'base-superstructure' which is responsible for these failings. Although the humanist right claims to be giving an account of gentrification which privileges agency above structure, as does the non-Smithian left, their accounts are in fact as heavily structuralist as those they mean to criticize. Consequently the grounds for claiming a consensus in the approach to gentrification are spurious. There is no meshing of structure and agency in this consensus. Instead, all we have is a compendium of different structuralist explanations which are all equally unacceptable. On all sides, there is the presumption that the question of agency has been addressed when, as I shall show in the next chapter, any possibility of the ability to do otherwise has in fact been completely ruled out of the picture.

Nonetheless, base-superstructure, along with functionalism and essentialism is only symptomatic of a deeper problem in gentrification studies. Why is it that the

gentrification debate persists in this line of approach? I have suggested that the reason is the fundamental insistence, on all sides, that gentrification represents a form of class constitution. The only difference between left and right on this issue is the origins of this class, and its implications for the status of Marxist theory. On the right, it reflects changes in the economic base, and signals the end, or at least irrelevance of this theory, on the left, the class is constituted via the process of gentrification itself. This assumption has to the best of my knowledge only previously been questioned by Caulfield (1989) who asks of both N.Smith and P.Williams, why does class constitution take the form of gentrification?

Why don't resettlers accomplish these purposes in architecturally modernist structures built where the old neighborhoods are razed - why, instead, are these neighbourhoods gentrified? Or, why bother to settle in cities at all - why isn't class status constituted in some variant of the suburb? ... how do an affection for 'diversity', the past, and certain architectural styles come into the picture?

(Caulfield 1988 p621)

Caulfield's answer however takes for granted that the questions he asks of N.Smith and P.Williams can be answered once answers to the subsidiary questions he poses are found. In other words, he too subscribes to the idea that gentrification is a form of class constitution. It is however possible to interpret gentrification in another way, as constituting identity rather than class.

When one searches the literature for evidence of interest in this idea, one finds that, time and again, the issue is raised, but dismissed, or at best treated as a cursory afterthought, and treated badly. Beaugard for example writes that the fact that

there is a status to be gained from "home" or "apartment" ownership and a potential for high capital gains and tax benefits, not to mention the opportunity to express one's affluence and "taste" in physical surroundings, also contributes to the probability of gentrification as a solution to these problems.

(Beaugard 1986 p45)

None of the issues which might be raised when invoking concepts of "status", "potential" and "opportunity" in the explanation of social processes in capitalist society are problematized in Beaugard's account of gentrification however. It is simply taken for granted that these effects exist and may aid the gentrification process, but not that they might be in any way essential to it. They simply help guide the (produced) gentrifier to the gentrification solution.

Smith's concession to demand side explanations of gentrification also touches on the question of identity and status

It is this question of cultural differentiation in a mass market which is most relevant to gentrification. Gentrification is a redifferentiation of the

cultural, social and economic landscape, and to that extent, one can see in the very patterns of consumption clear attempts at social differentiation.
(N.Smith 1987a p168)

Gentrification, on this account, is used as a means of social differentiation. But, **crucially**, that social differentiation is immediately reduced to class constitution. **Gentrification**, then is more than simply a mode of consumption of housing: it "*engenders*" that mode of consumption (ibid. emphasis added)

This argument is not so different from the 'production of gentrifiers' approach he is criticizing. In both cases, gentrifiers' demand is treated in terms of demand for gentrified property, a pre-given reconciliation of the causes with the effects. For Smith, these properties are produced by the rent gap, so in effect, he doesn't have to worry about demand issues at all ("It is not where this demand comes from that the question of gentrification turns on, but where it is *expressed* that matters" N.Smith 1987a p169). For the production of gentrifiers approach, there is some non-observable object with real effects out there, directing the gentrifiers' footsteps in the direction of "architecturally interesting housing" (Beauregard 1986 p53).

In both cases, what is being argued is that there is an unexplained, and (given the theoretical framework) probably unexplainable divergence of taste and preference between the middle classes and the working classes. Smith indeed prefers to think of these classes as "fuzzy sets" (1987a p162). The treatment of demand issues in the gentrification debate can therefore be expressed in the following way: the purchase of commodities is the means whereby different groups distinguish themselves from each other, thus the demand for gentrified property.

This argument may seem to be exactly like the one I am suggesting is missing from the literature, but there is this crucial difference: Smith's reduction of this 'demand to be different' to issues of class constitution implies that these people already know who they are on the basis of their class position, and that gentrification simply confirms their status, as members of a particular class ("the means employed by new middle class individuals to distinguish themselves from the stuffed-shirt bourgeoisie above and the working class below" - 1987a p168). In his 'product differentiation' explanation of the origins of the demand for gentrification, Smith's argument reduces demand issues to a reflex, and thus depends on psychologism, on the gentrifiers' (definitive) need to exhibit their difference.

The 'humanistic' variety of the 'production of gentrifiers' approach fares little better.

Ironically, as blue jeans turned into a new conformity, so does the

landscape distinctiveness of the gentrified neighbourhood.

The 'discovery' of ever-new scarce commodities which can act as vehicles for status remains barely one step ahead of the mass market [*sic*].

(Mills, 1988, p186)

In suburbia this is known as "keeping up with the Jones's", but, in the 'production of gentrifiers' approach, on this account of demand and agency, there seems to hang a whole theory of gentrification. In fact the convergence between Smith and his critics is so close at this point that, as noted above, Mills (1988) takes over his product differentiation argument, seeking to give it an anthropology. As Bondi puts it, the "new urban middle class" (*op.cit.*) involved in gentrification seeks to differentiate itself, not only from the elements of the middle class engaged in suburban or ex-urban strategies, but also

from the previous inhabitants of the urban environments that are colonized (Jager 1986; [P.] Williams 1986), as well as from contemporary working-class or underclass residents...

(Bondi, 1991, p193)

In short, members of the new urban middle class seek to distinguish themselves from virtually everyone else with whom they come in contact. This however is one of the fundamental and distinctive problems of modern life, the problem of establishing identity in the face of mass society. It is this general problem, common to everyone living in modern society, which needs to be addressed first and gentrification analyzed as a particular instance only second. In identifying gentrifiers' needs with the demand for gentrified property, gentrification studies start from the wrong place. This failing accounts for why the search for the answers to the questions of the "where", "when" and "why" of gentrification turns into one in which reasons must be sought why other properties in the concentric 'zone of gentrification' are not, or have not yet, been similarly gentrified.

I have argued that the fundamental problem with gentrification studies is the insistence that gentrification be studied from the point of view that gentrifiers gentrify because they have to. In particular they have to have gentrified properties. This is true in a definitional sense but in no other. It is like saying that jockeys need horses. By contrast, I want to argue that people gentrify because they can. In taking this approach one can address the question of the peculiar needs of the gentrifier in a different and superior way. The deficiency in the gentrification debate, as it is presently constituted, is that it imagines this problem to be confined solely to gentrifiers.

It may seem odd that an ostensibly Marxist account of gentrification should diagnose the problems currently facing the gentrification debate as resulting from the reduction of the

issues at stake to ones of class constitution. It is not that class issues are not important, and I shall show in later chapters how they do affect the process of gentrification, and its interpretation; it is simply that the way in which they are thought to be relevant to the gentrification debate at present hinders understanding of the issues at stake. The problem is that, in attempting to account for the origins of gentrification in class constitution, the "could do otherwise-ness" (Giddens 1987 p220) of agency is thereby denied. The explanation of gentrification is always sought in either gentrifiers' class-given need to give expression to their class-awareness by gentrifying, or, even if not knowing themselves to be a class, in their class-specific housing needs which can only be solved by gentrifying. Thus the insistence on class constitution being the basis of gentrification goes hand in glove with the insistence on demonstrating why gentrifiers need to gentrify. Consequently, as the next chapter will show, a very odd perception of gentrifiers is perpetuated by the literature. Chapter 3 investigates these themes.

3 Gentrification and its metaphors: essentialism and realism in the analysis of housing consumption

3.1 Introduction

Thus far in this thesis, I have argued that all the arguments advanced in the gentrification debate are flawed because they begin from the fact of gentrification and then seek to find reasons why it had to occur. The postindustrialist consensus must then rely on some *deus ex machina* to account for the differentiation of this gentrifying "new urban middle-class", as Bondi puts it (1991 p193), from other classes. This *deus ex machina* always presents himself in terms of this insistence that gentrifiers gentrify out of necessity. He creates in gentrifiers the need to gentrify. The desired explanation of gentrification then tends strongly to exclude agency. The conditions of occupation of a property are extended to the definition of the agent. Explain our gentrified property and hey presto, we have explained our gentrifier. We have also explained her away.

This chapter argues that this *deus* is in fact more of a *diabolus*; the argument that gentrification constitutes some form of class constitution can only be made by the invocation of sin. Gentrification is sinful because the consumption of gentrified housing is a form of fashionable display. Its frivolity offends the Protestant ethic of asceticism. Gentrifiers are sinners, and therefore fundamentally different to you or I. They are alien, bearers of the cancer of gentrification, eating away at the authentic inner-city of lively proletarians, leaving lifeless the areas they invade. These metaphorical representations of gentrification as sin and disease come about because of what Nietzsche calls a homesickness, a yearning to overcome the sense of loss that comes with development and change. Gentrification, as a phenomenon of the new middle class, is associated with bourgeois triumphalism (Dickens & Savage 1988). Explanations of gentrification therefore seek to expose the hollowness of those claims to triumph.

However, Nietzsche's arguments do more than expose the origins of the metaphors of sin and disease in which explanations of gentrification are couched. They provide a non-essentialist account of human behaviour which avoids the reductionism inherent in the psychological accounts which dominate the housing literature. Awareness (at the very least) of the the problems these can bring is vital if the current problems endemic in the gentrification debate are themselves to be overcome.

3.2 Base-superstructure in the theory of consumption cleavages

The general consensus in the gentrification debate, that gentrification can only be understood by invoking a specific class-demand for inner city residence by a "certain segment" of the "service class" (Hamnett 1991 p186), is supported by participants in a wider argument, sustained principally by P.Saunders and P.Williams, that housing, and especially housing tenure, be considered "a crucial structuring medium with respect to the individual, the household and society" (P.Williams 1987 p154). In arguing for the importance of housing consumption as the basis for class constitution, gentrification has been cited by P.Williams as an example of a medium through which a particular class is able to constitute itself (P.Williams 1986, 1987 - see also Saunders 1984, 1988, 1989 1990, Saunders and P.Williams 1988).

Saunders and Williams' work has recently been the subject of a useful review by Warde (1990). Warde argues that Saunders and P.Williams have sought both singly and jointly to integrate two separate but related themes, namely the social psychology of consumption as display, and the sociology of consumption cleavages.

In the expression which Saunders has now made famous, homeownership is held to provide "ontological security" (Saunders 1989 p186). As a form of tenure, homeownership is also a principal source of consumption sector cleavages. Society at large is, according to Saunders, moving from a market to a privatized mode of consumption (Warde 1990). People able to receive privatized modes of service provision benefit at the expense of those who do not. Saunders here draws on and extends the work of Dunleavy (1980). For Saunders, there is a clear political moral to be drawn. Since society is moving in the direction of privatized modes of service provision anyway, these should be given every encouragement, since these are what most people want (Warde 1990).

These arguments have not gone unchallenged. Dickens (1989), Duncan (1989), Murie (1989, 1991), Somerville (1989), Sullivan (1989) and Warde (1990) have all taken issue with one or another of Saunders' arguments concerning the privileged position of homeownership in ensuring the benefits of a privatized delivery of consumption services. Areas of dispute have included: the financial benefits involved in homeownership (Duncan 1989, Murie 1991); the reliance on tenure divisions to signify consumption sector divides (Murie 1989, Sullivan 1989); disputes over whether the public/private split in service consumption matches the public/private split in the consumption of housing (Warde 1989); the ideological constructions underlying the distinction between public and private (Somerville 1989); and the social psychology of consumption (Dickens 1989).

These arguments are all of varying degrees of interest within the terms of the argument posed by Saunders and P.Williams. However, to follow them would only be to remain within the terms of this argument. I wish to transcend the dispute altogether by pointing to two assumptions buried deep in the arguments made by Saunders and Williams. These are their failure to escape from the base-superstructure metaphor, and linked to this, an espousal of Protestant attitudes toward consumption (D.Sayer 1991). This leads to an implicit essentialism (Graham 1988, 1990, Resnick & Wolff 1987) in their attitude toward human nature (cf. Bhatti 1991). Analysers of gentrification as display analyze it with the same attitudes toward their topic as Protestants have toward sin.

The problems of Marxist theory which P.Williams and Saunders address in their arguments lie in the base-superstructure metaphor, and not in Marxism as such (Frankel 1983 makes a similar argument in regard to Urry 1981 - cf. 3.5 below). As in Ley's case, Saunders' and Williams' arguments have led them to reject Marxist theory entirely (Saunders & P.Williams 1987). The type of work which they reject is described by Williams in the following terms:

Work and the workplace have dominated our conceptions of the ways social relations and institutions are constituted and reproduced. All else, it seems, has been regarded as secondary and as a reflection of the primary relations established through work.

(P.Williams 1987 p154)

The use of the reflection metaphor identifies this problem as being one of 'base-superstructure'. Having identified this problem, P.Williams does not follow R.Williams' route and rethink what is signified by 'base' in this metaphor. Instead, like Rose (1984), P.Williams argues that the 'home' constitutes an alternative 'base':

it is essential to think beyond the workplace to other settings (or locales) where social interaction takes place and where social relations are composed and contextualised. There are clearly any number of these including the school, club and pub but there can be little doubt that the home must rank high amongst them and perhaps alongside the workplace as a key social setting.

(1987 p154)

There can be no quarrel with these sentiments. However, to progress further, it is necessary to analyze what is meant by 'home' and 'workplace' in the context of this argument, and not simply proffer 'home' as an alternative 'base' which stands in a quite untheorized relation to the original 'base', the 'workplace'. This P.Williams does not do. Consequently, his article begins with an assertion of the importance of the home as a theoretical equal to the workplace in the constitution of social relations, yet by its conclusion this equality appears to be only a recent historical occurrence, in which the home has become "a real physical and social arena" and "an important constitutive force" (P.Williams 1987 p 203). What was allegedly a matter of theoretical importance turns out to be a matter rather of empirical significance.

The implications are curious. They would suggest that P. Williams believes that the home is only a recent phenomenon, which is absurd, and clearly he does not hold such a belief. What he really is arguing is that it is the awareness of the importance of the home in constituting social relations which has grown rather than the importance itself. However the difficulties which P. Williams has at this point in his argument betray an idealist, or, at best a *liberal* rather than *historical* materialist, position (Connell 1987), which the invocations of struggle - fighting and achievement - cannot hide. For P. Williams, what is important is not the 'home' as such (without stopping to ask what *that* might mean), but the *idea* of the home. Moreover, because the 'home' is hypostatized in this manner, the argument fails to come to grips with the historic and regional variations in the constitution not only of the home, but also of its occupants (Murie 1991).

This privileging of the home fails in its attempts to deal with the reductionism of explaining all social phenomena in terms of class relations established in production. P. Williams sets up home in opposition to workplace only as an alternative base, or source of reflections, thereby varying but not fundamentally altering the relation of source to reflector. Saunders and P. Williams fail to escape the limitations which they themselves correctly recognize in much Marxist work because they mistakenly identify base-superstructure with Marxism, admittedly an easy mistake to make.

3.3 Gentrification and sin

Like Ley, Saunders and P. Williams also reject the notion that class consciousness arises in production. Instead, also like Ley, they must argue that it arises in consumption. Hence the significance of *A Nation of Homeowners* in stimulating class constitution via consumption cleavages. This of course throws a great deal of weight onto the concept of consumption. However, the notion of consumption which they espouse is a quite distinctive one, namely the Protestant asceticism described in Weber's *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and in his *General Economic History* (D. Sayer 1991). This notion carries with it a great deal of ideological baggage, which, I argue, vitiates the use of consumption cleavages as an explanation of why gentrifiers gentrify.

Weber developed his ideas after visiting the U.S. in 1904, and observing the behaviour of Protestant sects there. Warde (1990) places Saunders in a direct line from Veblen, and Veblen's intensely Protestant upbringing is well known. Admittedly Warde also places Bourdieu in that line also, and I do not wish to suggest that Saunders' religious leanings

have any place, necessarily, in his arguments. Like all good ideologies, the ideology of Protestantism has become so pervasive as to be unnoticed.

I am not here interested in the merits of Weber's historical case as to the origins of capitalist development (D.Sayer 1991 provides a good discussion). Rather, I seek to demonstrate that Weber's analysis of Protestant attitudes toward consumption apply to Saunders' and P.Williams' arguments, and that it is this Protestant attitude which gives rise to the inherent essentialism of their position. By essentialism is meant theories of human behaviour which begin from some (idealist) premise as to the fundamental essence of human nature (Resnick and Wolff 1987, Graham 1989, 1990, Lovering 1989). I shall then seek to demonstrate the links between this (Protestant) essentialism and the argument that gentrification is in some way expressive of class constitution.

To steer the discussion of Saunders' and Williams' arguments about the nature of homeownership toward a discussion of Weber's analysis of Protestantism may seem an unusual direction to take, but, as I shall show, the parallels between Sayer's interpretation of Weber's analysis of Protestantism and Saunders and Williams' explanation of the meaning of the home are extremely compelling. Furthermore, this should not seem so strange when, as Somerville (1989) points out, Saunders and Williams' own position is itself Weberian. I shall argue that the problem with Saunders' and Williams' arguments is not that their analysis is Weberian, but that it is not Weberian enough. Thus, where Weber problematizes this attitude toward consumption (D.Sayer 1991), Saunders and Williams take its existence for granted, as natural.

The Protestant ethic has particularly shaped the gentrification debate, as I now intend to show, through the Protestant attitude to sin. It is worth quoting D.Sayer's summary at some length here.

Protestantism... expected of its adherents, not the recurring (and, [Weber] maintains, the 'very human') cycle of sin, confession and absolution accepted by the older Catholicism, but a *continual* ethical 'probation'; 'the God of Calvinism demanded of his believers not single good works, but a life of good works combined into a *unified system*' ([Weber]1974: 115). The godly were perpetually on trial. Morality is thereby abstracted from all particularistic contexts, becoming an ontological attribute of the *subject* rather than of his or her discrete *actions*, and it provides the basis upon which this new subjectivity is unified. Weber contrasts an ethic of good works in which 'particular actions [...] can be evaluated singly and credited to or subtracted from the individual's account', as exemplified in the Hindu doctrine of *karma*, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and (in its practice) Roman Catholicism, with what he calls the 'ethic of inwardness' characteristic of Protestantism. In the former, human behaviour is 'more than a simple and uniform quality of personality, of which conduct is the expression'. A given action has to be located in terms of its *intentio*. In the latter, by contrast,

individual actions are treated as being the 'symptoms and expressions of an underlying ethical total personality' and it is this total personality which becomes the object of ethical rigorism'. The consequence is that 'religious good works with a social orientation become mere instruments of *self-perfection*' ([Weber] 1968:271-2)

(D.Sayer 1991 p121 author's emphases)

In this passage, Sayer (and Weber) make three key points. First, Protestant sin is no longer the unfortunate proof of a weakened postlapsarian human nature, the result of Original Sin, against whose effects one can continually strive, seeking to earn God's grace through a combination of faith and good works and thus combating that weakness: it is instead a revelation of the (immutable) *character* (ibid.) of the individual, who receives grace only by faith and God's favour. Second, those character revelations form part of a unified system, a social ordering of the elect and the damned. And finally, the individual is continually on trial, on show, on display.

In Protestantism, according to Weber, the godly are godly because God has made them so. But who the godly are, and who are not, is known only to God. Since godliness is granted by God alone, absence of sin by itself does not demonstrate godliness, but sin in any form reveals an essential wickedness, marking its perpetrator as doomed to eternal damnation.

Sinfulness may be expressed either in idleness or viciousness.

Labour - that formerly despised activity and estate - is now a *duty*, from which the wealthy are least exempt. This is a 'perfect' middle-class morality, in terms of which both the idle poor and the idle rich are equally deserving of condemnation.

(D.Sayer 1991 p131)

More importantly for the purposes of my argument, claims to godliness could be made, even if not proven, by reasoned and disciplined consumption.

Only the saved, it was reasoned, would prove spiritually capable of living the kind of disciplined life which would reap them such earthly rewards.

(D.Sayer 1991 p120)

Sayer shows how the links between labour and acquisition were made by Weber in the *Protestant Ethic* and how these were in turn shown to best advantage in the middle class home.

If labour is a calling, its fruits - property - are a trust. The entrepreneur is a steward of God's gifts, labouring to increase them for His glory... The Protestant idea of the calling gave 'the entrepreneur a fabulously clear conscience', so long as the profits of enterprise - a term like 'industry' itself, that is deeply imbued with moral resonance - *were not idly dissipated in vainglorious self-indulgence*. Weber notes that 'against the glitter and ostentation of feudal magnificence which... prefers a sordid elegance to a sober simplicity' Protestants '*set the clean*

and solid comfort of the middle-class home as an ideal"... ([Weber] 1974: 170-1)
(D.Sayer 1991 p132 - emphases added)

Earlier, D.Sayer argues, quoting Simmel, that the loneliness engendered by this Protestant God, before whom one stands naked, without the intercession of priests, the hierarchy of the Catholic church, or of the Catholic saints, led to the growth of

a protective cocoon, a newly constructed and (highly valued) 'domestic' realm which is counterposed to the impersonal world outside, mitigating the existential loneliness of modernity.... this model family's place in the social reproduction of the conditions under which capitalism has so far operated is much more pivotal than classical sociologies have been apt to recognize.

(D.Sayer, 1991, p127)

This "model family's place... is much more pivotal than" Saunders' and Williams' sociology has been "apt to recognize" either. They too have accepted isolated (family) relations under capitalism as natural that which "Weber was emphatic, [was] substantively *irrational*" (D.Sayer 1991, p129).

The second key point about the nature of sin in Protestant theology was that the character revelations thereby displayed formed part of a unified system, a social ordering of the elect and the damned. Translating this into the context of gentrification studies explains the origins of the notion of gentrification as class constitution. A new form of housing consumption has arisen. This not only reveals something peculiar (and distasteful), about the natures of those engaged in this form of consumption, but also must be interpreted as revealing a new social order, or at least a hitherto unexpected complexity to the existing social order.

Gentrifiers, in the eyes of the Veblen tradition, are notorious for putting their domestic arrangements on public display: no net curtains; see-through interiors. Hamnett is fond of quoting Raban's account of gentrification, "the knockers-through are here" (Hamnett & P.Williams 1979, Hamnett 1984). This is the third point, that the individual is constantly on trial, and therefore open to display. For in the Protestant world, sin is a matter of public determination and therefore very much in the eye of the beholder. It is in the combination of these three key points and the second two in particular, that Veblen's notion of conspicuous consumption is applied to the sin of gentrification.

In pre-modern times, identity was ascribed by birth and caste. In the modern world by contrast, identity is acquired. It is therefore inherently fluid, since it can only be acquired by recognition, by significant others (Park 1952, Goffmann 1971, Sennett 1977). In these circumstances all consumption is conspicuous, it enables others to recognize you. The only difference the possession of money makes is to the form of that conspicuous

consumption. The more money you have the greater your discretion in the range of consumption choices you can make (Chapter 5). However, in Veblen's account, conspicuous consumption is both class specific and to be disapproved of, for good Protestant reasons. Thus Wilson writes that

Veblen argued that conspicuous waste accounted for change in fashion, but he also believed in a 'native taste' (that is some kind of essential good taste) to which conspicuous wastefulness was actually abhorrent. It is abhorrent, he argued, because it is a 'psychological law' that we all 'abhor futility'...
... In Veblen's ideal world, there was no place for the irrational or non-utilitarian; it was a wholly rational realm.

(Wilson 1985 p52)

Wilson goes on to argue that, in writing on fashion, Veblen's ideas have remained essentially unchallenged. They have remained essentially unchallenged in the analysis of gentrification also. Bondi (1991) for example quotes with approval Jager's (1986) account of the aesthetics of gentrification, but Jager's account draws explicitly on Veblen, and is similarly disapproving to the point of condescension over those aesthetics, which he characterizes as the aesthetics of "kitsch" (Jager 1986, p87). N.Smith is similarly disapproving (N.Smith 1982 fn1). This peculiarly sinful display however can only be comprehended within the Protestant tradition if it is simultaneously assumed that the gentrifiers' actions are not to be judged in themselves, but held to reveal characters essentially different from those of the observer; characters created moreover by circumstances outside of their control - the characteristics of the new service class (Hamnett 1991).

This Protestant assumption that different consumption practices reveal essential differences in human nature has led Bhatti (1991) to argue that Saunders' thesis leads to the conclusion that people who do not share the natural disposition to homeownership that Saunders claims for the vast majority must be somehow less than human. Bhatti's concerns should be taken seriously since he was Saunders' principal research associate, carrying out a large number of the interviews on which Saunders' (1989, 1990) thesis was based.

This demonization of 'others' than ourselves is of course age-old. It is one of the most important components of the definition of the self (cf. Dickens Chapter 2, 1990). Said (1978) demonstrates how much the West's definition of its own identity depended on Orientalism, a particular dehumanizing demonization of the Arab world and points further east. Shields has taken this argument one step further and argued that not only Orientalism, but "marginality" in general has been "a central theme in Western culture and thought" (1990 p276). Take as an example the advertisements for *Dances with Wolves* "In 1864, one man went to the frontier *in search of himself*" (emphasis added),

from those forms. Yet this presumption lies at the heart of the insistence that gentrification is itself merely a form, namely, of class constitution. Only once the task of establishing the centrality of the importance of fashion to the understanding of gentrification has been carried out, will it then be possible to show how it is that gentrifiers gentrify because they can, and how this ability (effective demand) is translated into class-specific form, without conceding that this activity in any way involves class constitution.

3.4 Gentrification and fashion

Questions of identity and self-definition are usually regarded with the social science tradition as belonging to psychology (Dickens 1988). "Belonging" is the operative word, however, and it is peculiar how geographers are so deferential to psychology's claims in this regard, when they (geographers) are so concerned with the history of their own discipline's claims to knowledge - its marking off of intellectual territory and defining and redefining what is to be regarded as simultaneously geography *and* knowledge (Taylor 1976, Kemeny 1988, Whitehead 1991). Debates between different schools within psychology are recognized and referenced (Dickens 1989, 1990), but the philosophical bases of psychology are seemingly never questioned. This is in spite of the by now well-known controversy within the discipline itself over Freud's doctoring of his evidence (Malcolm 1984), which, it is claimed, if true, calls the whole psychological project into question. That whole project, R. Williams (1977, 1973b) argues, is any case flawed, insofar as its avowed purpose is to free the personality from the clutches of psychological repression. Williams argued that this meant attempting to reconcile the alienated (and definitively problematized) individual to (an equally definitively unproblematized) society. He argues that psychology is an essentially individualistic and bourgeois response to a social and socialist problem. That problem is how to overcome alienation. There is another problem implicit in this project, however, and Williams concentrates only on the first of them.

The psychological concept of alienation carries with it an assumption as to the real core of the human nature from which the defined self is alienated. To discuss alienation, it is necessary therefore to interrogate that assumption. This second problem, however, is not only the oldest problem in the book, it is one which is probably not capable of a solution. Psychology in itself cannot answer this question. Alienation is as much a philosophical and social problem as it is a medical one: even as a medical problem it has been socially constructed, as Foucault has demonstrated (Hebdige 1989, Foucault 1979, Sarup 1988). The development of personality is of course a legitimate area of study, but

exactly the language of the gentrifier as urban pioneer as presented in N.Smith's (1986, 1991) discussion of the frontier vocabulary of gentrification. Smith writes that the term "urban pioneer"... conveys the impression of a city that is not yet socially inhabited" (1991, p87). That is to say, he disapproves of the use of such imagery. However, he then goes on to argue that it is in fact the gentrifiers who are in some way less than social - alien Space Invaders from another planet in a different but parallel economic universe who are playing Back to the Future in the inner city property market; reversing thereby the places of subject and object in the frontier vocabulary of gentrification, but not really escaping from the Veblenesque Protestant presuppositions underlying the debate.

Smith assumes that the frontier imagery is ideological and seeks to expose it as such by demonstrating its roots in class constitution. Ideological it may be, but what if it were nonetheless genuinely based in existential experience and gentrifiers really were in search of themselves? Then all that gentrifiers would be guilty of is expressing that search for identity in class-specific ideological terms, bad language rather than bad behaviour. In any case, frontier imagery in urbanization long predates gentrification (Chapter 10.5 below).

One way of avoiding these problems is to interpret gentrification in terms of a more Catholic view of sin, namely to concentrate on actions rather than character. If everyone is engaged in strategies of self-definition via conspicuous consumption, then gentrification may be regarded as merely one such strategy out of many. The difference between gentrifiers and those they displace would be merely one of resources, not class character. Gentrifiers gentrify because they *can*, thanks to their greater access to money, not because they have to. There is no point in searching for the class character of gentrifiers, or for the nature of gentrification. Such searches lead only to the assumption that gentrifiers engage in gentrifying behaviour out of class generated and class-specific needs, needs which are peculiar to gentrifiers and alien to the rest of us. Simpler by far to argue that these needs, for shelter and for self-definition, are common to all, but to remember that needs are not the same as demand. In a capitalist society, the distinction between need and demand (availability of the resources required to fulfil needs) is crucial.

The purpose of making these arguments is to establish the importance of viewing gentrification in terms of fashion. In line with cultural materialist principles, questions of fashion cannot simply be tacked on to the end of the analysis, as with N.Smith and Beauregard, but must be viewed as the necessary form in which the process is carried out. It is no good therefore searching for the nature of gentrification, supposedly lying behind or above or beyond the forms in which it is carried out. It is indistinguishable

what is the nature of that personality? Psychology simply assumes, in an ironic reversal of Durkheim's sociology, that there is a core personality somewhere 'in there', but has no idea what its nature might be. Dickens (1989, 1990) recognizes this problem, but the strategy he adopts, to seek for an answer in sociobiology leads into the 'infinite regress', which Popper (1959) is so concerned to warn us against. Another strategy would be to question the necessity for the quest at all. To see how this strategy might work, I draw on Wilson's (1985) analysis of fashion and modernity.

Changes in fashion are rapid and unpredictable so that what is considered ugly and socially undesirable in one period is regarded nostalgically as a precious talisman of the 'world we have lost' in the next. This applies to gentrification as much as to clothing. I have already quoted (Chapter 2.3.4 above) Jonathan Raban's ironic commentary on the reassessment of the "Georgian" square in Islington where he lived during the early '70s (Raban 1974 p86).

Academic writing on fashion too has been dominated by the implicit assumption that something essential in human nature is revealed by forms of consumption (Wilson 1985, p49). Wilson argues in regard to fashion, much as I have done in regard to gentrification, that the underlying assumption is then that fashion "must therefore be directly related to human biological 'needs'", that is, in functionalist terms (ibid.). Yet when particular fashions cannot be explained in these terms, the irrationality that this implies (from this functionalist perspective) leads to a tendency to

explain this 'irrational' behaviour in terms that come from outside the activity itself: in terms of economics, of psychology, of sociology. We expect a garment to *justify* its shape and style in terms of moral and intellectual criteria we do not normally apply to other artistic forms... When it comes to fashion, we become intolerant.

(Wilson 1985, p49)

This intolerance has elective affinities with the Protestant attitude toward consumption and sin, discussed above. It rests in the same fruitless search for a definition of human nature:

underlying such arguments is a belief that human individuals do have certain unchanging and easily defined needs. The attempt to define and classify such needs has proved virtually impossible, however, and in fact even such biological needs as the needs for food and warmth are socially constructed and differentially constructed in different societies. The concept of need cannot elucidate fashion.

(Wilson 1985 p50)

Nor, Wilson argues, can the phenomenon of fashion be elucidated by the fight for high social status. She criticizes the allegations made by Veblen of the necessity for labels which announce high social status, and by those who have followed him in their analyses of fashion. In other words she is posing the same question of fashion historians that

Caulfield (1989) poses of N.Smith and P.Williams, namely why does this existential need for labels of high social status take these particular forms, housing in Smith and Williams's case, fashion in the case of Veblen? However, unlike Caulfield, the answer she supplies begins by problematizing the fact that such a question should ever be posed in this way at all.

Wilson argues that the usual Veblenesque answers given in response to such questions, predicated on the belief that analyses of fashion should begin with the presupposition of an essential human natural core, including the need for display of high social status, "miss fashion's purposive and creative aspects" (1985: p59). Wilson argues that to clothe the body at all demonstrates in itself the "shifty identity" of the "psychological self"(Wilson 1985, p59-60). "Dress is the frontier between the self and the not-self". Yet, "it marks an unclear boundary ambiguously, and unclear boundaries disturb us..." (1985 p2-3). Fashion in other words does not merely 'reflect' identity, it also constitutes it, and since fashions change, so can identity, hence the ambiguity. Wilson's analysis of fashions in clothing can be applied to consumption generally and specifically to the analysis of gentrification.

Miller (1987) and McCracken (1988) both argue that material consumption in general has a purposive and creative aspect. Material consumption of food, clothing, cars, housing, leisure and entertainment is intimately bound up with the question of identity and the creation and communication of meaning. The form this consumption takes cannot be separated from the concept of culture, which Miller argues should be seen in this instance as "the relationship through which objects are constituted as social forms" (1987 p11). This definition of culture complements R.Williams' definition of culture as the social forms within which material production is undertaken (R.Williams 1973b).

Gentrification is culturally informed and culturally bound material consumption and therefore is constitutive of identity, but within those parameters it is also fashionable. Robert Park argued that the goal of fashion was to be different, but not *that* different (Park 1931-1955 pp288-289). Fashion must on the one hand proclaim its novelty, but on the other cannot sunder all reference to previous experience. Fashion, like status generally, has to be recognized as fashion to be fashion. Gentrification as fashion has exactly these properties. It represents a new development in urbanization but does so via the consumption of old housing. It therefore confronts and challenges at the same time as it makes claims to recognition of status. The resultant ambiguity colours the responses of the commentators on gentrification.

They share in this ambiguity of response problems which Blanchard (1985) notes

characterizes Engels' report on the *Condition of the working class in England in 1844*, a report which Harvey 1974 recommends to modern Marxist analysts of urban process. Engels' difficulties are shared by many contemporary analysts on the left.

Blanchard argues that Engels' role as curious investigator into the conditions of the working class in England in 1844 contains an inherent insecurity because he attempts to render his personal experience as objective discourse (p62). Not only is Engel's position ambiguous in regard to the facts he describes, but he shares this ambiguity with the city itself (p64). Since he cannot hope to investigate all the aspects of the city, he cannot help but treat his experience of those parts of the city he does investigate as a synecdoche for the whole. Raban (1974) argues in fact that it is impossible to come to terms with the city in any other way. However, from Engels' point of view, if his description is merely metaphorical, then it cannot but undermine his claims to objectivity (Blanchard 1985 p64-65).

Engels regards the city as no more than a cover-up, its appearance an ideological cloak protecting the historical processes of capitalism from view. Consequently, he refuses to confront the question of individual consciousness. There is no need, since the investigator already knows what is going to be found behind the appearance. This means however, that Engels has no engagement with the people of the city, only with its structures. "If there are people there, he does not see them; he only sees *signs of their existence*" (p67). They are only ciphers for the pre-known historical process which Engels is interested in elucidating, exactly as are gentrifiers in the production of gentrifiers approach.

Engels' narrative strategy, and his consequent failures to deal with his own place in the city and to interact with others, to see only signs of their existence, are the same failings which bedevil the gentrification debate. If these issues are not addressed, then the needs and motivations of others (including gentrifiers) have to be assumed. To assume that they *can* be so assumed, however is to deny the presence of ambiguity. If the city *is* inherently ambiguous, then this must be confronted directly. We must argue from the world to gentrification, not the other way round.

The role of fashion takes on a considerable importance in this ambiguous world. It fashions, literally, an identity for the consumer of the fashionable object. Miller argues that, at present, studies of culture and material consumption concentrate only "on the 'genuine' cultures of leisure or poverty" (Miller 1987 p11). The deficiencies in the definition of culture referenced in the decisions as to what is and what is not to be categorized as culture mean that "authenticity" in cultural studies is restricted either to the

fine arts, or to the music hall:

Although on the surface such definitions appear to be evaluations of taste and style, they are always in effect denigrations of those people who are associated with the 'other' material and expressive forms. One social group condemns kitsch & soap opera.. the other is appalled by the mass middle-class culture devoid of any true sense of [working class] 'history' or even of the present.

(ibid.)

Thus, package holidays to Benidorm bad: hop-picking in Kent good. Consequently, the lives and living experiences of "around three quarters of Britons to-day" are written off as being without academic interest, as being "inauthentic". Miller argues that this is because the theories of culture employed by and large fail to recognize that

Culture... is always a process and is never reducible to either its object or its subject form. For this reason, evaluation should always be of a dynamic relationship, never of mere things.

(ibid.)

It is this failure to treat culture in the manner outlined by Miller which causes this denigrative attitude to the culture of gentrification as 'the aesthetics of kitsch' (Jager 1986) and is the reason why the study of gentrification can so easily be treated as sinful. I shall argue in the next section that this attitude also permits gentrification to be conceptualized in terms of disease. In both cases, if and when the issue of fashion enters into the analysis of gentrification, it only contributes, in its confirmation of the essential frivolity of gentrification, to the sense of the essential worthlessness of gentrifiers. I shall argue in later chapters that by contrast the analysis of gentrification as fashion is a most important route into a proper understanding of the phenomenon.

3.5 Gentrification and disease

If the experience of the modern city is one of ambiguity, this only raises the question of what it is we are seeking to find in our investigations of urban phenomena. As the gentrification debate is presently constituted, descriptions of gentrification, like Engels' description of Manchester, are inherently metaphorical. They are synecdoches, in which the problems posed by gentrification illuminate the problems of modern life in general. I am arguing that the line of investigation be reversed. Before we can understand gentrification, we first need to understand the way we all live now, which means being at least aware of the metaphors in which we represent the experience of modern life.

There is of course nothing wrong with being metaphorical. Indeed, Blanchard (1985) argues that metaphor is one of the most important ways in which new meaning can be introduced into a language. Sarup (1988 p54) argues that they can in many cases have a

liberating effect on thought and conduct. Metaphors make new meaning by applying a definition established in one context, to another context. Needless to say, because the other context is by definition different, the match of signifiers is not perfect, hence new meaning is created. But at the same time use of metaphor can obscure differences within the context to which the metaphor is applied and can imply that both contexts do contain something essential in common. As Sarup puts it

metaphors to a large extent shape what we think in any field. Metaphors are not idle flourishes - they shape what we do. They help to make, and defend, a world view. It is important that the implications of the metaphors we employ or accept are made explicit and that the ways in which they structure our thought and even our action are better understood.

(Sarup 1988 p55)

It is therefore of the greatest importance to be aware of the development of meaning in this way (cf. R.Williams 1976, 1977). The failure to examine the metaphorical framework within which gentrification is debated helps account for the failure of the gentrification debate to accomplish the tasks it sets itself, namely the explanation of gentrification within the context of a narrative of class constitution.

I have already argued that one of the underlying metaphors used in the gentrification debate is that of sin. I have also argued that use of this metaphor leads on to another, namely that of gentrifiers as aliens from another planet. Chapter 2.2 highlighted the organicism inherent in the concept of neighbourhood lifecycle, in particular the use of medical analogies ("triage" - Chapter 2.2.1) in early studies of gentrification-as-remedy for urban maladies, such as abandonment of properties (cf. also Chapter 9.5.1 below). The current consensus in the gentrification debate is to see gentrification less as the remedy, more as part of the problem (cf. Beauregard 1986 p37):

Far from being a cure for abandonment, gentrification worsens it.

Gentrification does *not* provide the cure for abandonment.... And if it did, the cure would be as bad as the disease, because gentrification is as inherently linked with the displacement of lower-income households as is abandonment itself.

(Marcuse 1986 p154, 174)

Far from being the cure for the problems of the inner city, therefore, gentrification here is the disease which is causing those problems. The metaphor of gentrification as disease can be placed in a direct line of evolution from metaphors of gentrification as sinful and gentrifiers as aliens.

Disease, particularly leprosy and plague, has been used as a metaphor of the moral condition of society at least since Biblical times. In modern times, syphilis, TB, cancer,

and AIDS have all featured as *the* social disease - the master-disease, that is, of contemporary society (Sontag 1978, 1989). According to Sontag (1978), there are four aspects to the analysis of such a social disease, diagnosis as a disease, investigation of its causes, including the lifestyles of its victims, treatment and cure. The history of reactions to these master-diseases bears such strong parallels to the evolution of the gentrification debate that it is hard to avoid the conclusion that gentrification is analysed as though it too were a social disease.

Sontag (1989) argues that the first three varieties of these metaphor-diseases had in common the characteristics that they were (usually) fatal, they were incurable, and that they only affected particular individuals. In other words, they were not plagues (though, this metaphor always remained available for these illnesses, as in the case of AIDS). Consequently, attention focused on the characteristics of the types of individuals likely to succumb to such diseases and the environments in which disease was likely to occur, just as attention in the gentrification debate focuses on the types of neighbourhood liable to have population "vulnerable" to gentrification (cf. Beauregard 1986 p47ff.).

Syphilis especially directed attention toward the environment and lifestyles of its sufferers (Sontag 1978 p60). However, "syphilis was limited as a metaphor because the disease itself was not regarded as mysterious; only awful" (ibid.) while TB, cancer and AIDS have in turn been regarded as both awful *and* mysterious. This has allowed much more scope for the use of metaphor, in ways which the gentrification debate has precisely paralleled.

As Chapter 2 has shown, the unsolved mystery in the gentrification debate is why gentrification only appears in certain areas of certain cities. The consensus in the debate is that the reasons for this mystery lie in the fact that there must be "multiple gentrification processes" (Beauregard 1986 p53), which theory must explain. This is precisely the same conclusion as was reached in debates over research into TB or cancer ("The notion that a disease can be explained only by a variety of causes is precisely characteristic of thinking about diseases whose causation is not understood" Sontag 1978 p60); and reached for precisely the same reasons:

TB was regarded as a mysterious affliction and a disease with myriad causes - just as today, while everyone agrees that cancer is an unsolved riddle, it is also generally agreed that cancer is multi-determined. A variety of factors ... are held responsible for the disease. And many researchers assert that cancer is not one but more than a hundred clinically distinct diseases, that each cancer has to be studied separately, and that what will be developed is an array of cures, one for each of the different cancers....

(Sontag, 1978 p60)

TB was demystified by the discovery of sulphur drugs and its role as master metaphor for social malaise inherited by cancer. With gentrification, city and society too can suffer from cancer. Analyses of cancer parallel those of gentrification in at least three different ways. First, cancers are in some way related to the environment of the sufferer, rendering him or her in some way vulnerable, just as the characteristics of a particular neighbourhood render its inhabitants vulnerable to gentrification. Second, the despair over the possibility of finding a non-chaotic explanation of gentrification (Chapter 2.3 above) leads to the arguments for concentrating on the production of the gentrification-causing agents, the gentrifiers. Third,

it is diseases thought to be multi-determined (that is, mysterious) that have the widest possibilities as metaphors for what is felt to be socially or morally wrong.
(Sontag 1978 p60)

Gentrification as a cancer brings themes of sin, aliens and disease together in a single metaphor.

Just as TB and cancer were and are used to describe society, so also metaphors drawn from economic thought were and are used to describe TB and cancer. TB was described in terms ('consumption') suggesting that the body consumed itself through the reckless waste of energy. "The language used to describe cancer" however

evokes a different economic catastrophe: unregulated, abnormal incoherent growth. The tumour has energy, not the patient; "it" is out of control.... Cells without inhibitions, cancer cells will continue to grow and extend over each other in a "chaotic fashion", destroying the body's normal cells, architecture, and functions.

(Sontag 1978 p 63)

The cancer of gentrification evokes the economic catastrophe of postindustrialism. The vigorous middle class invaders of formerly lively proletarian neighbourhoods destroy not only the normal cells (the displacees), the architecture of their dwellings, but even the functions they perform for the body of the city. N.Smith (1982 ftn 1) describes how gentrification has not revitalized, but devitalized the city, as no-one sits out on their stoops (steps to the house) anymore or plays in the streets. Rose (1984 ftn 6) claims that the detrimental effects of gentrification include disruption to the supply of the downtown city's support staff, thereby impairing the reproduction of the urban economy.

Until the recent past, the city itself was seen as a cancer (Sontag 1978 p74). These days, the city, the urban environment, is seen as *causing* cancer, and this restores the opportunity to relate the cancer metaphor to those of the plague, especially when this can be linked to AIDS and its metaphors

Presently, it is as much a cliché to say that cancer is "environmentally" caused as it was - and still is - to say that it is caused by mismanaged emotions. TB was

associated with pollution, and now cancer is thought of as a disease of the whole world. TB was the "white plague". With awareness of environmental pollution, people have started saying there is an "epidemic" or "plague" of cancer. ...
(Sontag 1978 p71)

AIDS has provided the perfect vehicle for linking cancer and plague, since the consequences of infection by the HIV virus typically include cancers such as leukaemia. Once plague metaphors can be brought in, the link between disease and sin is easily made, as Sontag demonstrates in her discussion of AIDS as a plague. Once we have plague, we have sin, and we also have aliens

One feature of the usual script for plague: the disease inevitably comes from somewhere else....there is a link between imagining disease and imagining foreignness. It lies perhaps in the very concept of wrong, which is archaically identical with the non-us, the alien.

(Sontag 1989 pp47-48)

AIDS, as Sontag points out, has a "dual metaphoric genealogy": as a cancer, it is characterized as an invasion; as a plague, it is characterized as pollution (Sontag 1989 p17). Both aspects of this dual metaphor are to be found in analyses of gentrification. The original diagnosis of gentrification was as a back to the city movement, an invasion of the inner city by formerly suburban residents. Once that theory was discredited (Palen & London 1984), the aliens came from within:

cancer is the disease of the Other. Cancer proceeds by a science-fiction scenario: and invasion of "alien" or "mutant" cells, stronger than normal cells (*Invasion of the Body Snatchers, The Incredible Shrinking Man, The Blob, The Thing*). One standard science-fiction plot is mutation, either mutants arriving from outer space or accidental mutations among humans. Cancer could be described as a triumphant mutation and mutation is now mainly an image for cancer...

(Sontag 1978 p68)

In the metaphor of gentrification as disease, cancer as mutation encapsulates the basic notion of postindustrialism: gentrifiers as middle-class mutants, unnaturally strong and vigorous social T-cell leucophytes, created by a carcinogenic environment, the postindustrial city, invading formerly healthy, but now weakened, working-class neighbourhoods, brushing aside their defences, and destroying them. Pahl's description of the effect of middle-class settlement in the 'gin and Jag' villages of London's commuter belt (perhaps the earliest examples of gentrification - Humphries & Taylor 1986), is couched in terms which continues to find echoes in the gentrification literature (cf. P.Williams 1986 p71, N.Smith & P.Williams 1986c p223):

The middle-class people come into rural [working-class] areas in search of a meaningful community and *by their presence* help to destroy whatever community was there.

(Pahl 1975 p34 emphasis added)

There goes the neighbourhood.

3.6 Nietzsche and homesickness in consumption analysis

Metaphors of sin and disease, and fashion as metaphor, the glazing of the shiftiness of identity, are all attempts to come to grips with the problem of modernity - the attempt to carve out an identity in the face of mass society, the search for stability and meaning in the face of an ever-changing increasingly impersonalized world.

The fear of depersonalization haunts our culture. 'Chic' from this perspective is then merely the uniform of the rich, chilling anti-human and rigid. Yet modernity has also created the individual in a new way - another paradox that fashion well expresses. Modern individuality is an exaggerated yet fragile sense of self - a raw painful condition.

Our modern sense of our individuality as a kind of wound is also, paradoxically, what makes us all so fearful of not sustaining the autonomy of the self; this fear transforms the idea of 'mass man' into a threat of self-annihilation. The way we dress may assuage our fear by stabilizing our individual identity. It may bridge the loneliness of 'mass man' by connecting us with our social group.

(Wilson 1985 p12 -13)

The demand for gentrification however has not been discussed in this way in the literature. Instead, when demand issues are broached, they are construed in terms of sin against, or disease of, an essential eternal human nature. Connolly argues, following Nietzsche, that such constructions are also an attribute of modernity, a form of homesickness

the demand, the insistence that one realize within theory what one yearns for most in life. It becomes translated into presuppositions and assumptions one treats as the unquestionable standard by which all other elements in the theory are to be judged

(Connolly 1988 p135)

Such characteristics are clearly obvious in the metaphors of gentrification. The homesick analyst yearns for a world without sin or disease. But even this homesickness constitutes an argument for viewing gentrification in terms of identity rather than class constitution. As Giddens (1990) argues, following Park (Chapter 6 below), identity cannot be achieved without a sense of loss, homesickness for the protective cocoon mitigating the existential loneliness of the model family (3.3 above).

Nietzsche's reasons for arriving at the conclusion that the problem of modernity is a problem of homesickness derive from his interpretation of the history of Christianity. Given the links drawn between gentrification and sin above, it is worth on these grounds alone pursuing his argument, since it confirms the problematic status of many of the assumptions employed in the argument that gentrification is a process of class constitution. However, the questions Nietzsche asks of philosophy go right to the heart of the problem of the modern condition, and thus to the heart of the issues raised by the gentrification debate.

Connolly argues that both Marx and Hegel insist, as does Genesis, that the world must ultimately be "*for us*" (1988 p.131); Hegel in the sense that its Spirit enables us to achieve a final realization of our true natures, and Marx in the sense that (its) nature is subservient to our will. In both their philosophies, all social structures and natural relations are capable of being rendered transparent, just as Engels imagined was possible in his description of Manchester (Blanchard 1985). In both sets of dialectics, opposition, antithesis is "dissolved into higher unities". Neither thinker, Connolly argues, are willing to concede that "every product and achievement engenders otherness as it realizes itself" (1988 p132). The "engendering of otherness" through gentrification is, I shall argue in Chapter 10, what keeps it at the forefront of interest despite its lack of numerical significance (Bondi 1991, Caulfield 1989, Hamnett 1991).

Similarly, in much the same manner as I have argued for the connection between gentrification and sin, Connolly argues of Marx and Hegel that

Each is doomed to see vice, irrationality, incapacity, perversity or madness where otherness resides, and each constructs an ideal of order which reduces the forms of otherness it is supposed to transcend.

(Connolly 1988 p132)

However, Connolly goes on to argue that it would be wrong to look upon these attitudes simply as an interesting but marginal residue of Christian ideology in a generally emancipatory political philosophy. He argues that "each advances a theory of freedom which supports suppression and subjugation" (ibid.) precisely because of these tendencies to interpret resistance to its projects as "irrationality, irresponsibility, incapacity or perversity" (ibid.), just as the Protestant tradition views fashion or gentrification. In fact, far from being marginal, this residue and its counter-emancipatory consequences is central to both Hegelian and Marxian philosophy. If we are to understand both the origins of gentrification and the opposition it generates, the residue and its consequences must be confronted.

Nietzsche traces these back to the origins of Christianity, which he analyzes through an inversion of the master-slave dialectic (cf. Sarup 1988). Christianity, the religion of the Roman slaves, has raised slave mentality to the status of a religion. It has created a morality based in resentment of servility, but which values servility above all else. Chief among the resentments of Christian morality is resentment of the human condition itself, which can best be tolerated "if humans can find some agent who is responsible for suffering, an agent who can become the repository of resentment" (Connolly 1985 p153). That agent is the subject of the Christian God. Whereas the Greek gods took guilt upon themselves in their interference in human affairs, the Christian God "demands that humanity assume responsibility for suffering and evil" (1988 p158). Connolly goes

on to suggest that part of the role of psychology is to substitute for the role of the priest, so abetting those demands, to

deflect resentment against suffering in life back into the self, manufacturing it into energy 'for the purposes of self-discipline, self-surveillance and self-overcoming'[Nietzsche 1969 III.16 p128].

(Connolly 1988 p158)

To undertake this task, psychology must presume a 'self' therefore capable of self-knowledge, ultimately transparent, "the last slumbering outpost of the view that the world is a design" (1988 p149).

The nature of the suffering to which Connolly and Nietzsche refer is "the problem of our meaning, and we seek to give meaning to our suffering" (1988 p153). However, we do not simply subside into resentment, we employ reason to help us in our quest for meaning. Nietzsche agrees that reason is necessary to life, but argues also that it is "insufficient" (1988 p154).

Suppose human bodies... and external nature... contain elements stubbornly opaque to human knowledge, resistant to incorporation into human projects, recalcitrant to assimilation into the modern model of selfhood. Under these conditions each worthy design we enact will subjugate some characteristics while releasing others create new resistances while dissolving previous ones, and engender new contingencies while taming old ones.

(Connolly 1988 p132)

It is this "ontology of resistances", Connolly argues, which is Nietzsche's most important contribution to modern thought. Rather than viewing gentrification as a form of class constitution, following Nietzsche, we can view it as creating its own resistances, engendering otherness. Gentrification then is not a proxy for class struggles instituted elsewhere and continued in the gentrification process; it is not even a proxy by which debates over class struggle and its significance might be carried forward. Gentrification is irrelevant to those debates.

Nietzsche argues that reason and the knowledge it brings impose form on the world, make it comprehensible and permit us to act within it. Reason and knowledge take the form of a will to power "the will to give form to something and to fix it in its form despite resistances it may offer" (1988 p144).

Knowledge does not correspond to the real world; it arranges a world for us in which our existence is made possible...

(Connolly 1988 p145)

Another way of putting this is to deny the premise that knowledge of the world is a preliminary to acquiring the power to change the world. Instead, argues Nietzsche, knowledge and power go hand in hand. It could be argued that Marx argues the same point in his famous thesis on Feuerbach: "philosophers have merely interpreted the

world, in various ways; the point however is to change it." (Marx, 1975, p423). Here the difference between Marx and Nietzsche is the degree to which they believe the world is susceptible of change, and whether the change can ever be finalized. Nietzsche argues that the very imperative to change which Marx proclaims also engenders resistance to that imperative. It is not that there are already in existence opposing forces, but that the will to power itself creates the resistance to its purposes. It is the struggle between this will to power and the resistances it engenders, even within the psychological self, which provides the impetus to politics and change,

perhaps each [form of life] encounters resistance because no actual form of life speaks to every drive and tendency in the species. Perhaps each form of life has to suppress some appealing possibilities to enable others to be
(Connolly 1988 p147)

Thus Nietzsche's ontology of resistances provides an account of personal motivation which does not depend on psychology, and thus avoids the problem of infinite regress. Instead, it points out the insistences and the ideological manoeuvrings which have created the psychological view of the self. "To be a subject is to have unity imposed upon the self which stirs up resistance and struggle within the self (the unconscious, insanity, perversity, depression, etc.)" (Connolly 1988 p157 - cf. Giddens 1990). Nietzsche denies that the world is created according to a plan; things do not inevitably fit together in the last instance. The contingencies contained in each human life "are likely to collide with each other in various ways. Nor does this constellation of contingent dispositions contain, even when examined deeply, an essence which must be realized" (1988 p163).

Human life is paradoxical at its core, while modern reason, penetrating into new corners of life, strives to eliminate every paradox it encounters. This is a dangerous combination, with repressive potentialities. It is dangerous to deny the paradox, either by ignoring the urge to unity or by pretending that it can be realized in life.

(Connolly 1988 p139)

If it is alleged that there is some transcendental plan to the world then, Connolly argues, this creates a politics "in which that which does not fit into the organizational scheme is defined as objective incapacity, or irrationality, or sickness, or perversity, or irresponsibility or enemy" (1988 p139). Here then we have the philosophical underpinning explaining the origins of the metaphors of gentrification as sin or disease, and gentrifiers as aliens or mutants.

This position may seem unacceptably nihilistic. I would argue not (see 3.7 below). If on the other hand it is conceded that there is no such transcendental plan to the world, then the restlessness of "the desire to find a home in the world" (1988 p138), to make meaning out of the world, becomes more understandable. In the case of gentrification,

this desire to make meaning by finding a home in the world exists both literally and metaphorically.

These observations on Nietzsche raise one final point which needs to be dealt with before leaving this review of the current state of gentrification studies. This is the question of realism and its claims to provide a philosophical foundation for the social sciences. Realists argue that the world exists independently of our theories of it (Pratt 1990). Nietzsche would deny this. So what? The gentrification debate has been strongly influenced by realist arguments, even if not in the way those making the arguments had hoped or intended. It has also suffered considerably from essentialist reasoning, characterizing gentrifiers as aliens and gentrification as sin or disease. This would lead one to the strong suspicion that these two conditions are in some way related. In what follows, I argue that they are. However, arguing that they are so related serves a further purpose, which is to justify the adoption of perspectives such as those derived from Nietzsche on the gentrification debate which may seem peculiar from the realist standpoint which dominates the current debate.

3.7 Essentialism and realism in gentrification studies

The unexamined use of metaphor accounts for the essentialism inherent in the argument that gentrification is class constitution. Graham (1990) provides an introduction to the problem of essentialism in sociological debates on class, based on the work of Resnick and Wolff (1987). She argues that the problem with essentialist notions in sociological theory is that since the objects under investigation are presumed to be at root explicable by a single cause, be it the economy or human nature, they

...become phenomena of the historical essence rather than uniquely and complexly determined historical moments.

(Graham 1990 p56)

She argues that to avoid this problem it is necessary to see the role of theory, not as seeking the discovery of "truth by finding the essence or essences of social life", but as producing "a particular knowledge" (p59)

That knowledge is specific, fragmentary, ephemeral and contradictory rather than universal, unified, cumulative and consistent. Like other processes, knowledge is not the phenomenon of an essence. It does not correspond to, or mirror, an essential reality.

(Graham 1990 p59)

Such arguments can be seen as a direct response to Nietzsche's description of theory as homesickness: "the demand, the insistence that one realize within theory what one yearns

for most in life". Fundamental to the essences invoked in essentialist theories is the notion that they are the "presuppositions and assumptions one treats as the unquestionable standard by which all other elements in the theory are to be judged" (Connolly 1988 p135).

Such a position, denying any privileged position to scientific knowledge, may seem unacceptably nihilist. Indeed this position does deny such a privilege to scientific knowledge, because to do so would be to claim that the essence of scientific activity was the search for truth. But this is because, as Nietzsche insisted, knowledge and power cannot be separated (cf. Prigogine & Stengers 1984).

Power relations permeate the most ordinary activities in scientific research. Scientific knowledge arises out of these power relations rather than in opposition to them....

The power relations that open up a field of scientific practice are also relations of disclosure of truth. In working on the world we find out what it is like. The world is not something inaccessible on the far side of our theories and observations. It is what shows up in our practices, what resists or accommodates us as we try to act upon it. Scientific research, along with the other things we do, transforms the world and the ways it can make itself known...

(Rouse 1987 p24-5)

There is not much in Rouse's argument that would pose problems for a Marxist commitment to praxis as the test of theoretical adequacy. But there is a lot in the argument which poses problems for realist arguments, by which I mean the critical realist or transcendental realist arguments advanced by Keat & Urry (1975), Sayer (1984 1989), Outhwaite (1987) and Bhaskar (1979 1986 1989).

The realist position to which Bhaskar holds believes that in principle power and knowledge can be separated, that

power can achieve our motivation to achieve knowledge and can deflect us from such achievement, but it can play no constructive role in determining what knowledge is.

(Rouse 1987 p14)

The realist separation of knowledge and power accounts for its failure actually to provide an account of the success of scientific enquiry. The success of any actually existing science does not require the postulates of realist ontology to account for that success.

The realist is trying to provide a scientifically respectable answer to a question that science has for good reason ruled illegitimate. Once we have given the best available scientific account of a phenomenon, there is nothing more to be said about *why* that account is successful.

(Rouse 1987 p139 emphasis added)

However, the Nietzschean anti-essentialist account of the unity of knowledge and power *is* able to provide a basis for the claims of scientific discourse to intellectual status, namely the success of scientific methods in changing the world as we know it.

Rouse wishes to move us beyond realism and anti-realism, and I raise doubts about the realist project here, not to engage in a fully fledged critique of realist philosophy, but merely to point out that realist objections to deprivileging the status of scientific discourse lose some of their cogency in the face of the ability of other perspectives than realism to provide an account of the success of science, in terms of practice rather than in theory. At the same time however, the criticism of critical realism should not be allowed to spill over into an attack on the status of science itself. It is a common tendency in post-modernist thought, which also uses Nietzsche's arguments, to do just that (Sarup 1988, Giddens 1990). However, the latest revolution in scientific thought, chaos theory, is taken by many of its practitioners to be a vindication of Nietzsche's arguments both for an ontology of resistances and the inseparability of knowledge and power (Prigogine & Stengers 1984 p128). As Rouse puts it

the turn from representation to manipulation, from knowing that to knowing how, does not reject the commonsense view that science helps disclose the world about us.

(Rouse 1987 p25)

R.Williams' arguments for the use of the concepts of hegemony and structure of feeling also provide support for Rouse's Nietzschean position. Williams argued that the concept of hegemony was important for Marxist analysis by pointing to a common habit in social and historical enquiry:

In most description and analysis, culture and society are expressed in an habitual past tense. The strongest barrier to the recognition of human cultural activity is this immediate and regular conversion of experience into finished products... Analysis is then centred on relations between these produced institutions, formations and experiences, so that now, as in that produced past, only the fixed explicit forms exist, and living presence is always, by definition, receding.

... And then if the social is the fixed and explicit - the known relationships, institutions, formations or positions - all that is present and moving, all that escapes or seems to escape from the fixed and the explicit and the known, is grasped and defined as the personal: this, here, now, alive, active, 'subjective'.

(Williams, 1977 p128)

It is to combat this "basic error", the "reduction of the social to fixed forms", and the reduction of historical to epochal analysis, that Williams proposed the use of the concept of "structures of feeling" (ibid.).

Williams links the construction of hegemony to the processes of a tradition of selection (R.Williams 1977). Of all the events which have occurred in the past, a judicious selection is made in order to persuade the subjects of that hegemony that the present order of things is natural and inevitable. However, this process of selection, and the objectives behind it are essentially the same as those carried out by social scientists. Of all the

events which have occurred in the past, some are selected as significant, and used to persuade the reader that, given this structure of significant events, the outcomes which resulted were inevitable, given that the agents in the narrative made the choices (determined by the structure) that they did. Furthermore, being inevitable, given these choices, these outcomes appear natural, that is to say, we are convinced by the explanation offered for the events cited. Given that hegemony is about maintaining power, and social science about producing knowledge, it seems to me that Williams' arguments on hegemony bear out Nietzsche's argument that knowledge and power cannot be distinguished.

To continue this discussion would take us far beyond the realms of this thesis. As stated, the point of raising it is to demonstrate that to advance an interpretation of gentrification based on Nietzsche's arguments is not simply a case of intellectual dilettantism in need of Occam's razor, for two reasons. First it can be shown that such an interpretation can be supported by other literature. Secondly however that other literature also raises serious doubts about the usefulness of the realist paradigm which has dominated the gentrification debate. Even if these doubts turn out not to be fully substantiable, they nonetheless make it impossible, given the present state of the debate between the realists and their critics, to rely unreservedly on realist arguments to guarantee the scientificity of science. *A fortiori* therefore, we cannot rely on realism to provide a guarantee of the scientificity of the social sciences, nor therefore on realist methodologies to provide an adequate account of gentrification.

The failings in the application of realist explanations in the gentrification debate cannot therefore be laid solely at the doors of inexperience or ineptitude. Pratt's otherwise favourable article notes that a "key sticking point in the practical application of critical realism is research methodology", Sayer (1984) being no more than "a rather vague 'recipe book' approach" (Pratt 1990 p254). I now wish to argue, on the basis of the arguments presented above, that realism is chronically prone to essentialism, no matter how much it seeks to avoid this, because of the realist principle that the world, including in particular the social world, exists prior to, and independent of, knowledge of that world.

Sayer (1990 p220) concedes that his work "tends to lack reference to needs". However, when we look at what Sayer endorses as among the "important conclusions" of the "critique of interpretative social science", we can see exactly why this should be so:

In interpreting sets of ideas which are inconsistent *or at variance with actual conditions*, errors or illusions cannot be ignored without failing to show why actions produce the results they do. In other words, *the attempt to restore or recover meaning inevitably slides into the reduction of illusion*, and hence into

critical social science.

(Sayer 1989 p209 emphasis added)

Now, who is to say what the "actual conditions" actually are, and who is suffering from the illusion? It should be quite clear from the demonstration of the metaphors of gentrification presented in this chapter that this is not nearly as obvious as Sayer would appear to believe. I do not mean to imply that Sayer is saying the answer to these questions would be necessarily easy to find. But what he certainly *is* saying is that in principle, there is *an* answer, and it is findable.

Baehr (1990) terms such a position "substantive a priorism", and criticizes Bhaskar's tendency to adopt such a position (e.g., Bhaskar 1989). Baehr's criticism of Bhaskar supports my criticism of Sayer. Bhaskar intends critical realism to be an emancipatory project, but Baehr points out the dangers of the rationalism inherent in this approach

The idea of 'real interests' which critical realism depends on, is also notoriously difficult to untangle and constantly in danger of authoritarian definition [just as I have shown in the case of gentrification as sin and disease]. Another problem concerns social heterogeneity and incompatible desires:... what is emancipation to one person may be sheer hell to another

(Baehr 1990 p773)

The insistence that there is an answer, returns us to the problem of Engels' curious investigator and his constant pursuit of facts in an effort to reach a conclusion which he cannot quite bring off (Blanchard 1985 p64-65), and ignores the synecdochal quality of the data gained in such investigations. When would we know that we had enough facts to say what needs really were authentic and not illusory? It is to avoid being impaled on the horns of the dilemma of the insistence that there is an answer, but not ever really being sure of what that answer would look like, which accounts for the reason for the (admitted) lack of reference to needs in Sayer's work. *A priori*, you already know what those needs are, or ought to be. If the expressed needs do not coincide with the 'real' needs, then action is needed to reduce the illusion. Hence any serious engagement with the question of needs goes by the board. This is exactly the problem at the heart of the gentrification debate, but this time we see it in Sayer's own work, the heart of the inspiration for so much of that debate. Perhaps realism does work best as a critique of chaotic conceptions.

In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche presents a critique of the concept of the real world as "the history of an illusion" and concludes by saying that when we have abolished the apparent world, we abolish the real world too (Connolly 1988 p143).

What does it mean to say that the abolition of the real world is also the end of the apparent world? Is this another idealism (the real world is what its most consummate constituters take it to be)? No. The world of appearance has

always been defined through contrast to the real world, to the world as it is knowable in itself. If the latter disappears, the world defined by contrast to it must too. They come and go together. If there is no Knower who can know the world in itself, then we must begin to think about the enterprise of knowledge differently.

(Nietzsche, quoted in Connolly 1988 p143-4)

In the spirit of this injunction, Baehr concludes his critical comments on Bhaskar's commitment to critical realism by arguing for an appreciation of the limits of rationality, in much the same terms as I have argued here: "the inherent opacity as opposed to transparency of much of our lives... the ethical irrationality of the world... our biological vulnerability" (p775), in short, precisely those issues which Nietzsche places at the heart of his philosophy.

At the same time however, Baehr does not wish his reservations as to the longterm validity of the realist project spill over into an endorsement of irrationalism. Consequently he ends by giving partial endorsement to realism. However, there are other options to choose from than irrationalism or realism, and for this I return to Graham's article.

If science cannot be privileged on the basis of realist arguments, and has no privileged position anyway on the basis of the anti-essentialist arguments; and if there are no essences (including transcendently real essences) for it to investigate, how can scientific activity proceed in any meaningful sense of the term? The first step in the answer is by reference to Rouse's emphasis on science as a practical activity, as first and foremost a way of acting, not a way of knowing. As a way of acting however, it is distinguishable from other ways of acting. Graham begins by arguing that the world and all its constituent parts form a constantly changing set of interacting processes. No process can be privileged above all others, but perspectives can be taken on those processes, and this is what scientific activity does:

In other words, theorists pick one or several processes as 'entry points' into the infinitely complex and ceaselessly changing social totality. An entry point is a starting place in social analysis rather than an essence of social life. Starting with a particular entry point cannot give us a better understanding of the social totality than we would have if we started somewhere else. But it will give us a *different* understanding, which produces different effects...

..Rather than discovering truth by finding the essence or essences of social life, theory produces a particular knowledge. That knowledge is specific, fragmentary, ephemeral and contradictory rather than universal, unified, cumulative and consistent. Like other processes, knowledge is not the phenomenon of an essence. It does not correspond to, or mirror, an essential reality.

(Graham 1990 p59)

Although neither Graham nor Resnick and Wolff (1987) cite Nietzsche in their arguments, it is clear that their position is an endorsement of Nietzsche's, as well as constituting a cogent alternative to realist arguments. Nietzsche's emphasis is on perspective rather than on truth: since knowledge and power are inseparable, there is no truth, no 'reality', only reality-organizing perspectives, such as Park argues Darwin took when developing the theory of evolution (Park 1936 - 1952 p145, Chapter 6.2 below), or as Blanchard suggests when he argues that the city "must be defined anew each time it is investigated" (1985 p70), or as Prigogine and Stengers (1984) argue is from the perspective of chaos theory. As Graham puts it:

Without a nonessentialist theory of knowledge, the quest for knowledge may become a quest for a singular truth.

(Graham 1990 p60)

Graham's conclusions endorse what I have been arguing in this chapter. People analyzing gentrification have basically disapproved of it. Consequently their realist analyses, admittedly value-laden but (ostensibly) objective nonetheless, have sought to demonstrate the truth of their prejudices. One of the most difficult prejudices for them to overcome has been their attitude that gentrification as fashion is irrational while at the same time insisting that it must be functional. The rationality of gentrification consequently escaping the analyzers' conceptions of what rationality must be, and therefore what gentrification's function might be, its analyzers are then happy to conclude that the rationality in gentrification is something alien, and its functions sinful and diseased. As I have said, the peculiar results of such prejudices cannot be laid solely at the door of realism, but I would argue that it has certainly contributed to the problem.

Is there, finally, a Marxist theory that fulfills the requirements insisted on by the critique of essentialism in social theory? Graham endorses Resnick and Wolff's perspective, but typically, does not claim that it is the only perspective that Marxism could adopt:

In Marxist theory of the kind practiced by Resnick and Wolff, the concept of class is the entry point to social analysis. This means that the concept of class is central to a particular Marxist discourse but it *does not* mean that it is central to social life... It is simply more important to a certain group of Marxists... they hope to draw attention to the neglected role of class in constituting society and to affect the ways in which class processes are understood, opposed and transformed.

(Graham 1990 p61)

As I demonstrate in the next chapter, I do not use class as the entry point to social analysis, for the reason that I believe that class analyses in general tend to the same a priorism that Baehr notes in Bhaskar and which I have argued is also present in Sayer. Instead, I use accumulation as the entry point.

3.8 Conclusion

I have now concluded the first item on the agenda outlined for the remainder of this thesis in support of my contention that gentrification may best be explained in terms of personal rather than class constitution. This was to establish a framework for the discussion of identity and the need for self-definition which will not at base appeal to notions of essential differences between individuals. I have argued that the way to achieve this objective is to reject realist arguments currently dominant in gentrification studies in favour of a perspective based on Nietzsche, and to begin from the problem of making sense of modern life generally. The realist perspective presumes knowledge of the nature of modern society, just as the Protestant tradition assumes knowledge of heaven.

However, as I have also argued, the appeal to notions of essential differences between individuals is supported by discussions of class issues which similarly require that members of different classes do have essentially different natures. The argument that gentrifiers have essentially different natures to the rest of the middle classes draws support from such arguments. In the next chapter, I will discuss the limitations in the models of class structure used by the participants in the gentrification debate in order to show how the tendency to essentialism comes about. The lack of understanding of demand issues in discussions of agency carries over into lack of understanding of demand issues in class constitution.

4 Divisions in society - class or status?

4.1 Introduction

Among the implications of the consensus that gentrification represents a form of class constitution are the assumptions that, just as we all agree on what society is, we all agree on what classes are, and what the impact on explanations of class constitution would be if, for example, a new middle class was indeed discovered through the process of gentrification. The question of class has in consequence been de-problematized in the gentrification debate, despite the attention ostensibly given to questions of class in gentrification studies. The debate has been reduced to arguments over the appropriate interpretation of evidence gathered for the purpose of establishing whether this particular form of class constitution known as gentrification and the society it exemplifies is best explicable in Marxist or non-Marxist terms. The past two chapters have shown how the ostensible purpose of the exercise, to provide an explanation of gentrification, has suffered as a result.

However, an alternative explanation might be that the participants in the gentrification debates simply have not been very good at theorizing class constitution. With a better understanding of what class constitution entails, the insistence that gentrification is a form of class constitution might be justified. It is therefore necessary on both counts to address directly the debates on class constitution to which attempts at the explanation of gentrification have been staked as a prize.

4.2 Optimism and disillusion in the state of class theory

According to both Bell (1989) and Pahl (1989), the work of Marshall, Newby, Rose & Volger (1988) provides the best evaluation of the contemporary debates on social class. Marshall & al. undertook a large empirical research project on *Social Class in Modern Britain* as part of an international project initiated by Erik Olin Wright in order to obtain internationally comparable information on the class composition of different societies. They however took advantage of this opportunity to evaluate empirically the models of class formation provided on the one hand by Wright and on the other by Goldthorpe. This they are able to do by classifying and reclassifying the respondents in their survey (of 1770 people) according to the criteria deemed as relevant by Wright, Goldthorpe and the Registrar-General, thus providing a unique opportunity to compare the apparently incommensurable (Bell 1989).

Their work discovered deficiencies in the arguments of both Wright and Goldthorpe, Wright's in his coding of occupational categories, and Goldthorpe's in his treatment of gender issues. Wright's classification, they feel, is simply out of date. Consequently his coding procedures produce a picture of increasing proletarianization in the modern workforce but this picture is not backed up by any evidence of changes in working conditions which might indicate proletarianization, such as increased work discipline, or less control over problem solving procedures. White collar work was not becoming deskilled with the expansion of the middle classes (p136). Nor did they find any evidence of class dealignment in voting patterns, a crucial test of the contrary embourgeoisement thesis. Working class voters had not adopted middle class attitudes and aspirations. Labour did badly in the eighties, not because it was a class party, but because it was not very good at being a class party (p230ff.).

Goldthorpe, they argued, seriously underplays the importance of gender issues in structuring life chances. As Marshall & al. put it, to follow Goldthorpe in his dismissal of the importance of gender influences on life chances in the UK would be like dismissing race issues when assessing life chances in South Africa.

They were also able to comment on the Dunleavy - Saunders claim that sectoral consumption cleavages were of more importance than class, a claim of great importance in postindustrialist explanations of gentrification. Marshall & al. concluded that there was no evidence from their investigations to suggest that such cleavages exist (Marshall & al. 1988 p183-184).

In general Marshall & al. found a remarkable stability in the class structure of British society and in the importance of class to that society. By class, Marshall & al. mean occupational categories. They found however that nearly 80% of people could think of no other criterion for class identification. Furthermore, class was "by far the most salient frame of reference employed in the construction of social identities" (p148). Bell (1989) finds this work greatly exciting, insofar as it is able to put many controversies in sociological debates to empirical test. He goes so far as to say that the "carefully empirically based paradigm" of Marshall & al.

takes over the others and makes them henceforth essentially *unnecessary*. For me at least the dedication of SCMB [Social Class in Modern Britain] to John H. Goldthorpe and Erik Olin Wright is deeply ironic for this book is writing them out of sociological history.

(Bell 1989 p789)

As far as Bell is concerned,

SCMB is a real *tour de force* of class analysis. It represents the very best

sociology produced in Britain and is of the highest international standard.
(Bell 1989 p792)

Nonetheless, problems remain, as Pahl's reaction to the same volume testifies. Bell regards the superiority of the work of Marshall & al. to lie in their practice of class analysis, letting others argue about theoretical rationales: Pahl's doubts surround the very practice of class analysis itself.

Pahl doubts concern the basic sociological concept of "structure-consciousness-action [SCA]", which, he notes, is to sociology what the concept of the labour market is to economics; is used at all levels of aggregation, from analyses of squatters to international blocs; and in both Marxist and non-Marxist contexts. Pahl's doubts are all the more piquant since Bell credits him with having made a significant contribution to the thinking of Marshall & al. on just these matters. Pahl explains the SCA model in the following terms:

The basic idea is that there is something *inherent* in the social and economic circumstances of categories or classes of people that leads them, apparently with deterministic logic, to acquire radical consciousness of their oppressed, deprived or exploited situation

(Pahl 1989 p711)

As the past two chapters have shown, this account of the belief system underlying SCA fairly well summarizes the attitudes of the participants in the gentrification debate, whereby structure (- new middle class or capital logic) → consciousness (- aesthetics of kitsch) → action (- gentrification). Pahl's article has stimulated considerable debate within the pages of the *International Journal*, (e.g., Crompton, 1991, Marshall 1991, Mullins 1991). Nonetheless, Pahl's central reservations stand (Pahl 1991).

Ultimately, Pahl argues, this model derives from Marx, even its neo-Weberian variants. In fact, SCA is the heritage of the denial of the salience of demand issues in Marxian theory (cf. N. Smith's avoidance of demand issues - 2.3.4 above), due to Marx's definition of subsistence in terms of the reproduction of individuals rather than of society as a whole (Redfern 1987, 1992). With Marx's definition, workers have no more choice in their reproduction strategies than they do in productive labour (Pasinetti 1977). Different classes may receive different bundles of subsistence and therefore their lifestyles may be different, but these differences flow directly from their different relations to the structure. Therefore their actions are determined directly by the structure. Pahl argues that the traditional (mis)use of SCA is to romanticize the underclass: their social and economic circumstances leads them to acquire radical consciousness of their ability to exploit their situation.

The concomitant to romanticizing the underclass is of course to disparage the pretensions of the overclass, which is where the analogies of gentrification as sin and disease arise. In fact the logic of SCA applies equally as well in the case of the postmodern new middle class, their social and economic circumstances leading them to acquire radical consciousness of their ability to exploit *their* situation, and gentrify. The bias in favour of the underclass is due to tradition, not inherent in the model, as Pahl points out. What is inherent and problematical is the inherent assumption that the model itself is unproblematical:

Those who use this model rarely recognize that the links in the chain S - C - A have not been adequately theorized. The model is seen as unproblematical when... it is based on notions of a theory of action which, in practice, does not exist...

(Pahl 1989 p712)

This, it can readily be seen, is the basic problem underlying the insistence that gentrification be discussed in terms of its impact on theories of class constitution. The SCA model within which those theories are couched is itself seen as unproblematical, and leads to a theory of action which is based on some unalterable attribute of the class position involved, and which consequently is inexorable in its nature. Pahl pleads for recognition by sociologists that

what matters is not whether there are shifts in occupational prestige or in the distribution of earnings and wealth but how such putative shifts work out in terms of consciousness and action...

(Pahl 1989 p713)

The two previous chapters have demonstrated that participants in the gentrification debate have singularly failed to show how the shifts in the class constitution of society have worked out in terms of consciousness and action. The models they have adopted have had the effect of ruling out the operation of consciousness altogether. They have reduced their accounts of gentrifiers' behaviour to a sinful and diseased alien reflex. They share the same problems as those sociologists "who busy themselves with allocating individuals, households, occupations or distinctive employment relations into categories":

...stuck at the stage of analysing *structure*, the S of the model, which may or may not have consequences for consciousness and action.

(ibid.)

"Those who wish to make the concept of class do some work for them would presumably like to fit it into the SCA model by using it to define the S..."(Pahl 1989 p713). However

There is evident danger of circular reasoning so that socioeconomic conditions produce 'classes' which are then used as an explanation of the same socioeconomic conditions.

(ibid.)

Trying "to make the concept of class work" results also in circular arguments for the participants in the gentrification debate, generalizing from gentrification to society. Gentrification is taken to herald the coming of post-industrial society, because in post-industrial society, consumption, that is, gentrification is the defining characteristic. But, as Pahl argues

Analytical distinctions related to a putative class structure are of interest only if they lead to greater understanding. The reason why sociologists concern themselves with *embourgeoisement* or proletarianization is not because they are simply interested in refining a classificatory scheme, but because these social processes, if they exist, are assumed to lead to significant social change through evolutionary or revolutionary processes.

(Pahl 1989 p713)

Unfortunately, as Chapter 2 has shown, participants in the gentrification debate have often concerned themselves with gentrification, precisely because of its supposed significance in judging the adequacy of one classificatory scheme or another. Consequently the understanding of gentrification has not been particularly far advanced. To justify this lack of understanding, we are instead presented with reasons, such as chaotic conceptions, why we will never have a satisfactory explanation of gentrification.

Not only is there a problem with the sterility inherent in the bias toward categorization for categorization's sake, but the shift to postindustrial modes of explanation has also created a problem with the process of categorization itself. Ley only moved in on the gentrification debate following his criticisms of structural Marxism. Similarly Rose's discussion of gentrification sought to use it as a means whereby the uneven development of Marxist theory might be overcome. The current state of the gentrification debate and its implicit characterization of the actors in the gentrification process bear out exactly Pahl's observations on the consequences of a commitment to explaining social phenomena in terms of class:

[Post-industrialism] shifts the argument away from the categorization of individuals, families and households by their *attributes* to a categorization according to their *attitudes* and values. It would obviously be convenient if there were a congruence between the two, so that social attitudes could be read off from economic positions. Since that does not seem to work empirically, traditional class analysts are in more than a little trouble...

(Pahl, *ibid.*)

SCA, in other words, represents the terms of the consensus in the gentrification debate. The debate revolves around the question of which account of S is the most plausible. It has never got on to consciousness or action. Pahl concludes that

class as a force for political and social change is problematic, since the links in the SCA chain are inadequately theorized and there is little empirical indication

that the model has much relevance in practice. Secondly, as a classificatory device, class does little to help us understand the lifestyles of the privileged and adds nothing to the brute facts of poverty when considering the other end of the social structure. Finally it is apparently well nigh impossible to operationalize the concept in order to make international comparisons.

(Pahl 1989 p715)

Pahl refutes any suggestion that he might be thought to be "arguing out sociological theory from urban and regional analysis" (p719), or that capitalism can ever be anything other than a class society. But, he insists, for all practical purposes, "it is difficult to see what, specifically is added to the analysis" by invocation of class and class consciousness. Pahl concludes by calling for consumption to be taken seriously in sociological analyses - and hopes to provoke serious debate "instead of flaccid neologisms huddling under the umbrella of postmodernism" (p719).

These criticisms of sociology by one of its major practitioners, in part in reaction to what Bell, another of its most distinguished figures, has called the very best of British sociology, evidence a deep-rooted problem in the practice of sociology. Pahl's comments are particularly evidenced by the characteristics of the gentrification debate. This is both a challenge and a cause for optimism. The optimism is caused by the fact that the criticisms of the gentrification debate conducted in the first two chapters are borne out by Pahl's comments on sociological analyses generally. There is support in the literature for the lonely position denying the relevance of class to gentrification and vice versa. The challenge then is to devise a model of social organization and change into which an account of gentrification can be placed, since it is clear from Pahl's comments that sociological theory will not be of much help. There is no space here to provide such a model. However, I have outlined the framework of such a model elsewhere (Redfern 1992 - see also Chapter 5 below).

4.3 SCA and the debate on the middle class

I rely in this section on the work of Sarre (1989), whose textbook summary of the principal features of the sociological aspects of class analysis, may be taken as a model of the standard sociological discussion of the issues at stake in class analysis. This model provides a useful illustration from sociology of those problems of SCA which Pahl identified. It therefore demonstrates the necessity for radically re-addressing the question of the role of class and class analysis in gentrification studies. It should be noted that the remarks in this section are therefore addressed at this model itself, not at Sarre's treatment of it.

Gentrification involves the displacement of so-called working class from residential areas by so-called middle-class people. In the sociological literature, there seems to be little doubt as to what constitutes the working class (see below). The problems appear to arise when considering the middle class. Sarre for example begins his review of the middle classes in contemporary Britain with a discussion of the problems in defining the middle class, but when he comes to review the working classes, he simply launches into a discussion of the arguments about whether and how they might be said to suffer from erosion from above and below. The question of the definition of the working class does not arise. The clear implication is that this question is quite unproblematical. As far as Sarre is concerned, they are manual workers, though we only find this out in his discussion of the problem of defining the lower middle class.

Since the middle class must, by definition, be distinguished from the ruling class above, and the working class below, definitions of all classes are in theory equally problematical. However, as Sarre illustrates, most attention has concentrated on the middle classes. This is because in sociological theory generally, not just in debates on gentrification, the continued existence of the middle classes poses a major problem for Marxist theory:

because of the influence of the notion that Marx had defined only two classes in capitalist societies, and that the intervening classes would gradually polarize into either the bourgeoisie or, more likely, into the proletariat. A typical traditional Marxist response would be to conclude that even senior managers were employees, and hence workers, and that their failure to recognize the fact was the result of 'false consciousness'

(Sarre 1989 p103)

The problem of the middle classes however only arises because of SCA. It operates in this particular context in reverse mode; instead of referring consciousness and action to the effects of structure, it infers structure from action and consciousness. Sarre's traditional Marxist responds to the existence of the middle class by arguing that even senior managers are employees "*and hence workers*" (op. cit., emphasis added). The resultant false consciousness results precisely because according to the precepts of the SCA paradigm, the consciousness of senior managers ought to be determined by their structural location. Since senior managers, if they are part of the proletariat, are 'hence' workers, so also, 'hence', according to the traditional Marxist, they ought to identify with workers in general. The obvious implausibility of such a situation is clearly apparent and this is the foundation of the doubts about Marxist class analysis.

Sarre in fact argues that there are two reasons why the middle classes pose a problem for Marxist theory: as well as "their intermediate position between bourgeoisie and proletariat", there is also the problem of "their heterogeneity" (1989 p102). This would

imply that the working class is comparatively homogenous in character and unproblematical to define. Sarre mentions three ways in which the middle class is heterogeneous compared to the working class: new kinds of middle class occupation, such as social worker; differentiated hierarchies of power and responsibility; people with the same occupational qualifications appearing in different employment situations - solicitors for example, who might be self-employed in partnerships or as state or private sector employees.

There appears however no convincing reason why any or all of these characteristics should be the peculiar possession of the middle classes.

When the criteria used to indicate a new middle class are applied to the working class.. differences appear within it [the working class] which are as great as those between what are supposed to be discrete and complete new middle and working classes.

(Barbelat 1986 p567)

The working class in the standard model is defined by and large only in order to give point to the definition of the middle classes, but the more this definition of the working class is examined the more impoverished this strategy seems.

This false opposition implied in Sarre's account between the essential characteristics of the work situations of the middle and the working classes ("using [class] to define the S..." Pahl 1989 p713) exemplifies just how deep run the problems posed for sociological analysis by SCA.

If people do react differently to the same set of external events, according to the model, they must therefore be in different structural situations. If not, they would all react in the same way. Their consciousness, their frame of reference, would not otherwise be different. Structure determines consciousness and consciousness determines action.

Wright's two accounts of class constitution fall into just this SCA loaded trap of attempting to interpret contingently different reactions as differences in structural situation rather than as contingently different experience (consciousness) within the same structural situation.

Wright originally argued that the middle classes occupied contradictory class locations in capitalist society (Wright 1976, 1980, also Carchedi 1977; the concept was first developed by Poulantzas 1975), because they acted as waged supervisors of waged labour. They were therefore said to be located in both the working and capitalist classes. Although these ideas were well received when they first appeared (cf. Massey 1984), Wright (1985, 1986) came to the conclusion that this definition should be abandoned.

The defining characteristic of the middle class on this account was domination. The middle classes dominated the working classes but they did not exploit them, and of course exploitation is the key to defining classes in Marxist theory. The emphasis on domination, a Weberian concept, seriously undermined Wright's intention to combat Weberian sociology using an account of the middle classes which was compatible with Marxist principles (Low 1990 p1102).

To return the question of exploitation to the centre of the definition of the middle class, Wright then argued, following Roemer (1982), that the middle classes possessed assets which they exploited on their own behalf. In particular, they were able to exploit their skill assets and the organization assets to their own enrichment, while the capitalists continued to exploit their labour power for profit (Wright 1986, p119-121). The middle classes could therefore be divided into two types: those who while exploiters on some dimensions are themselves exploited on others; and those who neither exploit nor are exploited (Wright 1986, p126 - see Figure 4.1 below).

Fig. 4.1 Wright's map of class locations in capitalist society

Assets in the means of production

Owners of means of production	Non-owners (wage labourers)			↑ Organization assets
Bourgeoisie	Expert managers	Semi-credentialed managers	Uncredentialed managers	
Small employers	Expert supervisors	Semi-credentialed supervisors	Uncredentialed supervisors	
Petty bourgeoisie	Expert non-managers	Semi-credentialed workers	Proletarians	

← Skill/credential assets

source: from Sarre 1989

Wright hoped by this typology to meet what he considered to be the basic challenge in Marxist class analysis, namely

the conceptual problem of nonpolarized class positions within a logic of polarized class relations.

(Wright, 1986, p115)

The problem of course only arises if it is accepted that a theoretically distinct middle class does exist and that the task confronting theorists is therefore to theorize it. Meiksins (1986) argues that if Wright's position is accepted one is then confronted with the problem of explaining what the middle class does, the familiar problem of functionalist explanation.

To modify Marx's two class theory of society is to modify also Marx's theory of capitalist accumulation. Carchedi (1986) argues convincingly that 'exploitation' in Wright refers to exploitation in distribution, rather than in production; Wright's definition of the middle class is therefore incompatible with Marxist theories of class.

As Carchedi notes, demonstration of this incompatibility would amount to a big "so what?", were it not for the fact that the criteria chosen by these commentators cause the historically grounded and dynamic features of Marx's dialectic to be replaced by static ahistorical categorizations of class functions (Carchedi 1986). Carchedi quotes Luxembour to make this point

he moves the question of socialism from the domain of production into the domain of relations of fortune - that is, from the relation between capital and labour to the relation between rich and poor.
(Luxembourg 1970 p65)

On the question of the actual status of the middle classes, Meiksins argues simply that

the crucial question for class analysis must be: 'Do the workers perform surplus labour?' and 'What is their relationship to the capitalist class?'
(Meiksins, 1986, p113)

His answer is that the middle class do perform surplus labour and that therefore they are part of the working class.

To argue that the existence of the middle classes does not require modifying Marx's "logic of polarized class relations" (Wright loc. cit.) is not inevitably to be reductionist about the matter. This apparent reductionism exists in the eyes of base-superstructure rather than Marxism. The only reason Wright needs to introduce his extra dimensions of exploitation is because of his adherence to SCA. It is inconceivable to Wright that two persons in the same structural situation could react differently to the same circumstances. Consequently, their structural situations must be different in ways not previously uncovered, hence the dimensions of asset exploitation. Consequently, Wright's classifications tend to be *ad hoc* in character, since the organization of employment is changing all the time (cf. Carchedi 1986). As noted above, Marshall & al. cast grave doubts on the picture of the class structure which results from employing Wright's

classification procedure.

Savage, Dickens and Fielding (1988 p 470) have nonetheless argued that Wright's (later) definition of the middle class fits their empirical findings as to the characteristics of a new service class, "the main growth class in contemporary Britain". This is somewhat surprising, since the service class concept has been championed in recent years by Goldthorpe, and Marshall & al. found that Wright's classifications had very little to do with Goldthorpe's.

The service class is composed of those working in the higher reaches of state and TNC bureaucracies, providing "key' services on behalf of the owners of capital" (Savage & al. p458.). According to Savage & al., the concept was first outlined by the "Austro-marxist Karl Renner in the 1950's". It has recently been elaborated by Lash & Urry as well as by Goldthorpe (Savage & al. p458). Mills (1988) and Bondi (1991) have both invoked its existence in their contributions to the gentrification debate. It is therefore necessary to examine this concept in some detail.

In terms of its provenance, the service class theory owes more to Weber than Marx (Dickens and Savage n.d., Sarre 1989). In common with most Weberian definitions of class, "the precise definition of the service class is rather vague" (Savage & al., 1988 p459.). Regardless of its provenance, it still betrays the characteristic problems of SCA. Sarre for example writes that

More recent discussions of the concept of a service class seem to continue to accept the contradictions between services for capital and state bureaucracies, without explicit discussion of how these two aspects are to be brought together.
(Sarre 1989 p106)

Equally necessary however is explicit discussion of why these two aspects should be seen as contradictory in the first place. Why should jobs in these two different areas of employment be contradictory from the point of class formation? Sarre does not say. He goes on to argue that the the case for the existence of a service class "is best left as 'not proven'" (1989 p107).

So, it may be asked, *does* the service class exist, in spite of its members' disparate actions (as exemplified by their record of disparate voting behaviour, indicating non-uniformity of consciousness)? If it does, the reply might be, so what? What does the labelling of this group of people as new service class add to the analysis? Abercrombie & Urry (1983) argue for example that the new service class has distinctive causal powers, though they are not necessarily manifested.

These powers are to restructure capitalism to maximise the separation between

conceptualisation and execution, hence de-skilling the labour force and maximising the educational and research requirements of the service class itself.
(Sarre 1989 p106)

This seems a very weak argument. It is the new-class-as-aliens argument in a different guise. The new service class, on this account, comprises people with distinct causal powers waiting for the opportune moment (contingency) to exercise them, all the time insinuating themselves into particular, key, occupations, reminiscent of aliens in U.S. science fiction films from the Cold War era.

It is not of course the members of this class or any other which have such powers. The powers they possess come to them by virtue of the jobs they hold. In the current state of capitalist development, there are a certain number of occupational categories, which we may call service class if we so wish, but the powers possessed by occupiers of these categories come to them by virtue of their position within a capitalist hierarchy, not by their powers as a class. If I accept money, either from an employer, or from the state in welfare benefits, I too accept the authority of the institution paying me to control my actions, although the extent of the control is a matter of negotiation and compromise. I have to obey my employer's instructions, or the instructions of those my contract says I am to report to. If I am claiming welfare, I may not work, but must look for work, and must report periodically to an officer of the state that I am obeying those instructions. Nonetheless, in capitalist society, labour must at all times be free to switch occupations (Nutti 1971, Indart 1990) and this limits the ability of my employer to control my actions. The pursuit of profit by capitalist institutions is tempered by the requirements of producing, reproducing and also retaining a labour force capable of achieving that goal.

To repeat again Pahl's question: What does labelling of different occupations as working class or new service class or middle class add to the analysis? It can only be that in so doing we can predict certain consequences from knowing what are the class positions of these occupation; that is, we can thereby read off consciousness and action from these so-called structural labels. Yet as both Sarre and Pahl in their different ways have indicated, this is clearly impossible.

Neither can we argue the other way, and say that the action of a person who has accepted an occupational position which could qualify them as a member of the new service class has demonstrated thereby the particular consciousness which characterizes a member of the new service class (Barbelat 1986 makes a similar point - see 4.5 below). Such an argument would exemplify the circular reasoning Pahl warns of whereby socioeconomic conditions produce 'classes' which are then used as an explanation of those same

socioeconomic conditions. The SCA model applied to the case of the middle class repeats in a wider context exactly the same problems of over-explanation to which theories of gentrification are so notoriously prone. It also tends towards essentialist explanations of human behaviour, as demonstrated by the tendency to treat the new service/middle class as aliens. The critique of essentialism therefore may be seen as paralleling Pahl's criticisms of SCA, a possibility I examine in the next section.

4.4 Essentialism in class analysis

I have already discussed Graham's (1989) introduction to the critique of essentialism in Chapter 3 above. Here, I wish to examine its relation to Pahl's criticisms of SCA. Graham argues that in a nonessentialist Marxism, the notion of class should be seen simply as a point of entry into social analysis. "This means that class is central to a particular Marxist discourse but it *does not* mean that it is central to social life." (1989 p61). This statement can be interpreted as an endorsement of Pahl's criticisms of SCA, since the implication of SCA is that class *is* central to social life, because consciousness and actions are determined on the basis of class position. On the other hand, Graham goes on to argue that "myriad effects" of the "role of class in constituting society" is "neglected", and that non-essentialist Marxists hope to draw attention to this role and "to affect the ways in which class processes are understood, opposed and transformed" (1989 p61). In other words, it would appear that they hope to place class at the centre of social life, presumably with desired (revolutionary) effects on consciousness and action.

So what does Graham understand by class? She defines class as "the process of performing, appropriating and distributing surplus labour" (1989 p61), but this, it appears, is not a social, but a theoretical process: "The class process... is constructed as a theoretical concept and deployed in Marxist theoretical and empirical work" (1989 p61). Graham's argument appears as ontologically cautious as Bhaskar's is ontologically bold.

For a more fully worked out position on non-essentialist notions of class, I return to Resnick & Wolff (1987), on whose position Graham bases her arguments. They argue that Wright and others, trying to establish a multi-dimensional Marxist theory of class, merely exchange one essentialism, politics, for another, economics. Resnick & Wolff therefore set themselves this question

is it possible Marx formulated a theory of class... that is not economic determinist, not otherwise essentialist, and not limited to a two class approach?
(Resnick & Wolff 1987 p115)

Their answer is yes. Resnick & Wolff accept the basic two-class division of producers and appropriators of surplus labour. This "fundamental" (p118) division consists of the various forms Marx describes, primitive communist, slave, feudal, or capitalist. Apart from this fundamental division however, they also employ another concept, namely "subsumed" class divisions (p118). Subsumed class processes "refer to the distribution of already appropriated surplus labour or its products" (p118). Resnick & Wolff quote from Marx to give examples of such subsumed class positions. In this manner, Resnick & Wolff attempt to substantiate their claim that Marxist theory does support a complex notion of class.

The problem with their demonstration of a complex Marxian model of class and income distribution is that it is hard to see what it achieves. As they outline the typology of contemporary social classes based on their arguments, Resnick & Wolff tell us for example that the job of managers is to "manage the enterprise's appropriation of surplus value" and that without the efforts of managers in this regard, "industrial capitalists would not realize surplus value" (p175). Again Pahl's question arises: what specifically is added to the analysis by dressing this description up in (subsumed or fundamental or non-) class categories? Not much, it would appear.

The sociologists' insistence on bringing class into the analysis raises expectations about what is to be gained from paying attention to such analysis which, if not satisfied, results in the scornful dismissal of the subject for being overcommitted to meaningless jargon....

Theory in much sociological reporting is in danger of becoming a conventional appendage - rather like the marxist-leninist preamble to technical papers published by Soviet social scientists in the days before glasnost and perestroika.
(Pahl 1989 p717)

The critique of essentialism in Marxist class analysis runs into difficulties when it attempts to produce class analysis of its own. The problem however lies in the commitment to class analysis itself. The attempt by Resnick & Wolff to produce a non-essentialist class analysis founders because they still phrase their account within the context of SCA. Even if classes can be defined in non-essentialist terms, their analysis still makes class itself essential. Why else do Resnick & Wolff feel the need to present this plethora of classes?

The question comes down to what we expect class analysis to achieve. I would argue that economic classes must by definition have economic interests. These interests should be identifiable from the manner in which members of those classes receive the wherewithal for their sustenance - their income in capitalist societies. But to say this is

not to say that members of a class defined on the basis of similar categories of income will necessarily see their interests in the same way. Take for example Marx's opinion that "if all the members of the modern bourgeoisie have the same interests inasmuch as they form a class against another class, they have opposite, antagonistic interests inasmuch as they stand face to face with one another (1847 - 1966 p107) or the discussion of the struggles between the industrial and the financial bourgeoisie contained in the *Eighteenth Brumaire* or the *Class Struggles in France* or the distinction between a class-in-itself and a class-for-itself (Marx EPM 1844). Urry (1981) on the other hand would see such an argument as unacceptably reductionist. For Urry, classes do not relate to abstract economic positions but only exist at the level of civil society. But Urry takes this position because he wants to read consciousness and action off from those class positions. It is not reductionist to say that class relates to economic interests, however, unless we have also made a prior (and *a priori*) commitment to SCA.

The whole domestic labour debate (Allen 1983, Allen & Wolkowitz 1986, Matthews 1984, Johnson 1989, Walker 1989) places itself in difficulties because it also makes this commitment to SCA. The debate seeks to establish whether it can be shown that unwaged domestic labour is a commodity, in the hope that this would then force recognition of patriarchal structures of capitalism, in which unwaged female labourers would constitute a distinctive class, etc., etc. But again, one is entitled to ask with Pahl, what does labelling unwaged domestic labour as a class add to the analysis, in this case of patriarchy (cf. Massey 1989)? If it is to advance the argument that unwaged domestic labour is just as worthy a topic of study as waged factory labour, why not simply advance the argument on its own merits? The answer lies in beholdenness to the imperatives of SCA. If the actions and the consciousnesses of this group of women are different to those of other groups of women (and men), then, it seems, we must find a class to put them in and consequently then define its relation to the structure (see also Chapter 5).

Low (1990) takes a position similar to the one advanced here. Commenting on the problems both Urry and Resnick & Wolff run into in trying to apply their particular definitions of class to the analysis of given situations, s/he argues that:

'Class' is the term given by Marxist theory to a cluster of very fundamental social rules structuring work and property relationships. If we take this step we should reserve the term 'class' for that cluster alone. It would therefore be incorrect to talk of 'consumption classes' or indeed of a 'service class'.... Rather we should say that capitalism... has constituted many different organized groups and social strata, but the fundamental work and property relationships remain unchanged.

(Low 1990 p1108)

Pahl too would agree with this

Modern capitalist society is based on an inherent conflict of interests between capital and labour and each in turn, is fractioned within itself. This I take to be axiomatic. My purpose in casting doubt on the *practical* usefulness of class is not to say that the concept does not have value at a higher level of analysis in comparative and historical sociology. However, its frequent incantation is often misplaced and otiose and the concept has been debased through inappropriate and uncritical usage.

(Pahl 1989 p717)

It is important to note that neither Pahl nor Low are antagonistic towards Marxist analyses of class as such, though I have chosen to highlight their problems in the course of this discussion. The same criticisms could be made of Weberian class analysis. Even though there are considerable ontological and epistemological differences between the Weberian and Marxist theories of class, they are nonetheless theories of *economic* class (D.Sayer 1991). Members of Weberian classes are as committed to economic interests as are members of Marxist classes. The question is not one of Weber vs. Marx; it is SCA. The question naturally arises therefore, if not class, what?

The answer I propose is status. I shall argue that the same structural (class) conditions are experienced in different ways by different groups and individuals. These can be accounted for in terms of status. Differences in status then account for the differences in political allegiance and all the other differences this symbolizes among the proletariat. This would appear to mean a shift from Marx to Weber, despite the fact that the criticisms of SCA apply equally to Weberian as to Marxist class analysis. As this chapter unfolds however, I intend to show that this is not necessarily so.

4.5 The new middle 'class' as a status group

As Sarre points out, Weberian practitioners of sociology have often used the concept of status in challenging Marxist class theory. According to Sarre, the sharpest challenge of these challenges could be found in the work of Frank Parkin (1979). This challenge was not particularly effective; according to Sarre, Parkin's work "both affirms what it wishes to deny... and fails to demonstrate what it asserts" (1989 p94). On the other hand, it might be assumed from a Marxist point of view that status is simply a matter of ideology, and therefore epiphenomenal to, or in some way simply derivative of processes of class structuration. It is therefore worth considering the Weberian concept of status to see if in fact either of these assumptions need be the case.

Weber argued that class situation depended on two related criteria: market situation was one, but this was only important insofar as it affected life chances (Barbalet 1986,

D.Sayer 1991). These two criteria make for difficulties in utilizing Weber's notion of class because the first, market situation, is essentially a definition in terms of *inputs*, what you bring to the market, while the second, life chances, is a definition in terms of *outcomes*, what you get from the market. The problem is that one's current market situation not necessarily the same as one's highest achievable situation. If the boss's son is sent to learn the ins and outs of the family business in the traditional manner by starting out on the shop floor, his current market situation is the same as his co-workers, but his life-chances, where he is likely to end up, are considerably different (Runciman 1990). This may seem obvious, but it was the fatal flaw in Rex & Moore's (1966) use of Weberian theory in their notion of housing classes (Haddon 1970). In fact, as Barbalet points out,

when a new middle class is defined in Weberian terms its class nature tends to be displaced by an understanding of its characteristics for status group formation. Accounts of a new middle class which point to the peculiarities of its employment market outcomes are as applicable to treatments of its nature as a status group as they are to its class nature.

(Barbalet 1986 p561)

For example, the service class is supposed currently to be characterized by increasing 'social closure', in other words, its ranks come more and more to be filled by the children of its existing members; the service class thus comes more and more to form a class for itself as well as in itself. Savage & al. (1988) dispute this view; but the fact is that social closure is a criterion in the formation of a status group, not an economic class. The significance of closure in such studies "should be seen in the identification of status groups within classes rather than of social classes themselves" (Barbalet, 1986 p573)

Barbalet also points to the fact that "Status groups, *but not classes* were distinguished by Weber... in terms of their different patterns of consumption" (p561 emphasis added). Also, according to Weber, education, "functional and work class differences are as likely to lead to status distinctions as they are to class differences" (ibid.). The implications of Barbalet's discussion are far-reaching. Once it is appreciated that what are described in the sociological literature generally as well as the gentrification literature in particular as class differences are in fact status differences, then the myriad problems of essentialism, aliens, sin and disease can be overcome. Such an outcome requires more than simply a change in nomenclature however. It is not as if these analogies only exist if one wishes to be pedantic. These authors' use of 'class' where they mean 'status' is no mere slip of the pen. Barbalet writes that

The contradictory treatment of class and status in Weberian theory is less visible than it might otherwise be because of the demise of status as an analytical category in neo-Weberian writing on stratification. This is not a resolution of

the problem, however, as the class concept has been forced to encompass what had traditionally been regarded as both class and non-class factors. *While it has overloaded the class concept, neo-Weberian theory has failed adequately to consider aspects of social reality which cannot be equated with class divisions* (Barbalet 1986 p562 emphasis added)

This confusion of class and status is of considerable theoretical import since the common complaint of anti-reductionist and anti-essentialist Marxist discussions of class is exactly the same as that which Barbalet complains about in neo-Weberian discussions of class; namely that the concept is overloaded, and cannot adequately consider aspects of social reality which cannot be equated with class divisions. The situation is comparable to Rose's (1984) complaint of mix'n'match theorizing in Marxist studies of gentrification - only in this case it is not a non-Marxist theory of gentrification which has been taken over wholesale and dressed up in Marxist clothes, it is a whole (and misconstrued!) theory of social structure which has been acquired. The self-imposed problem of providing a Marxist account of the neo-Weberian middle classes is like a cuckoo in the nest for Marxist theory. It has been deposited from elsewhere and demands and receives copious attention, without those administering to it ever stopping to question where it came from or why they have to devote so much attention to it. The greatest irony is that these so-called middle classes, for which Marxist theory has been charged with finding a theoretical rationale, do not, according to Barbalet, even have a legitimate parentage in the context of Weberian class theory.

However, Barbalet goes on to argue that Weberian status theory is of hardly any more use than is its class theory. Parkin and others "have complained that Weber's notion of status has been (illegitimately) reduced to mere 'prestige' by some of his followers. *Yet there is little in Weber's discussion of status which goes beyond prestige*" (p562 emphasis added). In fact "the significant aspects of social reality" which Barbalet argues "cannot be equated with class divisions", equally cannot "be apprehended through the Weberian conception of status" (p562). If we accept therefore the force of the argument that questions of status have been unduly neglected in contemporary sociology, this does not, according to Barbalet, encumber us with an concomitant commitment to Weberian sociology. However, it does encumber us with a commitment to some account of status. In Chapter 6 therefore, I sketch out how such an account and how it may be reconciled with the Marxist theory of classes.

An account of the formation of status groups is not enough however. To use status as an independent variable or axiom in this account would simply be to substitute status for class in the SCA model. Group consciousness, be it of class or status, is always the consciousness of the individual as a member of that group. Status, high or low, is the

status of an individual as a member of a group. A large part of Blanchard's (1985) criticisms of Engels turns precisely on his (Engels') failure to come to terms with this question of the relation of personal to collective consciousness. Consequently, having outlined in the remainder of this chapter how status groups might form (and it is a matter of complete contingency as to whether any status groups may form at all), in subsequent chapters I shall outline how status as a member of a group relates to selfconsciousness of status as an individual in society. For the present however it is sufficient to note the implications of Barbalet's arguments for the conduct of the gentrification debate, which demonstrate conclusively that the whole debate is misplaced.

To recap, the gentrification debate is one in which all sides accept the proposition that gentrification is a class issue. However, as D.Sayer argues, the term 'class' has two senses: one is internal, intrinsic to selfconsciousness; the other "a matter of mere 'accidental' circumstance rather than inherent being, ... something which is extrinsic to the essence of personality" (1991 p69). It is in the first sense that the English obsession with class is concerned - U or non-U accent and behaviour (Mitford 1956) "in sum, those relations, Max Weber analysed in terms of status" (D.Sayer 1991 p69). However, Sayer argues, it is in the second sense that class is a distinctly modern phenomenon and of concern to Marxist theory. The second sense is of course that in which class is a purely economic attribute. It is this sense that Marxist theory only recognizes two classes, works such as the *Eighteenth Brumaire* notwithstanding. Whether the proposition is that gentrification has created a new middle class, or that this new middle class has created gentrification, if the creation of this new middle class can be linked to economic processes, then Marxist theory is in trouble; hence the vigour with which the gentrification debate is conducted (Hamnett 1991).

However, Marxist theory is only in trouble, as Barbalet makes quite plain, if we slip, illegitimately, from the use of 'class' as *economic* class to the use of 'class' as *social* class, invoking *status* considerations. If we cannot tie the existence of gentrifiers and gentrification to economic class issues (in other words, if gentrification is not a class issue, in the strict Weberian or Marxist sense of that term), then we cannot use their existence as a proxy by which to debate the competing claims to knowledge made by Weberian and Marxist theories. That it *is* illegitimate to use Weber's or Marx's theory of (economic) class as though they applied to social class, or status groups, should be clear from the problems of SCA, namely the way in which the actions of gentrifiers becomes explicable only in terms of aliens, sin or disease. Even in Weber's own sociology, the axes along which class and status differentiation occur are supposed to be quite separate. Conceptualizing divisions in society in terms of status as well as class avoids these problems, and provides the sociological rationale for the argument that gentrifiers

gentrify because they can, not because they have to. Chapters 7, 8 and 9 will demonstrate the economic rationale behind such behaviour.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has now carried out the second of the agenda outlined for this thesis in Chapter 3.2 above, namely "to establish a framework for a discussion of class issues which will not... require of members of different social classes that they have essentially different natures". The argument has proceeded by demonstrating and problematizing the standard sociological model, SCA, endorsing the concept of status as a means of mediating between structure and agency, and then showing how the concept of status can be introduced into a Marxian theory of class.

This interpretation of Marxist principles permits the defence of the economic focus of this thesis and, in doing so, provides a powerful endorsement of the principle that gentrifiers gentrify because they can. It obviates SCA in Marxist models of society, and in a manner superior to that of Resnick & Wolff's strategy for dealing with the problem. Gentrifiers do not have to gentrify because of their class position because class position only determines behaviour in the sense in which R.Williams uses 'determine': setting limits, not dictating actions. In capitalist society, individuals produce and reproduce capitalism at the same time as they produce and reproduce themselves via the acquisition and circulation of money. The outcomes of this productive and reproductive process however are open and must be continually negotiated, revised and updated. Within the broad limits of the necessity to acquire money in order to exercise agency, a whole range of strategies may be pursued. The necessity to acquire money and the conditions under which this money is acquired (the internalization of the rules - the moral order - of capitalism) does however explain a particular set of strategies to ensure a secure supply in the everchanging world of capitalist production: the search for centrality in the accumulation process and status group formation - closure - in order to secure this centrality (Chapter 6.6 below). Status group formation cannot however be reduced to labour market segmentation. Status groups incorporate several labour market segments.

There is the danger that simply to substitute status for class in discussions of social differentiation would leave the analysis stuck within the confines of the SCA model. In fact, status cannot simply be substituted for class. The crucial difference between status and class is that status is not only acquired, it is also ascribed; there has to be social consensus on status matters where none need exist on class issues - class considered in the internal and external aspects discussed by D.Sayer (1991 and 4.5 above). Status

norms are internalized by group members and upheld in other contexts. Although closure, the fundamental principle of status group formation, is directed toward monopolization of job opportunities in the context of the capitalist accumulation process, strategies for status group formation are not only pursued in the context of paid employment.

So far however, these contexts have not been specified. They cannot be specified without understanding how status itself is constructed. So far this question has not been addressed. To understand gentrification in terms of clashes between status groups, it is necessary to understand how status is acquired and ascribed. This is the object of the next part of this thesis.

Having, therefore, sundered the links between housing and class constitution, and between class constitution and identity, the next item on the agenda is to forge a link between housing and identity.

5 Structure and agency in the modern world

5.1 Aims and issues

I argued in Chapter 2 that much of the gentrification debate has ostensibly been dedicated to a clarification of the problem of structure versus agency in social theory. Dominated on the one hand by the structure-oriented neighbourhood lifecycle model of N. Smith's rent gap, and on the other by the agency-oriented postindustrial model of the production of gentrifiers approach, the issue of gentrification has been extremely conducive to the holding of such a debate. However, Chapters 3 and 4 have shown that the conceptualization both of the agents and the structures of gentrification have been quite inadequate to explain its occurrence: hamstrung by the presumption that the problem of structure versus agency must be considered in terms of the context set by SCA; by the fact that students of gentrification basically disapprove of the activities of gentrifiers; but principally by the fact that gentrification is used as a synecdoche for modern society.

I begin in this chapter by problematizing the fact that there is a debate over structure versus agency at all. The point I wish to stress is that concern over the very question of structure versus agency is itself a peculiarly modern phenomenon. The modernity of the question of structure versus agency has not been recognized by the participants in the gentrification debate, and this has considerably undermined efforts to conceptualize behaviour in the gentrification process.

This of course implies that research strategies should be based on the presumption that gentrification is a phenomenon of modernity, which means providing a definition of modernity. I argue that the fundamental condition of modernity is concern with meaning. It is this concern which has led gentrification so often to be used as a peg on which to hang debates on structure and agency.

I argue that the insistence on treating agency seriously is often quasi-religious in nature. I argue this point in some detail, because the problem of modernity bites very deep, deeper than most people might think. The lack of appreciation of the religious imperatives involved in theorization in social science is partly responsible for the characterization of gentrification in terms of sin. Making this first point, furthermore paves the way for the second, namely that the inclusion of demand issues into cultural materialism provides a materialist basis for taking agency seriously. The assumption that gentrifiers gentrify because they have to not only means that demand issues in gentrification are by-passed, but so also is agency, despite the ostensible concern with the status of agency that fuels much of the debate. Furthermore, it shows that a concern

for demand issues need not be the heart of darkness for a Marxist account of gentrification, as it is for N. Smith (Hamnett 1991, cf. Chapter 2 above).

5.2 The question of agency and the problem of meaning

In this section and the next, I want to show how the problem of agency is a problem of modernity. Understanding how the two are linked will help understand how the problems of postindustrialist accounts of gentrification arise, and more importantly, how they may be solved.

Concepts of agency are crucial to the problem of explaining social life. They give meaning to actors' behaviour (Runciman, 1962, p8). Without some account of agency, the role of human behaviour in explanations of social life would be reduced to that of an automaton responding to social or biological forces or needs. Most accounts of human behaviour are very reluctant to deny the role of agency in this way. The status of agency in explanations of social life has however become a political question as much as a philosophical, psychological or sociological one. Many historical or dialectical materialist Marxist studies have been reluctant to emphasise the role of agency in capitalist society. Invocation of agency implicitly concedes that human beings have some autonomy of behaviour.

Many Marxists have been reluctant to concede that this is possible in a capitalist society which proclaims freedom of choice but which in fact coerces people into alienating to the will of another the very thing which demonstrates their humanity, namely their creative capacity, their ability to make decisions about how to intervene in nature, their labour power. Only the advent of communism will restore the ability of human agents to display agency and hence humanity. Real agency is not possible under capitalism. Those, such as the self-styled humanists, who insist on apotheosizing the role of agency in contemporary society only do so for ideological reasons, they support the capitalist slogans about freedom of choice, or are too proud and wilfully refuse to admit publically what they know to be the case, that the only freedom of choice they have is in the furnishings of their prison walls.

Such criticisms made of humanists and others on the right contain a large element of truth. The right holds to such positions in large part because of their fear that, without an account of social life which did proclaim its meaningfulness, their own lives would not in fact have meaning. Such fears should not be belittled (Lasch 1991 p241), but nonetheless avowals of the importance of agency arise because those making these

avowals could not accept a theory which denied their belief that their own lives did have meaning.

This is a summary of a debate condensed to the point of caricature. However, the point I seek to make is not the question of whether left or right is correct in this matter, but to illustrate the fragility of meaning in modern life and the centrality of the problem of meaning in judgements about the adequacy of social theory. If we are interested in explaining social process, then there is no reason in principle why we should not accept the principles of the positivist social science of the sixties, the attempt to explain all human behaviour by means of mechanical analogies (Haggett 1964); except that we do not like to think of ourselves as mechanical analogies. Positivist social science buckled under the weight of calls for relevance (D.M.Smith 1977), but what this really meant was that positivism did not explain ourselves to ourselves in terms in which we were happy to see ourselves; just as today we are extremely reluctant to accept descriptions of ourselves as mere carriers of 'selfish genes' (Dickens 1990).

The succession of theories of social organization which have been adopted in the geography and social science literature generally are only partially explicable in terms of the career strategies of young Turks (Taylor 1976). The success which each successive paradigm has had in launching its ideas is also explicable in terms of the general dissatisfaction with the handling of the problem of meaning in the previous literature. Each new paradigm has been looked to as the one to restore meaning to life, dominated by inexorable structural forces seemingly indifferent to our individual fate. This continual attempt within social science to make our lives mean something is no less than the general problem of modernity: how to come to grips with the apparent incomprehensibility of the conditions of all of our lives. I have already said that gentrification should be regarded as one such attempt to make meaning, but the problematical status of meaning in social life affects the very thoughts and language we use to conceptualize and describe gentrification.

The belief that our lives do have meaning and that our social theories must not only describe that belief but also demonstrate its fundamental truth must be recognized for what it is: in Nietzsche's terms, an insistence, a homesickness (Connolly 1988). This is not to deny the proposition that our lives do have meaning; to make such a denial would be equally insistent. What is interesting however is the way in which and the extent to which our social theories have taken the place of religion in our lives. A few years ago, I commented on Harvey's tendency to use religious allusions in his arguments (Harvey, 1987, Redfern 1987). I now believe that this was more than simply a rhetorical excess. It is fundamental to understanding what social science is about. This should not surprise

us. Marx more than once (in particular in the course of his famous remarks on religion being the opium of the people) spoke of bringing explanation of social life down to earth from heaven.

Questions of agency in social science are closely tied to a central area of religious concern, namely morality and moral philosophy. Evaluation of explanations of social processes are therefore rarely made on the evidence provided, but on the implications such explanations have for the status and the meaning of human life. Evaluations are made on pre-given and quasi-religious criteria of belief. Since questions of morality are inextricable from social science thought however, we ought to confront them directly. Many of the long standing problems in Marxist thought, problems which impinge directly on the gentrification debate are created by the refusal of Marxist thought to face just this issue. If we do not appreciate this, we will fail to understand the depth of the insistence that gentrification is about class constitution.

5.3 Meaning, morality and choice

Alexander argues that the problem of modernity is the central theme of sociology (cf. Appleyard 1991p5). In contrast to the early (artistic) Modernists:

The great classical figures of modern sociology were... more worried about the costs of modernity than they were confident about its gains. In varying degree, they viewed modernization as an emptying out of meaning. Throughout the writings of Marx, Weber, Simmel and Durkheim we find assertions, and suggestions, that at the end of this modernizing process only hard and impersonal structures will be left.... Industrialization and secularization, it seemed, had produced more harm than good. The first allowed structures to develop that were impervious to human will; the second prevented the new society from being meaningfully understood.

(Alexander 1989 p1)

These early worries, continues Alexander, were discounted for by the experience of progress and its promise of material gain. The experience of two World Wars, not to mention other horrors, meant that these worries never really subsided. As we near another *fin de siecle*, they appear to be revived. Sennett gives a typical account,

because so much social life which does not have a meaning cannot yield these psychological rewards [of "warmth, trust and openness of meaning"], the world outside, the impersonal world, seems to fail us, seems to be stale and empty.

(Sennett 1977, p5)

Similarly Giddens (1990) describes the fundamental characteristic of modernity as "specifically *opaque*, in a way that was not the case previously" (Giddens 1990 p146). This opacity in the structures of everyday life paradoxically requires us to place our trust

in abstract and expert systems such as transportation or banking systems.

Modernity turns out to be enigmatic at its very core and there seems to be no way in which this enigma can be "overcome" [in Nietzsche's terms]. We are left with questions where once there appeared to be answers... A general awareness [that history has neither purpose nor goal, and neither do our own personal histories]... filters into anxieties which press in on everyone.

(Giddens, 1990 p49)

The relation of questions of the meaningfulness of life to questions of structure and agency has long been debated, but in terms of moral philosophy and theology rather than sociology.

In pre-modern times, the question was posed in terms of Original Sin. 'Structure' was to be found in God's plan, 'agency' in the Fall of Man. To illustrate this point I compare Ollman's account of Marx's philosophy with Tillyard's account of mediæval cosmology.

Ollman (1971, 1976) argued that Marx's philosophy should be seen as a system of internal relations, derived from Spinoza by way of Hegel. His arguments had considerable influence in the development of Harvey's Marxism (Harvey 1973), and provided the counterfactual by which A.Sayer (1982) presented his case for realism. Ollman summarized Marx's philosophy as a

conception of reality as a totality of internally related parts, and [a] conception of these parts as expandable relations such that each one in its fullness can represent the totality.

(Ollman 1971 p8)

The philosophy of internal relations which Ollman finds in Marx can be also be found in Elizabethan and mediæval cosmology. Then it was known as 'The Great Chain of Being' (Tillyard 1943 - 1960 Ch.3). At one end of this chain lies the earth, and at the other, God. 'Man' is internally related to all the other links in the chain and can therefore represent the totality of the cosmos in miniature: a microcosm, he incorporates on the one hand the highest stages of development of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms over which 'he' is lord; on the other, he displays intimations at the lowest stage of the heavenly Kingdom above, of which 'he' is a vassal. The essential difference between the Elizabethan and Marxian systems of internal relations is that the existence of God gave the Elizabethan picture immanent meaning.

A.Sayer, in his first presentation of critical realism, argued against applying this philosophy of internal relations to an analysis of social world.

If everything is internally related to everything else then the concept does not help us say anything about specific structures.

(A.Sayer, 1982, p70)

Ollman argued that although all reality was internally related, this did not mean that nothing was distinguishable. The problem of individuation, of distinguishing one thing from another, is one which is basic to any ontology and could be successfully accomplished within a philosophy of internal relations (Ollman Chapter 1, Appendix 1 1971). Sayer strongly disagreed:

if we try to... assert that [Ollman's] book is internally related to the stars then the silliness of these... pretences detracts from the evident sense of the... statement [that there is "an asymmetric internal relation between Ollman's book and Marx's book"].

(A.Sayer, 1982, p70)

Such criticism of Ollman's philosophy of internal relations may seem intuitively plausible and even self-evident. From Tillyard's account, however, Sayers' argument would seem less evident to an Elizabethan or a mediaeval, and indeed Ollman argued that to begin from the opposite premise, that all reality was not internally related, was then to beg the question of how the non-related parts could ever affect or interact with each other.

D.Sayer and Frisby may also be cited in support of Ollman's comments on individuation. Their comments on difference also support the post-structuralist approach to theorization (5.4 below):

Central to [Marx's] conception of society is an important point... Because it is relational, it is integrally a system of *differences*, and those characteristics which mark individuals as social are therefore ones which also *differentiate* them as individuals in definite ways: for instance as a master or a servant, husband or wife. This means that society is not homogeneous. It is rather, in Marx's words, a *contradictory* unity.

(D.Sayer & Frisby, 1986 p96)

Comparing Ollman's "realism" to Althusser's "nominalism", Outhwaite also supports Ollman's interpretation of Marx's philosophy (Outhwaite 1983, p46). Althusser's 'structuralist Marxism', highly influential in the Anglophone literature in the early to mid-seventies (Pickvance 1976, Castells 1977), is still very much the bogeyman of the social sciences (cf. Harvey's reaction to the charge that he was Althusserian - Harvey 1987), although a revival of sorts is under way (Resnick & Wolff 1986, Graham 1990). Yet the contrast between Ollman and Althusser is instructive, illustrating once more the way in which social science explanation is judged in terms of its ability to give meaning to our lives. The development of A.Sayer's arguments for realism can be interpreted as an attempt to steer a middle course between Ollman and Althusser. Sayer's objections to Althusser's position may be used for the purposes of comparison with Ollman.

Althusser's most notorious argument was for a 'theoretical anti-humanism' (Althusser & Balibar 1970, Callinicos 1976). Humans were mere bearers of structures, no more than

ensembles of social relations. Now, while it could be argued that the accompanying concept of 'over-determination' (Chapter 2.1 above) can be read as an attempt to give meaning to a structuralist account of social life (Resnick & Wolff 1987), for A.Sayer even a theoretical anti-humanism involves an unacceptable loss of ontological status:

... in stressing the way in which actions take place within social relations and are rule governed and constrained by conditions not of the actors' own choosing, the activity of the agents and their skills were ignored [by 'structuralist' approaches], so that it appeared that the *conditions did the acting*.

(A.Sayer 1985 p88, emphasis added)

Meaning, in other words, is given to the structures, and this is unacceptable:

Actors are not mere 'dupes', 'automata', or 'bearers of roles', unalterably programmed to reproduce...

... At worst, the 'subjects' were 'written out' altogether, producing a dehumanizing social science.

(ibid.)

To make this point (that theories are evaluated on the basis of their accounts of human being) is not to belittle Sayer's reasons for making such a judgement, nor those of the many other writers who would support it (e.g., E.P.Thompson 1978, Giddens 1987). It is to reinforce the argument that 'agency' and 'meaning' are closely correlated, that emphasis on this correlation is historically contingent upon the 'emptying out of meaning', associated with modernism and the death of God, and that we look to social science to restore this meaning to us, where once we looked to religion. It is because social science has this role in our lives that the conviction that gentrification is explicable in terms of class is so deeply held. This conviction may be expressed in terms of a syllogism. Social science explains our lives to us; social science is dominated by controversies over class, derived from SCA; to *be* explanations, therefore, explanations of gentrification must invoke class.

The orthodox Marxist argument is that it is capitalism which robs its bearers' lives of all meaning. In capitalist social relations, the lives of human beings are significant only as labour-power for capitalism. Their lives have no other meaning. Therefore analyses of modern life should begin from class because capitalism is predicated on class exploitation. It is capitalism which denies its bearers their humanity, an Althusserian would argue, and Marx's theorizing accurately captures this sad fact:

The ultimate or minimum limit of the value of labour-power is... formed by the value of the physically indispensable means of subsistence...

It is an extraordinarily cheap kind of sentimentality which declares that this method of determining the value of labour-power, *a method prescribed by the very nature of the case*, is brutal ...

(Marx, 1967, p277, emphasis added)

For Marx, therefore, it appeared to be quite literally a waste of time to concern oneself

over the question of agency (Lukes, 1987 p6). Marx was not concerned with giving meaning to 'modern' life, and so making it more bearable. He was concerned only with overthrowing it, as the eleventh thesis on Feuerbach makes clear (3.6 above). Complaints that in their arguments, Marx or Althusser treat human beings as though they were automata, dupes, &c., ought to be addressed to the capitalist system, not to them. A.Sayer's argument, it might be added, is mere moralizing. It depends on treating human beings differently in theory than they are in practice. In this respect, Althusser and Ollman are in agreement:

when Marx describes the worker as degraded, this is what he sees, in fact as well as in judgment.

(Ollman 1971 p50)

If this is Marx's argument however it must be rejected. It depends on the presumption that what is 'seen' is already "*and otherwise*" known [from theory] as the basic reality of the material social process", a classic presumption of base-superstructure modes of thought (R.Williams 1977 p97, see Chapter 2.1 above). This presumption undermines the case for social revolution Engels tries to present in his *Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*. (Blanchard 1985). In any case, as Lukes points out, such an argument

... leaves untouched the question... both of marxism's general rejection of morality and its actual (if unsystematic and largely unacknowledged) moral stance.
(Lukes, 1985, p26)

Ollman, considering the possibility of a Marxist ethics, notes that

An ethic assumes... that there is a possibility that one could have chosen otherwise.

(Ollman, 1971 p46)

Questions of morality are predicated on choice, in particular the choice between good and evil, but choice, according to Giddens is also the *conditio sine qua non* of agency:

to be a human agent is to be able to 'act otherwise'.
(Giddens 1987 p220)

The refusal to deal with questions of morality in Marxism is therefore not one which can be justified either by appeals to science, history or to the imperatives of political practice. Questions of morality cannot be excluded from social science discourse, even Marxist discourse; they are inextricably bound up with the meaningfulness of human activity (Hampshire 1959, Runciman 1962).

In denying the possibility of choice or difference, Marxism, especially its scientific socialist varieties, slips into idealism, because the meaningfulness in behaviour is conceded, but attributed to the structures rather than to the agents. However, interpretation of the meaning of structural transformation depends on the pre-existing (but illicit) guarantee of correspondence between explanation and outcome (otherwise

known). Consequently, even the claims to scientificity are undermined. The conclusions of the analysis are implicit in the premises. The analysis itself becomes an elaborate tautology, an explanation of why the described outcome had to have occurred as it did.

Williams argued that this was a recurring problem with the use of base-superstructure modes of thought (R.Williams 1977). Chapters 2 and 3 have shown that this is also the precise situation which bedevils the gentrification debate. Since all sides in the debate succumb to the same tautology, the problem is not solely restricted to Marxism. Williams' arguments for cultural materialism show that it is not inevitable. Nonetheless, it is not an easy problem to get round. The remainder of this chapter considers strategies by which this might be achieved.

5.4 Post-structuralism and gentrification

Admitting the possibility of choice means accepting the existence of variety, of difference. How to theorize this? As Chapter 2 showed, the claims of post-modern theory "to empower or explain variety", that is, to account for agency have engendered considerable dissent (Massey 1990). If the claims for postmodernity are wishful thinking however, is there anything that can be rescued from the debates on postmodern theory? Probably three things. The first and most important is the problematization of the condition of modernity itself, and this has been the principal focus of this chapter.

Cooke argues for two further considerations which should be taken into account. If postmodernism is parody, then that should be given its due because its "ironic treatment of history" means that

it uses history creatively to criticize, amongst other things, modernism's loss of contact with popular consciousness.

(Cooke 1990, p337)

The same thing of course could be said for Joyce's *Ulysses* (Ellman 1986 Howard, 1991). The project is worth pursuing, but it is not new (Howard 1991p21).

The second, and most important, point is that even if modern urban theory is 'totalizing', it is, or should be, theorizing, "not a universalistic system, but a system of differences" (Cooke, 1990, p332). Strictly speaking, this is a position derived from post-structuralism (Giddens, 1987 ch.4), but Cooke expands this position into a post-modern urban theory

not as a project in itself but a form of reading for absences, a deconstruction of the ways of seeing and acting which first developed with the onset of early modern urban policy but which have now themselves become exhausted and in need of further democratization and renewal.

(Cooke 1990 p342)

This idea that the effects of structures are felt in absences rather than presences is worth very careful consideration. The 'production of gentrifiers' approach in effect makes this fundamental error of theorizing presences, the presence of a gentrifier in its gentrified house.

The proposition that we think in terms of differences rather than universals seems at first sight a bizarre one. However the poststructuralist argument is that is only in differences, that distinguishable characteristics, and therefore information, meaning, can be *created*, not lost. This is quite a different conclusion from those drawn by the post-modernists.

The consequence of theorizing in terms of universals is to deny the possibility of choice in human affairs. Gentrifiers, in the universalist perspective (shared by both left and right in this debate), gentrify because they *have to*. Anything which the gentrification debate has to say about gentrifiers or gentrified neighbourhoods applies equally as well to the rest of the middle class or to the rest of the inner city. Because they theorize in terms of universals, they are unable to explain the existence of differences between one section of the middle class or one area of the inner city and another. The irony then is that the major problem for these theories of why gentrification occurs is to explain why gentrification does *not* occur, in those areas of the inner city to which the explanations offered by these theories apply, but in which there is no sign of gentrification.

Because gentrifiers have to gentrify in the universalistic perspective, the question of the availability of the means to do so becomes irrelevant; while in the difference perspective, the problem of the means, the technology, becomes key to explaining the social changes brought about by gentrification. Exploring the means by which gentrification is made possible is the focus of the second half of this thesis (Chapters 7-10).

The arguments for post-structuralism are epistemological rather than sociological. Espousing a post-structuralist position therefore does not imply also endorsing claims about or for postmodern society. As has been seen, there is no evidence even for presuming that there is a postmodern condition which gentrification could be symptomatic of. Therefore there is no reason for basing research strategies into gentrification on the presumption that it is. However, these arguments do not affect the vital importance of post-structuralism in guaranteeing theorization which admits the

possibility of choice as a matter of principle, rather than as a concession, as the unexplained variance in an explanation, to be reduced in subsequent refinements of our models. Having made this argument for theorizing in terms of differences, however, it is necessary to show how it may be applied in a cultural materialist context.

5.5 Conclusion: demand and agency in cultural materialist perspective

Chapter 1 described cultural materialism as a radical attempt to place the question of agency at centre stage. As this chapter has shown however, attempts to address the question of agency have rarely done so on materialist lines. Consequently, the status of agency in social analyses has remained largely unresolved. Both those who would evince a concern for agency and those who would deny the validity of those concerns are able to marshal arguments which effectively criticize the opposing position. However the current state of the gentrification debate, ostensibly (and often ostentatiously) concerned with agency, bears witness that the result has been a stalemate - hence the consensus that a synthesis of the two alternatives is required (Hamnett 1991). This stalemate may be avoided by reconsidering the role of subsistence (and therefore demand) in Marxist economic thought. Adopting this strategy admits material evidence of the existence of agency, which can also be linked to materialist accounts of structural transformation.

Marx argues that capitalism is characterized by the existence of profit (as a category of income), and that profit depends on exploitation in the labour process. Exploitation arises when workers have to sell their labour-power, alienate their creative faculties and place them at the disposal of the capitalists, but are then only paid the value which they require to reproduce their labour-power, not the total value of the work which they perform for the capitalists. Knowing the value of labour-power enables the rate of exploitation to be calculated. Therefore some definition of subsistence is required to put a figure on the value of labour-power. However, Marx operationalizes this definition in terms of the reproduction requirements of the individual labourer (1967, p277). The unavoidable implication of this is that each individual labourers *must* consume what is provided for her or him by their capitalist employer (Pasinetti 1977). They are unable to exercise choice, agency, and therefore consciousness in their consumption decisions, in effect in their lives outside of the labour process. Since they are also unable to exercise agency in the labour process, the exercise by the working classes of any form of agency

is ruled out *a priori* by Marx's particular definition of subsistence. Marxists tend to alternate between 'economism' and 'voluntarism' as their basic political strategy for fashioning conditions for a revolutionary transformation of society (e.g., Fine & Harris' criticisms of Poulantzas 1979 p56). The *a priori* denial, in Marx's definition of subsistence, of the operation of independent working class consciousness is, I argue, the reason why.

Reliance on some definition of subsistence cannot be lightly abandoned, however, since abandoning this definition would also mean abandoning the notion of exploitation in the labour process and therefore denying the centrality of class and class relations in capitalist society (though it must be noted that this is precisely the strategy followed by rational choice Marxism - Roemer 1982, 1986 cf. Mouzelis 1990). By shifting the focus of the definition of subsistence from the individual to society as a whole, it is however possible to retain the concept of subsistence (and thus retain the concept of exploitation), while at the same time permitting workers to make meaningful decisions about what they wish to consume. At the level of society as a whole, subsistence can be defined as the minimum amount of commodities which must be sold or otherwise consumed if the *total* labour power in the system *as a whole* is to reproduce itself from day to day and year to year.

Defining subsistence at the societal level leaves it a matter of complete indifference, for the purposes of the reproduction of the capitalist system, as to who consumes the commodities, as long as they are all consumed and the surplus value they embody is realized. In other words it is a matter of complete indifference for the purposes of system reproduction whether some workers get more money than others, or if some workers get no money at all. Conversely however, it becomes of the utmost importance to ensure that those goods which are produced are sold, since it is no longer possible to rely on the assumption that since every worker is receiving just that quantity of goods and services which permits them to reproduce their labour power on a daily basis, every good and service produced for sale to the workforce will be sold. This is of course the situation with which capitalists and workers are confronted every day: "have we/they made the 'correct' decisions about which goods and services to produce or to consume?". Capitalists are constantly posed with the problem of what to produce next - which they may well get wrong: the basic principle of effective demand (Pasinetti 1974). But, I argue, it is precisely this scenario which is ruled out of the picture by the assumption of subsistence defined at an individual level.

Keynes (1937) forcefully makes the point that, only in a lunatic asylum, would anyone regard money as a store of value, were it not for the fact that we do have and do make choices about where, and most importantly *if*, we spend our money. The

post-Keynesian approach to the problem of the value of money is to explain it in terms of the unknowability of the future. While accepting that explanation, I would wish to widen it. We all are forced to work for money, but once we've got it we can spend it on what we like, and the more money we have, the wider the range of choices open to us. Money is therefore a prime medium by which agency is empowered. Money is also however a prime medium through which agency is expressed. It is of course not the only means of providing a material demonstration of the existence of agency. As I argue in Chapter 6.5 below, the separation of means and ends which underlies any definition of agency can often also be seen spatially as well as imagined conceptually. It is not the *use* of a tool which indicates awareness of the separation of ends and means: birds and primates may be observed using sticks and stones to obtain food. Rather, it is the *transport* of a stick, stone or other implement to the place where the food is to be obtained which demonstrates that separation of ends and means which Marx argues distinguishes the worst of architects from the best of bees (Marx 1967 p284).

Money nevertheless has a great importance in the demonstration of agency for two reasons: the fact of its value is also a materialist (rather than an idealist) argument for the existence of agency; and its role as the medium through which capitalist society is structured (and capitalist social structures produced and reproduced) enables the relation of structure to agency in a capitalist society to be specified.

Money dominates capitalist society. Accounting for where it comes from and where it goes, is the fundamental structuring mechanism of that society. Such accounting is the basis of the impetus to rationalization which Weber regarded the fundamental characteristic of modern life (D.Sayer 1991). Although money has value, value is of course also dead labour in the capitalist accumulation process. As the medium of social structures, money is the material expression of the social processes of selective tradition which create not only social structures, but also hegemony (and social science; cf. Chapters 2.3.3 and 3.7 above).

Money does not just have value for the capitalist however, it has value for everybody. The fact that it does have value, moreover, makes for a materialist and non-essentialist argument for the existence of agency, not simply because I buy beer and you buy wine (though that is still a valid argument) but principally because the fact that it does have value is a materialist demonstration of the ability of human beings to conceptualize the future (Keynes 1937) and themselves in it - and so distinguish the worst of architects from the best of bees. Marx's definition of subsistence however rules out the use of money as a store of value and contradicts his assertions about architects and bees. As proletarians, whatever we were to spend our money on (and we would have to spend it,

we couldn't just hold on to it), it would be because in some way we *had* to spend it in that way. We would not therefore be able to separate means and ends, be able 'to do otherwise': (employee) architects would not be materially distinguishable from bees. Marx's definition of subsistence is the legacy inherited by SCA which underlies the assumption that gentrifiers gentrify because they have to.

By contrast, redefining subsistence at the social level provides a cogent rationale for arguing that gentrifiers gentrify because they can. Under this redefinition there is no necessary link between our (common) class position and the amount of money we may receive. Consequently, there need be no commonality in our feelings towards the system that rewards you handsomely and me outrageously. S does not determine C; consequently it cannot determine A. One can therefore be fundamentalist over the question of class and class relations - to insist that class can only be defined in relation to formal position within the economy - without being reductionist - without, that is, reducing behaviour to a reflex of class position; adopt, in other words, N.Smith's position on the importance of structure without denying Ley's concerns for agency, in fact giving real meaning to Ley's concerns. The domestic labour debate provides a useful illustration of the point.

The domestic labour debate is explicitly about the relation of waged labour to unpaid activity, a vital but implicit theme in the gentrification debate. Furthermore, it impinges on many of the arguments I present in Chapters 8 and 9 regarding class and gender relations in the gentrification process.

Much of the impetus in the domestic labour debate as well as the gentrification debate comes from the presupposition that to be fundamentalist about class is to deny the validity of other areas of experience. This presupposition depends implicitly on accepting Marx's restrictive definition of subsistence, which allows for no possibility of self-expression. Using the system level definition of subsistence, it is possible to develop an economic framework which gives expression to D.Sayer's observation that "what is most socially *consequential* in capitalism is not the class relation on which it rests, but the wider 'abstraction' of sociality and subjectivity entailed in the generalization of the commodity form which this relation makes possible" (1991 p90). If there is patriarchy, or if there is racism, their effects are experienced by Abercrombie, Hill and Turner's "sovereign individuals of capitalism" (1986), created through the reduction of social relations to exchanges of abstract labour. To argue, as do Matthews (1984) and Johnson (1989), that class is inherently a patriarchal concept because women's labour is only accounted as being of value when women "enter the male world of paid work" (Johnson 1989 p682) is surely to put the cart before the horse. Patriarchy is inherently a

class concept because it is through class relations that patriarchy is experienced. Although Johnson is being ironic when she writes that

class is inapplicable to women *except* when they enter the masculine economy either as potential or as actual paid workers

(Johnson 1989 p682)

she in fact encapsulates the point precisely, as Massey (1989) points out.

The bottom line in these debates on the operation of patriarchy (or racism) in capitalism is that women's (or ethnic minorities') actual or potential capacity to labour is not adequately recognized or compensated. But to argue this is to concede the fundamentally capitalist principle that recognition ought to be in the form of financial compensation for what then immediately becomes abstract labour, performed by sovereign individuals of capitalism. In *Wage Labour and Capital* Marx criticizes the trades unions for marching behind banners displaying demands for better wages when they should be displaying demands for the abolition of the wages system. When it comes to the question of domestic labour, the same point stands. To argue, as Massey puts it, from "classes as historically constituted social phenomena" to "class as a concept ... confuses two issues and fails to make the conceptual point it is [sought]... to establish" (1989 p693).

As Massey argues, the whole point about capitalism is that it makes for "a very partial view of society", in which "the whole area outside paid work and the preparation for paid work is omitted from consideration" (1989 p693). But it does not seem to me that the solution is to treat those areas outside paid work (including, not least, gentrification) implicitly as though they were in principle analyzeable as paid work, an implication which, I repeat once more, is based on an acceptance of Marx's definition of subsistence. Defining subsistence in terms of the requirements for the reproduction of the labour-power of each individual worker rules out the possibility of workers being able to exercise consciousness in a form which is not completely determined by their place in the economic structure. It is this definition of subsistence which underpins the SCA model. Consequently, as I have shown, we are presented with the spectacle of people who would in other situations applaud Marx's opposition to Utopian socialism, actually making assessments of arguments within Marxism on the basis of idealist and essentialist presuppositions about human nature (5.3 above). In Chapter 6, I develop a sociology of consciousness in which the relation of the experience of waged labour to the experience of those activities which take place outside paid work is more adequately theorized.

As for this chapter, viewing agency in terms of choice and demand satisfies the desire to place agency at centre stage. To do so however, demand (and hence economic theory) must be incorporated into the premises of any explanation of social life, and that

explanation must therefore be founded on the theorization of difference. In other words, this chapter provides a philosophical underpinning for the insistence that gentrifiers gentrify because they can. Chapter 7 looks at the economic issues in more detail. In the meantime, having argued that the value of money provides material evidence of consciousness, agency and structure, it is still necessary to provide an account of how that consciousness is created under the particular conditions of modernity. Chapter 6 provides that account.

6 Robert Park & the dialectics of modernity

6.1 Introduction

Since Chapter 2, I have been arguing that the problems in explanations of gentrification betray a deep-rooted crisis in sociological theory generally. The gentrification debate, not unnaturally, tends to obscure these problems. If they were clearer, they could be resolved more easily. The deep-seated nature of these deficiencies has meant that it has been necessary to provide a reconstituted theory of structure, consciousness and agency, before an explanation of gentrification can be provided which avoids the problems of the accounts of gentrification analysed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 5 begins this work by exposing the homesickness which lies at the heart of most discussions of agency in gentrification studies and proposes instead a materialist conception of agency in capitalist society in which money is the medium of structure, agency and therefore consciousness. It is argued that this permits one to be fundamentalist about class without being reductionist about behaviour or motivation. Now while it is perfectly correct to argue, as Massey (1989) does, that a fundamentalist position on class cannot provide an account of social life which comprises the totality of human experience, the answer is not to dilute the specificity of class, but to derive an account of consciousness which includes the experience of class but is not reducible to it. This is the larger purpose of this chapter. This also means of course providing an account of social life into which gentrification can be fitted, and not, as in the gentrification debate, the other way round.

Specifically however, in terms of providing the basis for an explanation of gentrification, this chapter also completes the last part of the agenda set out in Chapter 3 for overcoming the problems identified in the gentrification literature: to break the presumed link between housing and class constitution; to distinguish between class and status, thus allowing the mediation of consciousness in reactions to class situation; and finally to establish a link between housing and status which does not surreptitiously re-establish a place for class, or more precisely, which preserves the autonomy of individual consciousness in the face of structural determinants. This chapter argues that such a link may be established by means of the works of Robert Park. It therefore calls for a revival of interest in Park's work.

However, although it strongly recommends that attention be paid to Park's writings, this

chapter is not about Robert Park, it is about modernity, the social context in which gentrification occurs. Chapter 4 concluded by promising that this chapter would demonstrate a link between housing and identity. However, why housing should have such a role at all is a question which also needs to be answered, and this chapter addresses this issue also. Saunders (1989 1990) has generated considerable debate over whether or not owner-occupied housing does provide ontological security (cf. *Beyond A Nation Of Homeowners* conference 1991). However, this debate has concentrated on the qualities which make owner occupation a privileged form of housing tenure, and not so much on the qualities of housing itself. The fact that housing does have such a role, I shall argue in 6.4 below, is one of the features which makes gentrification a phenomenon of modernity, and, I shall argue in Chapter 10, the feature which makes it such an object of controversy.

Having argued for the past three chapters that the state of the gentrification debate reveals serious difficulties in the very heart of sociological theory which have acted to the detriment of attempts at explaining gentrification, the works of Robert Park may not seem the most obvious place to start rectifying the situation. In the next section, I attempt to justify why one should think of using Park's work to discuss the problems of modernity.

6.2 Confronting the received wisdom on Park and the Chicago school of urban sociology

When people think of the Chicago school of urban sociology, they do not think of Robert Park; they think of Ernest Burgess and Louis Wirth. They may cite Park's name, but the representative icons of the Chicago school are Burgess' concentric zone model and Louis Wirth's picture of *Urbanism as a way of life* (Burgess 1925, Wirth 1938). Park's works are cited only in support of the propositions contained in these two great statements, or viewed as inspiration for the other famous works of the Chicago school: Anderson on *The Hobo* (1923), Cressey on *The Taxi-Dance Hall* (1932), Reckless on *Vice in Chicago* (1933), Thrasher on *The Gang* (1927) or Zorbaugh on *The Gold Coast and the Slum* (1929).

If Park's work is examined at all, examination is interested less in exposition of Park's ideas than with identification of the influences on Park's thought (Saunders 1981, Gottdiener 1985, Dickens 1990) and inevitably then either with how those influences came to affect subsequent development of the Chicago School (Matthews 1977, Bulmer 1984, D.Smith 1987). Almost nobody, it seems, interests themselves in Park's work for

its own sake, as they do for example with Marx or Weber. Consequently, no-one is looking to see how Park's work might be made relevant to contemporary thought, as they do with Marx, Weber or Durkheim. Park is regarded as a considerably influential thinker, but not as a particularly original one. Therefore his work tends to be reviewed, as Carter put it "*faute de mieux*" (1972 p161), used simply as a vehicle for continuing discussion of some other thinker or ideas in which the reviewer may be interested. The inadequate treatment of Park's ideas in the conventional wisdom is my justification for using Park's writings, not as preliminary to a discussion of later debates or authors in the sociology literature but as the principal basis for my account as to how identity, status and housing may be linked.

The only comparisons I shall be drawing is with Marx and Raymond Williams, and this only for the purposes of demonstrating that the ideas of Park and Marx are complementary. The complementarity lies in their treatments of the development of consciousness. Marx may be said to discuss the development of consciousness in social-historical terms, whereas Park discusses it in personal-historical terms. Park's account is not a psychological one however. What he seeks to present is a *sociology* of consciousness. Williams argues that such an approach was once available, as

a seminal element in the period of classical sociology... [However the] general tendency within bourgeois sociology has been a reduction of the sociology of consciousness to the 'sociology of knowledge'.

(R.Williams 1977 p138)

It is as just such a sociology of consciousness which Park's work needs to be appreciated.

Park's work is rarely described as a dialectic (e.g., Ballis Lal 1989). Turner (1967) and Matthews (1977) are the exceptions. Yet it is clear that the famous 'invasion' -'succession'-'assimilation' sequence (Park, 1934 - 1952 pp160/161, 1928 -1967 p199; 1936 -1952 p75; 1914 -1967 p114, 1936 - 1952 p145) corresponds to an Hegelian triad of Being, Negation and Becoming (Kainz 1973). Turner argues that Park's dialectic fell apart in the hands of his followers who, "rendered static" many of his "characteristically dynamic ideas" (1967 p.ix). This has been a common problem in the development of sociological thought. Raymond Williams (1977) argues that the reason terms such as community and society, or culture and civilization are brought into the language, and come to have such overlapping meanings is that each began life as a term for an active process - society referred to the act of sociation, community to the act of communion and so forth.

Gradually however, the active sense of each term was lost, and the concept rendered static. But the experience of this active sense was so powerful, each time the active sense

began to be lost from the current description, another term would be coined to try to encapsulate that lost active sense. Thus the immediate active sense of society comes to be replaced by community, culture is extolled in opposition to civilization. Yet these replacement terms themselves come to be burdened with the same abstracted characteristics and separated in their meaning from the active constitutive processes they were supposed to convey. In many ways, one might argue, the concept of locality similarly tries to capture the immediacy implicit in the original active senses of society and community. All of these attempts, Williams argues, were trying to deal with a common problem, and in as much as the attempt has continually to be repeated, they deal with a common error, namely a radical separation of individuals from each other, of "the subjective as distinct from the objective; experience from belief; feeling from thought; the immediate from the general; the personal from the social" (R.Williams 1977 p129).

Thus for Durkheim, for example 'society' becomes something 'out there', separate from, "or at least radically distinguishable" from "the inner world" of the 'individual' (R.Williams 1983K p248 - cf. D.Sayer 1991 p65). The inner world itself is something which is to be separated from the natural world outside. Consequently, aesthetics and psychology become for Williams the "two great modern ideological systems" (1977 p129). By extension, as the other, and equally erroneous side of this separation of actual lived experience into personal and social, would stand sociology. Rather than talk of social *structures*, which immediately concedes the reduction of the social into the fixed, and the separation of the personal, agency, from the social, structure, Williams prefers to talk of 'pressures', 'limits', 'determinations' and 'formations' (1977 *passim*).

Park's dialectic strives to overcome these pressures toward the separation of the personal and the social, as described by Williams. However in his attempts to apply this dialectic, it is clear that Park did not recognize the active process of development of meanings, the "habitual" slide into a "past tense" (R.Williams 1977 p128) to be present in the terms of his dialectic. Thus, in Park's writings, society and culture, bearing the active sense, are opposed to community and civilization, bearing the fixed sense; or more generally, the social is opposed to the biotic. The relation between the first and the second terms of these couples embodies the tension between the active and the fixed senses in which we are habitually disposed to think of social relations.

However, Williams' argument that "it is the reduction of the social to fixed forms that remains the basic error" (1977 p129) needs to be qualified slightly. It is not so much the reduction which remains the error, as lack of awareness of the tendency toward such reduction. If D.Sayer is right to argue that in modern life "reification is a social process, not a mere category error" (1991 p65), then the reduction of the social to the fixed is a

result of social pressures which must be equally as insistent as the desire to maintain the active sense of these now-fixed terms. If the need for a means of expressing the active senses of society, or community is so strong that new words are continually being coined to meet this need, then so also must be the social pressures towards such reduction. These social pressures, argues D.Sayer, are constitutive parts of the condition of modernity. The tension which Saunders (1981 p79) notes in Park's dialectic is not therefore to be seen as a source of weakness, but an implicit recognition of these tensions between the active and the fixed; in Park's words, between the bohemian and the philistine.

Therefore the terms society and community, culture and civilization, social and biotic, in the form in which Park uses them, should be seen as his implicit recognition of some of the most problematic issues in the explanation of social life to its participants. Also, as dialectical couples, they must be regarded as being inherent in each and every situation being described or examined. One cannot be described without invoking the other. Thus Saunders is wrong to describe Park's account of the relation of community to society in terms of a temporal sequence rather than a dialectical relationship (Saunders 1981 p56). The crucial mediating concept in all these accounts is the relation of the individual to society, as expressed in the processes of acculturation and integration, identity and status (6.2 below). Nowhere does Saunders, nor indeed any of the other reviews cited in this chapter, discuss this vital aspect of Park's thought.

One school of sociology which has continued to claim Park as an intellectual forebear, and which has suffered much from accusations of being "inept", "undeveloped", and "befuddled" (Rock 1979 pp 220, 238) is symbolic interactionism. Rock's account of symbolic interactionism rejects such accusations and lays charges of its own against what Rock calls macro-sociology; charges which bear consideration when evaluating the strength of the criticisms made of Park: "Interactionism discards most macro-sociological thought as an unsure and over-ambitious metaphysics" (Rock 1979, p238). This is a strong claim, but one which is at least partially vindicated by Pahl's doubts about SCA (Pahl 1989, Chapter 4 above). If Rock's arguments are taken together with Williams', the reasons for Park's making the methodological decisions he did become much clearer, and the macro-sociological traditions rejection of Park's work far less convincing.

Rock accuses the macro-sociological tradition of beginning from the reduction of the social to the fixed form and then attempting to turn round and explain the social in terms of the fixed form, and falling down in the attempt:

[Orthodox sociologists] have been unsure whether a precise demarcation can exist between culture and social organisation, or whether an autonomous realm of structure exists...

Interactionists would assert that social organisation is not what the macrosociologists believe it to be. They would further assert that the separation of social organisation and culture is a perilous and probably absurd exercise. After all, a culturally uncontaminated example of social organisation would be a most implausible entity. To the Martian, all social life would be equally baffling. It would not happily resolve itself into an opaque culture and an intelligible structure. Rather, both would be in need of symbolic decoding. There can be no easy devaluation of interactionist ontology as a mere lack of appreciation. Neither can problems be met by appeals for greater clarity or conformity.

(Rock 1979 p220/1)

It is clear that Rock and Williams share many of the same concerns. Although Williams rarely discusses sociology, the arguments Rock makes from within the symbolic interactionist perspective are comparable to Williams' reservations about the "new and displaced forms of social analysis and categorization", with their spurious opposition to "the 'human imagination', the 'human psyche', the 'unconscious', [and] with their 'functions' in art and myth and dream" (R.Williams 1977 p130).

Clearly however, some distinctions must be made in descriptions of social change and process, or no change or process could be observed at all, the problem of individuation (Ollman, Chapter 1, 1971). However, according to Ollman, individuation does not mean separation of the (so-called) internal and external, which are always internally related. In fact, it is possible to argue that Williams and Rock are arguing for an awareness of the dialectical relation of the so-called internal and external factors in any context, and that this is what Park's dialectic attempts to provide.

Park's loose dialectic of theory and data was an effort to place the questions raised by the confrontation of classical theory and modern experience in a problematic context, where the premises would not dictate the answers.

(Matthews 1977 p191)

In reducing the social to fixed forms, it may be argued that macro-sociology does indeed let "the premises... dictate the answers". This, after all, was the burden of Pahl's complaints about SCA. The apparently Darwinian language in which some of Park's ideas are expressed should not be allowed to distract from the seriousness and the quality of the attempts Park made to confront this central problem for theories of social process and change.

The organization of the remainder of the chapter is therefore as follows. First an outline of Park's dialectic as a sociology of consciousness, then an outline of its complementarities with Marx's, using Raymond Williams' arguments that human ecology should be the basis of socialist practices, followed by an account of the role of

space and spatial relations in a dialectic of socialization and social change in modern life. Once this account has been developed it is then possible to understand the significance of housing in defining status in conditions of modernity. Gentrification on this account will have significant effects on the constitution of status, not class. Furthermore, far from being post-modern, it is quintessentially a product of modernity. This proves once more the paucity of the postindustrialist explanations of gentrification. However, simply to say that gentrification is a product of modernity is not enough. Modernity provides the context only, within which gentrifiers exhibit their ability to gentrify because they can. Chapter 7 will then show how gentrification may be specified within this context, that is, without invoking changes in social organization or class constitution.

6.3 Park's dialectic - basic principles

Park's dialectic begins with a consideration of the fundamental bases of human behaviour, that is a search for the fundamental social element (Park 1927 - 1955). His considerations do not lead him to sociobiology, to find the social element in the 'instincts' of human beings. "Even if they may be said to exist", these instincts "themselves are in a constant process of change through the accumulation of memories and habits", (Park 1925, 1926 - 1952 p174), that is, through the development of consciousness.

The fundamental human element is not instinct but the tendency to act itself, the 'attitude' (ibid.). The tendency to act is however formless in itself. In order for actual actions to occur, it must go through what may be interpreted as a typically Hegelian sequence of Being, Negation, and Becoming. This sequence is repeated again and again in wider and wider contexts from the growth of a child into adulthood (1929 - 1952 p203) or the socialization of an immigrant into a new society or the development of personality types (1931 - 1955 p263), through the relation of communication and consensus, community and society, civilization and culture (1936 - 1952 p157/8), to social change, migration and war (Park 1941-1967). It is in this context that Park's ecological metaphors of dominance (1934 - 1952 pp160/161), invasion (1928 -1967 p199), succession (1936 - 1952 p75) and assimilation (1914 -1967 p114; 1936 - 1952 p145) must also be placed.

Park describes the determination (that is to say, the negation of the formlessness) of an individual's attitudes in terms of a dialectic between self-consciousness and other's attitudes (1925 - 1952 p174). Park quotes on numerous occasions Dewey's aphorism that society exists "in and through communication" (e.g., Park 1925, 1926 - 1952

p174/5). Communication gives form to attitude and attitudes form self-consciousness and self-determination.

The formation of the attitude is a synthesis of experience and ambition, in which the ego surveys its past, reflects upon it, and projects itself into the future.

(Park 1931b - 1950 p358)

Attitudes are the processes by which the tendency to act is continuously transformed into actual actions, which thereby generates further experience (Park 1931-1955 p274).

Each stage in the ongoing process of socialization therefore takes place through and with the acquisition of experience, in particular through communication. Communication gives form to attitudes, attitudes form self-consciousness and the acquisition of self-consciousness leads to self-determination. The dialectics of socialization can then be presented as a dialectic of naïvety, nonconformity and self-consciousness (1929 - 1952 p203).

Communication also presupposes a "universe of discourse", in which compromises are made and decisions are reached over actions to be taken (Park 1925, 1926 - 1952 p173). This "universe of discourse" which comprises communication and socialization contains two opposing and contradictory poles; on the one hand consensus, but on the other conflict or competition. Although these two poles may be isolated for descriptive purposes, all actual social relations, expressed in the communications and interactions one individual has with another, contain and express both these elements (Park 1929 - 1952 p178/9).

By referring us to habit, custom and mores, Park appears to collude in that habitual slippage into the past tense which Williams decries. But it would be wrong to suggest that this is the category error which Williams suggests. As I have argued above, this habit and its associated category errors arise from social processes, not simply from poor conceptualization. Park's account of the struggle for status therefore is not some *a priori* idealist teleology. The struggle for status is inextricably intertwined with alienation and self-consciousness.

The fact of communication implies the existence of other individuals/persons who are themselves aware of the ultimate incommunicability of their experience, and thus aware also of their separate, alienated status. Alienation is not to be construed simply in terms of self-consciousness and the awareness of an ultimately incommunicable isolation; a world of "brooding, subjective inscrutable egos" (Park 1929 - 1952 p203). As with Hegel, socialization is inextricably linked to alienation (Kainz 1973). The ensemble of

gestures an individual acquires in the course of socialization goes to make up that individual's character, the role that that individual plays as a person. Alienation is therefore objectified in the concept of the 'person'. Reflecting on the fact that "is probably no mere historical accident... that the word "person" in its first meaning is a mask", Park comments

In a sense and insofar as this mask represents the concepts which we have formed of ourselves, the role we are striving to live up to, this mask is our "truer self", the self we should like to be. So, at any rate, our mask becomes at last an integral part of our personality: becomes second nature. We come into the world as individuals, achieve character, and become persons.

(Park 1927 - 1967 p191)

Since therefore "the individual's status is determined to a considerable degree by conventional signs - by fashion and by 'front'..." (Park 1916 - 1952 p47), status itself is the objectification of alienation.

For Park, self-consciousness is therefore not so much a state of bliss for we instinctively strive as one which is visited upon us and which is inherently problematical:

Our self-consciousness is just our consciousness of [our]... individual differences of experience, together with a sense of their ultimate incommunicability...

(Park, 1925, 1926 - 1952 pp 175)

Park describes this form of consciousness as a "subjectivity" which "is at once a condition and a product of human life." (1927 - 1967 p190). Williams' and Sayer's descriptions of the historical specificity of this subjectivity means that this should be more properly understood as a condition of modern life (R.Williams 1973b, D.Sayer 1991 cf. also Connolly 1988, Giddens 1990). This presentation of the conditions of modernity as universal and transhistorical is a weakness in Park's work, but this weakness takes nothing away from his account of the processes of socialization under the conditions of modernity (6.4 below).

Self-consciousness is therefore consciousness of our alienation from each other. Park comes very close to defining the condition of humanity in existentialist terms - to be human is to strive to overcome alienation, but never to succeed since this would mean that the striving would cease and therefore the quality of human-kindness be lost. Unlike the existentialists however, Park concentrates on the social rather than the personal consequences of this condition:

This world of communication and of "distances" in which we all seek to maintain some sort of privacy, personal dignity and poise is a dynamic world, and has an order and a character quite its own...[in which] ...the conception which each of us has of himself is limited by the conception which every other individual, in the same limited world of communication, has of himself and of

every other individual...

The consequence is - and this is true of any society - every individual finds himself in a struggle for status: a struggle to preserve his personal prestige, his point of view, and his self respect. He is able to maintain them, however, only to the extent to which he can gain for himself the recognition of everyone else whose estimate seems important... From this struggle for status no philosophy of life has yet discovered a refuge.

(Park, 1925, 1926 - 1952 p176/7)

The acquisition of status is not shorthand for high social status. On the external, or extra-personal, level, status is the social validation of the person, the individual-in-society, the bearer of social relations. At the personal level, the acquisition of status is a moral issue, in the sense of internalizing the mores or customary obligations inherent in interpersonal communication (Park 1931b - 1955 p267). At the same time, status is part of an individual's self-conception, or the projection of action into the future (cf. Chapter 5.5).

Just as action results in the development of an individual, so also it results in the development of society:

Societies are formed for action and in action. They grow up in the efforts of individuals to act collectively. The structures which societies exhibit are on the whole the incidental effects of collective action.

(Park 1929 - 1952 p181)

Action tends to the development of social structures, and social structures in turn impose their characteristics upon the acting members of that society:

The same forms which co-operate to create the characteristic social organization and the accepted moral order of a given society or social group determine at the same time, to a greater or lesser extent, the character of the individuals who compose that society.

(Park 1927 - 1967 p188)

Habitual actions become recognized as gestures, "since what one does is always an indication of what one intends to do" (Park 1927 - 1955 p18). As habitual actions develop into customary modes of behavior and moral regimes, societies develop into organized structures capable of reproducing themselves intergenerationally. The development of social structures consequently follows a similar Hegelian dialectic:

Institutions are always... the accumulated effects of tradition and customs *they are always in the process of becoming* what they were predestined to be, human nature being what it is, rather than what they are or were.

[They therefore] seem to be... a product of the type of dialectical or rational communication which is the peculiar practice of human beings.

(Park 1939 - 1952 p246 emphasis added, p258)

To summarize, Park's dialectic of socialization is an account of struggle between the pressure to conform (being) and the determination to be an individual (negation) (Park

1929 - 1952 p203). Socialization leads to the formation of a person, defined, foreshadowing Althusser, as an individual-in-society ("The individual represents the human being outside of society. The person represents the individual in society" Park 1950 p20). It involves a dialectic of alienated, objective being (simple unmediated attitude and self-consciousness - the result of experience); negation (determination of attitude by others); and becoming (the self-conscious determinate person - a synthesis of self-consciousness and determined mediated attitude). However, society (and all its structures) is itself created and recreated through these same processes. There is no dividing line between the social and the psychological, either in theory or practice.

The struggle for status (the dialectic of status) deals with some of the most important themes in Western philosophy since Hegel. Furthermore, since his account of social change derives from the same principles as does his account of human nature, Park's dialectic avoids many of the problems of the unwarranted separation of a whole way of life into separate idealist categories, problems which have bedevilled sociology before and since. Park's dialectic therefore gives us a very useful way of approaching the question of status, which, while it can make use of Weber's insights, does not owe anything to Weber's views on social organization. Nor does it owe anything to Marx. However, it should be clear, from what has so far been seen of Park's dialectic that, in principle it ought to be reconcilable with Marx's. I shall argue that the difference between the two dialectics is one of foci of interest, not of fundamental differences in ontology or epistemology, and that therefore it is worth trying to reconcile the two. Achieving such a reconciliation not only strengthens both but also means that the last piece of the jigsaw may be put in place, namely a sociological account of the development of consciousness which includes the experience of class but which is not reducible solely to class considerations. It gives us the conceptual apparatus necessary to construct the link between housing and status so as to understand why on the one hand gentrifiers gentrify because they can, and on the other why this expression of free will is so bitterly resented.

6.4 Mobility, marginality and consciousness

The motor of Park's dialectic, and why I term it a dialectic of modernity, is not urbanism, but 'Progress'. Progress breaks up the "cake of custom" (Park 1928 - 1967 p197, 1943-1955, 1944-1950), on the one hand releasing energy for social change, but on the other promoting social disorganization, as the habits, customs and mores of the community are broken. What Park calls Progress is of course the condition of modernity (cf. 5.2 and 5.3 above, and D.Sayer's account of Weber's views on Progress - 1991 p148ff.). It is in this context that Park's account of the formation of the person is sited. What is particularly intriguing about this account is the way in which it anticipates themes and concerns to be found in R.Williams' work, the influence of mobility on modern consciousness.

The impact of Progress in the experience of the modern city means that society is indeed normally in a state of flux. The impact of mobility on the dialectic of experience and ambition is consequently one of the most common themes in Park's work (cf. Park 1925 - 1952 p92/3). Mobility not surprisingly therefore plays an important role in Park's account of the development of the marginal man, perhaps Park's most original contribution to sociological thought.

Some justification is required for retaining the terminology of marginal 'man' and not marginal 'person'. In dealing with this issue, I rely on D.Sayer's conclusions to this problem of gender blindness in the 'classics'. He argues that it is better to let the sexist language stand than to defer to modern-day sensibilities (cf. Love 1986):

To imagine this deficiency can be remedied by changing the gender of pronouns is to efface even more thoroughly that world of feminine experience sociology has so conspicuously neglected. It silences by a token inclusion, of a kind that Marx and Weber might recognize as paradigmatically modern...
(D.Sayer 1991 p5)

In Park's writings (and Williams' also - see below), it must be understood that the marginal man is precisely that - a man. Although in many situations the *processes* of the development of consciousness may be the same or very similar across genders, there is no account in either author of how gender may affect the *outcomes* of the development of consciousness. To remedy this deficiency could be a very important topic for future work, but not in this thesis, as I shall argue in Chapter 9 that gender issues are not important for the explanation of why gentrification occurs - which is not to say that they are not significant in its processes or effects. Furthermore, as argued in Chapter 5, in explanations of gentrification, SCA raises its hoary head over gender issues just as much

as over class. Accounts of diseased and sinful alien space invaders playing back to the future in the inner city are denounced for not taking into consideration the experience of Ms. diseased and sinful alien space invader in the process (cf. Bondi 1991). The gender blindness is rightly denounced but while the proposed remedies fail to deal with the problem of SCA, they will achieve little more than a change of pronoun in the way that SCA handles the issues.

Park develops the idea of the marginal man through an account of the effects of migration: of the individual into a new society; and of the impact such immigration makes on the host society. The effect of immigration on the host society is summed up in the famous dominance-succession-assimilation triad.

Conditions of stability result in a society of philistines "whose life-organization is taken over from, and stabilizes in the patterns which [they find] in the society around [them]" (Park 1931a - 1955 p262). Placed in such a society, the new migrant, unaware of the customs and mores of the people around him will initially display the naivety of a child. The immigrant, being unaware of the mores of the host society, presents a constant living challenge to them. To be naive therefore is to be alien (Park 1931 - 1955 p286). Until the mores of the society have been assimilated by - taken into the psyche of - the immigrant, and the immigrant thereby assimilated into - made more like - the host society (Park 1914 -1967 p114), the immigrant will be denied the status of a person by the native members of the host society. From the point of view of the host society, assimilation presents itself as a question of establishing social control. Turner (1967 p.xi) argues that this was Park's central concern.

What presents itself to the host society as the preservation of order presents itself to the immigrant as a struggle for status, for recognition as a person. The "fundamental struggle for existence" (Park 1939 - 1952 p120) is no more nor less than the struggle for existence as a person, i.e., for status (Park 1941a - 1967 p159). Unlike the child, who similarly seeks, or rather learns to seek recognition as a person, the migrant brings to the new society, the memories and experience of the old, in which such status had already been won. The immigrant is a marginal man, standing on the margins of two cultures.

Park uses the example of the 'emancipated Jew' in nineteenth century Germany to illustrate both the problems and the promise inherent in the situation of the marginal man:

He was a man on the margin of two cultures and two societies which never completely interpenetrated and fused. The emancipated Jew was, and is, historically and typically the first cosmopolite and citizen of the world...

The conflict of cultures as it takes place in the mind of the immigrant, is just

the conflict of "the divided self", the old self and the new. And frequently there is no satisfying issue of this conflict, which often terminates in a profound disillusionment...

... the restless wavering between the warm security of the ghetto which he has abandoned, and the cold freedom of the outer world in which he is not yet quite at home is typical. A century earlier, Heinrich Heine, torn with the same conflicting loyalties, struggling to be at the same time a German and a Jew, enacted a similar role. It was... the secret and tragedy of Heine's life that circumstances condemned him to live in two worlds, in neither of which he ever quite belonged.

(Park 1928 - 1967 p205/6)

The emancipation of the migrant may see a return to the naive moment in the dialectics of socialization into the new society, but nevertheless some integration into its mores does occur (Park 1928 -1967 p200/201). In effect, a new person is created. The migrant becomes "in the process not merely emancipated, but enlightened." (Park 1928 -1967 p201). It is this enlightenment, painful as it may be, as old securities are abandoned and new insecurities encountered, which is the precondition for change in the society to which the migrant moves. The ideology of a society or social group is an "integral part of its social structure..." (Park 1939 - 1952 p247/8). To change a society's ideology is also therefore to change its social order. With the onset of immigration, the host society is forced to change the definition of who is and who is not a person in that society, to change the definition of who is and who is not an alien. With this change in ideology, as immigration proceeds, the social order must therefore also change.

However Park also argues that the replacement of one social order by another can be understood without reference to migration at all, through another aspect of his dialectic of socialization, succession. Succession occurs intergenerationally as the compromise (synthesis) between being and its negation, naivety and non-conformity, experience and ambition is worked out over and over again in the processes of socialization (Park 1938 - 1952 p236). Park's concept of succession is therefore reminiscent of Giddens' theory of structuration (Giddens 1987, Thompson 1989).

If social change does occur through succession, however, then in significant respects we are all 'marginal men', standing in the margins between a fixed past and an undetermined future. The marginal man is not for Park a person located on the margins of one society; whatever that might mean. Nor is the marginal man to be thought of as an outcast, redundant or low-life person of little or no status in society (cf. Perlman 1975). The marginal man represented for Park not only the typical problem of modern society, that is to say, the effects of migration in all its ramifications, but also the promise of its solution.

The character of the marginal man is a consequence of the experience of modernity, and

so is his situation, between the past and the future, in the indefinite present which Williams (1973b p357) argued is the experience of the modern city. Park himself argues that the present is experienced as a tension, and that this tension tends to the breakup of those same habitual actions which he argues underpin social structure.

The fact that men can look back with regret to their past and look forward with lively expectation to their future, suggests that there is, ordinarily, in the lives of human beings an amount of tension and sustained suspense which tends to break up established habits and to hold those habits not yet established in solution. During this period of tension and suspense when overt action and eventual habits are in process, activity is directed less by previous habits than by present attitudes.

(Park 1931 -1955 p274)

If the tension Park describes does ordinarily exist in the lives of human beings, then the society in which they live must be ordinarily in a state of flux: it must be a modern society. Conditions of stability promote a lack of self-consciousness as the ideologies generated in stability become evermore taken-for-granted (cf. mediæval Japan in Park 1931b -1955 p289). The implication of this, of course, is that the intense self-consciousness which Park describes so convincingly is not simply part of the human condition, but is in fact a condition of an unstable, highly mobile, society.

The conclusion that the conditions of modernity make us all marginal men need not simply be a matter of inference from Park's work. R.Williams also makes use of the concept in very similar ways to Park (R.Williams 1973b p201, p213, p223 cf. also Chapter 10.4 below). In particular, Williams too stresses the importance of immigration in the creation of the marginal man (cf. Pinckney 1989 p14). Where Park describes the fortunes of the marginal man in terms of his personality, however, Williams describes them in terms of his class situation. However, the concerns which Park considers to be central to sociological enquiry, namely the exercise of social control, become problematical in Williams' account for exactly the same reasons - mobility and the destruction of the mores.

It was... in the break-up and mobility of the post-feudal society, that a new ideology decisively appeared. It at once organized the response to poverty... and... it linked poverty to labour in new ways, so that the harrying of what was called vagrancy, itself the result of a socially created disturbance and mobility, became, in its turn, a social duty... the biggest problem of this system was always its treatment of an inevitable and natural mobility. ... The idea of settlement, and then of paternal care, was counterposed to that of mobility, of the wandering 'sturdy rogues', the free labourers.

(R.Williams, 1973b p105/6)

Much of what Williams has to say in regard to the question of the relation of mobility to the marginal man is to be found in his analysis of the works of Thomas Hardy. Williams argues that Hardy's Wessex is in reality

that border country so many of us have been living in: between custom and education, between work and ideas, between love of place and experience of change.

(R.Williams 1973b, p239)

The contrasts which mark the border country have persisted since the sixteenth century "in a long crisis of values" (R.Williams, 1973b p106). Insofar as the border country is indeed one in which "so many of us" live, and insofar as the concept applies across genders, we are all marginal men, just as Park seems to imply.

Chapter 4 argued that we are (nearly) all members of the proletariat. Here I am arguing that experience of the marginal man stands for the experience of everyone living under conditions of modernity, confirming Shields argument that "'Marginality' is a *central* theme in Western culture and thought" (1990 p276 - Chapter 3.3 above cf. Chapter 10 below). Marginality is the characteristic condition of modernity. Chapter 5.5 argued that Marx's limited account of the experience of everyday life outside of the immediate context of capitalist production ought not to be supplemented by the unnecessary expansion of the categories of class into areas outside of that context, but by incorporating Marx's account of the moulding of consciousness in that context into an account of the formation of consciousness across "a whole way of life" (R.Williams, 1961 p63). Given that the conditions (marginal and proletarian) characterize the daily experience of most of us, Parks's account of the development of the consciousness of the marginal man would appear fill that lacuna.

As I have shown, Parks's dialectic is specifically concerned with the formation of consciousness. Marx, however, describes (in his 1859 *Preface*, cited in *Capital I*) only how consciousness is *shaped*; he emphatically does *not* describe how consciousness is *created*:

My view is that each particular mode of production and the relations of production corresponding to it at each given moment, in short, the 'economic structure of society', is 'the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which *correspond definite forms* of social consciousness' and 'that the mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life'.

(Marx 1976 p175 ft35 emphasis added)

As Blanchard (1985) argues, the experience of class can only be experienced personally. The parallel experience of marginality and proletarian status make for a potentially fruitful linkage between personal and collective experience. Park argues that the experience of the struggle for status of classes in capitalist society is experienced by its members in the same fashion as that of the marginal man. The processes whereby individuals struggle for status are the same processes by which individuals are brought to terms with their

status, as they reconcile their ambitions with their achievements. Marx's dialectic is described by Park as "a struggle of economic or functional classes for social status in a social hierarchy" (Park 1943a - 1950 p304). The struggle for status in this instance takes place in the context of an *otherwise derived* social hierarchy, the hierarchy of class in capitalist society. Classes of people who are partially but permanently excluded from the "imaginary community of the nation" (Hall 1989 p9) struggle to be recognized as individuals-in-society by other classes. Friedmann's (1977) concepts of central and peripheral labour become very important here (6.6 below). Like the marginal man in modern society, the proletariat is both partly included and partly excluded from capitalist society (cf. Cleaver 1979). Like the marginal man, the proletariat also not only epitomizes the problems of its society, but also provides the promise of its dissolution (Marx & Engels 1848). Parks's account of the development of the consciousness of the marginal man provides a useful complement to Marx's account of the shaping of that developed consciousness through the experience of the capitalist production process.

Equally importantly, Park's account of the formation of the consciousness of the marginal man thus permits the incorporation of questions of space and spatial relations into a dialectic of social change which, I shall argue below, is superior to anything currently on offer in the literature. This then permits a discussion of the social origin and estimation of use values (such as housing) and their relation to exchange value. It is then finally possible to show the importance of a sense of place in the constitution of identity, which is to say in the constitution of status as a person within the context of the capitalist mode of production. It is these three characteristics of the development of consciousness in modernity, I shall argue, which lend gentrification its potential for social conflict.

6.5 The social dialectic of space

6.5.1 Society and space

Many attempts have been made to incorporate space and spatial relations into Marxist thought. Perhaps the most important attempts have been made by Henri Lefebvre, who has been a significant influence on the two authors considered in detail here, namely Harvey and Gottdiener (Harvey 1982, Gottdiener 1985). Lefebvre's approach is to seek ways of incorporating space and spatial relations into Marx's dialectic of production, and both Harvey and Gottdiener have developed this approach in significantly different ways.

Harvey's most extended attempt at incorporating the effects of space and spatial relations

into Marxism is contained in *The Limits to Capital* (1982). Here the effect of space and spatial relations is treated essentially as a context which, although created by the processes of capital accumulation, in its turn limits the conditions under which that accumulation may be carried on. This approach to the influence of space and spatial relations is one which in its essentials is followed by the localities approach, although usually the focus in locality studies is less economic than in Harvey's; instead the emphasis is on social process in general, however this may be defined in the course of the study (cf. Duncan & Savage 1989).

Harvey's argument follows closely the outlines of capitalist development sketched out in the Communist Manifesto of 1848. The 'spatial fix' to problems of capital accumulation created by investment in the built environment in one generation comes to represent a barrier to continued accumulation for later generations. In other words, space and spatial relations become no longer compatible with the productive forces they have helped to develop and turn into fetters of production. N. Smith, Harvey's disciple, follows this line of argument in his rent gap theory of gentrification (Chapter 7 below).

In Harvey's account, while space and spatial relations may affect the outcomes of the dialectic between capital and labour, the capital-labour dialectic remains itself fundamentally aspatial. The role of space in the system is in effect as one of the relations of production. Gottdiener argues that space should instead be treated as a force of production. Compared with Harvey's system, Gottdiener tries to push back the question of space and spatial relations into the Marxist dialectic itself. In his Lefebvrian account, Gottdiener distinguishes between social space, the home of use values and abstract space, the home of exchange value. Capitalism pulverizes social space, which is replaced by abstract space. Gottdiener demonstrates in all sorts of ways how neglect of space and spatial relations leads to economism or functionalism in Marxist thought. To make space a force of production, Gottdiener argues, would solve these problems.

In order to make space a force of production, Gottdiener argues, Marx's aspatial dialectic of production should be translated into spatial terms. However, even supposing this can be achieved in the terms in which Gottdiener proposes, space would remain an output of production in Gottdiener's just as much as in Harvey's work, rather than an input, which calling it a 'force' of production would imply. A successful translation of a word or concept depends on preserving as many of the properties of the original as possible. If therefore, the original concepts suffered from functionalism or economism, then their translations, even if successfully accomplished, will do so too. If we want to introduce space and spatial relations into Marxism, it is necessary to push the frontiers of space much further back than simple translation of Marx's dialectic into spatial terms will

allow.

The approaches of Harvey and Gottdiener to space, either as a relation or as a force of production respectively, can stand for the full range of contemporary positions, Marxist or otherwise, on the role of spatial relations in social structures, the point being that they begin at the social level. An *already theorized* set of social relations is adapted to take spatial considerations into account. A good example of this is the set of essays collected in Gregory & Urry (1985). A.Sayer's essay is typical of the approach: "Space makes a difference, but only in term of the particular causal powers and liabilities constituting it" (1985 p52). The causal (social) powers predate (in theoretical terms) the space they are supposed to constitute.

Similarly, Paasi, in a review of the various approaches to "the new regional geography", one of the bases of locality studies (Duncan and Savage 1991), notes that these approaches all

arise from the fact that space (and time), its symbolic and ideological dimensions as well as its material basis (nature, economy etc.) are essentially social categories.

(Paasi 1991 p240)

But essentially social as opposed to what? The approaches Paasi summarizes perpetuate an unwarranted division between the social and the individual. If space and spatial relations are as important in constituting the person as Park argues, then to attempt a reconciliation of an unnecessarily sundered relationship between the social and the spatial is to repeat in another context the attempts at the reconciliation of Marxism and psycho-analysis, which Williams so rightly criticizes.

These authors make the same mistake as Marx in his 1859 *Preface*, imagining that the formation of consciousness is non-problematical, and that what is important is how it is shaped by the labour process. Yet everyone brings different experiences to the labour process, experiences acquired through their being in different places at different times to everyone else. There is therefore, no guarantee whatsoever that they will react in the same ways to experience of the same objective circumstances in the labour process - communication discussion and consensus is required to produce a common attitude to this experience. What they have forgotten is Marx's purpose in constructing a dialectic of production in the first place.

Marx concentrates on creating a dialectic of production because production demonstrates that separation of means and ends which distinguishes the worst of architects from the best of bees. However, what is demonstrated by the ability to separate means from ends is self-consciousness, the ability to conceptualize oneself as separate from one's

environment, to survey one's past, reflect upon one's present, and project oneself into the future (Park 1931 - 1950 p358). Self-consciousness is implicit in creativity. In Park's dialectic the questions of space and spatial relations enter into the very ways in which human is distinguished from animal existence, because mobility itself is an indispensable aspect of the creation of self-consciousness: "Mind is an incident of locomotion" (Park 1925c - 1952 p93). The questions of space and spatial relations are fundamental to his definition of the humanity of human beings.

The role of space and spatial relations therefore cannot be added in to the dialectic of capital and labour once this dialectic has been established, nor can this dialectic be translated into spatial terms, as though these terms were "empty boxes" (Harvey 1982 p?) waiting to be filled up by Marx's categories of political economy. Human beings do not spring forth fully clothed in all their humanity, only to have this stripped from them in the capitalist labour process: they have first to acquire this humanity - status as human beings. The labour process shapes consciousness, space and spatial relations are fundamental in creating it.

Treating Park's dialectic as complementary to Marx's adds another string to the Marxist bow. It frees it from the confines of SCA. It is no longer necessary to trace each and every difference between social groups to differences in the conditions of their participation in the labour process. Nor does it mean a tacit abandoning of Marx's thought either. The conditions of modernity, with its associated mobility and anonymity, is nowhere better summarized than in the *Communist Manifesto* itself:

Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty, and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy profaned...

(Marx & Engels 1848 -)

In arguing that Park's dialectic is a dialectic of modernity, this condition of life has to be seen as, in a sense, the 'external' counterpart to the 'internal' dialectic of class struggle in the labour process. I shall return to this point in 6.5.2 below. For the moment, it is enough to re-emphasize that both dialectics are mutually implicated one in the other: there is no question of the one being theoretically prior to the other.

I wish now to fill out some of the implications of the effects of space and spatial relations in the development of status, implications which will be seen to have the greatest influence on the question of gentrification.

6.5.2 Place and status

It has already been argued that the necessity for communication arises from the experiences gained through mobility. Communication depends on a system of mutually intelligible, i.e., conventional signs (cf. R.Williams 1977 p40, also below). However, for signs to become conventionalized, there must be a certain stability of association also.

Society is, to be sure, made up of independent locomoting individuals. It is this fact of locomotion, as I have said, that defines the very nature of society. But in order that there may be permanence and progress in society, the individuals who compose it must be located; they must be located, for one thing, to maintain communication, for it is only through communication that the moving equilibrium that we call society can be maintained.

All forms of association among human beings rest finally upon locality and local association.

(Park 1925 - 1952 p93/4)

However all forms of association among human beings are also ones which are inextricably implicated in the struggle for status. The fact that all forms of association among human beings also rest finally upon locality and local association, means that a 'sense of place' may be understood as a realm of experience acquired either in socialization or in the maintenance of status.

'Status' is in other words 'place', place in society (" 'This is a white man's country.' 'The Negro is all right *in his place*' " - Park 1943a p310 emphasis added). The hobo is someone who has given up his place in society, preferring the open road. In his case, there is no synthesis of the negation of mobility with the being of place:

The trouble with the hobo is not lack of experience but lack of a vocation. The hobo is, to be sure, always on the move, but he has no destination, and naturally he never arrives... The hobo seeks change solely for the sake of change; it is a habit and like the drug habit, moves in a vicious circle. The more he wanders, the more he must.

(Park 1925c - 1952 p93)

A 'sense of place' results from the experience of socialization and constitutes part of this personal dialectic of experience and ambition. The question of a 'sense of place' is regarded by existential Marxist geographers as fundamental to the alienated human condition (Samuels 1978) for precisely these reasons.

As long as man is thus attached to the earth and to places on the earth, as long as nostalgia and plain homesickness hold him and draw him back to the haunts and places he knows best, he will never fully realize that other characteristic ambition of mankind, to roam freely and untrammelled over the surface of mundane things, and to live, like pure spirit, in his mind and in his imagination alone.

(Park 1925c - 1952 p91)

The issues of a sense of place have long been of interest to geographers, in particular humanistic geographers (Ley and Samuels 1978) who have taken their lead from authors such as Tuan (1974) and Buttimer (1980). These geographers have tended to concentrate on rural landscapes as expressions of cultural forms, rather than locales of socialization. Thus Tuan for example, when looking at 'environment and topophilia' (1974 p113 ff) discusses the relation of concepts of paradise to the environmental contexts in which they are formed, and the way these concepts became translated into artistic forms, notably landscape painting. Landscapes demonstrate the potency of universal myths.

These associations are carried over into discussions of urban milieux, as for instance in Tuan's discussion of neighbourhoods in cities and suburbs. Although neighbourhoods are defined in experiential terms as "the district in which one *feels* at home" (Tuan 1974 p215), this experience is defined either exclusively in psychological or in aesthetic terms - the two great modern ideologies:

a metaphysical or psychological 'community' is assumed, and characteristically, if only in abstract structures, it is universal; the middle terms of actual societies are excluded as ephemeral, superficial, or at best contingent and secondary... A direct connection... is forged between intense subjectivity and a timeless reality... There is a language of the mind... and there is this assumed universal language. Between them, as things, as signs, as material, as agents, are cities, towns, villages; actual human societies.

(R.Williams 1973b p295)

Williams' study of *The Country and the City* is an extended critique of the capacity of English literature to convey a sense of place in an adequate fashion. Often, he argues, nostalgia has instead been allowed to apotheosize the relations of class and appropriation that have created the place in which socialization occurred (an "obscuring vision of easy settlement" - R.Williams 1973 p105). Jackson is therefore right to be wary of "the more indulgent and idiosyncratic aspects of the humanistic study of 'sense of place'" (1989 p185). He seeks instead to use Williams' concept of 'structure of feeling', arguing that it shares the meaning of a 'sense of place' but goes "well beyond it in several key respects" (1989 p39). In practice, however, this means that Jackson does not discuss sense of place at all. This is a damaging omission.

A better translation of a 'sense of place' into the language of Williams' concepts is as a "knowable community" (R.Williams 1973b p202ff.). Williams' accounts of knowable communities in Austen, Eliot and Dickens connects exactly with the entwining of socialization, place and status, which lies at the heart of the concept of sense of place. Knowable communities are defined by status. Admission to the community is in itself a mark of status:

Neighbours in Jane Austen are not the people actually living nearby; they are the people living a little less nearby who can be visited. What she sees across

the land is a network of propertied houses and families, and through the holes of this tightly drawn mesh most actual people are simply not seen. To be face-to-face in this world is already to belong to a class. No other community, in physical presence or in social reality, is by any means knowable.

(R. Williams 1973b 203)

As Williams makes clear, all communities are in some sense defined in this way. Socialization is socialization into a community. It means the acquisition of status and status means recognition as a person. Recognition therefore is inevitably selective, and depends on familiarity, and local association. It is the conjuncture of these processes which result in the creation of a sense of place.

A sense of place is, as Williams suggests, liable to be affected by nostalgia. Williams has a habit, commented on by Cosgrove (1984), of implying that there is a 'real' history, or structure of feeling, discoverable behind the obscuring visions of easy settlement. Consequently there is a tendency in Williams' writings to see these nostalgic visions as in some way 'false'. Though this tendency is often understandable, it is nevertheless a fault in Williams' work which the development in his later writings of the notions of hegemony and counter-hegemony ought to have rooted out (cf. Chapter 5.3 above). A sense of place is not simply to be dismissed as sentiment. Even if it is only experienced as sentiment, it is still of the utmost importance to people's 'psychological well-being', or 'ontological security', their sense of who they are.

The processes of socialization, which include a sense of place, may be summarized simply as "learning from experience". To talk of "learning from experience" in this context is however to suggest that the most important relationship that human beings have is with their memories (Warnock 1987 ch.6). Socialization and the social construction of identity means that human beings define themselves in terms of relationships. This is normally understood in terms of relationships with other people, and, particularly in capitalist society, with possessions as they mediate interpersonal relationships (cf. 6.6 below). But the relationship with their memories exists on a deeper, often subconscious, level, and which colours their relationships to other people and their reactions to fresh experiences. The most traumatizing effect of amnesia is not knowing *who you are*. Relationship is not static, but a process, therefore an ongoing engagement between the subject and the object.

Warnock denies however that her arguments mean endorsing a psycho-analytical or psychological approach to the analysis of the relationship between identity and memory (Warnock 1987 Chapter 4). Warnock argues that the importance of a sense of place in the construction of identity arises through the comparison of the present experience of the

place, with the memory of the former experience of the place. Warnock uses Wordsworth's return to Tintern Abbey to illustrate her argument:

The existence of his memory-images retained during the five years between his visits, allows him to explore his *own continuous existence* and to seek meaning in the emotions that are now, on a return to the same place, so powerfully experienced, yet so changed.

(Warnock, 1987 p85)

Particularly in conditions of modernity and mobility, where meaning has to be sought out - and Wordsworth's *Prelude* is regarded by Williams as important for being one of the earliest recognitions of the problematical nature of this condition (R.Williams 1973b p280) - a 'sense of place' is one of the most important of the memorial associations which affect or influence personal assessments of identity. Indeed the problem of the past, and thus of memory in retrieving this past, is one which, Williams argues, pervades all areas of thinking about society and social processes and change (1977 pp128/129 - see also Redfern 1992).

That sense of place which Warnock finds in Wordsworth's poetry is important to Wordsworth precisely because he *returns* to Tintern Abbey *bearing new experiences* compared to those with which he last observed it. Both location and mobility are fundamental to the creation of consciousness through socialization, and the outcome of socialization is to establish status as an individual-in-society. A sense of place is of the utmost importance in this process, both as outcome and as constitutive effect. The recognition of place confirms not just identity, but identity as a person with status in society. If that also means identity as a person with status in that place, if there are other people around who grant you recognition, then a sense of place is experienced in an affirmative manner. If on the other hand there is no-one around to validate your status as a person, the experience of that place is liable to be nostalgic, even resentful. It is in these varying reactions to the ability of place to confirm status that the controversies over gentrification arise.

However, before this issue can be discussed, what needs finally to be shown is how 'places' are created. This, it may be noticed, is the fundamental difficulty facing locality studies (cf. Duncan & Savage 1989), of indeed of any regional description (cf. Cosgrove 1984) - the question of defining boundaries of 'natural areas'. In what follows, I shall argue that Park's theory of value, which also arises out of the same processes of socialization of the individual and change in the society can be used to deal with this problem. This does not pretend to be a complete answer to the problem, nor do I argue that this is necessarily the only solution to the problem of regionalization, on which there is a vast and venerable literature, beginning in this context with Alihan

(1938). It does however have the advantage of being consistent.

6.5.3 Space and the formation of values

Earlier I argued that attempts to reconcile the spatial and the social were misguided: theorization should begin from the consideration of both together. To apply this principle to the problem of regionalization, keeping in mind the need to begin from the presumption of changeability, calls for a discussion of Park's theory of value.

Park's theory of value grounds both use and exchange value in individual experience. Personal values are grounded in the experience of culture, while economic values are grounded in the experience of civilization. The development of experience is part of the dialectic of socialization and social change. The placing of experience in the context of a dialectical process of growth and development provides an explanation of the dynamics underlying and undermining regionalization - the social dialectic of space.

The differences in the contexts through which experience is mediated, culture or civilization, allow for a distinction to be drawn between place and space, and for the possibility of conflict between them. Thus, in this social dialectic of space, an account can be given, not only of a sense of place, but also of how this can be forced into consciousness, to paraphrase Williams' expression. To introduce this discussion, I return to Park's definition of the attitude.

As outlined in 6.2 above, the transformative effects of communication on individuals in the processes of socialization means that the ultimate reduction possible in social analysis is to the attitude, or tendency to act, which for Park is the "social element" in all forms of sociation (Park 1925 - 1952 p174). Although similarities in attitudes arise from similar experiences, it is the interaction of attitudes which creates consciousness. Communication implies the existence of others with whom it is not only possible but necessary to communicate, and who are also therefore possessed of differing attitudes.

An attitude is more than just a tendency to act, however, important though this is. It is also "the state of mind of the individual to-wards a value" (W.I. Thomas, quoted in Park 1931 - 1955 p278). Values, as in Marx, are properties of objects rather than people (Park 1931 - 1955 p279). The effect of vesting value in an object is to create a social object, an object with meaning. Furthermore, the existence of values indicates the existence of interests, the recognition of the separation of means and ends:

Interests are directed less to-ward specific objects than to-ward the ends which

this or that particular object at one time or another embodies. Interests imply therefore the existence of means and a consciousness of the distinction of the difference between means and ends.

(Park 1916 - 1952 p26)

So where Marx takes labour to be the evidence of the distinction between means and ends as the material proof of the existence of consciousness and thus of human being, and labour therefore as the value of that proof, Park takes value itself to be the proof of consciousness, rather as, I have argued, money can be so regarded. The existence of values provokes, or tends to provoke, action. Park therefore regards activity in general, rather than simply productive labour as evidence not only of consciousness, but also as evidence of the value of an object (Park 1927-1955 p14/5, 1931-1955 p274). Socialization terminates in the formation of an attitude. In this manner, value is linked to status and so to the dialectics of socialization.

Park therefore does not confine the production of values to the labour process:

The economic process, so far as it can be distinguished from the production and distribution of goods, is the process by which prices are made and an exchange of values is effected. Most values, i.e., my present social status, my hopes of the future, and memory of the past are personal and not values that can be exchanged. The economic process is concerned with values that can be treated as commodities.

(Park 1920/1921 - 1955 p238)

Park is not interested in economics as such; that is, he is not interested in establishing a set of propositions about the derivation of a set of relative prices, level of output and income distribution. Rather what interests him is economics as a social activity. It is not what is written on the labels which interests him but how labels come to be attached to objects at all. It is in this light that economics arises out of the same processes as the necessity for socialization. Although Park is not interested in economics as a discipline, Park's work ought to be of the utmost interest to economics, including Marxian economics, as it provides a most useful explanation of a most neglected topic in economics, namely the genesis of use-values in those same processes. This explanation in turn explains the importance of place and the reasons why the boundaries of 'places' are so liable to change.

The distinction Park makes between economic values and personal values is in effect equivalent to the conventional economic distinction between exchange value and use value. Economic value is clearly exchange value. Personal value may be regarded as use value, but the connection is not as straightforward to make as that between economic value and exchange value.

To estimate something of personal value is to hold an opinion of it. To hold an opinion

is to have an attitude, and to have an attitude is to have experience (Park 1924 - 1950 p157). The validation of experience through its communication to others may cause us to change our opinion of the experience. Nonetheless experience is, as Park (1924 - 1950 p152/3) points out, the result of action not speculation, so it is grounded, not in what we think we do, but what we actually *do* do. Experience may be personal and unique. It is nonetheless concrete.

Park, citing Nietzsche's early mentor Schopenhauer, argues that our experience is itself gained from projection of our will into the world. Hence not only do we learn from experience; we also gain experience from learning, together with all that acquisition of experience implies:

The world in which men live is, on the whole, the world in which they have learned to live. Things take form and substance as we learn how to behave towards them. Our habits and our attitudes are the subjective aspect of the world we know. What things mean for us is determined in the final analysis by the events in our personal history. The subtleties of the modern mind are reflected in the complexities of the modern world. The child at birth knows nothing of space and time, and has so to speak, no world at all, because it has no habits, no attitudes and no objects.

(Park 1931 - 1955 p274)

It is then the relation of attitudes to social objects which is constitutive of the reality of those objects:

The significance of objects for individual men and women is, in the final analysis, what gives them the character of reality. For things are not real because they exist, merely, but because they are important. The study of attitudes, as it turns out is a study of this importance - the importance which objects have for different individuals, and groups of individuals, and the conditions under which this importance is acquired.

(Park 1931 - 1955 p284)

In fact insofar as they have meaning, importance for individuals, space and time may be regarded as social objects themselves, and attitudes towards spaces and times the measure of their importance.

The meaning which a social object bears as the subject of an individual's attitude or opinion of it, its personal value, must also be validated by others' attitudes towards the object; just as the different experiences of individuals provokes a need for their validation through communication and the processes of socialization. It is in this process of validation that economic values arise: "It is the different meanings and values that objects have for different individuals that makes trade and provokes discussion" (Park 1931 - 1955 p279).

The money or market value of a commodity - a social object bearing economic value,

which results from trade and discussion, expresses a universal consensus as to its price. There can be no such universal consensus over the personal value, the sentimental or cultural value, of a social object to any person or social group in society. However, even if a social object's personal value is assessed differently by different individuals, it is the common experience, the consciousness in other words of the fact that the social object in question does also possess personal value for others, which can render personal value both social and concrete. The communication of experiences, in other words, the dialect of socialization, is the way in which personal, use, values become social use values, cultural or social artefacts or objects. Paradoxically, therefore conflict can create awareness among numbers of people that a particular object bears personal value not only for them, but for others; that is, conflict can create social awareness of personal values. Just as experience is grounded in action, and transmitted through communication, so also therefore with personal values, which though still personal, may yet be held collectively.

Impersonal economic value is also at first expressed in an individualistic manner. Consensus is reached as to what the economic value actually is, because attitudes to the objects of trade, which belong to the sort of rationalistic, calculating individuals which Weber describes as produced in conditions of modernity (D.Sayer 1991), are disinterested and rational. There is no social solidarity resulting from the creation of economic value. It is socially necessary labour time, the necessity of society at least to reproduce itself from one period to the next which grounds economic values. However, socially necessary labour time cannot be established in advance; it can only be revealed through experience or given by tradition, although it represents an objective condition (Redfern 1991).

If the formation of exchange values is grounded in this dialectic of social experience, the formation of use values are grounded in the equivalent dialectic of personal experience. A use value is the concrete synthesis of a dialectic of experience and ambition. It represents an objective compromise between what we want and what we get.

To say that a use value represents an objective compromise between what we want and what we get, is to employ the notion of an opportunity cost. Use value is in this way linked to exchange value, since an object loses its usefulness if its opportunity cost is too high. Usefulness depends on the level of development of society, since opportunities foregone depend on the existence of other consumption choices. It also therefore depends upon the disposition of labour between the various branches of the economy, as society discovers in the course of its own dialectic of experience and ambition what can and cannot be produced under current conditions. One can, for example, estimate the socially necessary labour time involved in putting a man on the moon, but cannot claim

thereby that putting a man on the moon is socially necessary. Use values therefore are not necessarily universal in nature, but are normally related to particular stages of development, considered both socially and personally. It is only as we describe them in more and more generic terms, food, clothing, shelter, for instance, that they become more universal in character.

To speak of society, use values (and opportunity costs) as being products of a dialectic of experience and ambition is in fact to say that life itself is an ongoing synthesis in a dialectic of experience and ambition. Both society and use-values are means by and through which life is carried on:

As a matter of fact, man and society present themselves in a double aspect. They are at the same time products of nature and of human artifice. Just as a stone hammer in the hand of a ["so-called" - *ibid.*] savage may be regarded as an artificial extension of the natural man, so tools, machinery, technical and administrative devices, including the formal organisation of government and the informal "political machine" may be regarded as more or less artificial extensions of the natural social group.

(Park 1920/21, 1924 - 1955 p215)

Insofar as use-values and social relations act as extensions of the individual-in-society, then they have the same social function. They come into existence as a consequence of, and are maintained via the same processes as the individual develops into a person, namely this dialectic of experience and ambition, as I have called it here. Insofar as some of these extensions of the individual-in-society are not externalizable, not alienable, but attributes intrinsic to our conception of ourselves, so some values are not tradable, therefore not reducible to labour values. The objectification of self, in the form of a person with status, is itself a social object. Insofar as other people, as social objects themselves, provoke a tendency to act, they too have value.

6.5.4 Culture, place and marginality

The way in which objects become social objects invested with meaning, extensions of the individual-in-society, does not simply parallel the dialectics of socialization, it is the material form of that dialectic. Park analyzes this aspect of his dialectic through the concepts of 'culture' and 'civilization', which are the material counterparts to 'society' and 'community' respectively. Culture embodies the mores, associated with customary, expected forms of behaviour. "Culture grows up in situations calling for collective action" (Park 1950 p20). It holds a social group together, and its possession characterizes an individual as a member of that group. Civilization embodies the ethos of trade. Civilized communities bring people together "not because they are alike, but

because they are different, not for collective action, but for trade" (Park 1931a - 1950 p13). The experience of space and time and the values placed on this experience is mediated through these two conditions.

'Culture', as the material equivalent of 'society', is the 'internal' moment in the dialectics of socialization. Social objects, the objects of social science, are first and foremost cultural phenomena, with attitudes formed towards them which are conceptually prior to those formed in the economic process. These objects are not pre-given in some idealist fashion but are created in the processes of everyday life:

Cultural phenomena are essentially "somebody's" phenomena. They are objects as given to the experience of individuals belonging to our social group, and activities formed by these individuals as appearing to them... The sphere of... investigation is not a world independent of realities such as might be known to some ideal subject; it is a world of data, given to concrete historically determined human subjects and of actions which these subjects actually perform upon the objects of their existence.

(Znaniecki, 1927, quoted by Park 1931 - 1955 p279)

The relation of culture to civilization, which Park adapts from Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft/ Gesellschaft* distinction is mediated through mobility, though mobility is only the proximate cause of the transformation. The root cause lies in whatever causes mobility to increase. A "sacred society" is immobile, whereas the "thing that characterizes secular society, on the other hand is its mobility" (Park 1931a - 1950 p13). The transformation of personal values into impersonal values takes place as interests replace sentiments, culture gives way to civilization, society to community, and the space of socialization gives way to the abstract space of commerce and trade (Park 1950). Park makes it clear that he does not see these two types of social organization as arranged in a temporal sequence, but as simultaneously affecting the course of individuals' lives. The claims that people make upon each other in the course of communication even while conducting matters of trade are at least in part based upon the mores. Culture and civilization are in other words to be regarded as existing in a dialectical relation one to the other. Sacred personal cultural values are determined by the moral order extant in the cultural society, whereas profane impersonal civil values are determined by the rationalistic calculations of the civilized community.

Park's description of the differences between culture and civilization, are, as I have argued, best regarded as attempts at relating material production to the 'internal' and 'external' aspects of his dialectic, rather than an attempt at relating an actual historical transition from mediæval to modern society. Culture and civilization are moments in the dialectics of socialization as well as of social change. The transformation of personal into impersonal values occurs in the course of people's personal histories, as well as in the

histories of their societies.

There is always the conflict between the sacred order which we try to preserve and that order based on trade which brings about the co-mingling of strange peoples and through which people become detached from their cultural moorings...

We live more or less in both of these orders and in these we get the character we call human.

(Park 1950 pp18, 21)

Since we "live more or less in both of these orders", it may be seen once again that we all live more or less the life of the marginal man. Furthermore, the social dialectic of space is essentially a dialectic between these two orders.

Park argues that the most important difference between the characteristics of culture and civilization is that whereas culture is centred on the group, civilization is centred not only on commerce but on territory. The political ethos of culture is nationalistic and solidaristic; that of civilization, patriotic and libertarian (Park 1950 p19/20). The mediation of experience through culture and civilization not only explains the genesis of personal and economic values, therefore; it also links these to place and space. A place is a cultural phenomenon, constantly subject to undermining by the forces of civilization. A region may be said to comprise both moments of this material aspect to Park's dialect, culture and civilization.

'Place' is constructed through the dialectics of socialization; like all personal values therefore it is an extension of the individual-in-society, and therefore also it is a validation of the status of the individual-in-society. Because place has personal value, no two experiences of a place are identical for even any two people who value it. What is collective in the nature of the experience of place is the shared consciousness that the place has personal value for others. Your sense of place is validated in the sense of place which others have of the same place, which is not to say that your sense of place depends on their validation. As Warnock's example of Wordsworth's ruminations on Tintern Abbey demonstrates, what is so important about the sense of place is the memory traces it provokes which confirm your own history to you. A 'place' is a locale of overlapping, never coinciding personal experiences: this is why it is so notoriously hard to define a locality.

For Park, not surprisingly given the emphases of his dialectic generally, mobility breaks down this sense of place. Mobility, in dialectical fashion, affects both the place and the person. Not only does mobility undermine the cultural associations of a particular place, because local associations inevitably break down because of mobility; but also mobility

takes a person away from the place where their status is the most obvious and therefore requires the least effort to maintain:

Under these circumstances [of mobility], the individual's status is determined to a considerable degree by conventional signs - by fashion and "front" - and the art of life is largely reduced to skating on thin surfaces and a scrupulous study of style and manners.

(Park 1916 - 1952 p47)

Conversely of course in an immobile society, change in status requires the greatest of effort. In a mobile society, not only is positive law, traffic rules, required instead of natural law, the mores, but news is also. Park makes great play of the connections between mobility and communication: "Mobility depends, not merely on transportation, but upon communication" (Park 1916 - 1952 p27) - as a former newspaperman, Park was fascinated by the sociological significance of news in modern society (Park 1956). The media by which news is transmitted - newspapers, radios and telephones (and of course TVs today!) -

are merely devices for preserving the permanence of location and of function within the social group, in connection with the greatest possible mobility and freedom of its members.

(Park 1925c - 1952 p93/4)

Place may be important in the validation of status, but without keeping up with the news of a place, the sentiments which underlie a sense of place are liable to degenerate into unfulfilling nostalgia. Park is as careful as Williams not to confuse an ongoing sense of place with nostalgia:

In a real sense we live in the world only when we keep up with the news of the world[!] If a person lives in a foreign country for any length of time with the expectation of returning to God's country, meaning his own, he is subject to disillusionment.

(Park 1950 p23)

Mobility is associated with land values, and land values with the news. The highest land values occur at the areas of greatest mobility of population, which are also centres of the news - the areas where the stock exchanges are located (Park 1925 1926 - 1952 p168 p171, Park 1950 p23).

By linking place and value to the dialectics of culture and civilization, and thus of socialization, Park's dialectic of space is therefore a genuinely social dialectic also. Park's dialectic provides a basis both for understanding a sense of place and for understanding why such places are so hard to define, in other words for understanding why regionalization is so complex. The propositions of his dialectic, moreover is itself entirely compatible with Marx's, looking at the subjective aspects of the processes of capitalist accumulation, while Marx treats more of the objective aspects. Park's language

may sound quaint at times, but it still has much to offer which is relevant to today's debates.

Park's association of personal value with place is for example paralleled by Gottdiener's distinction between the "use value of social space" and the "exchange value of absolute space" (1985 p165). However, although Gottdiener criticizes "political economy variants of Marxism" for not taking this distinction into account, he provides no account of the dialectics of socialization and status and the role of space in this.

Blanchard (1985) also argues that experience of the modern city can be classified dichotomously. He applies the Freudian concepts of 'identification' and 'association' to the classification of urban experience. Identification in the Freudian sense lies at the basis of Marx's definition of the equivalent form of value - the linen recognizes itself in [identifies its value in] the coat - *Capital I*. Association can be interpreted in terms of personal or use value. Park's interpretation of use values as extensions of the individual-in-society mean in effect that objects bearing personal value are actually identified with the individual - individuals see themselves in the objects that they possess. This, as D.Sayer (1991) so effectively argues, is in effect Marx's view of social relations under capitalism (6.5 below).

As ever, an interesting light can be thrown on Park's arguments by considering Williams' work, in this case Williams' discussions on the connections between language and subjectivity. Williams makes a distinction between signals and language in a manner exactly parallel to Park's descriptions of the differences between economic and personal values or space and place, when these are regarded as comprising the external and internal moments in a social dialectic (R.Williams 1977 p40).

Language, including the language of place, is a result of the internalization of signs and signals, which are nonetheless simultaneously available for use by others, so that they not only have personal meaning, but are also the means of interpersonal communication of meaning. As an inner sign, language helps constitute and give expression to personal values. By language of place, I mean no more than the meaning a place has for a person. If a place has meaning for someone, some process of communication must be occurring, even if this is simply an interior dialogue between experience and ambition. Like language generally, the language of place is capable both of being internalized and of continually being available in social and material ways, just as a place constitutes both an inner sign and a socially manifest signal. Economic values are price signals. They may be recognized but they need not be internalized. They are collective facts, fixed, exchangeable, easily imported and exported.

The real parallel however is not between language and place, but in the tensions between the inner and material aspects of both language and place, "a relationship lived as a tension but experienced as an activity" (R.Williams 1977 p40). The tension in the relation between the inner and the material aspects of language lived as practical activity which Williams describes is one which has been alluded to many times in this chapter, in the descriptions offered of modern society by both Park and Williams. It is the tension of modernity, the tension between the inner and material experience of capitalist accumulation; where all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy profaned. If we wish to discover the social conflicts at the heart of the controversy over gentrification, it is with this tension - the tension afflicting the spatial extensions of the spatially constituted marginal man - standing on the margins of capitalist civilization and local culture - that we must begin, not with class.

6.6 Conclusion: Gentrification, mobility and modernity

So far in this chapter, I have attempted to construct a link between place and status, which, though relevant to Marxist analysis of the conditions of capitalist society, did not depend on Marxist accounts of class and class struggle to explain those links. Instead, I have attempted to develop Park's sociology of consciousness along lines suggested by R.Williams' arguments for cultural materialism, so as to construct an alternative link between place and status. In the previous sections, I have shown how the development of this consciousness is conducted simultaneously in spatial and social terms, leading to the development of a sense of place. I have also shown how the same process which creates a sense of place in the course of socialization, namely the acquisition of experience through mobility, also gives rise to the circumstances which can undermine that place. Mobility, according to Park, is the only way in which new experience may be gained. Mobility also means that the experience thereby gained is different for all. Hence mobility lies at the root of the need for language and of self-consciousness (Park 1925, 1926 - 1952 p173). The fact of locomotion is therefore a crucial aspect in the processes of socialization, from which society, culture and civilization are derived and through which they are maintained (Park 1925c - 1952 p92/3). Mobility is the quintessential attribute of civilization, and civilization is the antithesis of culture and a sense of place.

Mobility, in the sense in which Williams describes it, may be taken as the defining characteristic of modernity. How else might we characterize the effect of all that is solid melting into air? The marginal man is the characteristic personality of this modernity. For

Williams, it is the unwilled (and unwilling) separation of areas of experience which mobility brings which is the root cause of marginality. However, mobility, in the sense in which Park describes it, is a transhistorical characteristic of human beings, much as labour is for Marx. According to Marx, it is the conditions under which the labour process is conducted, which are historically unique in any epoch. It is the buying and selling of labour power that makes capitalism historically unique. We can think of mobility in the same terms, a transhistorical characteristic of human beings experienced in specific and historically unique ways.

In this respect, I have argued that much of what Park has to say on the impact of mobility on consciousness and socialization is implicitly an analysis of the impact of modernity on consciousness. Modernity may be defined as the subjective experience of capitalism, including, but not restricted to, the immediate experience of the labour process. Both Park and Williams see mobility as the hallmark of that experience. Neither however see mobility as a cause. Instead, what "underpins the transitory, fleeting and contingent experience so many have seen as the hallmark of the modern condition" is the alienation peculiar to capitalist society (D.Sayer 1991 p88). Williams is explicit on this point, while Park's theory of alienation is expressed in much more personal terms.

For an analysis of this experience, Marx's account of the definite forms of social consciousness which correspond to the capitalist mode of production *is* appropriate for this purpose. D.Sayer (1991) has shown how Marx's account of the creation of abstract labour in the development of capitalist relations of production stands for a general abstraction of the social from the personal, with the consequence that:

The social world of capitalism has become something we inhabit - Durkheim's society *sui generis* - rather than some ways we are, and it is this estrangement of the real content of social life that grounds the abstractions which come to stand in for it: modernity's representations (which is to say, its re-presentations) of both society and self.

(D.Sayer 1991 p88)

The abstraction of the social from the personal creates a profound subjectivity in the individual: it is just this interiorized subjectivity which Connolly (1988) argues is the principal focus of Nietzsche's philosophical enquiries.

The subject is unified in terms of *personal* biography, but dislocated from any *social* integument; ... Modernity constitutes individuals as subjects not through, but in opposition to the real sociality which concretely defines and differentiates them.

(D.Sayer 1991 p87)

One consequence of that subjectivity is a profoundly altered attitude to space and place. The archetypically modern novel is Joyce's *Ulysses*, and what is modern about it is its

representation of the stream of consciousness of the subjective individual of modernity:

The consequent awareness is intense and fragmentary, subjective primarily, yet in the very form of its subjectivity including others who are now with the buildings, the noises, the sights and smells of the city, parts of this single and racing consciousness...

... the fantasy of the Oriental city begins from the smell of bread in Boland's van, but each sight or sound or smell is a trigger to Bloom's private preoccupations. Under the pressure of his needs, the one city as it passes is as real as the other.

This is the profound alteration. The forces of the action have become internal and there is no longer a city, there is only a man walking through it.

(R.Williams, 1973b p292, emphasis added)

The subjectivity, and mobility, of the modern individual apparently tends therefore to the utter abolition of place. However, this subjectivity of this modern and mobile individual also results from living on the margins of culture and civilization. As I have argued, this tension between the apparent abolition of place and the continuing pressures to invest places with meaning as a consequence of the very same processes of socialization is an essential component of the "profoundly contradictory" experience of modernity, where

Individuals are perpetually riven between 'personal' experiences and public identifications, differences which cannot be represented, and representations which deny difference.

(D.Sayer 1991 p89)

This account of the subjectivity of the modern marginal mobile individual provides the basis of the distinction of the social space of use values from the abstract space of exchange values for which Gottdiener was only able to make an assertion.

Underlying this subjectivity is the fact of social relations taking the "fantastic form of relations between things" (*Capital I* p72) - commodity fetishism:

It is this alienation of the social, in which human beings' collective capacities manifest themselves as the attributes of material things, which is in [Marx's] view the ground of modern individualism.

People appear to be independent of one another because their mutual dependency assumes the unrecognizable form of relations between commodities. ... individuals appear to be self-sufficient monads only because the social relations which really link them - and give them their concrete identities... - do not appear to them as such, as relations of persons. They assume, on the contrary, 'the fantastic form of relations between things' ...

(D.Sayer 1991 p64)

However, these "things", social objects constituted by meaning, also bear the tensions of modernity. Even as commodities, in which form they mediate social relations, they still bear use values.

The duality of the commodity is clearly the template for [Marx's] analysis of a

wide variety of other bourgeois social forms: in particular, of those forms which both individuality and community assume within modern capitalist societies. In both instances concrete particularity is masked in abstract generality, with a resulting mystification. The qualitative and particular differences which concretely make individuals who they are, appear inessential to them, while the generic equality which appears to characterize their subjectivity is abstract, formal and illusory. ...

(D.Sayer, 1991 p79)

Included in these things, mediating social relations in which "concrete particularity is masked in abstract generality" are those things which can constitute places and spaces simultaneously: buildings, streets, parks.

I have argued that explanations of gentrification currently extant are flawed since they attempt to use gentrification merely as a starting point for reflections on modern society. This thesis reverses the order of exposition, beginning with modernity and then placing gentrification in this context so defined. Since, in modernity, "social relationships are no longer palpably the foundations of individuals' identities" (D.Sayer 1991 p88), and are instead mediated through things, public representations of status become all the more important to the construction of those identities. In Chapter 3, I argued that this condition underlay the importance of fashion in conditions of modernity, and that gentrification could usefully be understood in those terms. Housing as a use-value is an extension of the individual-in-society, and as an extension of the individual in-society, it is also a status symbol; as indeed are all items of consumption in modern capitalist society. As I have argued above however (6.3), the usefulness of use values depends on the state of social development, because as extensions of the individual-in-society, they are also extensions of an individual's status. Use values are not trans-historical verities. In opposition to Saunders' arguments (reviewed in Chapter 4 above), it is therefore the modernity of modern society which makes housing a status symbol, and owner-occupied housing in particularly prized status symbol, not any characteristics or qualities innate to housing or the tenure. However, housing's role in establishing status does not of its own explain the basis of the conflicts which arise over gentrification, nor does it explain why these should be represented, even by the participants in these conflicts, as class struggle.

What is peculiarly modern about a modern city, which puts yet further difficulties in the way of the articulation of what Sayer calls the "collectiveness of disadvantage, the sociality of subordination" (1991 p89) is residential segregation, whether by function, by race or ethnicity, or by class or status. In no other respect is a modern city more unlike its predecessors (Shevky & Bell 1955, Abu-Lughod 1969, Peach 1975). Not only is residential segregation an aspect of modernity, but without residential segregation,

gentrification could not occur, or more precisely, could not be experienced in the way in which gives it its (so-called) class character. The effect of residential segregation is to extend the status bound up in the consumption of the use-value of housing to a whole area, to a particular place.

Gentrification is almost always associated with the identification of a place as a place, even before the place is itself recognized as such by its current inhabitants. P. Williams' account of gentrification in Islington (1976), or Zukin's account of gentrification in New York (1982) bear witness to this important aspect of the gentrification process. The creation of London's Dockland (Short 1989) as an identifiable region is only the latest example. Before the advent of the LDDC, no such region existed in the popular imagination and each area composing the Dockland was seen as a separate entity. If a generic title were applied to the area at all, prior to the creation of the LDDC, it would have been as London docklands, the (grammatical) differences in the qualification, capitalization and number are slight but very telling. Nor, given the importance of mobility to a sense of place, can it be seen as accidental that the first conflicts which took place in Islington between the gentrifiers and those they were to displace, took place over the introduction of a traffic control scheme (Pitt 1973).

The counterpart of segregation is succession. If residential segregation extends the status immediately derived from the consumption of housing to the place - however defined - in which that housing is situated, then the conflicts which arise over gentrification are conflicts over the appropriation of particular areas for such purposes.

With residential segregation, fashion is at the same time extended from the consumption of housing to whole areas. Individuals belonging to one status group find that their social spaces of use values have become transformed into abstract space of exchange values. Sacred places of socialization become secularized and trivialized as fashion accessories. The realization is forced into consciousness that the "possession of things [including places] appears accidental and extrinsic to who persons are" (D.Sayer 1991 p89). Culture is replaced by civilization, to become eventually, possibly a place of socialization once more, but for different groups of people with cultures of their own (cf. Raban 1974). Gentrification undermines the ontological security of the inhabitants of a place by permitting gentrifiers to turn it into a new place, of *their* own.

It is here that the resistance to gentrification begins, not in the grinding of the gears of the SCA-based machinery of class struggle. Resistance to gentrification is resistance to the derangement of the personal and the social in modernity - resistance to the "unbearable lightness of being" (D.Sayer 1991 pp152, 155). However, to argue for the importance

of status in gentrification studies, and conversely to deny the importance of class, in particular as this is theorized by SCA models, is not to deny either the salience of capitalism, or that tensions and pressures for change exist in a society dominated by status considerations. The experience of modernity is one of a constant and unresolved tension; a tension which derives from the fact that the experience of socialization and acquisition of status is continually undermined by the reduction of all social forms, status and meanings to the calculus of exchanges of abstract labour.

This argument, it might reasonably be objected, completely overlooks one of the most common arguments advanced against gentrification, namely that by converting housing from working class multi-occupancy to middle class single family occupancy, it reduces the supply of working class housing available in working class areas, causing even greater pressure on the non-gentrified working class housing nearby. Resistance to gentrification therefore begins with working class people organizing to safeguard the availability of housing for themselves and their children, and not in some airy-fairy notions about modernity, and tensions between place and space in the construction of personal identities.

There is of course no question that middle class homes are under-occupied, sometimes considerably so, by comparison with working class homes, and that therefore the displacement caused by gentrification places pressure on working class accommodation elsewhere (LeGates and Hartman 1986). Just how much pressure is open to question of course (cf. Chapter 9 below), but no matter how much pressure there might be, I would still argue that this housing stock argument is a rationalization of the status conflicts which arise in gentrification.

Assume for the sake of argument that there was a sudden difference in fertility, in which half of all working class families suddenly decided to have 10 or more children each (and there were no racial or ethnic differences among the working class which could be held accountable for this). This differential increase in fertility would place just as much pressure on working class housing stock and pose as many difficulties in safeguarding it for future generations of the working class as even the worst displacement through gentrification. It is highly unlikely however that the pressures caused by increased numbers of children would lead to conflicts between the prolific and the non-prolific in the working class; though it might well lead to them having to suffer lectures from Sir Keith Joseph. Instead demands would be made for the government to do something about providing more housing. This is of course the left's response when the traditional white working class complain about immigrants (with their large families) coming over here, taking their jobs, ruining their neighbourhoods, 'swamping' their culture -

undermining their status.

The only difference between the two cases of immigration - ethnic and gentrifying - which could account for these differences in response is that the middle-class immigrants are assumed to be able to look after themselves, whereas the foreign immigrants are assumed to have immigrated here out of political or financial necessity. While clearly, the accuracy of both assumptions need not be in doubt, the fact that the interpretation of the validity of the working class verbalization of this response is treated with such respect in the one case and such disdain in the other betrays an inconsistency of response in the two cases. On the one hand, of course, it tacitly concedes the argument that gentrifiers gentrify because they can (and in so doing fall into sin). To avoid such a concession, it might be argued that the housing crisis forces middle-class people into gentrifying and thereby forces them into conflict. However, this argument merely confirms what the 'affect on supply of working class housing' argument itself overlooks, that the problem lies in the lack of housing, not in middle class usage of what is available.

What is of greater interest is however not so much the inconsistency of the left's position in regard to immigration as what this inconsistency represents: the articulation of what is clearly a status conflict in the language of class. Despite all the arguments advanced in Chapter 4 against the misidentification of class with status, the double hermeneutic of social science ensures that this misidentification continues as a social process as well as a category error. Again, this is a consequence of modernity. D.Sayer argues that "class is *itself* a distinctly modern category" (1991 p69), and that "the immediate experience of social reality" is status rather than class "while those forms in which our sociality is represented concerted obscure the relations which actually constitute it, class above all" (p88).

This is because, under conditions of modernity, class

... presents itself as a matter of mere accidental circumstance rather than inherent being, as something which is extrinsic to the essence of personality.

The point is not merely that - as Marx recognizes - capitalism offers more individual mobility than previous forms of society. It is rather that class does not seem to define the individual in the same way. There *is* an apparent split between the 'private individual' and the 'class individual', which is predicated on the 'accidental' nature of that which makes individuals members of classes - their property in 'things' external to themselves. In principle anybody may own property, just as all are free to stay at the Ritz Hotel.

(D.Sayer 1991 pp69-70)

This split between the private and class aspects of self-consciousness and sociality "compromises the identity of both bourgeoisie and proletariat" (D.Sayer 1991 p71). In

particular, the "individualizing division of labour, which is constitutive a relation of capitalism as class itself" means that the modern world "is an atomistic, fissiparous kind of place, and social identities are abidingly fragmented and contradictory" (ibid.), while "individuality is experienced as non-social, 'purely' personal. ..." (1991 p88)

Nowhere is this derangement of the personal and the social more evident, for Marx, than in class. The latter in fact emerges as a highly problematic category. ...

Class in short is not the same kind of immediately experienced social reality as *Stand* [status]...

(D.Sayer 1988 pp88, 89)

The language in which the conflicts over gentrification are expressed is the language of status dressed up as the language of class (Chapter 10 below), because in conditions of modernity this is the form in which our sociality is represented, and which, ironically, obscures the actual class basis of that experience; what Sayer calls the split between the private and the class individual, and what Park and Williams call the situation of the marginal man. As noted in Chapter 5, Sayer suggests that it is this situation, not class, which is "most socially *consequential* in capitalism" (D.Sayer 1991 p90/91). Consciousness is not moulded simply by relation to (economic) structure, as the SCA model would have us believe. It is rather the interaction between the economic and non-economic activities of individuals-in-society in pursuit of their daily goals, an interaction experienced as a constant tension between these activities, which both moulds and creates individual and class consciousness in capitalist society - the consciousness of the marginal man and of the proletariat both.

In Redfern (1992), I argue that the working class/middle class division is one of status based on centrality in the capitalist labour process; status which is continually in danger of being undermined under the centrifugal pressures of capitalist accumulation, where all that is central is rendered peripheral, if possible. Central status has to be fought for, continuously, in positional, not simply confrontational, struggles, (such as the 'gentrification of the bourgeoisie' - 2.3.1 above). If this is so, then the so-called class conflict over gentrification would appear to be indeed as Park described Marx's account of class struggle, "the struggle of economic or functional groups for social status in a social hierarchy" (1943a - 1950 p304). The language of class used in the conflict over gentrification and the arguments about displacement derived from this, are consequent upon the experience of modernity and its tensions between place and space in the construction of personal identities.

The gentrification debate raises many issues. However, the inadequacies of the standard sociological model, within which these issues are discussed, are so profound that it has

been necessary to indicate in some detail an alternative picture of the links between consciousness, agency and structure; before gentrification can be explained, it is necessary to describe the context in which it occurs. Having described this context, however, it still remains necessary to demonstrate the specific circumstances which make it possible for gentrifiers to behave in the ways they do (and this is the purpose of the next three chapters). To fail to demonstrate the specificity of gentrification within this larger context would be to fall into the trap of the postindustrialists, making modernity rather than postmodernity into the Protestant god of the new middle class.

7 The 'Rent Gap', Domestic Technologies And The Theory of Rent

7.1 Aims and Issues

In Chapter 2, I argued that explanations of gentrification fall by and large into one of two categories, which I termed neighbourhood lifecycle or postindustrialism. To this point in the thesis, I have, in effect concentrated on postindustrialism. Chapter 3 uncovered the metaphors of postindustrialism, Chapter 4 linked them to Pahl's criticisms of SCA, and Chapters 5 & 6 outlined an alternative model of the context in which gentrification could be sited. However, as was made clear (should have been made clear!) in Chapter 6, the explanation of the links between status, place, mobility and marginality in the experience of modernity does no more than provide this context. If as was argued, the experience of modernity was to live on the margins of two cultures, in an indefinite present, as subjective individuals inhabiting society - the iron cage of modernity - rather than society being particular aspects of what we are, then this is an experience which affects us all, gentrifiers included. Though modernity provides the context in which the gentrification process is carried out, modernity itself cannot be the explanation of the causes of gentrification, nor either can capitalism.

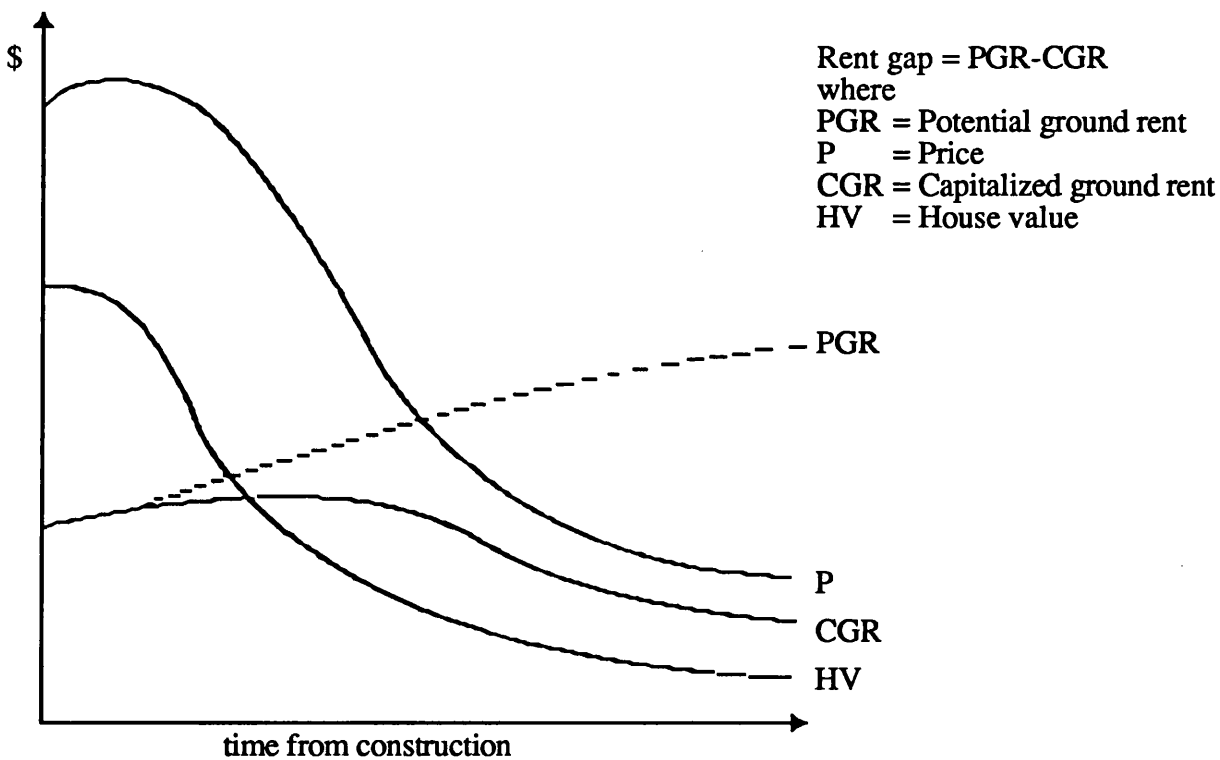
Having ruled out postindustrialism as the explanation of the causes of gentrification, it remains the work of this chapter to investigate the alternative hypothesis, neighbourhood lifecycle. It concentrates on one particular version of this hypothesis, the 'rent gap' theory outlined by N. Smith in his many contributions to the gentrification debate (N. Smith 1979a, 1979b, 1982, 1986, 1987a, 1987b, N. Smith & Lefavre 1984, Schaffer & N. Smith 1986, N. Smith & P. Williams 1986, P. Williams & N. Smith 1986). Indeed it would not be overstating the case to argue that without Smith's vigorous defence of the rent gap explanation of gentrification, there would hardly have been a gentrification debate at all.

Urban theory has traditionally been concerned with how developments at the centre of the city have worked themselves out toward the periphery, with the connection between changes in the centre of the city and changes at its edge made via the theory of urban rent. From Ricardo onwards, the role of rent has been theorized as securing the 'highest and best use' of land and the co-ordination of land uses in the accumulation process (Haila 1990). Smith's 'rent gap' hypothesis is an attempt at showing how the workings of the urban land market by itself produces gentrification (N. Smith 1979a, 1979b, 1982, 1987a, 1987b). This has the advantage of avoiding the 'consumption functionalist'

perspective of the 'production of gentrifiers' approach; but, in common with that approach, it too gives no role to demand.

Accounts of the theoretical bases of the rent gap are given only in N. Smith (1979a) and N. Smith (1982). The original formulation was presented in Smith (1979a), as a conclusion to a discussion as to whether or not gentrification represented a "back to the city" movement. Smith argued that gentrification did represent a "back to the city" movement, but "by capital, not people" (Smith 1979a, p547). In presenting Smith's arguments here, I ignore the problems of 'base-superstructure' as presented in Chapter 2, and of SCA as presented in Chapter 4. Nothing I shall present here detracts from those problems, but I wish to highlight here a different, though related, set of issues. Before going any further, it will help to know what we are talking about.

Figure 7.1 Smith's rent gap model



(source: after N. Smith, 1979a Fig. 2 p544)

In its original formulation, the rent gap arises as the result of the operation of neighbourhood lifecycle processes, in particular, 'filtering down'; though it could simply be the result of upward revaluation of potential land values through comparisons of alternative uses for a site. Gentrification occurs when the rent gap is "wide enough" (N. Smith 1979a, p545)

Smith (1982) contained two modifications to his argument. First, the rent gap was conceptualized in terms of a "devalorization cycle" instead of a "depreciation cycle":

Depreciation refers strictly to changes in price, whereas devalorization is a deeper economic process implying the loss or negation of value as a necessary part of the valorization process.

(N. Smith, 1982, p147, ftn3)

Second, the account was placed in the wider context of the necessity for 'uneven development' in the course of capitalist accumulation. "Gentrification is part of a larger class strategy to restructure the economy" (N. Smith, 1982, p153). However, despite these wider, and deeper, references the processes described appeared much the same:

Essentially, the valorization of capital invested in an inner city built environment leads to a situation where the ground rent capitalized under current uses is substantially lower than the ground rent that could potentially be capitalized if the land use were changed. This is because devalorization leads to physical decline which in turn lowers the market price of the land on which the dilapidated buildings stand. When, and only when, this rent gap between actual and potential ground rent becomes sufficiently large, redevelopment and rehabilitation into new land uses becomes a profitable prospect and capital begins to flow back into the inner city market.

(N. Smith 1982 p149)

Devalorization" and "uneven development" appeared as little more than mantras to be chanted throughout this account, which could easily fit into a neoclassical analysis of gentrification processes (Hamnett, 1984, p311). This "mix'n'match" theorizing was the focus of Rose's (1984) critique, reviewed in Chapter 2 above.

7.2 The rent gap and its metaphors

7.2.1 *Functionalist reasoning in the rent gap hypothesis*

The obvious criticism to be made of Smith's approach is what we might call its 'rent logic', its reductionist approach to the question of the causes of gentrification. Hamnett made just this criticism (Hamnett 1984). He argued that

in order to explain satisfactorily the central questions of why gentrification occurred where and when it did, it is necessary to explain first its concentration in a limited number of large cities, second, its rapid growth in the late 1960's and early 1970's, and third its specific areas of occurrence in cities. Smith's theory helps explain only the third of these.

(Hamnett, 1984, p310)

The first two questions could only be answered by considering employment and demographic changes which Smith had "resolutely" dismissed (*ibid.*), because he had

categorized all the explanations on offer into just two types, "the cultural and the economic" (ibid.). Worse yet, from Hamnett's point of view, Smith then argues that both these two types of explanation share a common perspective: "an emphasis on *consumer preference*" (N. Smith, 1979a, p539 quoted in Hamnett 1984, p311). Hamnett flatly contradicts Smith on this point ("This is quite simply incorrect." - Hamnett, 1984 p311). Against Smith's dismissal of "the changing occupational and demographic structure of the population" (1984 p311), Hamnett asserts their importance, quoting Braverman (1974) and Kumar (1978) as having

convincingly made the case that changes in occupational structure are central elements of the capitalist mode of production... Deferred child-bearing can also be interpreted as a response to rapidly rising house prices. Thus even in terms of Smith's own materialist frame of reference his analysis is both deficient and partial... In consequence, Smith is only able to explain in general terms the occurrence of gentrification in certain areas of cities. He is entirely unable to explain why gentrification has occurred in the type of cities at the time it has.
(ibid.)

It may not have escaped the reader's attention that Hamnett is criticizing Smith for a procedure so far followed in this thesis, namely for reducing the various types of explanation of gentrification to two and then arguing that, as defined, they share a common perspective. Before proceeding further, it is as well to address this point. I would argue that Hamnett's criticism is misplaced.

As was noted in Chapter 2.3.3, Hamnett argues that 5 factors must be taken into account when considering gentrification, namely: city size; demographic and household structure; lifestyle and preference shifts; house price inflation; and employment base and occupational structure of certain large cities (Hamnett 1984 p298). However, having listed them, Hamnett does not explain how they relate to one another. Instead of theorizing how these factors may relate to one another and then using gentrification as an example of how they interrelate, he uses gentrification as the sole nexus through which the postulated factors are related. Although Hamnett's criticisms of Smith are well taken therefore, his explanations of gentrification suffer from the problem that they are all "theoretically unconnected with each other" Warde (1991 p225 - although Warde inexplicably states that Hamnett distinguishes six, not five, factors). Their only links lie in the gentrification phenomenon itself. Consequently, though Hamnett asserts against Smith the importance of employment and demographic factors, his conclusions as to how each factor adds to the total understanding of gentrification is extremely tentative (Hamnett, 1984, p304-305). These end with a "synthesis" "of the various explanatory factors", which, where it is not quite vague, is no more than a reflection of what is immediately obvious:

it would appear that changes in the demographic and employment structure have

led simultaneously to a growing concentration in certain large cities of young, relatively affluent and highly educated childless households, frequently with one or more city-centre workers with a strong preference for accessibility. They have faced (and partly created) a structure of housing supply and rapidly rising house prices which, if it has not actually necessitated inner-city residence, has certainly pointed strongly in that direction.

(Hamnett, 1984, p305)

This "synthesis" merely summarizes the phenomenon; it does little more.

Hamnett and Smith in fact share a common perspective, namely that of base-superstructure. In much the same manner as Rose (1984), Hamnett is able to point to the problem of base-superstructure but is unable to identify it as such. Consequently, he does not escape its confines. Thus, he argues in criticism of Smith, "to... write off *material* changes such as the changing economic and demographic structure of the population as 'cultural' factors is as untenable" as their categorization as 'cultural' is "erroneous" (1984 p311). Hamnett therefore endorses Smith's belief that while 'the material' is clearly important, 'the cultural', equally clearly, is not. To force a distinction between materiality and culture in the way that Hamnett does, even in his criticisms of Smith for doing the selfsame thing, is clearly to subscribe to the validity of 'base-superstructure' modes of thought. Hamnett was undoubtedly correct to criticize Smith's writing off of cultural factors. However, Hamnett's dispute is not with Smith's assertion that the cultural is *by definition* unimportant, just that Smith should not have labelled particular factors as cultural *and therefore* unimportant.

Smith however responded otherwise to Hamnett's criticisms. He accepted "Hamnett's (1984) critique of earlier work (Smith 1979)":

for conflating a variety of lifestyle and demographic arguments under a somewhat grab-bag concept of consumption-side and consumer-preference explanations.

(N. Smith, 1987a p163)

However, he did not accept fully the implications drawn by his critics: in particular, he wanted nothing to do with the 'production of gentrifiers' approach, which had developed out of the criticism of his earlier work (by Rose as well as Hamnett). This reformulation of Marxist analysis, Smith argued, posed dangers of its own, notably reliance on some form of consumer-preference model, "no matter how watered down" (ibid.)

... the conundrum of gentrification does not turn on explaining where middle class demand comes from.

(ibid.)

Rather, it depends on where it is expressed, i.e., "in the central and inner city" (op. cit. p164):

In this context, I would defend the rent-gap analysis (Smith, 1979) not as in itself a definitive or complete explanation but as a necessary centerpiece to any theory of gentrification.

(N. Smith, 1987a p165)

Thus Smith's concession to his critics was not that great. While he accepts their criticisms, he does not accept that they touch his central hypothesis. He interprets the criticism not as a problem of conceptualization but rather as a problem of expression, of the enthusiasms of youth. If not the complete story, the rent gap remains the "necessary centerpiece" to any theory of gentrification. Smith was on fairly sure ground at this point, for as I show below, his rent gap arguments are not overly affected by either Hamnett's or Rose's criticisms. There is however a more fundamental criticism than those currently extant in the literature, to which I shall now turn.

Despite the refinements and concessions Smith has made over the years in his arguments surrounding the rent gap, it remains a tautologous proposition. Gentrification occurs "when the gap is wide enough" (N. Smith, 1979a, p545), "it is most likely to occur in areas experiencing a sufficiently large gap between actual and potential land values" (N. Smith, 1987b, p464). Ley, probably Smith's most persistent critic, comments unfavourably on the fact that

almost ten years after its first presentation it still has not been made empirically accountable... Smith... has no empirical results of his own to report.

(Ley, 1987 p466)

However, even he does not appear to notice the tautology that lies at the heart of the concept of the rent gap. This criterion of 'sufficient wideness' is enough to save the rent gap hypothesis from any empirical criticism. The proof of 'sufficient wideness' lies in the pudding of the gentrification phenomenon - no gentrification, rent gap 'insufficiently wide'.

Runciman (1968 p40) argues that "tautologies have proved a perennial weakness of functionalism". I shall follow through the implications of Runciman's observations below. First I shall deal with the principal potential objection to my argument that the rent gap hypothesis is impervious to empirical criticism, namely Clark's (1988) study of the rent gap in Malmö, Sweden.

Clark argues that Smith's definition of "capitalized land rent" is ambiguous and would be better split into two terms "actually realized land rent", which continues to decline, and capitalized land rent proper

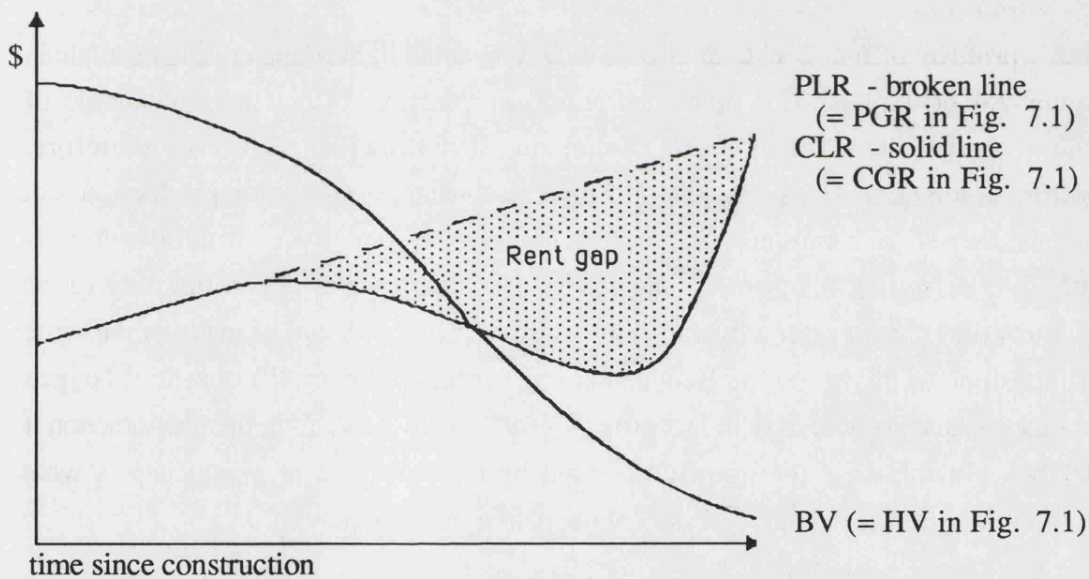
namely the valorization of future land rent income by the sale of land.
This is more in line with the generally held meaning of the term, and if it is

capitalized land rent we are talking about, the evidence here suggests it usually rises during a period prior to redevelopment. Indeed, it only makes sense that the sellers of dilapidated properties try to appropriate part of the 'actually realized land rents' expected to materialize in the near future
 (Clark, 1988, p188)

The difference between the two accounts can be seen by comparing Figure 7.2 below (Clark 1988, Fig.7 p147) with Figure 7.1 above. In Smith's account the rent gap continues to widen indefinitely. In Clark's account, the rent gap closes immediately prior to gentrification.

Figure 7.2 Clark's rent gap model

Rent gap = PLR - CLR
 where
 PLR = potential land rent
 CLR = capitalized land rent
 BV = building value



(source: after Clark, 1988 p253)

I do not seek to dispute Clark's careful empirical investigations of a rent gap in Malmö. Nor do I wish to debate his principal conclusion, namely that the "empirical evidence of these studies supports the view outlined by Neil Smith" (Clark, 1988, p252). Nor even do I wish to dispute Clark's "marginal" deviations "from Smith's conceptual scheme..." (ibid.). What remains at issue is that none of Clark's empirical findings and marginal deviations rescue the 'rent gap' hypothesis from the problems of functionalism. If the gap does start to close immediately prior to gentrification, this is because the capitalized ground rent component represents expectations of future revenues from redeveloped

land. His revised version is therefore as self-fulfilling as Smith's original formulation - no expectations, no closure, no gentrification.

If gentrification occurs when the rent gap is wide enough by definition, then the proposition that the rent gap causes gentrification is no longer an empirical one. Instead it is functionalist. To paraphrase Runciman (1968 p40-41), what in fact we want to do (and by Smith's definitions are prevented from doing) is to consider empirically what is or is not done by those institutions and individuals which have a (pecuniary) interest in the existence of a rent gap; this is of no use at all if what we mean by the rent gap depends upon the generative or adaptive results of what it does (in this case, 'generates' gentrification).

Far from being a necessary centerpiece to any theory of gentrification, as Smith insists, the rent gap hypothesis is not, strictly speaking, an hypothesis at all. It describes a condition of the gentrification process, but if it is a description, it is not an explanation. It is not an hypothesis because it is incapable of being falsified.

Another problem of functionalism, particularly relevant in light of the criticisms made in Chapter 2.4 of explanations of gentrification in general, "is that it is incapable of accounting for historical change" (Runciman, 1968, p113). Whether therefore, gentrification explanations are oriented toward consumption-side or production-side accounts, they share a common perspective, namely functionalism. Smith therefore is justified in defending his position against the Hamnett/Rose criticism but only to the extent that they cannot offer a fundamental critique since they share so many of the same presuppositions with Smith. As Runciman (*ibid.*) argues however, the questions begged by a functionalist account may in fact prove useful in really explaining the phenomenon it describes. In this case the question begged by the existence of a rent gap is what generated it. Smith's answer, as I shall show below, is inadequate.

7.2.2 The 'circuits' metaphor

Smith, following Harvey, argued that the built environment acted as a repository for investment capital when opportunities elsewhere, in "the broader economy", were limited (N. Smith 1982,p150). An electrical metaphor, of capital 'flowing' through various investment 'circuits' was employed. The built environment represented one such circuit, 'switched' on in response to crises in the 'primary circuit', i.e., the circuit of industrial capital. This switching of investment into the built environment revives the profit rate, enabling the industrial circuit to be switched back on again. Harvey based this metaphor on Desai (1979), though Desai's 'circuits', of commodity, productive and money capital, (themselves based on *Capital* Vol. 2) are in fact representations of the different 'moments' in a single circuit of capital as value-in-process.

Smith argued that, in general, growth in the industrial circuit outstrips growth in the built environment circuit. This growth fuels land values throughout the urban area, but these are not reflected in rents of developed land (returns from the built environment circuit) because the value of the activity currently undertaken on this land cannot afford these higher rents. This differential growth accounts for the growth of the rent gap. The rent gap therefore is symptomatic of a crisis in the built environment circuit, a crisis resulting from the barrier to accumulation posed by the longevity of fixed capital in the built environment. Gentrification, which is just one part of an overall restructuring of space, including downtown redevelopment, condominiums, harbour malls "and so on", represents the closing of that gap.

with falling rates of profit in the major industrial sectors, financial capital seeks an alternative arena for investment, an arena where the profit rate remains comparatively high and where the risk is low. At precisely this point, there tends to be an increase in the capital flowing back into the built environment... The underdevelopment of the previously developed inner city, meaning the systematic lack of capital investment in those locations, brought about the rent gap, and this, in turn, laid the foundation for a locational switch of capital invested in the built environment, simultaneous in part with a sectoral switch.
(N. Smith, 1982, p150)

The circuits metaphor and the notion of rent as a barrier to the flow of those circuits is therefore central to Smith's advocacy of the rent gap as the necessary centerpiece to any explanation of gentrification. The dynamic relation of flows to barriers also strongly implies that Smith sees gentrification as a circular process. Whereas the inner city once was a barrier and now is profitable, so the suburbs will act as a barrier until the inner city becomes a barrier once more.

In what follows I shall argue that the fundamental problem with Smith's circuits

metaphor is that it does not recognize the specificity of different sectors of production. Haila notes of this metaphor, that to regard the built environment circuit as a repository of investment capital passively responding to crises in the industrial circuit denies the real estate sector's "own dynamic" (Haila, 1990, p291). Haila's criticism is an implicit recognition of the failure of the circuits metaphor to distinguish between different sectors of production. There is only one path at any time by which capital can flow through the circuits. Consequently, if capitalism is to have a crisis, then on this account, it will have them in all sectors at once. The circuits metaphor undermines the possibility that a barrier could arise in any one sector independently of all the others. It thereby undermines the possibility of the switching of the flow of capital from one sector into another. Smith's circuits metaphor does not therefore alter the *ex post facto* nature of his arguments for his rent gap theory.

Plausible though Smith's account sounds at first, the changing status of the built environment with respect to the resolution of crises undermines it. At the outset of his account, the built environment is presented as a repository for capital unable to flow elsewhere due to crises clogging the industrial circuit. By the end, however, the built environment forms an attractive investment opportunity in its own right *because of* successful growth in the industrial circuit.

Smith seems to be aware that there is a problem, revealed in the immediate retreat from certainty: "it is at *precisely* this point that there *tends* to be an increase in capital flowing into the built environment (1988 p. 150 emphasis added). This tendency is a result of the growth of awareness in the investment opportunities provided by the built environment because of successful growth in the industrial circuit. The precise timing of the switch depends however on the development of a crisis in the industrial circuit. While it can be argued that the perception of favourable investment opportunities in the built environment follows on from the crisis in the industrial circuit, it cannot at the same time be argued that the crisis arises from the barrier posed by the existence of fixed capital in the built environment *unless conditions in the two circuits are identical*.

If the conditions in both sectors are identical, no distinction can therefore be drawn between them. Consequently, if the rent gap arises as a result of a crisis in both the built environment and industrial circuits, then the 'circuits' metaphor is unsustainable. Similarly unsustainable is the implication derived from the circuits metaphor that gentrification is a cyclical process. The debilitating effects of over-reliance on metaphors to explain gentrification is not a prerogative of postindustrialist approaches to gentrification.

7.2.3 Rent as a barrier

Smith's view of rent as a barrier, which lies at the heart of his rent gap theory, is inspired by Marx's definition of absolute rent (Marx 1959, 759-761), where Marx is held to have argued that rent does indeed form a barrier to accumulation. To confront Smith's barrier argument therefore is to confront the debate on Marx's theory of rent. The literature on this is enormous (Howard & King 1975, Malone 1986 and Haila 1989, 1990 provide good summaries), and to do it justice would take this thesis far beyond what is required for the demonstration that gentrifiers gentrify because they can. Aside from a few remarks in 7.3 below, my position on this debate is contained in Redfern (1991).

The rent gap is a gap between rents for a plot of land calculated on the basis of two different uses. Smith (1979a) distinguishes between 'capitalized ground rent' and 'potential ground rent'.

Ground rent is the claim made by landowners on users of their land; it represents a reduction from the surplus value by producers on the site. Capitalized ground rent is the actual quantity of ground rent that is appropriated by the landowner, given the present land use. . .

Potential ground rent is the amount that could be capitalized under the "land's highest and best use"

(N. Smith, 1979a, p543)

In the case of owner occupancy, Smith argues,

ground rent is capitalized when the building is sold and therefore appears as part of the sale price

(ibid.)

As noted above, Clark (1988) argued that Smith's use of the term capitalized ground rent is "ambiguous", which seems to have been a polite way of saying "wrong". What is wrong about it however, as far as Clark is concerned, is its reference in Smith's account to present, rather than future income. The error does not alter the 'structural quality' of this form of rent, namely its ability to intercept, on the landowner's behalf, the flow of surplus value to the land user. As an interception of surplus value, capitalized ground rent therefore has an impact on accumulation.

Smith argued further, that this impact was negative. Capital fixed in the built environment resolved one immediate accumulation problem (e. g. N. Smith 1979a, p541, 1982, p150), but stored up another for the future. The built environment creates a barrier to further accumulation because of the long turnover period of capital invested there. Haila identifies this attitude toward rent, a barrier to accumulation, as a specific phase "of consensus in the 1970s" (1990 p278) in the modern history of rent theory.

The physical structure must remain in use and cannot be demolished without sustaining a loss, until the invested capital has returned its value. What this does is to tie up whole sections of land over a long period in one specific land use, and thereby to create significant barriers to new development
(N. Smith, 1982, p149)

New developments therefore take place elsewhere, in particular in the suburbs: "It is this spatial shift of capital investment that led to... the *rent gap*":

To summarize, the investment of capital in the central and inner city caused a physical and economic barrier to further investment in that space. The movement of capital into suburban development led to a systematic devalorization of inner and central city capital, and this, in turn, with the development of the rent gap, led to the creation of new investment opportunities in the inner city *precisely because* an effective *barrier* to new investment had previously operated there.

(N. Smith 1982, p149)

There can be no question that the new investment opportunities in the inner city arose precisely because an effective barrier to new investments had operated there, but Smith's argument is undeniable precisely because it is *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*. The question which must be posed is, can the characteristics of that barrier be defined without recourse to a circular argument?

Smith argues that the cause of this barrier is the slow physical decline of the building stock. However this decline is described in terms of devalorization of capital, in other words not in physical but in value terms (N. Smith, 1982 p149). Smith justifies this by reference to Marx's definition of productive labour, which he links to Marx's definition of productive consumption (N. Smith, 1979b, p164). However the meaning Marx gives to 'productive' when referring to productive consumption is different to that used when referring to productive labour, and Smith confuses them.

'Labour', for Marx, is an active process of consumption of raw materials in the creation of new products (Marx, 1967, p290). The consumption of raw materials for this purpose is productive consumption. This can be accomplished whether or not labour itself is productive, that is, productive of surplus value. Smith quotes Marx's example of the jobbing tailor patching a capitalist's trousers. The tailor is paid out of the capitalist's income, i.e., out of surplus value. The tailor's labour is therefore not productive, since it generates no surplus value on its own account. However, raw materials, cotton thread, needles, labour power have been used up in the production of the use value of the patches. This consumption is therefore productive.

Smith's belief that capital can be productively consumed is also erroneous. Productive consumption is indeed the basis of the formation of constant capital, but only when the means of production are used up in the creation of a use value for sale as a commodity,

i.e., in productive labour. Therefore, when Smith argues that
the physical structure must remain in use and cannot be demolished without
sustaining a loss, until the invested capital has returned its value.
(N. Smith, 1982, p150),

he is wrong to link this to the physical depreciation of the building. The building
certainly can be demolished, at any time, only provided that the rentals from the building
replacing it cover the cost of any unrealized value from the building which is demolished.

Admittedly Smith is always able to argue that it is not the physical condition of the
building which counts, but the rent gap between its present and its highest and best use.
Even ignoring the problem of functionalism in the rent gap hypothesis overall however,
there is a constant suggestion in Smith's writings that this gap will only appear when the
physical deterioration of the building has reached an advanced stage, one at which its
present value is minimal

The steady devalorization of capital creates longer term possibilities for a new
phase of valorization, and this is exactly what has happened in the inner city. . .

this devalorization cycle for housing [consists of] five stages: new construction
and first phase of use, landlordism, blockbusting and blowout, redlining,
abandonment

. . . devalorization leads to physical decline, which in turn lowers the market
price of the land on which the dilapidated buildings stand.
(N. Smith, 1982, p147, ftn3, p149)

Smith here falls into the same trap which Marx argued befell Ricardo

Those economists who like Ricardo, regard the capitalist mode of production as
absolute, feel... that it creates a barrier itself, and for this reason attribute the
barrier to Nature (in the theory of rent), not to production
(Marx, 1959, p242)

Smith's barrier argument succumbs to this same problem. The physical attributes of the
building stock are made the reason for the long turnover time of the capital invested in
them. The pace at which the building deteriorates is made to determine the rate at which
the capital is released in the form of rent income to the owner of the property. Howard
and King write that Ricardo

attributed rent to the intrinsic qualities of land itself: "the labour of nature is paid
not because she does much, but because she does little. In proportion as she
becomes niggardly in her gifts, she extracts a greater price for her work". . . It
would be difficult to wish for a better example of commodity fetishism,
attributing to the properties of inanimate objects phenomena which are in reality
the product of social relationships.

(Howard & King, 1975, p115)

Buildings, like all other commodities in productive consumption, transfer their value as
constant capital via the services they provide to the services produced through their use.

But this does *not* imply a rate of physical deterioration, i.e., a loss of use value, concomitant with that transfer of value as capital. If productive consumption is not to be linked with physical deterioration how should it be treated? Correcting the errors in Smith's interpretation of productive consumption paves the way toward an understanding of the causes of the rent gap.

For Marx (1967 p317), capital comprises two equal aspects, the labour process, which creates it, and the valorization process, which realizes it. The means of production and labour power are to the labour process as constant and variable capital are to the valorization process. Both aspects are different moments of the dialectic of capital as value-in-process.

As value-in-process, capital cannot be consumed, it can only be transferred from the means of production and labour power to commodities. Consumption of the use value inherent in the commodity is accompanied by the enhancement of labour power, i.e., variable capital is enhanced by the transfer of constant capital. The money transferred in payment for the right to consume that use value is the price equivalent of the value transferred from the commodity (which may be an item for productive or unproductive use) to labour power in the course of its consumption.

Once sold, it is the commodities' use values, not their values, which are productively consumed. A consumer of a use value looks at the commodity bearing that use value as a source of use value only (n.b., I am dealing here only with the question of the consumer *qua* consumer: the question of how to deal with the investment potential of a property is discussed in 7.3.3 below). Smith was incorrect therefore to state that a mortgage represented the productive consumption of capital (1979b p164). It is as money, the universal commodity, that a mortgage advance is productively consumed, not as capital. The mortgage is capital for the mortgage finance institution, but a commodity for the mortgagee.

The productive consumption of a mortgage is virtually instantaneous. Its use value is to enable the purchase of the property for which the mortgage advance was made. By contrast, the productive consumption of the property will typically be over many years, during which time its building services contribute to the reproduction of the labour power of its occupiers. The productive consumption of this use value may continue long after the proportion of the value of the constant capital transferred to the value of the labour power enhanced has fallen to a very low level.

The value of a house is transferred as constant capital via the housing services it provides

to the labour power reproduced in that house. The 'devalorization' of the property arises because wage rates *rise*, as part of the general increase in productivity of the economy at large, i.e., of social labour. Consequently, the proportion of constant capital utilized in the reproduction of labour power, the value transferred in productive consumption from the house, *necessarily* falls.

This fall in the flow of value of building services is only contingently related to the physical deterioration of the house as such. The theory of capital vintages assumes an historical sequence of more and more productive machinery coupled with rising real wage rates. Machinery of a particular vintage is scrapped when the rising wage rates mean that the value of that vintage's output is entirely absorbed by wage costs. The scrapping, in other words, is entirely due to economic, not physical, reasons (Harcourt 1972).

Capital vintage theory was developed as a defence of neoclassical concepts of capital, but the principle, I would argue, is nonetheless applicable to the analysis of the origins of the rent gap. Buildings are scrapped (or abandoned) because the rising productivity of social labour reduces the contribution of their services to the reproduction of that labour to a minimum, not because of their physical condition. To paraphrase a well known proposition in economic development theory, the rent gap arises not because buildings are exploited, but because they are not exploited enough.

7.3 Domestic technologies and the rent gap

7.3.1 Domestic technologies: the missing factor in explanations of gentrification

How then are buildings' potential to be exploited? By "doing them up", etc. Builders working on converting an old building into something new is such a familiar sight, that the very fact that such activity can take place at all is taken for granted. I shall argue in this section that to do so is to overlook completely the importance of what I term domestic technologies, the capability of investment in domestic property. In permitting the improvement of existing property, domestic technologies are responsible for creating the possibility of gentrification. As such, their development needs to be studied closely. Yet the question of domestic technologies is almost completely absent as a question for analysis in gentrification studies.

Following Du Vall (1988), domestic technologies may be defined as covering food production, preservation, cooking facilities and utensils, clothing, cleaning, water and

waste disposal, heating and lighting. Du Vall traces developments in these technologies from Neolithic times onwards. As Cowan (1983) and others have shown, modern developments in these technologies have led to the devolution from the home of clothing, food production and, to a certain extent, food preparation. While these are extremely important from the point of view of gentrification studies (Chapters 8 & 9 below), the key developments only occur after the introduction of piped water and sewage, and especially external energy sources, gas and electricity, into the home. The term 'domestic technologies' is therefore taken in this study to apply particularly to cooking, cleaning, water and waste disposal, heating and lighting insofar as the operation of these technologies depend on piped water, sewage, gas, and/or electricity.

The closest any of the literature comes to acknowledging the importance of domestic technologies is Hamnett's (1973) examination of the use of *Improvement grants as an indicator of gentrification in inner London*. Hamnett however does not problematize the creation of the possibility of improvements. There are similar passing comments on improvement grants in N. Smith (1979b p170). These comments are however made in the context of a discussion of the role of the state in the gentrification process. N. Smith (1987a p167-69) refers to consumer durables in passing, but only as part of a discussion of suburbanization, not of gentrification.

The question of domestic technologies is dismissed by Smith because of his opposition to the demand-side explanations of Ley et al. On the consumption functionalist side, the existence of the possibilities of home improvements simply serves as a peg on which to hang arguments about class distinctions on the basis of conspicuous forms of consumption. Smith's error is in imagining that theirs is the only way in which the contribution of domestic technologies can be analyzed. He actually sums up their approach extremely well.

gentrification and the mode of consumption it engenders are an integral part of class constitution... they are part of the means employed by new middle class individuals to distinguish themselves from the stuffed shirt bourgeoisie above and the working class below

(N. Smith, 1987a, p168)

The possibility of gentrification is not problematized but taken for granted in the postindustrialist approach, so that the discussion can move on to the meaty business of class. So for example, P. Williams comments that

style and the income which makes it possible can in turn be traced to developments around the mode of production, changes in the class structure, and residential differentiation; in other words, it is not an autonomous response but one that *mirrors* continuing social tensions and conflicts.

(P. Williams 1984, p219 - emphasis added)

It is worth adding the emphasis to the last quotation because it brings out the close

connection between the neglect of domestic technologies and the adoption of 'base-superstructure' metaphors in gentrification analysis. As argued in this chapter and in Chapter 3 above, these metaphors are pervasive in gentrification theory. The functionalist tendency to discuss gentrification in terms of results, of achieved housing situation (cf. Runciman 1968, quoted in 7.2.1 above), and not in terms of means is, I have also argued, closely associated with 'base-superstructure' theorizing.

Once pointed out, the relevance of domestic technologies to gentrification is obvious, yet the lack of attention paid to this issue is amazing. The only reason can be the functionalism associated with the use of 'base-superstructure'. It is noteworthy in this regard that Ley (1986) makes no reference to domestic technologies out of a total of 35 variables in his correlation exercise searching for the causes of inner city gentrification in Canadian cities.

It is possible that the participants in the gentrification debate genuinely do not consider domestic technologies as worthy of attention. But without electricity or household appliances for cleaning, cooking and heating, what good does it do to spend money on repairing the structure of a house which can only be run with the aid of these technologies, or with the aid of servants? If they do hold the view that domestic technologies are not worthy of attention, one purpose of this chapter is to show that this would be a mistake.

7.3.2 A model of gentrification

Without the possibilities offered by domestic technologies, gentrification as I have defined it, the return of middle class people to dwellings originally constructed for middle class occupancy, could never have taken place. The change in tastes supposedly represented by gentrification is secondary to the production of changing opportunities for consumption.

Now while it is quite true that domestic technology can be invested across the complete age range of housing, it is also true to say that the impact on the flow of housing services from the building will be the greater the older the property.

The more modern a house, the more likely it is that it has already incorporated into its design, features which would represent a significant improvement in amenities if applied to an older house. In these more modern houses, there would be a smaller difference between the level of housing services currently provided by the property and the maximum level of housing services it could provide after investing domestic technology

in it. In short, assume (as do the neighbourhood lifecycle models) a Burgess type city in which growth takes the form of concentric circles, each of which contains more modern housing than the previous circle. This assumption is for the sake of ease of exposition only, no essential features hang on it.

If an investment of domestic technologies in an existing property is being assessed in terms of the gross returns over the interest payments required to finance the investment, then, *cet. par.*, one would expect to find the oldest houses capable of being renovated, being renovated first. Then further investment would follow in later, better-built, houses.

This argument therefore also suggests that gentrification is a subset of home improvements. It offers a reason why attempts to define gentrification have proved so difficult. This is because the requirement for the financing of the improvements which would categorize them as gentrification is a secondary consideration to the decision to improve. Gentrification tails off into improvements to the property which can be financed out of current income, and which do not therefore require a change in occupation.

An economic model of gentrification as a subset of home improvements is then fairly simple to construct. As any display of mathematical symbols in a text devoted to social issues invariably invokes cries of economic determinism - usually from people who are perfectly happy with SCA-based determinism in their accounts - it is as well to specify at the outset exactly what the development of this model is intended to achieve.

This model seeks to show what are the financial limits and constraints on behaviour in the context of gentrification. It is therefore deterministic but in the sense in which R. Williams defines 'determine' (1977, 1983K) - *if* such a course of action is taken, then this consequence *must* follow. In realist terms, if such and such contingently related real objects ($2\text{H}_2 + \text{O}_2$) are brought into contact with each other then the consequences ($2\text{H}_2\text{O}$) are inevitable.

If this defence against charges of economic determinism still fails to convince, if the explanation of the determinants of the gentrification process presented here still seems to privilege economic explanations overly, my final argument is that, under capitalism, life really is like that. Money and money flows both structure social relations under capitalism and are the medium through which capitalist society interacts. Under capitalism, to repeat D. Sayer's words once more "Reification is a social process not a mere category error" (1991 p65).

Let

\bar{q} flow of housing services from a modern (or fully improved) dwelling - assumed constant at any time τ

\hat{q} flow of housing services from an unimproved (or only partially improved) dwelling at time τ .

$\bar{q} - \hat{q}$ benefits from improving dwelling

Let costs of improvement I be some function of $\bar{q} - \hat{q}$ so that

$$I = I(\bar{q} - \hat{q})$$

Assume interest rate i constant at any time τ so that

$$i = \bar{i}$$

Then the profitability of investing in the dwelling r is given by

$$r = \frac{\bar{q} - \hat{q}}{I(\bar{q} - \hat{q})}$$

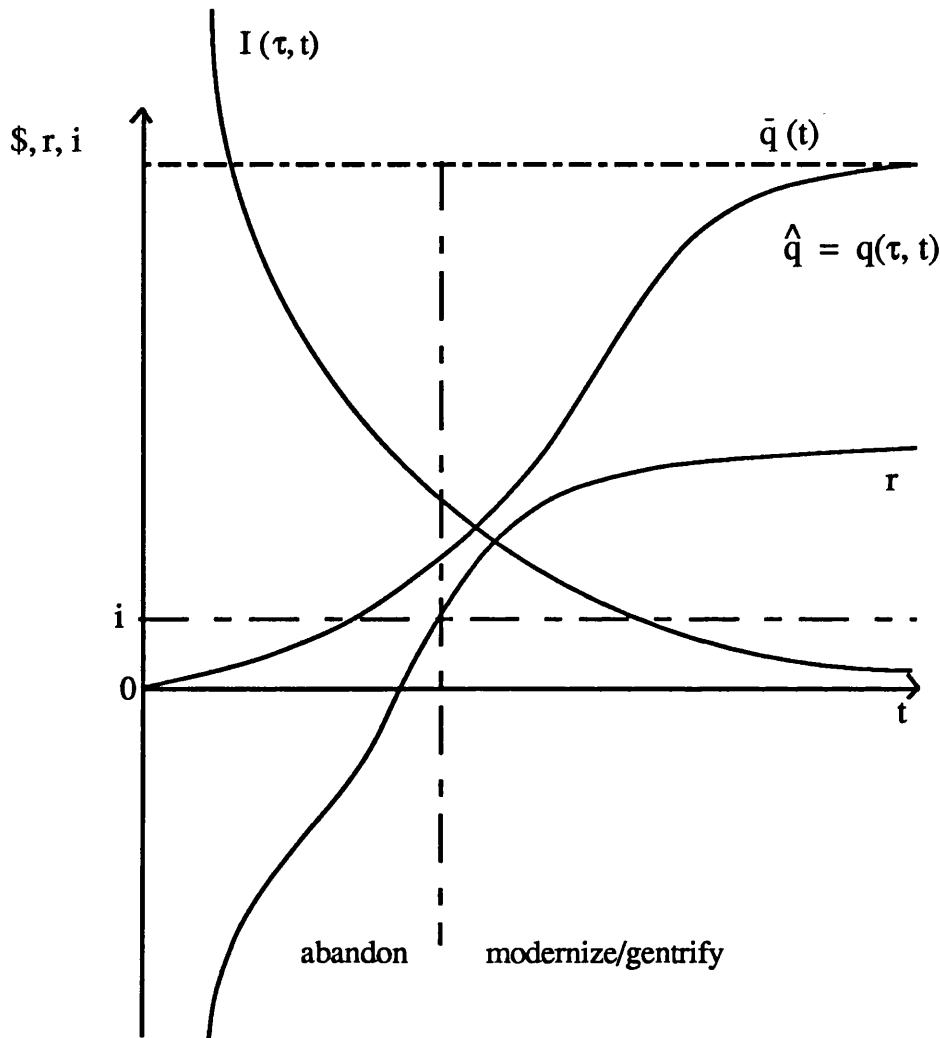
If $r \geq i$ improvements may be undertaken. If $r < i$, mortgage finance institutions will not finance investment. Better returns can be had investing elsewhere.

These relationships are graphed in figure 7.3 Note that the boundary between improvements and abandonment will shift to the left bringing the possibility of improvements to older houses as *either* the interest rate falls with respect to the profit rate, *or* the investment function falls with respect to the decline of housing amenities with housing vintage $\hat{q} = q(\tau, t)$ (which would have the effect of raising r with respect to i). Investment will proceed up to the point where the gross returns expected from the investment just match the cost of financing the investment. As the rate of interest moves up and down with respect to the expected rate of return from such investments, in other words as $(r - i)$ rises and falls, so the volume of investment carried out will rise and fall. This much information can be gleaned simply from looking at the graph.

Figure 7.3 (and Figure 7.4 also) is a graphic representation of the argument that as the productivity of social labour has increased, so also has the flow of housing services from each successive vintage τ of the housing stock. This increase is shown by the 'S' shaped curve $\hat{q} = q(\tau, t)$. The value of the flow of housing services in this case is the rate of transfer of value from the house-as-constant-capital to the occupants. As houses become more 'modern', they have incorporated in them a greater quantity of use value.

Consequently the value of the flow of housing services also rises.

Figure 7.3 Relations between investment, profitability and interest rates affecting decision as whether to modernize an existing property.



If however, houses are able to have incorporated into them the latest improvements in technologies, then the value of the flow of housing services will be the same, regardless of the age of the house. This constant value is given by the horizontal dashed line $\bar{q}(t)$. The area between the two curves, $\int_{\tau} q(\tau)dt$, represents the size of investment required to raise the unimproved flow of housing services up to the current level.

Having defined the conditions affecting the decision to modernize or to abandon, the next step is to define the conditions affecting the issue of whether this can be financed by the present occupiers or if they would have to be replaced by occupiers on higher incomes; in other words whether these improvements can be financed without displacement or only with displacement. To understand why displacement even comes into the question of financing housing improvements requires a preliminary discussion of the conditions

under which housing finance is undertaken.

As defined above, profitability is only measured in terms of the increase in flow of housing services over the costs of obtaining that increase, and not in terms of what the likely resale price would be. The difference between the two measures of profitability are important for understanding gentrification. The possibility of a discrepancy between the costs of increasing the flow of housing services and realizing those costs upon sale means that mortgage finance institutions never invest in a property itself. They invest in its owner, in particular in its owners' future income prospects. Their only interest in the property itself is a security against those prospects being unrealized, through death, illness, unemployment, or change in financial circumstances.

Because it is viewed as a security, mortgage finance institutions are only interested in improving a property if they can be sure that they can get their money back should they be forced to foreclose. Mortgage finance institutions' investment decisions are therefore based primarily on occupiers' incomes, and only secondarily on speculative estimates on the growth of property prices (at the micro level - at the macro level, they of course depend heavily on the assumption that property prices will rise - see Boddy 1980). P. Williams (1976) gives an example from Islington where some property improvements were undertaken with private finance. Representatives from mortgage finance institutions were then invited along to see the results. Only once they were convinced that the property stood a chance of being resold at its rental value were they prepared to begin lending, and then only to people with sufficient incomes to justify the risk of the investment.

If mortgage finance institutions could be sure of getting their money back in resale of a property if they had to foreclose, then the question of housing improvements being contingent on the *prior* displacement of the existing occupier would not arise. An existing occupier could borrow the money to improve the house and sell it on to a 'gentrifier', thereby pocketing the increase in value of the property for herself.

I put 'gentrifier' in quotes here because it is not certain whether this transfer of ownership would constitute gentrification. The essence of gentrification is that property improvements take place through prior displacement. Gentrifiers, by virtue of their higher incomes, are able to invest what is for them a comparatively small amount of money in order to obtain considerably enhanced housing services from the property, which the displaced person could not, because the mortgage finance institutions were not prepared to invest in her.

Let mortgage outstanding, H , be some function of the purchase price
 (the remarks on the behaviour of mortgage finance institutions mean that H could also be defined
 as a function of income - here I choose to use income as the parameter rather than the variable);
 then

$$\begin{aligned} H &= H(\hat{q}) \\ Y &= \text{income of occupier} \\ \alpha &= \text{maximum mortgage/income ratio (a constant, usually around 2.9:1)} \end{aligned}$$

Then if

$$\begin{aligned} H + I < \alpha Y & \quad \text{home improvements possible without displacement} \\ H + I < \alpha Y & \quad \text{improvements can only be financed through replacement of} \\ & \quad \text{existing occupier by a higher income occupier.} \end{aligned}$$

The cutoff point is then obviously $H + I = \alpha Y$.

The problem of assessing the cutoff point is then a routine one of maximization under
 constraint. It is to maximize $\bar{q} - \hat{q}$ for a given Y, \bar{Y} .

In fact since \bar{q} is fixed at any time τ , the problem may be simplified as

$$\begin{aligned} & \min \hat{q} \\ \text{subject to } & \begin{cases} \alpha \bar{Y} = H(\hat{q}) + I(\bar{q} - \hat{q}) \\ \{(\bar{q} - \hat{q})\} / \{I(\bar{q} - \hat{q})\} \geq i \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

Alternatively, for given a \hat{q} , the problem is one of finding the maximum income which
 would permit an occupant to finance improvements of a given size:

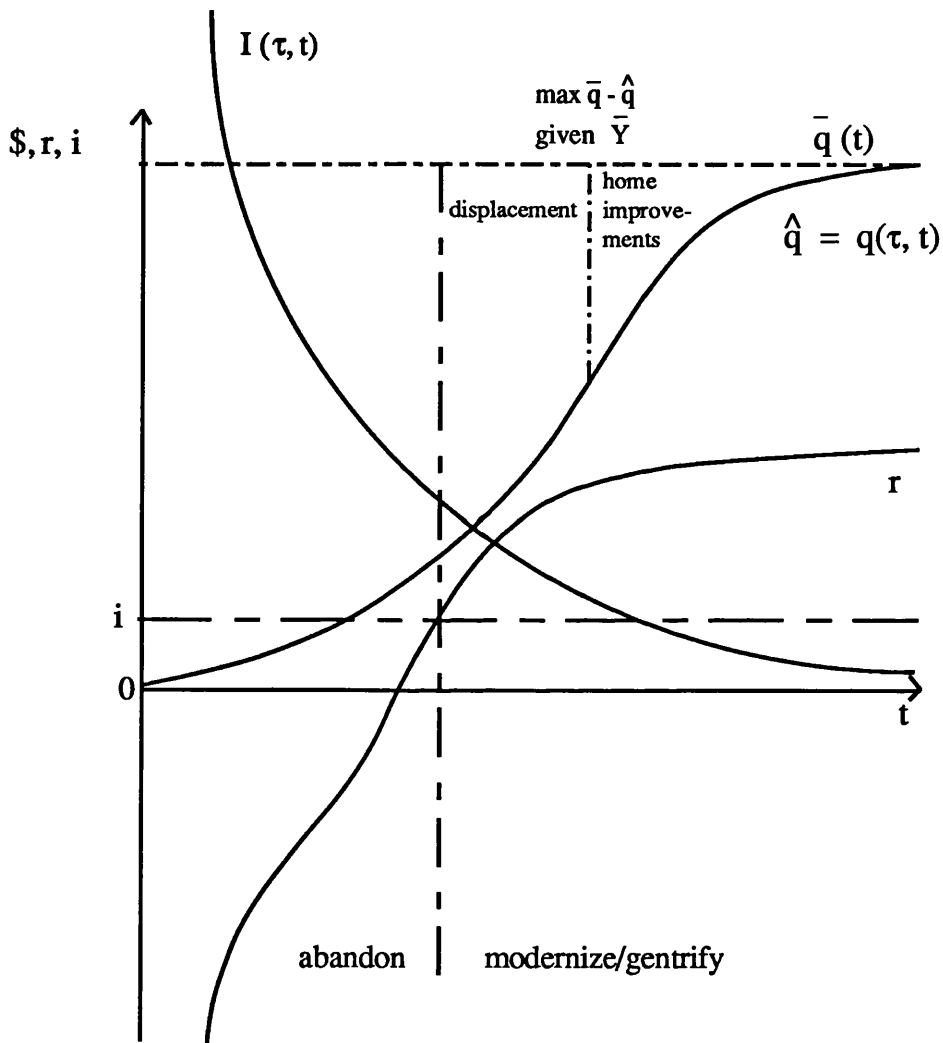
$$\begin{aligned} & \max \alpha^{-1} \{H(\hat{q}) + I(\bar{q} - \hat{q})\} \\ \text{subject to } & \bar{q} - \hat{q} = \kappa \text{ an arbitrary constant} \end{aligned}$$

That is, find the maximum income which could finance $H(\hat{q}) + I(\kappa)$ without
 displacement.

Figure 7.4 shows how given an arbitrary income, \bar{Y} , what the maximum $\bar{q} - \hat{q}$ might be
 before displacement becomes the only method of financing improvements to a property
 of vintage τ .

Figure 7.4 Determination of cutoff point between displacement and home improvements:

maximum $\bar{q} - \hat{q}$ given an arbitrary income \bar{Y} .



It is possible to refine the model still further. Replacement of the existing occupier by one of higher income need not of itself constitute gentrification. There should be a certain disparity between the incomes of the gentrifiers and the incomes of the displacees. Gentrification is then a subset of displacement-financed improvements and a sub-subset of home improvements.

Let

Y_g be the incomes of the gentrifiers

Y_d be the incomes of the displacees, and

$Y_g = \mu Y_d$, where $\mu \geq 1$. Assuming gentrifiers' incomes at least 30% higher than displacees, $\mu \geq 1.3$.

The conditions under which gentrification, displacement, or home improvements will occur are now

$$\begin{array}{ll} (H + I) \geq \mu \alpha Y_d & \text{yields gentrification} \\ \mu \alpha Y_d > (H + I) \geq \alpha Y_d & \text{yields displacement without gentrification} \\ \alpha Y_d > (H + I) & \text{yields home improvements without displacement} \end{array}$$

This complicates only slightly the form of the problem to be solved. The only difference is to the form of the budget constraint

$$\begin{array}{l} \min \hat{q} \\ \text{subject to } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \mu \alpha Y_d = H(\hat{q}) + I(\bar{q} - \hat{q}) \\ \{(\bar{q} - \hat{q})\}/\{I(\bar{q} - \hat{q})\} \geq i \end{array} \right. \end{array}$$

The dual similarly is

$$\begin{array}{l} \max Y_d = (\mu \alpha)^{-1} \{H(\hat{q}) + I(\bar{q} - \hat{q})\} \\ \text{subject to } \bar{q} - \hat{q} = \kappa \end{array}$$

That is, find the maximum income which could finance $H(\hat{q}) + I(\kappa)$ without being displaced by gentrification. The problem

$$\begin{array}{l} \max Y_d = (\alpha)^{-1} \{H(\hat{q}) + I(\bar{q} - \hat{q})\} \\ \text{subject to } \bar{q} - \hat{q} = \kappa \end{array}$$

is now to find the maximum income which could finance $H(\hat{q}) + I(\kappa)$ without non-gentrifying displacement, as when a newly married working class couple purchase a house from working class 'empty nesters', moving into a retirement cottage.

Posing the problem in this way brings out the fact that the gentrification factor, μ , is not a

rent gap, but an income gap. The rent gap accounts for displacement, not for gentrification. Clearly, μ will always be arbitrary, but for good reason. One person's yuppie is another person's ghastly *nouveau riche*. However, because it is arbitrary, it does not mean to say that it is meaningless. I shall explain the social bases of μ in Chapter 8.

Finally, government subsidies, in the form of improvement grants might be considered. Let these be some function (within limits) of the investment required. Then $G = G(I)$ and the cutoff point (simple case) is now

$$H + I - G = \alpha Y, \quad \text{where } I \leq I^*, \text{ and } I^* \text{ is the upper limit on government grants.}$$

Since $G = G(I)$, this can be expanded in Taylor series (Pasinetti 1974 pp49-50) to yield a multiplier style equation

$$\alpha Y - H = (1 - g') I$$

where g' - the rate of change of size of grant with size of I - may be interpreted as the government's propensity to disburse improvement grants! Taking the existence of government grants into account, the cutoff point between home improvements and displacement is

$$\begin{cases} H + I(1 - g') = \alpha Y, & I \leq I^* \\ H + I = \alpha Y, & I > I^* \end{cases}$$

The existence of government subsidies affects the model in two ways. The effect of $1 + g'$ on αY is effectively to increase its size, thereby making it more likely that home improvements can be undertaken without displacement. This effect is also seen in the increase in the size of mortgage H which can be obtained for a given income.

$$H (1 - g')^{-1} + I = (1 - g')^{-1} \alpha Y,$$

The model of gentrification presented here is intended to clarify the definition of gentrification, and its relation to investment, income, home improvements and displacement. It helps explain why gentrification has been regarded as a chaotic conception. The boundaries separating gentrification from displacement-led improvements, and separating displacement-led improvements from home improvements generally are extremely variable, depending on size of the investment required, and the relative incomes of those seeking to make that investment, the current occupiers or the

potential displacers/gentrifiers. Even if the vertical dashed lines in Figures 7.3 and 7.4 did set the current boundary between gentrification and displacement, they are always moving left or right as interest rates rise and fall, and depending on the relative incomes involved. They also move left and right depending on the flow of housing services inherited from the past, that is, on the shape of $\hat{q} = q(\tau, t)$. At a certain point the precise age of the building becomes unimportant. The fact that gentrification of the (17th century) Spitalfields area has occurred subsequent to the gentrification of (19th century) Islington is evidence that the relations graphed in Figures 7.3 to 7.5 do not constitute an economic model to be interpreted in a mechanistic manner. The current housing situation of gentrifier and non-gentrifier can only be explained historically.

Second, it gives economic meaning to the criterion of 'sufficient wideness'. Gentrification will only occur when $\bar{q} - \hat{q} \geq \kappa$, and κ is such that $H + I - G \geq \mu\alpha Y_d$. The fact κ and μ are arbitrary constants however shows that wideness itself is not consequential in terms of explaining gentrification. 'Sufficient wideness' can only be defined with reference to relative incomes and interest rates, and must therefore be defined anew each time these change - which means every time. Effectively therefore, as I argued in respect of Smith and Clark's accounts of gentrification, how wide is wide enough can only be discovered after the fact. The model presented here therefore is not intended as a causal explanation of gentrification. However, it does seek to illustrate the importance of (in fact the very existence of) domestic technologies as the primary enabling factor in the explanation of gentrification.

7.3.3 Domestic technologies and the rent gap

The rent gap is defined as the difference between the rental in current use and that which could be obtained in a (so-called) higher and better use. Figures 7.3 & 7.4 describe such a rent gap but one which does not suffer from the functionalism inherent in Smith's accounts of circuits and barriers. The rent gap is created by the difference between the flow of housing services obtainable from an "unimproved" and an "improved" property. It does not occur as a result of the physical deterioration of properties, but because these properties can be improved. The buildings' use values may well have remained constant and their value completely amortized. Gentrification does not (automatically) occur when the gap is "wide enough", but only when conditions in the finance markets permit.

What distinguishes gentrification from home improvements or simple displacement is that this particular form of improvement can only be financed if there is a substantial change

in the owner's income, however that change of occupancy may be accomplished.

This begs the question, why would anyone want to finance such an improvement in such a drastic way? To answer this question, it is necessary to address the issue of what gains may be made from the ownership of housing. This issue has been the subject of much debate in recent years, with Saunders (1984, 1989, 1990) and Murie (Forrest & Murie 1987, Forrest, Murie & P. Williams 1991) leading protagonists. The purpose of this debate has been to establish empirical evidence for Saunders' proposition that capital gains from home ownership lay the basis for a new form of class division in society based on consumption cleavages rather than on production relations. I have already discussed Saunders' arguments in Chapter 3 above. Here, I am only interested in the question of whether or not capital gains can be made from domestic property ownership.

Duncan (1989a) argues against Saunders that no overall capital gain can readily be identified with owner-occupation, when housing prices are deflated both for inflation in the general price level and for improvements in housing quality, to obtain a "pure housing price" (p11). Kleinman (1991) argues that owners do in general make capital gains but that, because of flaws in Saunders' methodology, it is difficult to estimate from Saunders' figures what the size of those gains might be. Kleinman argues that the gains "capture part of the increase in real wealth, by virtue of the fact that we live in an imperfect world of disequilibrium, not smoothly adjusting markets" (p2).

Despite Duncan's problematization of the "house price assumption", his conclusions nonetheless seem implausible. As is by now well documented, the building industry in Britain is very backward and labour intensive compared with the rest of the British economy, and indeed with building industries throughout Europe, though not North America (Ball, 1983, Duncan 1986, 1989b). On Marxist, or any other, economic principles, we should therefore expect to see the unit costs of new construction rise with respect to the general price level. As Duncan himself writes "cost levels in the stock as a whole are fundamentally affected by the costs of new build." (Duncan, 1986 p15, cf. Ball, 1983, Chapter 4). If the pure price level has remained constant, it would contradict such an expectation, since it would imply a rate of improvement of labour productivity in construction equal to the national average, over the period for which figures are available. Since it is generally recognized that there has been no such improvement, then there must be a problem with either Duncan's data or his methodology.

Duncan's pure price index deflates first for price increases, and then for cost increases due to quality and quantity improvements. If labour costs represent a rising proportion of housing costs, compared to the national average embodied in commodity production,

then deflating for quality and quantity improvements would also tend to downplay the significance of the relative increase in the quantity of labour embodied in the house. This would tend to downplay the potential of any capital gain from the ownership of domestic property.

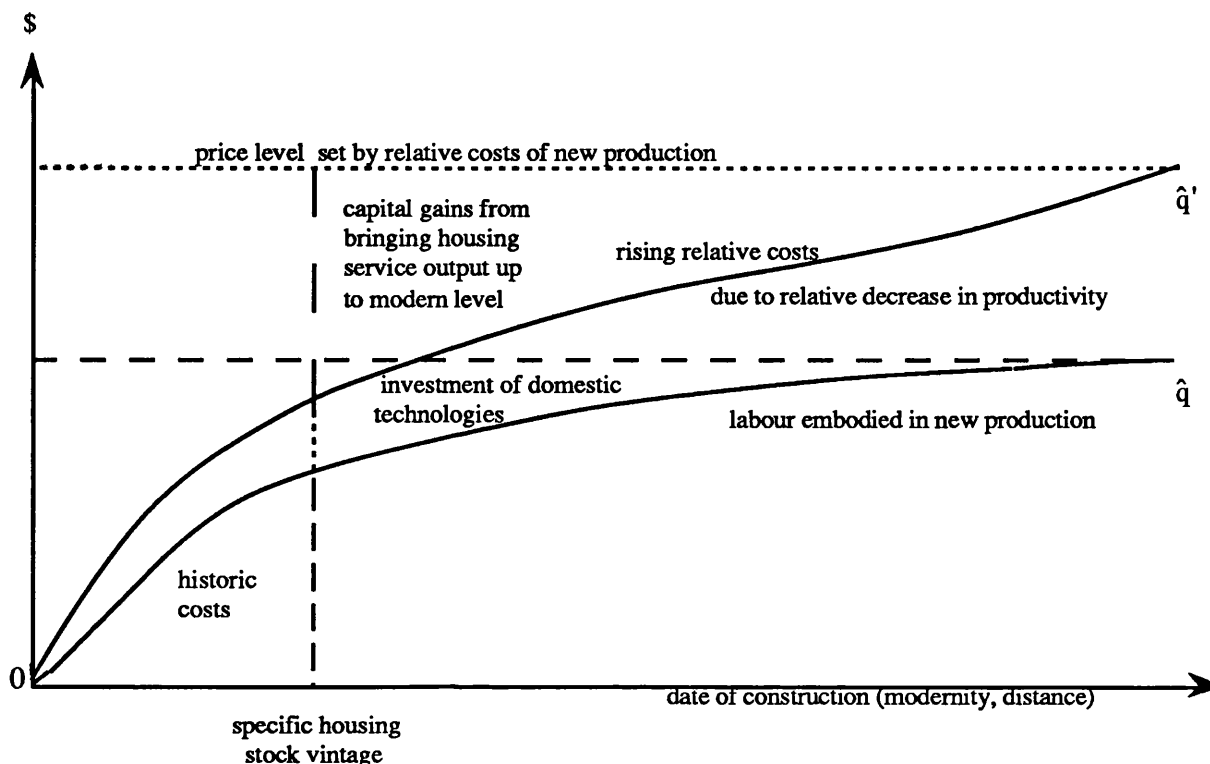
The question at issue is the capital gain to be made by ownership of a particular vintage of the housing stock, when the possibility exists that subsequent technical progress can be embodied in it. The problem with Duncan's 5% sample survey of building society mortgages in the UK which he uses as the basis for his raw house price data, is that it is composed of mortgages advanced on all properties, not just on new construction. Consequently, it confuses the average with the margin. It implicitly averages technical progress, quality and quantity improvements, across the whole housing stock. Again, this therefore underplays the potential gap between current replacement cost and the sum of historic costs and investment in domestic technologies.

These problems extend to Duncan's estimation of the costs of improvement and maintenance. The median age of an extant mortgage is 7 years. This is an average for the entire stock, but nevertheless implies that the median length of residence in new construction is 7 years (Duncan has therefore in effect averaged curve \hat{q} around a horizontal line intersecting \hat{q} at a point where $7 \leq t - \tau < 14$). If there is a greater tendency to improve second hand property compared to new construction, then the estimates of these costs should only be applied to second-hand mortgages, ie. , on mortgages over 7 years old.

The precise length of time before new construction is traded in is of course unimportant compared to the main point that the costs of improvements etc should be placed against the older, rather than the newer stock. To include this in the costs of all mortgages advanced is again to engage in an averaging procedure which would tend to counteract the effects of any historic trend. Unit housing prices would be higher than average prices, but would not vary from the average in the long run.

These points may be illustrated by considering Figures 7.3 and 7.4 once more. The shape of the historic building cost curve, \hat{q} , represents the effect of quality and quantity improvements embodied in later vintages of the housing stock. It standardizes for the relative cost increases in the construction industry compared to the national average costs per unit of output. If relative cost increases are taken into account, then the possibility of capital gains from the application of domestic technologies to existing housing occurs, and therefore the possibility of gentrification also. This possibility is shown by curve \hat{q}' graphed in Figure 7.5.

Figure 7.5 Capital gains from investment in the housing stock



The market value of the building can be accounted for as the sum of the historic cost \hat{q} , plus any the value of any investment in domestic technologies, plus any capital gains arising because of the relative increase in the cost of new housing \hat{q}' . These unearned increases in the market value over the supply price should be accounted under the heading of rent.

As accumulation and urban development proceeds the value of land at any location will rise independently of any other considerations. Ball (1983) makes this the centrepiece of his explanation of the backward state of the British building industry, since this unearned increment in land value is appropriated by the builders. Builders are therefore under less pressure to rationalize the labour process in the building industry, hence its state of relative backwardness compared to other sectors of the economy. Consequently as well as taking into account the rent on the unearned value of the building, as in Figure 7.5, for a full account of the contributions to a rent gap, the unearned increment in the value of the land must also be considered.

Although this last observation might seem obvious enough, in fact Ball (1985) argues strongly against proceeding in this fashion. He argues that ground rent and building rent cannot be distinguished from one another in practice and so should not be distinguished from one another in theory either. Ball would deny that the rent gap argument therefore

on the grounds that the relevant categories of rent do not even exist. They do not exist, Ball argues, because Marx's theory of rent, which in any case suffers from Marx's failure to solve his transformation problem, was designed to apply only to the agricultural context, and cannot be translated into the urban context. Having already noted Clark's criticisms of Smith's definitions of rent, and having argued that Smith's conceptualization of rent in terms of flows and barriers is faulty, it might therefore be possible that Ball has a point. It might well be that the reasons for the deficiencies in Smith's rent theory lie not in particular errors in Smith's application of Marx's categories to the problem of gentrification, but are instead inherent in *any* attempt to apply Marx's theory of rent to the urban context. The debate on the theory of rent in other words raises issues lurking in the depths of the gentrification debate, which have not so far been discussed in this thesis, and which are not properly dealt with in the rent gap literature either.

The four questions normally debated consider (i) what role rent plays in the accumulation process; (ii) whether Marx's categories of rent were correct, or at least correctable; (iii) whether these categories can be associated with particular forms of class struggle (does the presence of, say, absolute rent signify a struggle between capitalist and landlord, whereas monopoly rent signifies a struggle between landlord and worker - H. Smyth 1986); and (iv) whether these categories, which were developed in the analysis of agricultural rents, can be applied to the urban context or not.

What answers are given to this last question obviously depend to some degree on the answers given to the first three. Ball (1985, 1987, 1989), as noted, argues that Marx's categories are incorrect in significant respects, that they cannot be associated with particular form of class struggle and that they most definitely cannot be applied to the urban context. Haila (1989, 1990) argues equally vigorously that Ball is incorrect. Clearly therefore, even to touch upon the issue of rent when dealing with the rent gap or gentrification issues in general is to stray into a minefield. My attempts at disposal of these mines is undertaken in Redfern (1991). My conclusions on these four issues are first that since the rent is accounted in terms of money, it acts like all other forms of money as both rule and resource, and so it plays an essentially co-ordinating role in accumulation. To the extent that a co-ordinating role must involve the setting of limits, rent can under certain circumstances act as a barrier. However, this barrier effect is contingent, it is not inherent in the nature of rent itself, as Smith's interpretation of absolute rent as a barrier seems to imply.

Second, Marx's categories of absolute, differential and monopoly rent are essentially correct. Absolute rent is best understood as an intersectoral version of Marx's category

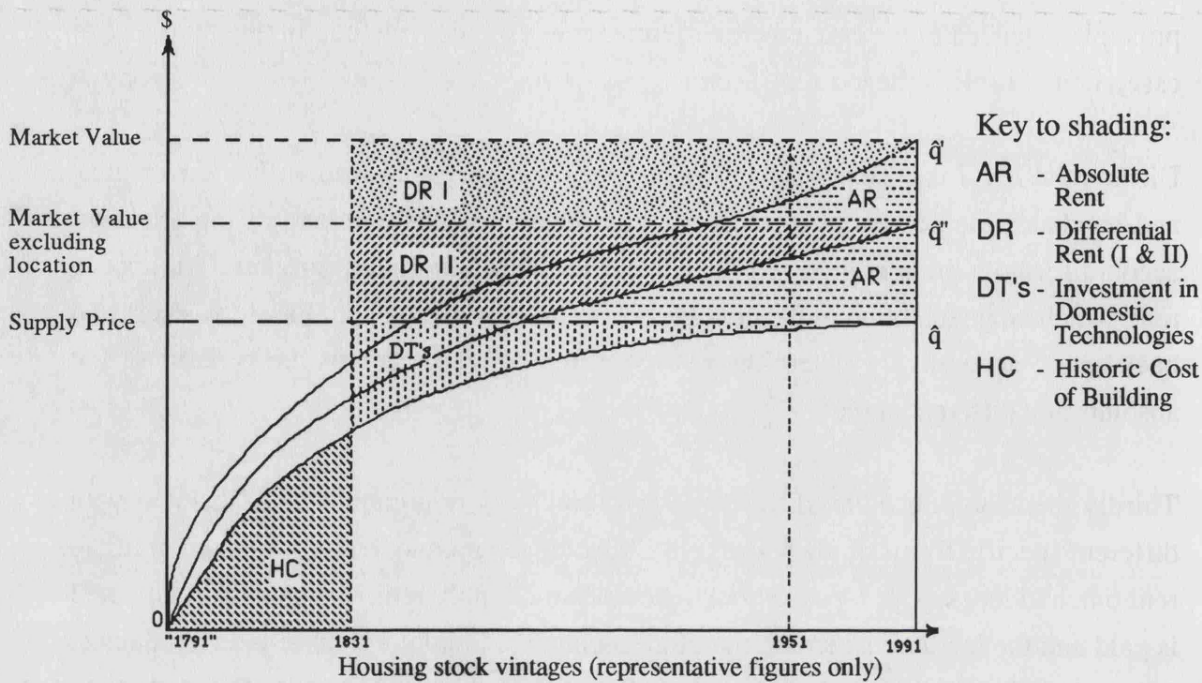
of differential rent II, which is differential rent arising from different organic compositions of capital in the output of a particular sector. Absolute rent is then this principle extended to the case where different sectors are considered. In the intersectoral case, money itself is the 'no-rent' sector.

Differential rent I is basically Ricardo's differential rent arising from either 'the original and inexhaustible powers of the soil', or from location. Absolute and differential rent account for how the rent arises in the context of the accumulation process. Monopoly rent, which is an interception in the circular flow of income from capitalists to workers and back again, accounts for where the rent goes, that is who receives the benefits of the absolute and differential rent.

Thirdly therefore, absolute, differential and monopoly rent cannot be associated with different specific forms of class struggle. A landlord, or anyone else with something to rent out, a video, say, or a power tool, receives a monopoly rent, and as long as that rent is paid and the landlord's income therefore secure, the landlord is quite indifferent as to who pays. Finally therefore, these categories of rent can be applied to the urban case, despite Ball's objections. For the purposes of analysis of the gains to be made from gentrification, the two relevant categories are absolute and differential rent. Monopoly rent is not a relevant category in this context.

Figure 7.6 shows how this rent is divided between the various relevant components of Marx's categories of rent, namely absolute rent, which arises because of the backwardness of the building industry, and differential rent. As noted above, differential rent may be divided into two categories, DRI, deriving from location on the one hand and DRII, deriving from quantity of capital invested per plot on the other. Therefore a third curve \hat{q}'' , intermediate between \hat{q} and \hat{q}' , has been added, to show how the differential rent splits between DRI and DRII.

Figure 7.6 Accounting for capital gains in gentrification, using 1831 property as an example



Curves \hat{q} , \hat{q}' and \hat{q}'' are flows, so the area between the lines represent the total sums of costs and rents for each category. The "1831 vintage" is taken as an example. In terms of labour embodied, the 1991 supply price of the 1831 vintage is the sum of the 1831 labour inputs, the historic cost, plus the 1991 investments in domestic technologies which bring the flow of housing services up to 1991 standards. The market price is higher than the supply price because the lack of growth in productivity in housing construction compared to the rest of the economy means that the proportion of labour embodied in new construction has risen relative to the rest of the economy. The organic composition of capital embodied in new production is lower than the remainder of the economy. This means that the market price of new, 1991, housing pays an absolute rent, which fully accounts for the difference between its supply price and its market value. The market value of new housing consists entirely of labour embodied plus absolute rent. However, pre-1991 housing vintages also yield differential rent compared to new construction, since the historic costs within the sector are lower.

Differential rent I, Ricardo's differential rent, arises out of the "original and indestructible powers of the soil", in the urban case, relative location. Differential rent II arises out from the differing proportions of capital invested in different vintages of the housing stock. Differential rent I therefore may be taken to account for ground rent, whereas differential rent II accounts for building rent. The graph does suggest however that a proportion of that ground rent is also to be accounted as absolute rent.

To repeat, the lines on the graph represent flows and the areas between the lines represent

total rents paid in each category. Moving from right to left on the graph, that is, when comparing later and later vintages, alters the relative proportions of each component of rent. Thus, compared with "1831", the "1951 vintage" has a higher historic cost, requires a smaller investment of domestic technologies to bring its services up to 1991 standard, and pays a smaller differential rent but a higher absolute rent. As noted earlier the 1991 vintage pays, this year, no differential rent at all. Its rent is arrived at entirely by comparison with other sectors of production, i.e., is all absolute. In 1992 however, it will begin to start yielding differential rent. Thus the proportions of absolute to differential rent change from year to year.

However when capitalized, the common market value of all the vintages is also a monopoly rent, a deduction from the general social pool of surplus value. Thus the same property yields qualitatively different rents from year to year, and also from the perspective adopted, even though nothing has altered in the class relations between capitalist, landlord and tenant.

Figure 7.6 just shows how the rent arising from the increase in the market value of existing housing is distributed among the various categories of rent. It does not answer the question of who actually gets this rent. Figure 7.7 shows the standard method of analyzing the distribution of rent amongst the different actors in the urban land market.

Figure 7.7 Rent trajectories in urban development

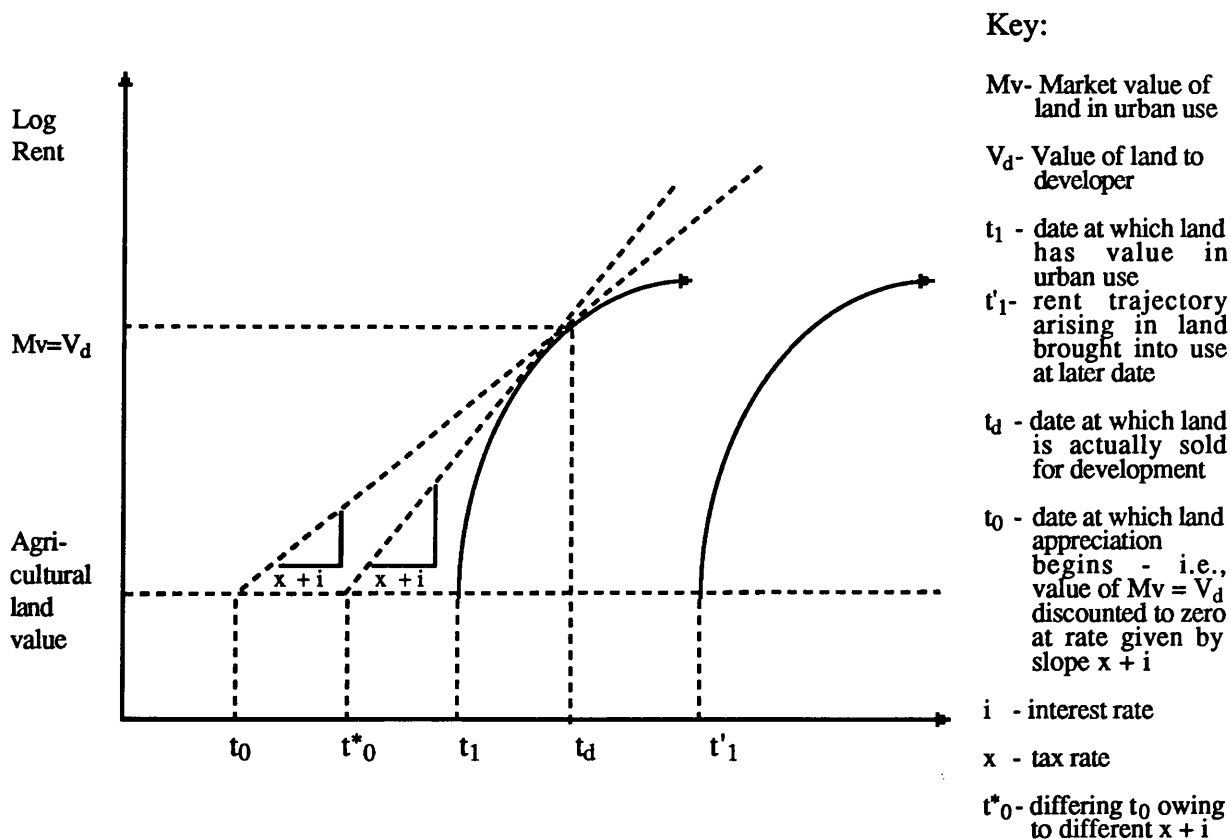


Figure 7.7 graphs the increase in land values which occur as land is brought into development. The solid black curved lines t_1 , t'_1 represent the rent trajectories, the rate of increase in land rents determined by the course of the accumulation process that would occur in the absence of speculation in land development. If speculation in land is permitted, a developer, seeking a 'normal' return on investment, would purchase the land at time t_0 (t^*_0). Time t_0 is determined by the holding costs of the land and is calculated from the formula:

$$\text{normal return} = \text{appreciation} + (\text{agricultural}) \text{ rents} - \text{taxes}$$

i.e.,

$$iV_d = dV_d/dt + R_a - xV_d$$

yielding

$$dV_d/dt + R_a = xV_d + iV_d = V_d(x+i)$$

So dV_d/dt , the rate at which V_d - the value of land to the developer - appreciates, is given by $x + i$, the holding costs of the land. This is shown graphically in Figure 7.7 by the slope of the lines t_0 and t^*_0 , which have gradients of $x + i$.

This at any rate is the theory. In fact of course, a developer cannot guarantee that the rate of appreciation and future costs of the land holdings will be those predicted from the current levels of x and i . This is why the developer is referred to as speculating in land. Depending on just how successful the timing of the land purchase or lease turns out to have been, the developer will get more and the agricultural landowner will get less of the rent increase. This division of the surplus between the developer/speculator and the agricultural landowner does not however affect the division of the surplus into categories of rent. Marx's categories of rent are important for accounting purposes, not for analyses of class struggle. Suggestions, in the current debate on rent theory that they should so be used and criticisms of the application of Marx's rent theory to the urban context based on such suggestions both seem equally misplaced.

I have argued that the boundary between displacement and home improvements is set where the interest rate falls below the gross returns to be realized from the investment, that is, when the return to be made from investing in the owner is less than the return to be made in the money markets. Certainly at this point, no mortgage finance institution would be interested. The graph does suggest however, that all investment in domestic technologies, including gentrification, is carried out with an eye to future gains from the investment. In other words, the rationale underlying gentrifiers' behaviour is common to all investment decisions, and not the peculiar demand functions of alien space invaders.

This argument touches on the thorny question of whether homeowners view their property primarily as a consumption good or as a capital good, and consequently whether researchers should view domestic property as a consumption good or as an investment good (e.g., Saunders 1990). In one sense, the question is misplaced. As long as the consumption of domestic property is financed by mortgage finance institutions, the treatment of a house as an investment good is inescapable both on the part of the owners and the researchers, despite any other attitudes they may harbour toward the social meaning of the home. In another sense however, the very posing of the question demonstrates that the experience of homeownership, like everything else, lies in the margins between culture and civilization.

Therefore, in arguing that the ability of gentrifiers to gentrify lies in their ability to take advantage of domestic technologies and the rising real value of new construction to improve existing properties, I do not mean to suggest that gentrifiers' motives are solely, primarily, or even secondarily financial. However, if they wish to get financing to carry out these improvements, their mortgagors must be convinced of the capital gains to be made, or the investment will not take place. P. Williams (1976) documents quite clearly the necessity, and the difficulty, of persuading mortgage finance institutions to lend money on Islington properties prior to the onset of gentrification there (7.3.2 above). Others have pointed to the opening of the Victoria line station at Highbury Corner. It is obviously important to bear in mind the limits set by the mortgage finance process, and by the availability of suitably tenured housing stock in particular locations. However, these are secondary contingent issues related to timing rather than cause. The origins of gentrification should be sought in the development of domestic technologies rather than in any of the functionalist accounts reviewed above. These arguments *entirely take for granted* the existence of domestic technology, as the means by which a house is to be renovated. In this neglect of domestic technologies they however follow a general trend. Saunders (1989, 1990) contains no reference to this aspect of the history of the home.

Similarly, the possibility of gentrification which is opened up by the existence of domestic technologies does not of itself guarantee that the process will occur. Domestic technologies cannot be considered without attention to the contexts under which they were developed and introduced. Not to pay attention to these issues would be to exchange technological determinism for functionalism.

I have argued that Smith's defence of his version of the rent gap does not save his theories from functionalism. In what way therefore is this version any different?

There are four reasons why this argument is an improvement on Smith's. First, as I

have been stressing in the explanations of Figures 7.3 to 7.5, the argument deals with potential, not process. Money is the crucial medium of structuration in a capitalist society. It is both rule and resource. The model and the graphs show how the parameters of action are set. If someone wishes to exceed those parameters, they will either find themselves bankrupt, or more likely find it impossible to raise the finance to accomplish their plans for their property.

Second, Smith's argument fetishizes rent, giving it a causal power which it does not possess. His metaphors of barriers and circuits similarly fetishizes capital, and the functionalism of his arguments is consequential on this. Third, Smith's argument, like all neighbourhood lifecycle explanations, implies that gentrification is a cyclical process. The organic analogies in which, as Chapter 2 showed, these explanations are rooted lead also into functionalist arguments. The arguments presented here lay the basis for arguing that gentrification is not a cyclical, but a one-off occurrence. In the next chapter I argue that the circumstances surrounding the investment of domestic technologies in the current housing stock are such as to make it unlikely that gentrification process is anything other than historically unique and therefore non-cyclical.

Finally, even if these arguments *were* functionalist, they nonetheless serve to direct attention to-ward other testable, that is to say, explanatory, hypotheses. In Chapter 1, I argued that these were the only benefits to be drawn from functionalist statements. The explanatory hypothesis I draw from this exposition is that the key to understanding the occurrence of gentrification is the development of domestic technology.

7.4 Conclusion

The way to overcome the functionalism inherent in Smith's account of the role of the rent gap in gentrification is to problematize the causes of the rent gap rather than its effects. The causes of the rent gap, I argue, arise from the same reasons as that which creates the possibility of there being a second-hand market in housing at all: the existence of domestic technologies and the possibility of investing them in an existing property.

I have already suggested that the issues involved in gentrification may best be understood by reference to capital vintage theory. Capital vintages were originally proposed as a means of dealing with the criticism of the concept of 'disembodied technical progress' found in neoclassical models of economic growth (Harcourt 1972). Disembodied technical progress meant that all machinery in use could be continuously improved by the application of the latest developments in technical knowledge. It was a guarantee of the

perfect foresight of rational economic man, and thus of a technological explanation of the determinants of income distribution, namely marginal productivity theory. If all machinery incorporated the latest technology, the same rate of profit could therefore be obtained on each and every unit of 'capital'. A unique relation could then be held to exist between the technology employed in any process, its 'capital intensity', and the profits it generated.

The concept of "embodied technical progress", incorporated in vintages of capital was proposed by neoclassical economists to counter the criticism that the assumption of disembodied technical progress is clearly implausible as well as tendentious. Embodied technical progress could only be introduced into the production process in successive rounds of investment and could not be transmitted across the stocks of machinery wholesale. However implausible and tendentious was its use in the case of capital theory, the concept of disembodied technical progress appears much more plausible in the case of the housing stock under the present historical circumstances. Gentrification then appears as a transitional phenomenon associated with the transition in the housing stock from embodied to disembodied technical progress, associated with the development of domestic technologies. When the Victorians talked of "improvements", they meant knocking down and building again from scratch.

If it were not possible to embody technical progress in the existing stock, there would be no capital gains to be made. Gentrification would not occur. Once the gains to be made from bringing the value of the housing services in the existing stock up to the level of the most modern buildings have been made, therefore, the gentrification process should cease. Subsequent improvements ought to occur at the same rate over the whole stock. Even if new buildings do continue to set the prices for the older stock, incorporating both quality improvements and relatively increasing labour values in the course of construction, the gap between old and new will never be as dramatic again.

Smith's rent gap theory implies however that gentrification is a cyclical process. Barriers appear in the built environment and are overcome by gentrification, only to arise as barriers once more. Through gentrification, the value of the built property is periodically brought back into line with its site rental value. What this argument overlooks however, is that while indeed ground rents have risen compared to the value of the property, traditionally this has led, not to gentrification but to further subdivision of the property (as in the Alonso model)

There is no city in Europe, I believe in which house-rent is dearer than in London, and yet I know no capital in which a furnished apartment can be hired so cheap... and what may seem extraordinary, the dearness of the house-rent is the cause of the cheapness of the lodging... A tradesman in London is obliged

to hire a whole house in that part of the town where he and his customers live. His shop is on the ground-floor and he and his family sleep in the garret; and he endeavours to pay a part of his house-rent by letting the two middle stories to lodgers. He expects to maintain his family by his trade and not by his lodgers. Whereas at Paris and Edinburgh, the people who let lodgings have commonly no other means of subsistence; and the the price of the lodging must pay, not only the whole rent of the house, but the whole expense of the family.

(A. Smith 1776 - 1977 p221)

A. Smith's argument is pertinent to this discussion precisely because the historical conditions under which he made it did not include the slightest perception of the need for a vacuum cleaner or an automatic dishwasher. N. Smith's rent gap argument makes the mistake, to paraphrase Ricardo, of assuming that gentrification occurs because the ground rent is high, rather than explaining the height of the rent by the fact that gentrification can or does occur, because of the possibilities offered by domestic technologies.

The existence of domestic technologies capable of being invested in an existing housing stock is only the means, a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for gentrification to occur. Other conditions also need to be met, the first, already noted in Chapter 6, is for there to be residential segregation by status, and for residential segregation to carry the marks of status. The second is the private ownership of property and investment in construction carried out for profit rather than to meet a need. Third, private financing of domestic property improvements is itself predicated on the existence of domestic property and the means to improve it. These contingencies together constitute what Ball (1983, 1985) calls 'structures of provision'. This concept is particularly useful since it emphasizes the fact that buildings are not simply a 'reflection' of demand, *zeitgeist* etc, but an interpretation of that demand (Boys 1989), by speculative builders operating under specific economic conditions. These were, and still are, the exploitation of rising land values rather than labour in the production process, the methods of financing speculative building, and the tenures under which the properties were occupied.

Finally, there must exist different income levels among house owners, otherwise there would be no displacement. All of these conditions are historically contingent, which in itself argues against the circumstances which helped create gentrification ever occurring again.

Within the context of these capitalist structures of provision of housing, a second set of contingencies help determine whether gentrification will occur. The existence of available domestic technologies and an available housing stock do no more than permit the possibility of 'home improvements'. It does not of itself imply that these improvements, if carried out, will be accompanied by a change of occupation. This will

only occur if the costs of improvement are so great that mortgage finance institutions decide that they can only be mediated through a new occupier with a substantially higher income than the former. The question as to what is 'substantial' and what not, is as I have already argued, impossible to say. There is no real boundary between displacement and gentrification. The one fades into the other.

Nonetheless, while these contingencies affect the specifics of the process, gentrification itself could not take place in the absence of domestic technologies. Therefore, even taking into account all these qualifications, to argue that the explanation of gentrification lies in the the ability to invest domestic technologies to an already existing structure only pushes the burden of explanation on to the qualities of these technologies themselves, just as the postindustrialist argument for concentrating on the production of gentrifiers pushes the burden of explanation on to the qualities of the gentrifiers, with, as I have argued, disastrous consequences for their claims to account for gentrification. However, as I shall show in the next chapter, such consequences can be avoided in accounting for the qualities of domestic technologies which make gentrification possible.

To account for the particular qualities of domestic technologies which permit them to act as the basis of gentrification, the contingencies in the development of domestic technologies must also be considered. This means investigating why their provision took the form they did, together with developments in domestic labour associated with their introduction. The available forms of domestic labour, performed by (mainly female) servants in the nineteenth century and housewives in the twentieth, greatly affected the forms of housing provision. An account which places the explanation of the causes of gentrification in the introduction of domestic technologies into existing houses must therefore include in its account the forms under which the original housing was provided. It is the possibility of investment of domestic technologies in a housing stock originally built to be operated by servants which permits the 'recolonization' of that stock by the middle classes, and which fuels the 'rent gap'.

It will be the purpose of Chapter 8 to bring out the importance of the role of domestic technologies in the evolution of domestic labour and the forms this took. This account will only indicate the development of the supply factors in gentrification however. It will show how gentrifiers *can* gentrify, if they so desire. It will not account for the roots of that desire.

8 Domestic technologies and the pre-conditions for gentrification

8.1 Aims and Issues

Having argued in Chapter 7 that the causes of gentrification are to be found in the application of domestic technologies to existing structures, I want to show in this chapter how the development of those technologies has taken place in the context of the themes developed in Chapters 5 and 6, and show how the relation between domestic labour and domestic technologies created the preconditions for gentrification to occur.

8.2 The unique nature of the impact of domestic technologies on the gentrification process

Chapter 7 showed how gentrification was a consequence of embodying technical progress in existing structures via investments in domestic technology, thereby creating a secondhand market in housing. Despite all the qualifications made in the course of this demonstration, the argument could still be considered technologically deterministic. The purpose of this chapter is to show that this is not so. If domestic technologies do play such a central role in the gentrification process, this is for sound sociological reasons. Before detailing the specific history of the impact of domestic technologies on gentrification, it is necessary to show what these sound sociological reasons are. If, therefore, the purpose of this chapter were simply to present a history of domestic technologies, this section would logically come after that history had been recounted. However, in the context of the thesis as a whole, it is necessary to change the natural order of exposition in order to demonstrate from the outset the relevance of that history to the processes of gentrification. The purpose of this section is to show how the historical context ever arose in which domestic technologies could have had such an impact. The circumstances surrounding the creation of this context are unlikely ever to be repeated. This fact in itself makes it likely that gentrification is a never-to-be repeated occurrence. Once the present phase of urban renewal is played out, of which gentrification is a part, the history of gentrification, in which domestic technologies play such an important role, will be over.

However, this means that much of what I have to say in this section on the history of domestic technologies will have to be taken on trust for the moment. For the same reasons and with the same caveat applying, I shall also leave till later substantive

discussion of gender issues in the development of domestic technologies and gentrification. Once this context has been established, the history of the development of domestic technologies and their impact on gender relations and gentrification can be placed in it.

Before the advent in the late nineteenth century of domestic supplies of first, gas and later, electricity (8.6 below), developments in housing design were few and far between, and changes in the layout of domestic interiors even fewer. Chimneys began to be incorporated in housing design from the fourteenth century and glass windows from the sixteenth century. Developments such as these were often the rediscovery of design concepts familiar to the Romans (Du Vall 1988). The invention of the corridor in the late eighteenth century was one of the first genuinely new developments in interior design since Roman times (Thornton 1985). Even a great palace such as Versailles has no corridors, hence no private bedrooms, nor indeed private rooms of any kind (Mitford 1966).

The history of developments at Versailles in fact provides a useful perspective from which to elucidate the social contexts into which domestic technologies were introduced, and on which they were to have such an impact. Historians of the development of domestic technologies have concentrated on the implications of these technologies for changing gender relations. In what follows, I wish to argue that their implications for changing class relations have been equally, if not more important.

Louis XIV's Versailles was a vital part of the last seriously successful attempt to justify monarchy as priest-kingship. The claims of Divine Right however put claims of their own upon the person of the King: from the moment he woke (*le petit levée*, where his courtiers squabbled over the right to hand the King the royal chamber pot and then to bear the royal excrement from the King's presence) to the moment he retired for the night, the body of God's magistrate the King was on continuous display (Mitford 1966). Such an utterly public life was abandoned by his successor and great-grandson, Louis XV, who built a new palace, *Le Grand Trianon*, in the grounds of Versailles, an imposing mansion, but still a recognizably private house. Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette continued the trend to privacy and domesticity with the construction first of *Le Petit Trianon*, and then of *Le Hameau* - the hamlet, still within the grounds of Versailles. The changing domestic arrangements of the last rulers of the *ancien regime* in France foreshadow the trends toward the separation of social activity into public and private spheres which has continued for the next two centuries.

Along with all its other separating effects (Chapter 6 above), the transition to a capitalist

mode of production brought with it a well-documented separation of public and private spheres of activity (cf. Daunton 1983, Mackenzie & Rose 1983, Saunders 1986, 1989, Boys 1989). Also, the interior designs of houses became more and more complex. As part of this separation, different rooms came to be assigned different functions and the differentiation became ever more complex, with for example the separation of dining room from kitchen, the sitting room from the drawing room, leading with unconscious irony to the creation of a living room, from which nearly all the activities necessary to the sustenance and reproduction of living were banished. The great mediæval hall shrank to become no more than a common entranceway to the various private rooms which now dominated domestic interior design.

Boys (1989) argues that these changes in housing design should not be seen simply as reflections of the separation of public and private but as interpretations by architects and builders of what were appropriate separations of public and private. However, precisely because their designs were interpretations of what were appropriate separations of public and private, they were also redefinitions of what ought to be regarded as public and private. In other words before they could be separated public and private had to be defined and in the transition to capitalism they were defined anew.

This argument, I believe, also explains the association between capitalism and the gendering of public and private as masculine and feminine. This association has come under critical scrutiny in recent years. Walby for example points out quite correctly that

the practice of confining women to the domestic sphere, which is supposed to be the symbol of gender relations after the rise of capitalism, is in fact found in its most developed forms in Islamic societies, both pre-capitalist and capitalist. Capitalism is not an exclusive hallmark of such patterns of gender relations; it cannot be treated as their cause.

(Walby 1990 p183)

Walby's argument is correct in its conclusions but faulty in its reasoning. Her point applies only if the domestic sphere in Islamic society is private and feminized in the same way as the domestic sphere is private and feminized in capitalist societies. Walby herself argues that the transition to capitalism saw

the development of many new bases of power, most of which *might be considered* to be in the 'public' sphere and from which women are debarred. The critical changes were not so much a new confinement of women to a private sphere as the growth of a public sphere to which men had nearly exclusive access.

(ibid. - emphasis added)

From the point of view of the argument presented here, it might have been better to say that the "critical changes were... the *creation* of a public sphere (and corresponding creation of a private sphere) to which men had nearly exclusive access". However,

Walby does not address this question of how or in what sense the public sphere might be considered public. She goes on to argue that "the benefits capital gains from patriarchy are contingent, not necessary and that there are considerable costs involved", and it is on this conclusion that she bases her argument that capitalism cannot be considered the cause of the patterns of gender relations in capitalist society. Rather, I should say, in modern society. The crucial link between capitalism and gender is not in the SCA derived questions about whether patriarchy is functional for capitalism or not, but in the changing definitions of self which went with the creation of social relations based on abstract labour (Chapters 5 and 6 above - see also 8.4 below). It is not therefore whether there were public and private spheres before or in other contexts than capitalism, nor whether these public and private spheres were gendered or not; rather it is how the definitions on what was public or private, and masculine or feminine, came to be made, how the very concept of self was altered in the rise of capitalism.

The redefinition of public and private was not incidental to the transition to capitalism, but fundamentally implicated in it. The concept of self radically differentiated from the world which was developed in the context of the development of a capitalist society was a concept of self with, moreover, unprecedentedly developed conventions of privacy. Victorian developments in housing design (and domestic technologies also), it may be argued, were therefore not so much the consequence of a separation of life into public and private spheres, but rather of a redefinition of the public and private which went hand-in-hand with their separation in the course of the development of capitalist social relations.

The transition to capitalist relations of production in agriculture in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw large numbers of people driven off the land in what has become famous as the Lewis model of the 'virtuous circle' of capitalist development (Lewis 1951, Green & Sutcliffe 1986 p286, 8.3 below). The high rates of accumulation which are possible in the virtuous circle are fuelled by this reserve army of surplus agricultural labour. The agricultural labour reserves eventually but inevitably dry up however, and this forces changes in the accumulation process. One consequence of the operation of the virtuous circle in England was the creation and constant replenishment of a large pool of labour, mainly young country girls (Weightman & Humphries 1983 p61), available for domestic service, in particular, in London. Never before or since has the keeping of servants been so feasible for so many. This model therefore provides a useful framework for understanding developments in housing design from Victorian times onward.

The daily routine of Louis XIV is testimony not only to changing definitions of public

and private, however, but also to the fact that a life conducted in the continuous presence of servants can never succeed in being truly private; at least, not according to modern standards of privacy. The separation of public and private and the changes in nineteenth century housing design which accompanied this and which had been foreshadowed by the developments at Versailles in other words can all be interpreted as having been introduced so as to minimize contact between masters and servants.

Even the introduction of bathrooms and toilets may be interpreted in this manner. A flushing toilet was developed in in England as early as 1449 (Du Vall 1988 p228). Presumably therefore Versailles could have contained such conveniences; in fact it was notorious for its lack of them. Screens were simply brought out for the incontinent to squat behind (Mitford 1966). However it was not until Victorian times that toilets began to be included in domestic designs as a matter of course (Du Vall 1988 p231). The demand for these conveniences, it would seem, was as much a result of changing standards of appropriate private and public behaviour (even to the point of redefining who were to be regarded as the public), as of changing standards of hygiene and of 'progress' in domestic living arrangements.

Bathrooms and toilets not only represent changes in internal housing design, but the bathroom fixtures and plumbing they incorporate are also a form of domestic technology. The development of domestic technologies and their introduction into the context of the Victorian domestic scene can then be interpreted as another means of responding to this desire to minimize contact between masters and servants.

The introduction of domestic technologies therefore betrayed a fundamental change in the nature of the class relations between masters and servants. The benefits from the installation in former times and in other contexts of chimneys and window glass in a building could be felt by all classes of people. Even in Versailles, the Sun King could not prevent the sunlight coming in through the extravagantly huge windows from falling on the lowliest of servants at the same time as it fell on His Most Christian Majesty. With the transition to capitalism however, large numbers of servants no longer represented an unencumbered enhancement of personality and status. Not bound to servitude through the compulsion of non-economic ties of kinship or tradition, but employed now as wage labourers, they represented an invasion of privacy instead. Domestic technologies were introduced for the express purpose of replacing privacy-invading domestic labour by domestic appliances. They did not benefit all classes incorporated under the household, but only one.

So far I have argued that gentrification is not about class but status, since the terms

working class and middle class are misnomers, referring to status groups within the proletariat and not to economic classes in either the Marxist or the Weberian sense of the term. In either of these senses, class is not to be thought of as a thing or an attribute, but as a relation. In particular it is a relation governing the disposal of labour. Consequently, therefore, it is possible for any given individual to occupy a multiplicity of class relations. Class in capitalist society is about forms of income, not amounts of income: wealth (especially forms of wealth) concerns status. As an employee in a capitalist society, I am a proletarian; as an employer of waged labour however, I am a capitalist. If I pay my domestic labour out of my wages, I then occupy both class situations at the same time. The middle class in Victorian London, therefore, was actually a(n) (economic) class insofar as the class as a whole was involved in a class relation with its servants. As Stedman Jones and others have shown, the orientation of the economy, including the manufacturing sector, of Victorian London was primarily towards the provision of bespoke services to the aristocracy and haute bourgeoisie (Stedman Jones Chapter 1 1971). In other words, the definition of those who composed the servant class in Victorian London can be extended to comprise practically the entire working class of the city. One definition of the lower boundary of the Victorian middle class was the ability to employ at least one servant. Rowntree used this definition in his survey of York in 1902 (Hardyment 1988 p34). The pretensions of the Pooters of Holloway, were as amusing in respect of their difficulties with their serving girl Carrie, as all their other attempts at acquiring middle class status (Grossmith & Grossmith 1892).

Looked at in this light, the mistaking of the middle and working classes as (economic) classes rather than as status groups may be a carry-over from the days when they really did have a class relation with one another and the middle classes really did occupy contradictory class locations. Not only can domestic technology therefore be said to be class specific in its development and effects, it can also be said to have been class specific in its consequences. Simply put, the widespread application of domestic technology can be said to have ended the class relation between the middle and the working classes.

It was because their impact was now class specific that made the impact of domestic technologies historically unique, not because public and private were now defined and separated in different ways (although this affected the course of those developments - see below). Furthermore, not only was their specificity of impact on the organization of domestic work unprecedented in itself, but so also was the capitalist (and not feudal) nature of this class relation (D.Sayer Chapter 2 1991).

The class specificity of the impact of domestic technologies is another instance of the modernity of the class relation in capitalism. There is no incentive to rationalize the

organization of servant labour in non-capitalist societies simply for its own sake; there is no *Zweckrationalität* in these societies (D.Sayer 1991, Chapter 3 above), hence little or no incentive to replace servant labour by machinery.

Furthermore, historians of the development and application of domestic technologies all agree that the very fact that domestic technologies were introduced as replacements for domestic labour had in itself the greatest consequences for attempts to re-organize domestic work (Cowan 1983, Miller 1983, 1991, Hardyment 1988, Nye 1991). Precisely *because* domestic appliances were introduced as replacements for servant labour, it undermined attempts at demonstrating how domestic work might be reorganized in the light of the opportunities offered by electrification.

Late-Victorian and Edwardian feminists and socialists had sought to promote the application of domestic technologies as a means whereby domestic services could be provided collectively, or by outside contractors, instead of being the responsibility solely of underpaid or unpaid domestic female labour. Instead, the promotion, by the electricity supply companies in particular, of electricity as the "drudge and willing slave" (Nye 1991 p247) of the electrified upper classes meant that the patriarchal relations of the Victorian family were continued.

If the patriarchal family relations of the Victorian domestic economy were not significantly altered by the onset of domestic technologies, however, housing design certainly was. As servants disappeared from the home, so houses became more open-plan (Nye 1991 p256). These changes in interior design cannot be interpreted simply as reflecting a change away from the tightly buttoned-up attitudes toward privacy characteristic of the Victorians: rather they are evidence of the freedom not to be tightly buttoned-up, precisely because, in the words of the British Electrical Development Association, the use of domestic technologies meant that no longer "shall the *sotto voce* 'not before the servants' again be heard in the land" (advertisement, *Ideal Home* October 1950).

Domestic technologies also fortified that trend toward residential segregation by status which I argued in Chapter 6 is a fundamental precondition for gentrification to occur at all. Olsen shows how in Victorian London, even the most prestigious of areas contained slum dwellings from which the serving classes came (Olsen 1971). In reducing the demand for servant labour altogether, therefore, application of domestic technologies in the houses of the well-to-do had the further class specific impact of reducing the pressure of numbers among those who had to live within calling distance of the houses they worked in (cf. Nye 1991 p257).

The impact of domestic technologies on housing design (and on permitting residential segregation by status) also underpins Hoyt's famous radial sector theory of urban growth and differentiation (Hoyt 1939). In this theory, the well-to-do are continually attracted to housing incorporating the latest advances in design. For maximum profit, this housing will be located along the line of some environmentally attractive feature, or simply upwind of the city, hence the sectoral nature of the differentiation. The houses which the well-to-do leave behind filter down through the rest of the population. Hoyt's theory today sounds quaint at best, an example of U.S. gee-whizzery and fascination with gadgets, and reactionary at worst, used in support of arguments which suggest that the solution to the housing problems of the poor is to build more houses for the rich. Placed in its historical context, however it is a valuable testament not only to the new possibilities for housing design generated by the impact of domestic technologies, but also, and crucially from the point of view of understanding gentrification, it is a testament to the cost of these technologies. Originally introduced as replacements for servant labour, they could only be afforded by those with the largest of domestic staffs. To obtain the benefits of even some of these domestic technologies meant moving into the suburbs, the locations of new appliance- and user- friendly homes.

The trend to residential segregation by status was also underpinned by developments in transportation technologies. The development of mass transit, in particular permitted a greater physical distancing between master and servants, that is, between the slums and the suburbs. However they also promoted the desire for distancing. Hoyt, discussing the factors underlying sectoral growth in Chicago, brings out this point clearly:

The first type of high rent development was the axial type with high grade homes in a long avenue or avenues leading directly to the business center. The avenue was a social bourse, communication being maintained by a stream of fashionable carriages, the occupants of which nodded to their acquaintances in other passing carriages and to other friends on the porches of the fine residences along the way such avenues were lined with beautiful shade trees and led to a park or parks through a series of connecting boulevards...

The axial type of high rent area rapidly became obsolete with the growth of the automobile. When the avenues became automobile speedways, dangerous to children, noisy, and filled with gasoline fumes, they ceased to be attractive as home sites for the well-to-do. No longer restricted to the upper classes, who alone could maintain prancing steeds and glittering broughams, but filled with *hoi polloi* jostling the limousines with flivvers, the old avenues lost social caste. The rich then desired seclusion - away from the "madding crowd" whizzing by and honking their horns. Mansions were then built in wooded areas, screened by trees. The very height of privacy is now attained by some millionaires whose homes are so protected from the public view by trees that they can be seen from outside only from an airplane.

(Hoyt 1939 pp119-120)

The behaviour Hoyt describes, the people parading up and down boulevards, participating in this "theatre of accumulation" (to adapt the title of McGee and Armstrong 1989), prior to the advent of large numbers of automobiles in Chicago's streets, were exhibiting behaviour not at all dissimilar to that described by the chroniclers of the lifestyles of the gentrifiers (Jager 1986, N.Smith 1982). They were occupied in creating a place for themselves in a highly mobile and therefore insecure world.

Interpreted in terms of the themes broached in Chapter 6 therefore, the increased mobility of the population at large can be said to have led to the transformation of the boulevards of Chicago from a place of upper caste culture into a space of cosmopolitan civilization, and that this accounted for the creation of isolated as well as segregated upper class suburbs. However, what this passage from Hoyt also shows is how these developments did not just happen, in some mysterious way. They were linked to the advent of the leading edge of capitalist accumulation in the U.S. in the first half of the twentieth century, the development of the automobile. Gottdiener (1977) provides extensive documentation of the interaction of developments in transport and suburban developments in the U.S. Their interaction in the development of London is discussed in Jackson (1962), and Weightman & Humphries (1984).

The links between these developments of technology on the one hand and segregated suburbs on the other provide another instance of the way in which technologies were affected by and in turn affected the social context in which they were developed and applied. As Chapter 6 argued, the desire for a sense of place is a key component in understanding gentrification, but technological developments were themselves key both in promoting that desire and in providing the means for its achievement. One of the first steps toward promoting the gentrification of the Barnsbury area of Islington was the establishment of a traffic management scheme in its streets; an attempt to reduce the mobility of the population in those streets, and thereby to recreate a sense of place (Ferris 1972 Pitt 1977).

A focus on technological developments in an account of the origins of gentrification therefore does not inevitably mean surrender to technological determinism. The historical context in which domestic technologies were introduced meant that they inevitably had all kinds of class connotations and, also, connotations for personal identity.

As argued in Chapter 6 and above, that personal identity, as a private (not a social) individual and inhabitant of (not a participant in) society, is itself as much a consequence of capitalism as the class relations it embodies, and domestic technologies in particular

have been both cause and consequence of those redefined and hypostasized notions of privacy. That identity is also of course gendered and, I shall argue below, if one is looking for the impact of class or gender issues on gentrification, they are to be found in the development and application of these technologies in the gentrification process, and not in postindustrialist tall tales of aliens, disease and sin.

8.3 The importance of domestic technologies in understanding middle class abandonment of middle class housing

Gentrification, I shall show below, could only occur once the technologies which were developed elsewhere and in other contexts, in particular, in residentially segregated suburbs, had developed to the point where they could be applied profitably to existing housing. However, the profitability criterion is only one of the necessary conditions. It accounts for home improvements in general, not gentrification in particular, although it is a necessary pre-condition for gentrification to occur. Similarly, for displacement to occur, the income required to finance the improvements must be greater than that generated by the present occupiers but this criterion applies to all forms of displacement, not just gentrification. As argued in Chapter 7, for gentrification, not just displacement, to occur, $H(\bar{q}) + I(\bar{q} - \hat{q})$ must be larger than $\mu\alpha Y_d$. To explain gentrification, it is necessary also to account, not merely for the size of μ - the gentrification factor, which in any case is an arbitrary constant - but for its very existence. In other words, to explain gentrification, it is necessary first to explain why housing did not just filter down through the various strata of the middle classes, but instead was abandoned by the middle classes altogether.

Without abandonment, there could be no substantial gap in income between that of the present occupier and that necessary for financing renovations, in other words, no μ . If the housing simply filtered down through income cohorts, then housing renovation could always be financed by the the next highest income cohort, if it could not be financed by the present occupiers. This, as I have argued, could not be considered gentrification.

It might be thought that this is not so, that there is in fact no necessity to account for abandonment: as the ordinary processes of filtering down (through the strata of income cohorts) proceeds, a very substantial gap would in any event open up between the incomes of the present occupiers of a property and of those who are able to finance the repairs. However, such an argument overlooks the first boundary in the scenarios sketched out in Figure 6.3, namely the boundary between improvement and final

abandonment of the property. When the ordinary processes of filtering down have occurred, there should be a fairly good correlation between age of stock (more precisely $\bar{q} - \hat{q}$) and incomes of present occupiers. By definition, therefore, if a house does require displacement-led improvement, that will be all that it will need: the incomes of the next highest income cohort will be sufficient to finance the renovations. If the cost of improvements would require the displacer to be from any higher income cohort than the next highest, then making the improvements would not be profitable, and the mortgage finance institutions would not fund it.

The ordinary processes of filtering down may well produce a large gap (in constant terms) between the incomes of the present occupiers and those for whom the housing was originally constructed. However that gap would be too large ever to be profitably filled and renovations would not proceed. Therefore if we are to explain gentrification, we do have to explain abandonment. Put another way, it must be explained why, despite all its other similarities to the workings of the Hoyt model of residential growth and differentiation, the ordinary processes of filtering down described in that model did not occur in the context of Victorian London.

In a memorable phrase, Raban gives the reasons for middle class abandonment of housing in Victorian Islington and Camden as a "combination of class fear and railway engineering" (1974 quoted in Hamnett & P.Williams 197 p3). Jenkins (1973) gives similar reasons. The railway developments at Euston, Kings Cross and St. Pancras during the 1850s and 1860s were routed through working class areas. The displacement of population which followed put pressure on middle class areas such as Islington (Weightman & Humphries 1983). Islington was vulnerable to such pressures, and from the 1860s till the 1880s, 'invasions' by these displaced working classes meant that solidly middle class residential neighbourhoods went solidly and rapidly working class.

In the same way as white Americans have fled to the suburbs when the blacks moved in down the road, the rich occupants of the Angel, Canonbury, and Barnsbury left their houses, which rapidly went into multi-occupation.

Where did they move to? They couldn't move into what is now the northern half of the London Borough of Islington, as this was being laid out as a dormitory suburb for the likes of Mr Pooter and the less affluent white collar workers from the City. As working class families moved into south Islington, the rich leapfrogged the genteel respectable areas such as Holloway and Tollington [North Islington] and moved further out, probably to areas like Highgate or further along the railway.

(Pitt 1977 p5)

Pitt's account may seem to give a perfectly straightforward answer as to why Islington was abandoned to the working class, but in fact it begs important questions. Class fear and railway engineering were indeed important factors in the development of Victorian

London, as Stedman Jones (1971), Olsen (1976), Connell (1987/88), Fussell (1988) and others have shown, and in this regard, it is as well to stress the novelty for Victorian Londoners of the concept of suburbia. For Victorian London, suburbs were a means for the upper-middle class of escaping the evils of the city while continuing to maintain and benefit from control of the city (Rodger 1989, p2-3, p41- 43). Consequently, anything which threatened to visit the evils of the city on the suburb was to be feared; avoided if possible, and fled if not.

Nevertheless these factors do not of themselves explain abandonment. Even if the upper-middle classes sought housing elsewhere, why would they not be replaced in their old homes by the lower-middle classes? The lower-middle classes could have taken the same advantage as the working classes of the opportunities presented by the departure of the upper-middle classes from Islington and moved out of Tollington and into Canonbury, leaving their houses to filter down to the working classes. Why did they not do so? One reason which must be considered is the Alonso type explanation (Alonso 1964).

Stedman Jones argues that London's manufacturing employment base depended on its ability to provide 'bespoke' services. All of these industries depended on close contact with a usually aristocratic clientele. This helped account for the high rents these sectors were prepared to pay, and consequently the tendency toward using 'sweated labour' rather than machinery. These firms, therefore, could not rely on increases in labour productivity, through the evolution of technology, and were constantly under threat from provincial firms who could (Stedman Jones Chapter 1 1971). Nearly all of them were seasonal, and their labour force therefore casualized. This meant that the working classes had to live close to their places of employment also. Hobsbawm notes the "extraordinary short-term immobility of the nineteenth century worker" (1963 p7-8). Stedman Jones reports average numbers of up to 13 per household in the working class areas of "Outcast London" (Stedman Jones 1971 -1984 p176). Waller reports that over 35% of the central areas of London were overcrowded (more than 2 to a room) in 1891. In Alonso-style terms, therefore, the answer to the question of why the upper-middle class were replaced by the casual working class would be that the poor, needing to be in close proximity to their places of employment, were prepared to outbid the (comparatively) rich, sacrificing space for location. Hence they moved from Somers Town (King's Cross) to subdivided Pentonville, rather than to Tollington and single family dwellings.

The imperatives outlined in the Alonso model must have had some influence on the pressure placed on Islington's housing stock. To be decisive however, it would be necessary to show that the middle classes were outbid rather than intimidated, pushed out rather than fled; in other words that subdivision in, say, Pentonville was an active

response by Pentonville landlords to working class displacement from Somers Town, with working class occupancy seen as a first option once the upper-middle class moved out. Renting to a lower-middle class family would then be only a second choice, taken up only if the working classes could not be persuaded to move in.

However, as historians of London's growth and development agree, the middle classes jumped well before they were pushed. Rates of residential mobility in Victorian London were extremely high (Olsen 1976 p232 - 244, FML Thompson 1988 p170-173). Waller (1983) quotes Booth's remark that people moved like fish in a river. In addition to the push factors of class fear and railway engineering, the very high percentage of private rented accommodation (approximately 95% as late as 1911, according to Offer 1981) must also be taken into account, together with competitive development of aristocratic estates, often in combination with, or in response to the competitive development of suburban rail, tram and underground networks, and providing the latest amenities and styles to attract middle class tastes (Olsen 1976 p75 - not surprisingly, housing in Victorian times was a depreciating asset - Thompson 1988 p173). The Alonso model in other words, can explain the pressure, but not the result. Instead, I argue, the answer to abandonment lies, once again, in the Servant Question.

There is an old joke about the young Etonian asked to write a story about some poor people. The story began: "Once upon a time, there was a very poor family. The mother was poor. The father was poor. The children were poor. The horses were poor. Even the servants were poor...". The punchline of course is that poor people do not have servants at all, rich or poor. The point, for understanding why the filtration process in Victorian times would tend to lead to middle class abandonment of middle class areas rather than to the replacement of upper-middle class families by a lower-middle class families, is that lower middle-class families would not have poorer servants than upper-middle class families, they would have fewer of them. A house designed to be run by a complement of four servants could possibly be run by three for a while; it could not be run by two.

To argue that lower-middle class families were forced to have fewer rather than poorer servants is implicitly to argue that there were no variations in the wage rates for domestic service offered by upper and lower middle class households. In other words it is to argue that there were competitive labour markets for domestic servants in Victorian times. The feudal traditions of service for which Wooster so often praises Jeeves might at first make the notion of competitive labour markets in domestic service seem unlikely. However, as both Stedman Jones (1971) and Weightman & Humphries (1984) make clear, in London, even the servants of the aristocracy were hired only for the duration of the Season, the London social round of the upper 500, running from around the start of

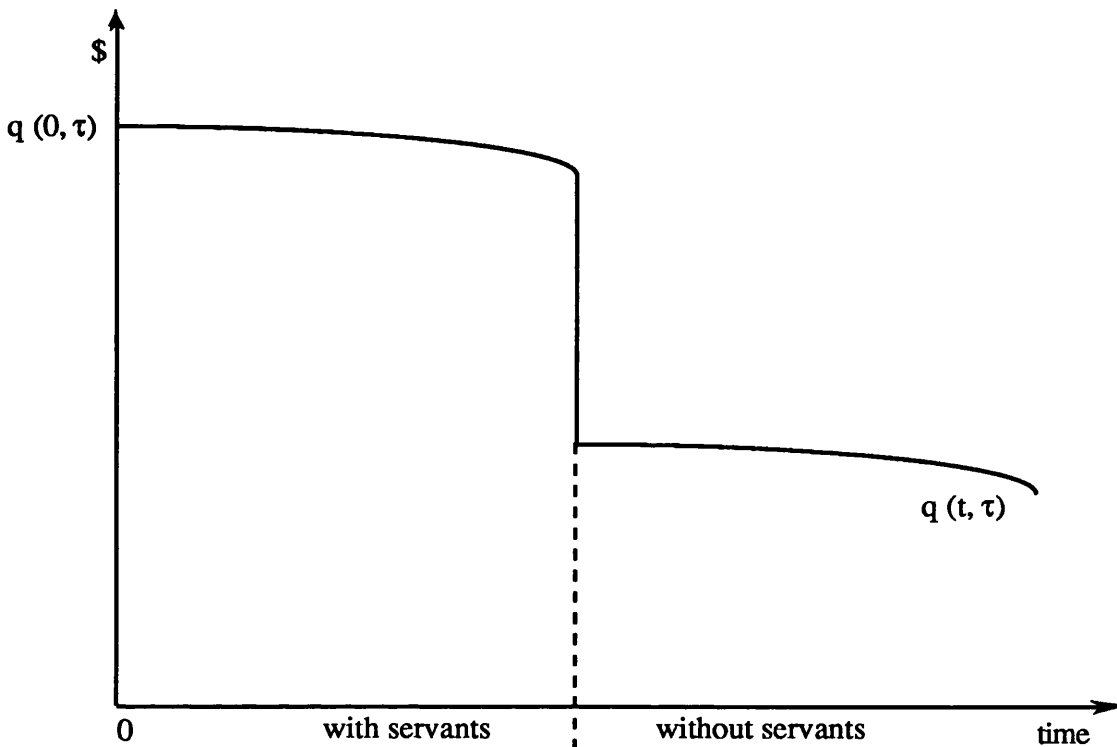
January to the end of July - Weightman & Humphries 1983 p51). Their practice of hiring and firing at will was, according to Stedman Jones, the fundamental reason for the casualization of the labour market for working class Londoners (Chapter 2 1971, Weightman & Humphries 1983 p65). The continual supply of domestics from the countryside also helped keep wages competitive. Country girls, especially from the West country, were much preferred to city girls, "as they were considered to be much more honest and diligent" (Weightman & Humphries 1983 p61).

The rationale for middle class abandonment of middle class housing in Victorian London (and the rationale for μ today) can therefore be traced to two specific economic conditions peculiar to the period: fixed co-efficients in the production of domestic services ('L' shaped isoquants) and competitive markets in labour for domestic service. Once capital could be substituted for labour in domestic work, neither of these conditions applied any longer. The 'ordinary processes of filtering down' depicted in the Hoyt model depend on the existence of domestic technologies.

In fact there is evidence that abandonment is in any case more likely than filtering. The spatial sociologists' accounts of tipping points in Chicago suburbs (the point at which black in-migration causes white flight) would indicate that filtering never really occurred in Chicago at all (Peach 1975). Whether filtering down ever occurs in the way it is supposed to, however, is not really at stake here (see Murie, Niner and Watson 1976 for such a discussion). All I am interested in showing is what the specific factors were in Victorian London which prevented the processes of filtering down from working in that city, when so many other respects, its development matches the outlines of the Hoyt model (see below). Those specific factors were directly connected with the absence of domestic technologies.

The graphs presented in Chapter 7 will therefore be slightly misleading if the context underlying their construction is not fully appreciated. The curve \hat{q} , which graphs the flow of housing services available from an unimproved house, should not be interpreted as indicating that housing services gradually decline with age, and did so between, say, 1791 and 1951. The curve \hat{q} , the the flow of housing services from a particular vintage does not chart a decline to the left as it were, but an increase to the right. The actual flow of services from any individual servant run house prior to the advent of domestic technologies would look like that shown in Figure 8.1. The original flow of services may decline slightly with age, but the real drop occurs when the servants move out.

Figure 8.1 Flow of housing services in Victorian times from a house of vintage τ



Curve \hat{q} in figure 7.3, it must be appreciated, is the aggregate of services from all vintages, $\int q(0, \tau) d\tau$, and not $\int q(\tau, t) dt$. In other words the aggregation is over vintages, $d\tau$, and not over time, dt . The difference between $\int q(0, \tau) d\tau$, and $\int q(\tau, t) dt$ is that the latter is only applicable in the case of disembodied technical progress, that is, in the presence of domestic technologies. Hoyt's filtering down theory and Smith's rent gap theory both implicitly assume that $\int q(\tau, t) dt$ applies. In such circumstances middle class abandonment would not need to occur and to explain gentrification in economic terms we would have to rely on the criterion of sufficient wideness.

The housing which the middle classes abandoned to the filtering process was housing which was designed to be run by specific complements of servants and it was equally impracticable to try to run such housing without its full complement of servants or to install domestic technologies into it. In the absence of domestic staff or affordable domestic technology, housing services could only be derived from such properties either by running them communally, or by subdividing them. In the context of the new standards of privacy in Victorian life, the first option would not be a likely choice. It is this disparity, between the number of servants a lower-middle class family could afford and the number of servants a Victorian upper-middle class house would require if it were to be run as any kind of middle class house at all, which accounts for the existence of the gentrification factor, μ .

However, this argument only accounts for the abandonment of individual houses. It does not account for the abandonment of whole areas. I have already argued that gentrification could not occur without residential segregation. Having, as promised, explained the social basis for the existence of μ , the next item which has to be dealt with is the existence of residential social segregation. In other words, having in these last two sections offered accounts of how class and economic relations would structure the demand for middle class housing in Victorian times, I turn now to an account of its supply.

8.4 The virtuous circle of capitalist development and its impact on middle class housing in Victorian London

The virtuous circle of capitalist development had very definite implications for the forms of housing provided in Victorian times. By driving people off the land and into the cities it created a continuously replenished pool of labour potentially available for domestic service. This made servants extremely cheap to hire during the transition to capitalist relations of production, and housing design altered to take their availability into account. In particular, they encouraged the design of houses which depended on a considerable degree of mainly female servant labour. A four to five storey house would typically have required a complement of three to five servants in order to run it, including a cook, a scullery maid, and a chambermaid (Weightman & Humphries 1983 p60). This labour was mainly female because there was a tax on the employment of male servants, dating from 1777, originally imposed in an effort to maintain conscription for the American War of Independence. It lasted until 1937 (Hardyment 1988 p33). The very fact that such a tax had to be imposed to discourage the employment of male domestic servants indicates the strength of preference for domestic service among males, both employers and employees. It demonstrates the danger of reading present-day concepts of what constitutes men's work or women's work into a past which might itself have redefined those concepts (cf. discussion in 8.2 above). Definitions of masculine and feminine are after all no more than definitions of appropriate behaviour for men and women, definitions of who ought to be doing what. And as Hardyment demonstrates, the tax itself helped define gender divisions of labour in domestic work. "In Ireland, where no such tax existed, menservants continued to be employed and male and female domestic occupations were quite interchangeable." (ibid.). In England, one result of the tax was that "Male servants, especially footmen, were a particular status symbol in the West End, but were rarely found in other parts of London..." (Weightman & Humphries 1983 p60). They were a status symbol precisely because the tax made them so expensive:

"...Usually it was only the grandest 'carriage folk' , living in the West End who could afford them" (ibid).

The high rates of in-migration (accounting for approximately 40% of London's growth in the nineteenth century - Stedman Jones 1971 p145, Waller 1983 p28, Rodger 1989) which fuelled the virtuous circle can also be said to be responsible for the mobility of life in Victorian London and the undermining of identity and status which accompanied this. The virtuous circle, it might be said, encouraged social segregation by status (and the changing definitions of public and private which went with this) at every conceivable scale, from the interior design of houses to the residential development process as a whole. Dyos and Reeder articulate all these themes in their description of the relation between slum and suburb in Victorian London

The fact of the suburb influenced the environment of the slum; the threat of the slum entered the consciousness of the suburb.

(Dyos & Reeder 1973 p360)

The rents extracted in the slums went to the upkeep of landlords' own dwellings in the suburbs, so the link between slum and suburb was not simply social or psychological, but economic in nature (1973 p381). Flows of money, in other words, and as argued in Chapter 5, underpinned the social structures of capitalism in Victorian London.

The development of Victorian London in fact displays great similarity to Hoyt's (1939) account of the structure and growth of residential neighbourhoods in U.S. cities. The similarity is more than coincidental. Suburban developments in Victorian London took the form of opening up fresh aristocratic landholdings for housing, in much the same way as a new subdivision is opened up for suburban development in 20th century US cities. Residential developments also took place under the same conditions, namely speculative ventures under conditions of competitive capitalism (Olsen 19776, Rodger 1989).

The major difficulty in applying Hoyt's model to the circumstances of Victorian London is that processes of filtering down do not appear to have occurred there, confirming the arguments presented in 8.3 above. Rodger (1989 p28) does argue that residential segregation in Victorian London was the result of a "filtration process" . However, he continues, it was one "based on affordable rents". In other words the process he describes could equally be seen as one of segregation by rent, based on capacity to afford given numbers of servants. In Victorian London, developments on estates were targetted at specific income groups within the middle and upper classes (FML Thompson 1988 p173).

Segregation in Victorian London was a result of the residential development process, not the filtration process. Olsen (1976 - 1979 p233) argues that in eighteenth century developments, such as Mayfair, segregation was street by street; in the nineteenth century developments segregation was estate by estate. One reason for the difference was that in nineteenth century London, as incomes increased in the virtuous circle, housing design could cater for more servants per household. There was therefore less demand for slums in the immediate neighbourhoods of Victorian developments compared to Georgian ones, since more servants could live in.

The virtuous circle finally comes to an end as the in-migrating surplus agricultural labour supplies eventually and inevitably dwindle, and with them the size of the pool of labour available for domestic service. For the newly gentrified bourgeoisie (Chapter 2 above), the struggle to maintain centrality in the processes of capitalist accumulation was not without its contradictions. In particular, the moves towards securing employment in producer services and property, rather than in industrial manufacturing helped a continuous process of undermining and transforming the very accumulation process to which they were attempting to render themselves indispensable. Having inaugurated the virtuous circle, in the first industrial revolution, the now-gentrified bourgeoisie helped bring it to an end with the close of the third, and with the onset of the First World War (Stedman Jones 1971 - 1986 p336).

Furthermore, with economic development and technical progress, alternative opportunities to domestic service became available in other areas of the economy. As the cost of hiring servants grew toward the end of the century (Thompson 1988 p61 estimates that by the end of the century they were the highest paid of female workers), houses that required less domestic help to run became more attractive to the middle classes. This is what happened in the case of Victorian London from the 1880s on (FML Thompson 1988).

However, the number of employees in domestic service nationally did not fall appreciably until after 1931 (Table 8.2 below). Therefore it is not possible to see the cause of gentrification in a simple link between a progressive rise in the costs of servant labour and the abandonment of Victorian housing by the middle classes. As I have already suggested, the links between labour costs and abandonment lie in fixed production co-efficients and competitive markets in labour for domestic service. The reasons for the constant numbers in domestic service lie in an expanding middle class, and more productive domestic servants, equipped with domestic technologies. The first factor meant an increased potential demand for domestic service. The second meant that the total costs of domestic service to the middle classes could remain constant despite the

increasing cost of servant labour. The combination of the two factors would mean that demand for domestic servants remained more or less constant, though housing design would alter to take advantage of the fewer servants required.

These factors were starting to take effect from the 1880s onwards, though they were not dominant until after the First World War (Stedman Jones 1976 - 1985 p336). The aftermath of the First World War confirmed the economic trends which had been incipient in the economy of Edwardian England, namely a shift in the geographical bases of capital accumulation in the UK away from the provinces toward the South East. It also saw an end to the class fear which had dominated Victorian London, and which had determined the course of its suburban development (Stedman Jones 1971- 1986 p336). The worst slums went in the 1880s and 1890s also, but the sweated trades, small engineering firms and subdivided properties remained (Martin 1965) to await the return of the middle classes in the 1950s, 60s and 70s.

The social changes which took place in Victorian London bear out the arguments made for the historical preconditions which must be met before gentrification can occur, namely status segregation by area and abandonment of property rather than its filtering down. Loft conversions in New York (Zukin 1982) or London's docklands (Smith, A., 1989) also meet these conditions in a sense. In these cases the abandonment is by light industry or the sweated trades, not by middle-class residents. Nonetheless gentrification is preceded by abandonment in these cases also. What the experience of Victorian London does show, is that if a rent gap is necessary for gentrification to occur, it can be in existence for up to 100 years before gentrification in fact occurs. In what follows, I shall show that if gentrification is indicative of changes in class structure, these occurred two generations ago, with the disappearance of the old middle class, not with the postindustrial arrival of the new, or, to say the same thing in another way, with the development of domestic technologies and their application to middle-class homes in suburban developments.

8.5 The development of domestic technologies - the U.S. experience

The fact that domestic technologies were introduced as replacements for high priced domestic labour cannot be overstressed when considering gentrification. The development of domestic technologies was not the result of some innocent technological imperative. Since they were introduced from the U.S., it is necessary to consider briefly the conditions under which they were developed there.

Miller (1983 p73) argues that the lives of women underwent a major change in the U.S., what Walby (1990 p191) calls "first wave feminism", with the onset of "suburbanization, social mobility [opportunities for female employment beyond domestic service] and an industrial economy increasingly based on domestic consumption, especially innovations in domestic technology". Similar causes can be adduced for the corresponding changes in the lives of women living in England between the wars (Glucksmann 1986, Weightman and Humphries 1984). However, the changes Miller relates date from a generation earlier, 1850 to 1920. When these changes in economic and urban development reached Britain, in Weightman & Humphries (1984) term the American invasion of London following the First World War, many of the options potentially available to first wave feminism for the reorganization of domestic work, which electrification in particular had offered, had already been closed off, as I shall now show.

Nye (1990) shows that the use of electricity in the U.S. for domestic purposes only began after its use as an industrial power source had reached a certain critical mass. Only once factory electrification had been achieved, did the electricity supply companies look to household consumption as a means of using the capacity they now had spare in the evenings.

The potential of electricity for domestic tasks was immediately apparent in its impact on house cleaning. As a clean source of light, it changed utterly the perception of domestic interiors. No longer was the ritual of spring cleaning necessary. Spring cleaning was undertaken largely to rid a house of the sooty deposits left by oil and gas lighting, which were much less used in the summer months. Cowan (1983) in particular shows how housework before the application of domestic technologies was extremely arduous, unpleasant, mind-numbing and downright dirty, so even in this particularly gendered form, the application of domestic technologies did represent a real advance.

Despite these technological advances in domestic economy, class issues were never far away:

the relation of servant-keeping to domestic appliance adoption is more than a simple matter of cause and effect... despite the fact that [servants] were a dying breed, they had a powerful influence on the shaping of the mechanization of the home. They encouraged people to think of machines as replacing servants, rather than enabling a quite new form of domestic management to evolve

(Hardyment 1988 p33)

The habit of viewing domestic technologies as mechanical servants could still be seen in the UK as late as the 1950's, as the following advertisement for the Triplex 'V' cooker-boiler, (cost ≈ £100) demonstrates:

Yes, the days when housewives could employ as many servants as they pleased are a memory. To-day with skeleton staffs - or none at all - every woman in the home demands 100% efficiency; the last word in labour saving design and efficiency show that women who study the problem at all insist on the Triplex 'V' (*Ideal Home* magazine, Jan 1951 p7)

Although this advertisement says that servants are but a memory, clearly, it cannot have been that long a memory, otherwise, servants would not have been referred to. Second, it is worth noting a subsidiary theme in the history of the application of domestic technologies to the home, namely the way in which their application was to be achieved *scientifically*. Domestic technologies, whether applied collectively or individualistically, were modernistic. Women were to be specialists in domestic science or home economics, that is, time and motion specialists. Taylorism came with domestic technologies (Hardyment 1988, Nye 1991). Time and again, *Ideal Home* during the 1950's carried advertisements proclaiming how much extra time Mrs X had now that she had acquired the advertisers' products. Miller (1991) shows how these themes dominated U.S advertising of domestic technologies in the period 1910-1930, again, a generation earlier than such advertisements appeared in the U.K.

8.6 The introduction of domestic technologies in the U.K. and the suburban expansion of London between the wars

N.Smith (1982) locates the origin of the rent gap in suburban development. I agree that gentrification cannot be explained without taking suburban development into account, but for different reasons. If gentrification cannot be explained without reference to domestic technologies, then their introduction to the UK cannot be discussed outside of the suburban expansion of London between the wars. First, this expansion (and the changing gender roles which accompanied it) was the context within which these technologies were introduced, and that makes it significant in itself. Second however, if their introduction had not occurred in this way, then again, there would have been no gentrification, since there would have been no inner city, created in the backwash of that expansion, and thereby rendered ripe for gentrification. Smith would argue that this

condition is what his rent gap theory is designed to highlight. I would argue that the real reason that the inner city was rendered ripe for gentrification is that suburban expansion maintained the residential segregation by status which (I have also argued) is a necessary precondition of gentrification. As I shall show, the development of domestic technologies was fundamental to this precondition.

Mechanical aids to servant labour had been introduced in Victorian London, mainly in the form of hand cranked kitchen machinery (Du Vall 1988). The application of power to these devices had to await the arrival of electric power in the home. The expansion in electrical capacity began with the First World War, but only really took off after 1926, with the establishment of the Central Electricity Generating Board and the National Grid. By this time the pattern of appliance production in the U.S. was well established (Cowan 1983) and U.S. imports dominated the UK market. Alford (1981 p320) quotes figures showing imports of electrical goods rising from £670,000 in 1907 to £2.6m. in 1924 and £6.3m. in 1930. The import of U.S. products into the UK meant that U.S. decisions as to the "appliance of [domestic] science" (Zanussi advertising slogan 1990) would be imported to the UK also.

When the U.K. established 20% import duties on domestic appliances (Hardyment 1988), in 1932, U.S. firms such as Hoover, Gillette, Firestone, and Macleans began to set up their subsidiaries along the Great West Road. These factories offered new forms of peacetime employment opportunities for women, enabling some to continue the independent existence which they had found working as drivers etc., during the First World War (Glucksmann 1986). The percentage of women (excluding juveniles) working in electrical engineering rose from 28.8% to 32.9% of the workforce between 1923 and 1930 (Green 1991 p30). Although, obviously not every woman in London, and no married woman (Weightman & Humphries 1984), could work in such factories under such conditions, the example of the opportunity was there.

Other opportunities which could be taken up were employment in the new department stores. Although the first example was Parisian, the Bon Marché, built in Brixton in 1877 (Olsen 1976 - 1979 p126), the epitome of the modern department store was Selfridges, opened 1909, based on the example of Marshall Field in Chicago, where Gordon Selfridge himself had been a manager (Weightman and Humphries 1984 p25). Although, necessarily, they were few in number, the impact on employment was large: six of the fourteen (only) firms in London employing more than 2000 workers were department stores (Green 1991 p29). The form of the products sold in the new department stores and produced in the new consumer goods factories, it is worth pointing out once more, was intended as a replacement for mostly female domestic

servants, so that women in these industries were still contributing their labour power to domestic service, only now at one remove.

The introduction of domestic technologies coincided with the years of the interwar suburban expansion of London promoted by the competitive development of mass transit (Weightman & Humphries 1984). The story of the suburban expansion of London is important to gentrification not simply because it is the Other in opposition to which gentrification is defined, but also because it was the environment in which the application of domestic technologies evolved. From the point of view of the story of gentrification, the story of the development of London's suburbs has two important morals.

The first is the extent to which the form in which housing was provided, detached, or semi-detached single family dwellings, was bound up with the particular form taken by the development of domestic technologies. The shape which was imposed on domestic technology by the fact of its filtering down from upper class applications was to leave the mistress of the isolated suburban house in charge, not of a complement of servants, but of a collection of domestic appliances. The electric servant ideology incorporated in the evolution of domestic appliances took Victorian ideas on public/private and gender divisions of labour (Boys 1981, Bondi 1991) to their ultimate conclusion.

The second moral arises from the first. The principle that consumption cleavages, and hence the home as the locus of most consumption (Saunders 1990), form an alternative basis for class formation depends very much on the idea that the form of accommodation developed in the rise of suburbia, Saunders' principal point of reference, expresses deeply held, natural and transhistorical, desires. It would have been interesting to see some cross-national comparisons before making such a judgement. Olsen's index contains the following summary of Victorian London's attitude toward its principal European rival, Paris: expressed in the disgust and disquiet is nonetheless a clear recognition that the French derived 'ontological security' in other things than housing:

Frenchmen

cared less for home life than English, 116
did not bathe, 115
had peculiar ideas of comfort, 116
indifferent to privacy, 115-116
wasted time in cafés, 108, 111

(Olsen 1976 - 1979 p378)

Nye, in addition, summarizes a whole set of literature which also shows just how culturally bound are those desires Saunders argues are natural. A 1930s pamphlet presents a picture of electrified domesticity, in which

Household tasks have become so undemanding that "Mrs. Modern Woman" is not exhausted on "Monday, which has long been proverbially the blue wash-day of the week, for Electricity, the silent servant in the home, has done much to make the day just as enjoyable as any other day of the week". In this account, machines take over house work, and the home is no longer defined by production but by consumption. The transformation is both automatic and beneficent.

(Nye 1990 p238)

Miller (1991) also makes the same points in his analysis of 1920s and 1930s (U.S.) advertising copy. As with the 'production of gentrifiers' approach to gentrification, Saunders' arguments for the social significance of the home as locus of consumption take this for granted.

Such accounts of the home as locus of consumption have been countered by feminist arguments that "home economic specialists and new appliances [were used by - patriarchal - capital] to gain control over the domestic system of production" (Nye, *ibid.*). These two accounts, the "progressive" and the "feminist" (Nye, *ibid.*), have tended to define the terms of the debate over the impact of the domestic technologies on the home. Feminists, according to Saunders' progressive view, caricature the home as "the locus of gender domination and the exploitation of women", and socialists make the equally untenable claim that the home is "an obstacle to collective life and the place where capitalist social relations are reproduced" (Saunders 1989 p178).

Feminists have of course argued in reply that Saunders has misrepresented their position (Bannion 1991). Nye argues against both positions. Both "accounts oversimplify... Both suggest that the home was a passive realm that new technologies or large corporations could invade at will" (Nye 1990 p239). In short, both the progressives and the feminists take the idea of the home as locus of consumption for granted, and simply argue about whether this is a Good Thing or a Bad Thing for women and gender relations generally. Nye's account demonstrates that the two poles of the progressive versus feminist argument overlook the degree to which the rise of the consumption oriented home is historically contingent upon the development of domestic technologies, and the links that these developments had with manufacturing production. Saunderson's "social history of the home" (Saunders 1986 p154ff.) contains no reference to domestic technologies.

Nye argues in fact that the Taylorist ethos promoted by advocates of domestic technologies "brought with them the economic, time-oriented perception of efficiency" that characterizes industrial culture (Nye 1990 p256). Paradoxically, it was this, Nye argues, that led to the growth of the idea of the home as solely a locus of consumption

The home economics movement argued that these changes signalled that the home was no longer a site of production, but rather one of consumption. Domestic

scientists encouraged housewives to buy canned goods, ready made clothing and other products of mass production. They redefined the homemaker in books such as *The Woman Who Spends* which declared that the era of home production was over. Instead, "Women have gained a whole new field of economic activity, that of consumption". Sociologists such as Thorstein Veblen and Simon Patten reconceived the idea of the family as a unit of consumption so persuasively *that the idea became an underlying assumption about family life* by the time Helen and Robert Lynd conducted their *Middletown* study.

(Nye 1990 p259 emphasis added)

One of those underlying assumptions was the sexual division of domestic labour. Cowan argues that one of the hidden ironies of household technology is that as the means to keep homes and clothes clean and well ordered has improved, so have received standards of cleanliness and so therefore has the time spent by housewives in cleaning their homes (Cowan 1983), with the result that, as Nye puts it: "Only from the man's point of view had the home become a sphere of consumption." (1991 p258).

Walby seeks to qualify these arguments slightly, pointing out that they are only true for women who are not in paid employment. Significantly, she goes on to argue that the main cause of the increases in time spent in housework

is that between 1937 and 1961 the amount of housework done by middle-class housewives increased as they were losing the assistance of servants in housework, not a form of assistance working-class women ever had.

To-day the social class of the husband's job makes no significant difference to the unevenness of the domestic division of labour. However... the higher the class of the woman's job, the less uneven is the domestic division of labour

(Walby 1990 p83)

One reason for this might be of course that women in high status employment can still afford some domestic help. On the other hand, as another example of the impact of domestic technologies in levelling out differences between (social) classes in the field of domestic divisions of labour, just as elsewhere, it backs up the argument that gentrification is a one-off phenomenon. Walby's argument implies that domestic technologies have thoroughly penetrated the domestic environment at all levels of society and that no particular house poses class-specific problems to run. Therefore once the disparities between income and property values, which domestic technologies permit, have been closed, gentrification will not occur again.

Gershuny argues that as labour productivity increases, more and more ancillary activities are externalized to specialist suppliers of services. Gershuny's arguments can be applied to characterize the history of the electrified house. As electrification took over manufacturing, and productivity increased, labour time in general became more expensive. This of course led to the replacement of servants by domestic appliances. It

also led to the disappearance of external domestic services, to be replaced by manufactured products. Nye writes that

As electricity was adopted in many contexts, society began to change in ways that undermined some of the premises of the ... [Victorian] house. A whole set of trades [and door-to-door tradesmen] began to disappear... Electrification was part of the general process in which the home became more isolated from the rest of society.

(Nye 1990 p257)

Suburban developments also embodied the themes of isolation and separation which D.Sayer (1991) has argued are most socially consequential in the rise of capitalist social relations (see Chapter 6 above). This isolation was manifested in the suburban expansion of London. The housing which was built after the war was strikingly different in style to that of the Edwardian and Victorian periods, semi-detached (Weightman & Humphries 1984 pp101-2).

The developers however continued to try to interpret what would sell to the middle classes. Significantly for the story of gentrification, what sold was 'Tudorbethan', not 'modern' (Oliver Bentley and Davis, 1981), harking back to a past which would be exemplified in the gentrified properties of a later generation of the middle class. People might work in modern factories and modern offices, but they did not want to live in modernist homes. They did however want modern conveniences. Weightman & Humphries report that

By 1939, of those houses - about two thirds nationally - which had an electricity supply, nearly all would have electric lighting, 77 percent an iron, 40 percent a vacuum cleaner, 27 percent electric fires, 16 percent a kettle, 14 percent a cooker, and less than 5 percent a water heater.

(Weightman & Humphries 1984 p131)

The new homes came ready wired, but electricity could not compete with gas, nor particularly coal, for heating or cooking purposes. The price advantage of coal in particular continued until the advent of North Sea gas. 1950 *Ideal Home* magazines are full of advertisements for coal fired cooker/boilers, costing around £25 to £30. The Rolls-Royce of such units, an Aga, cost between £85 to £115. Electric cooker/boilers started at £80.

Nye, Hardyment, Cowan and Weightman & Humphries all agree that a new woman was being created in these developments, the housewife, a solitary woman working as a rational consumer to keep an empty house clean warm and welcoming, awaiting the return from work of the rational producer, the man of the house (Nye, 1990 Hardyment, 1988 Cowan, 1983 and Weightman & Humphries 1984). The isolating effects of modernity that Baudelaire, Joyce and others had recognized in the Victorian and

Edwardian city streets (Chapter 6 above) was now to be found in the homes of Metroland.

The data on employment in domestic labour would appear to support the view that the creation of suburbia saw the creation of the isolated housewife (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1

Domestic servants 1911-1951

	1911	1921	1931	1951	
Female	1,211,990	1,004,666	1,119,088	188,213	
Male		42,034	227,380	260,267	9,234

(source: OPCS Census, Industry Tables 1911 - 1951)

Data on employment activity rates do not begin until 1931, so only raw numbers can be presented here (employment activity rates are presented in Tables 9.6a,b & c). Why there should have been such a jump in male domestic service after the First World war is unclear. What is noticeable however is the precipitous decline after 1931. Again, whether this preceded the Second World War or not is unclear. It is admittedly doubtful, but the evidence is anecdotal. Would *Ideal Home*, for example, have been carrying so many advertisements in the 1950s appealing to upper-middle class women bemoaning the loss of domestic servants, if the loss was not effectively recent and dramatic? Nevertheless it was during this period that the middle classes started moving into owner-occupied properties in large class-segregated estates, equipped with the latest technologies. Weightman & Humphries (1984 p114) report the giving away of gas cookers in sales promotions on these new estates.

This isolated existence in the inter-war suburbs led to what, in the 1950's would become known as 'New Town Blues'. Shops, friends, places of entertainment were all far away. These blues were the unintended consequence of the Victorian privatisation of domestic life and gendering of domestic work as female (Saunders 1987). When the house was full of servants and children, the mistress of the house, even though excluded from the masculine, outside, world of business, would have seen isolation (not in front of the servants) as a blessing. As servants disappeared from middle-class life, so housing design became more open plan (Nye 1990 p256). However, social attitudes, filtering down along with the housing stock, meant that when open plan designs were incorporated into the new towns, such as Harlow, they were most unpopular with working class residents (Humphries & Taylor 1985 p88).

At the same time as the new towns were being built, the first signs of gentrification were occurring in Islington (Humphries & Taylor 1985). The waves of suburban expansion had carried with them the newest forms of social and domestic arrangements for the previous 150 years. The backwash was just about to start.

8.7 Conclusion

I have argued in this chapter that a focus on technological developments to explain gentrification does not mean a lapse into technological determinism. I have argued that the context in which domestic technologies were devised and introduced into domestic work was one dominated by the Servant Question, as this had been posed in the transition to capitalist modes of production. The change in the nature of the class relation of master and servant with the transition to capitalism, together with the easy availability of servant labour, was fundamental to the redefinition of public and private which occurred in the course of the separation of public and private with the transition to capitalism. The invasion of privacy represented by the presence of waged labourers in the home, to say nothing of the costs involved, encouraged the development of domestic technologies as a replacement for servant labour. The particular forms of domestic technologies which emerged thus discouraged attempts at the reorganization of domestic work and maintained thereby the trends toward separation and isolation which Chapter 6 argued were characteristic of personal experience in conditions of modernity. However these forms were not inevitable, but, as Nye shows, were partially dependent upon the peculiarities of the history of domestic supplies of electricity in the U.S. Although domestic electricity supplies were established comparatively more quickly in the U.K. than in the U.S., they were established a generation later. By that time, debate on the possibilities of adopting alternative forms of domestic management in response to the possibilities offered by the new technologies was effectively closed.

However, important as are domestic technologies to an explanation of gentrification now, the economic conditions prior to their introduction were equally as important. There is only a fixed amount of housing services which can be provided by labour power alone. Houses built for the middle classes therefore required a more or less fixed complement of servants for the achievement of their flows of housing services. Houses built for the upper-middle class would have higher required servant/house ratios than houses for the lower-middle class. When therefore the upper-middle class moved out, the lower middle class could not filter up since they would not have been able to afford the same numbers of servants. The only alternative then to upper-middle class occupation of upper-middle

class housing was subdivision and working class occupation. Housing was in any case a depreciating asset in Victorian times so there would have been little financial incentive for the lower-middle class to move in; but the very fact that housing was a depreciating asset is but one more instance of the impact domestic technologies were to have on the housing market in the twentieth century.

Gentrification depends not only on abandonment of individual properties by the middle classes, but also on residential segregation by status. The history of London's Victorian, and indeed inter-war, developments show that this segregation was not achieved through the processes of filtering down but through the residential development process itself. Estates were not only built for the upper-middle classes but for all subdivisions of the middle classes. The barrier to filtering down imposed by the fixed co-efficients in the production of housing services only reinforced this trend to residential segregation by status.

The development of suburbia was associated with changing gender roles involving increased isolation in the home and increased participation in factory employment elsewhere as well as with the development of domestic technologies. In producing these changes, the development of suburbia was intimately bound up with the development of domestic technologies. Nonetheless the liberating possibilities these technologies offered from the daily grind of housework meant that the suburbs remained sought after locations, despite the increased isolation of the housewife in her suburban home which domestic technologies helped create. These possibilities were slow to be adopted elsewhere in the urban environment. Had it been conceivable earlier that they might be applied elsewhere, it is doubtful whether gentrification would or could have occurred. Technological progress in the supply of housing services would have become disembodied far earlier and filtering down rather than class abandonment would have occurred in London's housing stock. It was not until the 'Long Boom' (Armstrong, Glyn and Harrison 1984 167-309), dating approximately from 1953 to 1973, (the beginning of the Korean War to the end of the Vietnam War) that the age of 'mass consumption' really got underway and domestic technologies began to be liberated from their suburban contexts. The problems of adjustment were to be seen in the costs of these new technologies.

As late as 1950 the cost of a vacuum cleaner, 15 guineas, excluding purchase tax of 25%, was approximately that of the average weekly wage, and the price of a washing machine, around £125. Bendix, the first automatic washing machine, was so expensive that no prices were quoted in *Ideal Home* magazine, the source of these figures, during the first three years following its introduction in 1951. Instead, generous, but

unspecified, H.P. terms were advertised. It must have been so expensive that quoting a price would have frightened off even the wealthy. The nearest competitor, the Servis twin tub, introduced in 1953, cost £95, including tax. Hunkin compared the price to approximately that of a small car (Channel 4 1989). Since 1960, the nominal average price of a washing machine, £200, has barely changed. The price of a house in Canonbury at this time was £2650 (Humphries & Taylor 1985 p151) i.e., a washing machine alone cost between 5 and 10 percent of the cost of a gentrifiable house, and about 10 times the average weekly wage. If washing machine prices had kept pace with prices of Canonbury properties, they would cost over £10,000 to-day.

This then concludes the historical background to gentrification in particular insofar as that history may be interpreted in terms of the evolution of domestic technologies. I have argued that although the precursors to gentrification in Islington were residential segregation by status, fixed co-efficients in the production of housing services and competitive markets for servant labour in Victorian London, there are nonetheless conclusions to be drawn applicable to gentrification in other areas and in other contexts. The most important of these is that there have been no filtering down of the property before domestic technologies are applied to it, that its original occupiers have abandoned it. This precondition is present in the gentrification of the SoHo district of New York and in the gentrification of the Docklands.

The evolution of domestic technologies, as I have tried to show, is important not only for gentrification, but also for the evolution of gender and class relations. Gentrification, I have argued in earlier chapters and in this, should not be theorized in terms of class (or gender), but in terms of status and domestic technologies. If class or gender issues are important in gentrification, it is as they are mediated through the application of domestic technologies to housing. To date, I have made this argument most thoroughly in regard to class issues. I have taken account of gender issues only insofar as it has been argued by for example Bondi (1991) and others that class oriented explanations of gentrification should not ignore gender issues. While agreeing that explanations of gentrification should not ignore gender issues, I have suggested that, given the problems inherent in class oriented explanations of gentrification, adding gender issues into these explanations will not improve their chances of being able to explain gentrification. In the following chapter, I will address the issue of changing gender roles directly. I shall argue that gender issues play little part in the explanation of gentrification, as I have advanced it here. This is not to say that they have no impact on the processes of gentrification or on its outcomes. However, gentrification itself would have occurred whatever the changing status of women in the economy might have been.

9 Gentrification in modern times

9.1 Aims and Issues

The last chapter sought to place the roots of gentrification, not in the coming of post-industrial society but in the coming of capitalist society, in the nineteenth, rather than the twentieth century. This chapter seeks to trace the processes involved in gentrification as it occurs in modern times, thus putting some more historical flesh on the economic bones of the model presented in Chapter 7. It concentrates on three interrelated themes, price trends in housing and in domestic technologies and trends in wages among the population at large and in higher income groups. It uses Islington, in North London, as an example of the process, but places this in a wider context than is normally the case in gentrification studies, comparing trends there with national and regional data. It also re-considers the role of the state in gentrification in the UK.

Much has been written on the role of the state in gentrifying neighbourhoods; particularly in the U.S. context, where the practice of land use zoning has in itself meant that state intervention is often an essential prerequisite for the process to go ahead (Chapter 2 above). That the state has a necessary role at all in gentrifying neighbourhoods in the U.K. is less obvious. This is partly for the reasons given in Chapter 2, the physical planning context in which gentrification occurs in the U.K. which is permissive rather than interventionist in essence. However, arising from this is a tendency to see state intervention in gentrification in the U.K. manifested only in the form of grants for home improvements and P.Williams speaks for many when he writes (in my view correctly) that

While it was accepted that the availability of such grants was an added incentive, it is suggested that it cannot be held to explain the process. It is likely that its effect was to heighten demand rather than cause it.

(P.Williams 1976 p80)

However, as Merritt makes clear, the rehabilitation of the housing stock has dominated U.K. housing policy since the Second World War (Merritt with Gray 1982). State intervention has not simply been limited to improvement grants but, by promoting owner occupation as a means to ensuring rehabilitation of the housing stock, has in fact been fundamentally implicated in the gentrification process in the U.K. State intervention and the context in which this arose are considered in the following section.

9.2 The impact of state housing policy on gentrification

Housing considerations dominated the post-war history of London. According to Mack and Humphries (1986 p149) almost half of London's housing stock, some 1.25m. houses, had been damaged by V-1 attacks alone, 130,000 damaged beyond repair. In Islington 2,516 houses were totally destroyed, and around another 78,000 had suffered bomb damage (Roberts 1975 p203). "Three quarters of its [Islington's] households did not even have running water, an inside lavatory nor a bath [in 1951]" (Humphries & Taylor 1985 p143).

The effects of bomb damage and the coming to power of a radical Labour administration meant that the problems of London's housing stock would be tackled by seeking to deal with the problem at source, building directly and on a scale never heretofore managed for the working classes. In addition, stringent war-time controls on the economy would be kept in place in order to facilitate post-war reconstruction, and to start to come to terms with the financial burdens which had been imposed by the prosecution of the war. Two policies in particular were to be followed, relief of overcrowding in the central cities by the development of new towns (Humphries and Taylor 1985), and upgrading of the existing stock (Merrett with Grey 1982) or slum clearance where this was not possible.

In many ways, the New Towns story is the logical continuation of the history of the expansion of London, and Humphries and Taylor devote considerable attention to this. However, as the New Towns were the site of new developments in working class housing, the type of worker they attracted eventually acted to the detriment of London's economic prospects. The post-war decentralization strategies eventually led to the creation of an economically marginal, elderly, unskilled vulnerable population, left behind after the new towns had creamed off all the young skilled inner-city working class labour force (Humphries and Taylor 1985). Islington was one such location.

Following the third 'Industrial Revolution' of the 1880s and 1890s, Islington's employment base remained virtually unchanged. In common with the rest of the London manufacturing sector, however, there was a gradual haemorrhaging of jobs from Islington following the Second World War. This was encouraged at first, in the form of the New Town developments, in order to relieve the stress on London's housing stock. The form of job loss in this period was mainly through migration of firms away from the area, rather than firms closing down as occurred during the 1970s. Unemployment in Islington stood at 500 in 1954. It stood at 17,000 in 1982. One implication of this out-migration of firms and employment was an ageing population in the borough.

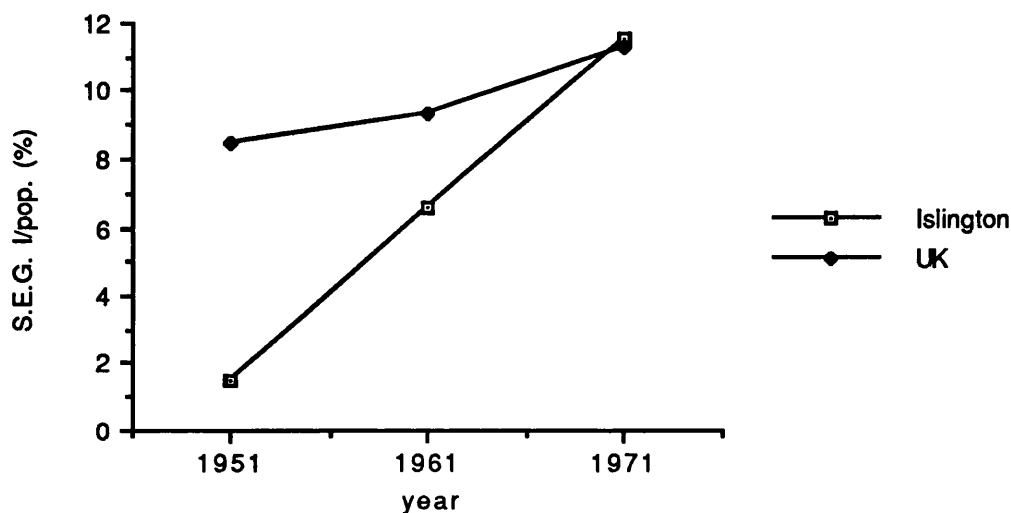
These job losses were particularly pronounced during the 1960's. At the same time, the changes in the employment structure in the London economy as a whole were to emphasize the return to dominance of the City in the Islington economy. Over the period 1961-1971 the numbers of Islington residents employed in manufacturing fell by 342,000 persons, while those employed in banking finance and insurance rose by 207,000 and the professional n.e.s. (not elsewhere specified) and scientific sectors by 101, 000.

These sectoral shifts in employment however could be expected from Gershuny's arguments concerning the shift to a service economy. As manufacturing labour becomes more productive, and therefore more expensive, it makes economic sense to buy in services rather than waste valuable production time in attending to them oneself. Therefore these shifts tell us little about the changing class composition in Islington which can be attributed to gentrification, as compared with those to be expected from the changing occupational structure of the economy at large.

To get a perspective on the impact of gentrification in Islington, therefore, it will be necessary to keep comparing changes in Islington's socio-economic structure with changes in the national, and where possible local London socio-economic structure. To the best of my knowledge, the use of comparative analysis to meet the requirements of the Gershuny argument has not been undertaken in any other study of gentrification (see Dickens et al., 1985, for a discussion of the merits of comparative analysis). In Islington in 1951, 1.5% of the population of heads of household (overwhelmingly male - Table 9.7 below) were professional workers, employers and managers (S.E.G. I), 6.6% in 1961, 11.5% in 1971 (Pitt 1977, Tables 1 & 4). By way of comparison (Halsey 1986 Table 2.1), the proportion of UK males in S.E.G. I rose from 8.5 in 1951 to 9.3 in 1961 to 11.3 in 1971. The percentage point increases for these decades are charted in Figure 9.1 below.

Figure 9.1

Percentage of population in S.E.G. I in Islington Borough and UK, 1951-1971



(source: Pitt 1977, Halsey 1986)

The rate of the rise in Islington's male S.E.G. I population was way above average, indicating a definite shift in the class composition of the borough which could not be attributed to macro or regional changes in the economy. Nonetheless, this spectacular rise came from a very low base. Even in 1971, Islington's S.E.G. I population accounted for only 5.1% (1961 4.25%) of the total S.E.G. I population of inner London. Only Tower Hamlets, with a 1971 S.E.G. I population of 3570 and falling, 2.5% (1961 2.9%) of Inner London's S.E.G. I population had less.

In regard to the second prong of government policy to relieve the housing pressure on London, Merrett (with Grey 1982) argues that the history of UK housing policy since the Second World War can be written in terms of rehabilitation policies. These policies were originally intended to encourage private landlords to upgrade their buildings (54% of the housing stock in 1953), but instead had the effect of encouraging landlords to sell off their housing stock, by stimulating demand for owner occupation:

the advances in legislation in the owner-occupied sector were a *by-product* of measures taken with a view to raising the quality of the privately rented stock...

.... in the 1950s nearly 90% percent of [rehabilitation] grants went to owner-occupiers.

(Merrett with Grey, 1982 p31)

By 1960, less than a third of the housing stock was in private rental. Merrett's organization of the history of post-War housing around the theme of rehabilitation may

appear to be a surprising perspective to take, given its lack of attention in academic literature and institutional reporting (Merrett with Grey 1982 p197). Given also however that new buildings only ever account for around 2% of the housing stock in any year, however, it should in fact make good sense to concentrate policy attention on the 98% of the stock which is already built.

Prior to 1954, building work was essentially subject to the same rationing controls as other important areas of the economy. Licences were required from the local council before any building work could be undertaken. The principle behind this policy was, on the one hand to ensure a conservation of resources in an economy drained by the War, and secondly to force the construction industry to deal with the effects of bomb damage, mainly suffered by the poor, rather than permitting the operation of effective demand, which would have concentrated on building for the rich and letting the filtering process take on the responsibility of alleviating poor housing conditions.

Licences were required for any spending on an existing property which exceeded £500, and/or which exceeded 1000 ft² (later 1500 ft²). Owners who were able to obtain these licences could not sell the rehabilitated property for any more than a price set by the local council at the time a building licence was granted (*Ideal Home* March 1954). This obviously had an inhibiting effect on the owner-occupied sector of the market. In fact house prices were falling during the 1950s (Holmans 1990), those of large homes in particular (*Ideal Home* July 1954).

In terms of inner city rehabilitation, the 15 years following 1945 were the era of mews conversions for middle class occupation. The size of these properties would fall easily within the square footage limitations of a 1,000ft² licence. *Ideal Home* carried a photo-spread of such a conversion in its February 1950 issue. Mews were used as stables and coachmen's quarters in Victorian and Edwardian times. In these conversions, the garage doors would be replaced by large bow windows, and the entrance hoist to the hay stores on the upper floor would be converted into a French window with small balcony. These conversions were a recurrent theme in the magazine during the early 1950s. These mews were concentrated in the West End suburbs, Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster. There were no such mews in Islington. Consequently, the initial inner city property rehabilitations and conversions to middle class residential use could only generically be described as gentrification, since the middle class occupants were settling in predominantly middle class areas. The servants they would have been displacing had not returned after the war. Gentrification, conceived of as a process whereby the class composition of an area changes, could only be said to have been taking place in these areas in a very muted form, if at all.

The 1954 Housing (Repairs and Rent) Act raised the maximum limits on spending on rehabilitation licenses from £500 to £1000, and changed the basis on which cash grants (for improvements only) were made to owners seeking to carry out such works. Prior to 1954, councils could make grants towards the repairs of between £150 and £800. From 1954, provided the cost of the work was over £100, the council could give a grant of up to half the cost of the work with a maximum of £400. However, the size of the property qualifying for a licence rose to 2,500 ft² (*Ideal Home* July 1954). 2,500ft² is the equivalent of a house 20' wide by 30' deep, five storeys high. This, according to Ruth Mellor, would easily cover most of the houses in Islington (personal communication). The standards to which rehabilitation and conversions had to adhere to qualify for grants was also relaxed (Merrett with Grey 1982). Licenses were finally abolished altogether in November 1954. The result was that the annual number of grants for rehabilitation to all private owners rose from approximately 4000 during the years 1949-1954, to 42,000 in the years 1954-1959, and, following the 1959 House Purchase and Housing Act to 90,000 in the years 1959-1964 (Merrett with Grey 1982).

As noted however, these policy initiatives did not persuade landlords to improve their properties, but to sell them off. This tendency was further encouraged by the abolition of Schedule A income tax on the implicit rental value of owner occupation. The other main policy initiative intended to protect the housing situation of the poor were rent controls. These were and are the subject of great controversy. It is argued that, by limiting the amounts landlords can charge in rents in times of shortage, they actually worsen the shortage of rental accommodation, by discouraging landlords from investing further in rental property, and by encouraging the run down of existing rental stocks through the withdrawal of maintenance expenditures in order to maintain profits at the same level as those of the rest of the economy. They have been widely blamed for the rundown state of properties in private rental and for the shift away from this tenure. P. Williams argued that they aided the gentrification process, since they

maintained a stock of vulnerable housing in a central location and did little to reduce the vulnerability of both the housing stock itself and of its tenants.

(P. Williams 1976 p81)

These arguments are however historically weak. Nevitt (1966 p131) has commented on "the apparent paradox that the decontrol of rents leads not to the supply of more rented accommodation but less" (cited in Murie Niner and Watson, 1976 p188). Tenants can only have security of tenure if there is rent control. Decontrol of rents also means that it is easier to evict tenants.

The theoretical argument against them is also weak, since it could as easily be argued that they protect landlords' incomes as a class. Rent controls ensure a constant supply of tenants for whom demand for rented accommodation has not been choked off by uncontrolled rents (Redfern 1983). Nevitt (1970) for example has also argued that the original piece of rent control legislation, the Increase of Rent and Mortgage Interest (War Restrictions) Bill, 1915, was intended to protect the landlord as much as the tenant (Murie, Niner and Watson, 1976 p187). The encouragement to private landlords to invest in their properties by rent decontrol meant only that they found it easier to obtain vacant possession, and thus make their profits by selling to owner occupiers, and invest the money elsewhere (see Hamnett & Randolph 1989 for an account of this process in the London area). As Merrett remarks in the context of a discussion of Labour policy during the 1960's, the rehabilitation objectives of rent decontrol "was a house - rather than a household directed philosophy" (Merrett with Grey 1982 p204).

The accession of a Labour government in 1964 continued in essence the housing policies pursued by the Conservatives. Rehabilitation continued to be seen as the *metier* of the private sector, which by this time meant the owner occupier. In 1967, "the first National Sample Survey of the conditions of houses had shown that the scale of disrepair and unfitness was far greater than had been previously believed" (Merrett with Grey 1982 p41). The result was an intensification of a policy which had already been experimented with by the 1963 Conservative administration, notably area based improvement schemes. The 1969 Housing Act re-introduced the concept, under the title General Improvement Areas (GIAs), subsequently modified by the 1973 Conservative administration in the form of the 1974 Housing Act, which introduced the concept of Housing Action Areas (HAAs).

The GIAs in particular were accused of sponsoring gentrification, but it can be seen from this brief history that they were largely a continuation of what was by then, in this respect at least, a bipartisan housing policy. Owner occupation was to be the medium through which rehabilitation was to be carried out. However, as the numerous neighbourhood lifecycle studies have shown, if nothing else, rehabilitation, even state sponsored rehabilitation, is not likely to take place in a decaying environment (Merrett with Grey 1982 p196-7). If owner occupation was to be the state-sponsored medium through which rehabilitation was to be carried out, then it only made sense for the state, in good social democratic / neo-Keynesian / public-private partnership / top-down planning fashion to take action which would improve the environmental quality, within which the private sector could carry out the objectives assigned to it (Ferris 1972).

With this background in mind therefore, it is possible to evaluate the processes of

gentrification as they have occurred in one specific neighbourhood, Islington.

9.3 The impact of state housing policy on gentrification in Islington

Ferris (1972) argues that the turning point in the history of the gentrification of Islington was the Conservative 1957 Rent Act. The effect of the Act was to reduce protection to dwellings of less rateable value of less than £40 in London, but only for sitting tenants, and there was no protection against landlord harassment to obtain eviction (Murie, Niner and Watson 1976 p183). The years following the passing of the Act became infamous as the Rachman era (Humphries and Taylor 1985). The 1953 Town and Country Planning Act had abolished the taxation of development values (Merrett with Grey 1982), this, together with the abolishment of licenses meant that prices of owner occupied properties were now completely decontrolled. Building societies were also encouraged to expand to finance this asset stripping. From 1959 to 1962, the government lent the building societies £100m. to be invested in pre-1919 property (Boddy 1980).

It was about this time that the major Islington estates started selling off their properties. The Northampton Estate in Canonbury were sold in 1952 (Pitt 1977). The Drapers' Company sold off their property, based on Lonsdale Square, in 1954 (Zwart 1973). The property companies who bought these estates engaged in a form of asset stripping, breaking up the estates into individual properties and selling them off. Estate agents in these areas stopped being agents for the estates, collecting rents and managing property, and became instead more or less full-time property developers (Pitt 1977, P.Williams 1976).

In Islington, the first area to experience gentrification were the old Northampton estates in the Canonbury ward. Significantly, this is close to Highbury, which has never experienced any real decline in its social status (Zwart, 1973 p25). This was followed by Barnsbury (Ferris 1972). Barnsbury was developed by three principal estates, the Thornhill family, centred on Barnsbury Square, but running down Hemingford Road to its junction with Pentonville, the Drapers' Company, already mentioned, and the Cloudsley Charity, centred on Cloudsley Square (Willats, 1987, see map 9.1).

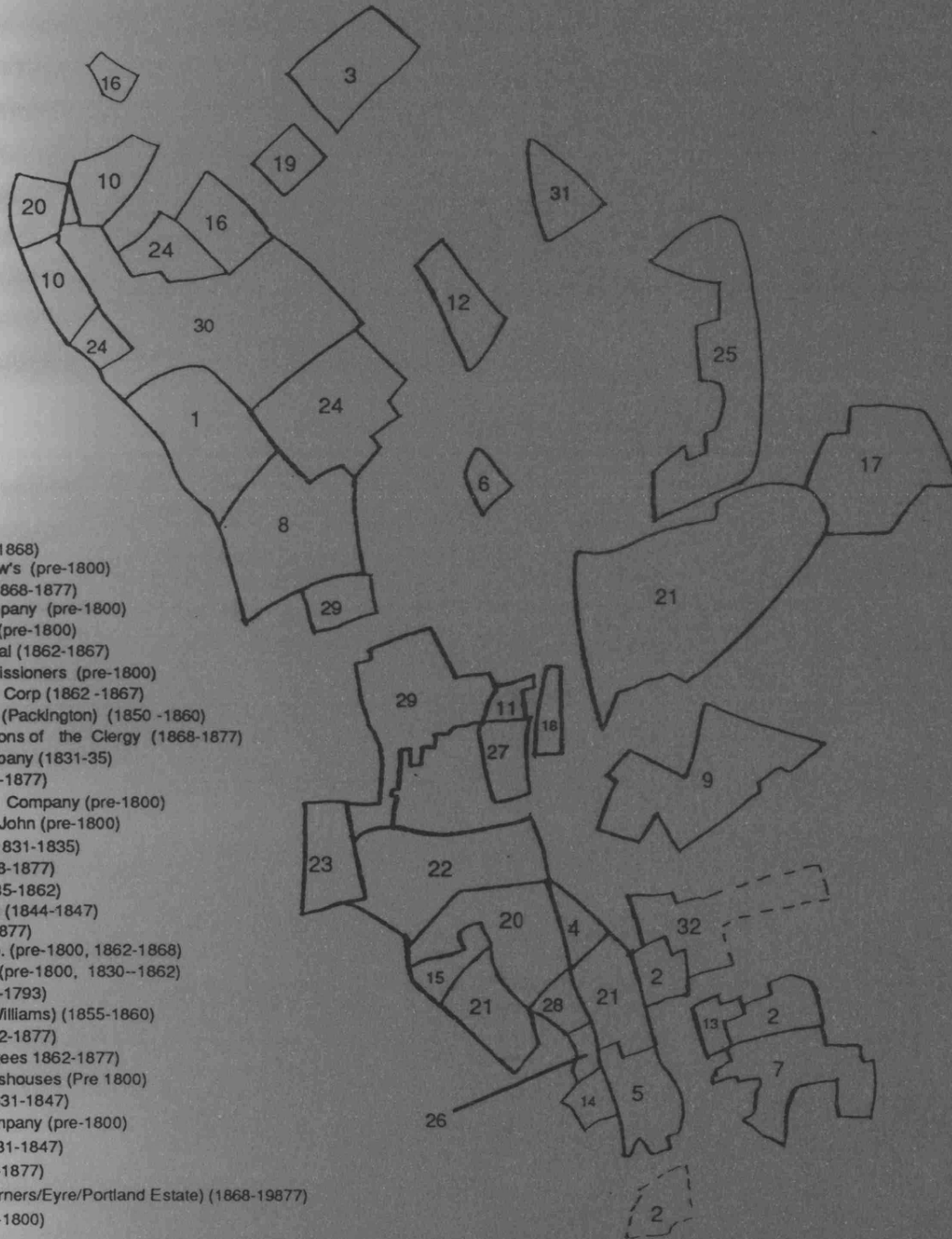
The impact of gentrification in this period can be seen from the way in which the overall increase in male S.E.G. I's were concentrated. Barnsbury ward, recorded a increase of 12.5 percentage points over the period 1961-1971, Junction at 9.8, Mildmay ward at 7.7. and Hillmarton 6.5 (Table 9.1 below, see also Map 9.1 for location of wards). Pentonville, Highbury, St. Mary, St.Peter, and Station all had percentage point increases greater than the Islington average of 4.9 (Pitt 1977 Table 2).

Map 9.1 Islington: Wards and Estate Boundaries

Major estates in Islington (and dates of principal development)



Major estates in Islington (and dates of principal development)



1. Batson (1855-1868)
2. St Bartholomew's (pre-1800)
3. Beauchamp (1868-1877)
4. Brewers' Company (pre-1800)
5. Charterhouse (pre-1800)
6. Christ's Hospital (1862-1867)
7. Church Commissioners (pre-1800)
8. City of London Corp (1862-1867)
9. Clothworkers' (Packington) (1850-1860)
10. Corp of the Sons of the Clergy (1868-1877)
11. Drapers' Company (1831-35)
12. Harvist (1868-1877)
13. Ironmongers' Company (pre-1800)
14. Knights of St. John (pre-1800)
15. Lloyd Baker (1831-1835)
16. Mercers' (1868-1877)
17. Mildmay (1735-1862)
18. Milner Gibson (1844-1847)
19. Neve (1868-1877)
20. New River Co. (pre-1800, 1862-1868)
21. Northampton (pre-1800, 1830-1862)
22. Penton (1773-1793)
23. Penton (McWilliams) (1855-1860)
24. Poynder (1862-1877)
25. Rydon's Trustees 1862-1877
26. Sekforde Almshouses (Pre 1800)
27. Stonefield (1831-1847)
28. Skinners' Company (pre-1800)
29. Thornhill (1831-1847)
30. Tufnell (1868-1877)
31. Unknown (Berners/Eyre/Portland Estate) (1868-1987)
32. Wenlock (pre-1800)

Table 9.1

Proportion of male population in S.E.G. I, selected wards Islington

	1961	1971
Barnsbury	3.3	15.8
Junction	7.7	19.8
Mildmay	7.9	16.1
Hillmarton	5.4	11.9

(source: Hamnett & Williams 1979)

By 1964, the middle-class in-migration to Barnsbury was extensive enough to provoke the first major class conflict between gentrifiers and gentrified. This was fought out over a traffic scheme, ostensibly intended to be part of an overall environmental improvement for the area (Ferris 1972). In the end, the environmental improvement schemes aroused so much popular opposition that it provoked a sea change in Islington Borough Council's own housing policy. It began (from 1971) to use its compulsory purchase powers to buy up existing tenanted properties, so converting private tenancies into council tenancies. Converting the tenancies on the threatened properties to municipal ownership achieved two ends. First, working class tenants were protected from harassment and illegal eviction. Second, however, although these houses were now council property, no-one need ever know. Hence values of otherwise identical, but owner occupied properties could continue safely to rise. However, at the time, this was not occurring. In 1973, the Barber boom was collapsing, aided by the first oil price shock (Pitt 1973).

Pitt notes that this had three effects

- i. Property values stopped rising, thereby making it impossible for property companies to stay liquid by re-mortgaging existing properties
- ii. Interest rates went up, thereby increasing the monthly loss on owning tenanted property [see the discussion on speculator behaviour in Chapter 7 above]
- iii. A mortgage famine severely depressed the market for houses that had been made empty.

(Pitt 1973, p10)

As a result, in Pitt's words, "willing sellers found a willing buyer, and Islington Council became the largest slum landlord in the borough" (ibid.). This did permit rehabilitation of the existing stock to take place without leading to pressures on the tenants to move. It

was also in line with current GLC policy which was now seeking to reverse the detrimental effects of its post-war decentralization strategies (Humphries and Taylor 1985). It was also promoted by the 1974 Housing Act, which gave official government backing to this type of municipalization, with the creation of the ability of local councils to designate Housing Action Areas, and thus the ability to manage the housing stock, enforcing improvements, regardless of the landlord's wishes.

However, the policy did contain an inherent contradiction. If, in principle, it enhanced private property values, which was still an objective of rehabilitation policy, then it would make it more difficult for the council to repeat the exercise, since the property values would have increased in the interim. The success of the policy in 1973 was largely due to the particular combination of circumstances outlined by Pitt, and not subsequently repeated. Pitt in fact ends his report with a plea that the Council continue its policy, which was obviously by then coming to an end. Since that time, conversions from rental to owner occupation have continued, house prices have increased and gentrification in the borough has continued apace.

This brief history of the initiation of gentrification in Islington bears out a number of important points. First, the ability to convert properties preceded the gentrification process. Mews conversions in West End suburbs and cottage conversions in the Green Belt preceded the 'classic' gentrification experienced in Islington. A case can be made for including both these activities, in particular the cottage conversions, under the heading of gentrification. I shall return to this question in the following chapter. However, in some cases the original gentrifying incomers to rural villages were welcomed as a source of new employment (in domestic service), bringing wealth into what had been a depressed agricultural community (Humphries and Taylor 1985). The displacement effects of classic gentrification were much longer in appearing.

Second, the effect of government policy has clearly been important in promoting gentrification, but its influence is ambiguous, both insofar as it has promoted owner occupation in general, and as regards the timing of gentrification. On the one hand, the property market was freed up around 1953-1954, but middle class inner city rehabilitation was already under way at this time. There does not appear to be any single legislative event to which one can point and say "that was the catalyst". Munt (1988) concurs, arguing that "empirical evidence for this institutional approach is sparse" (p1178), quoting Balchin (1979, p170) as showing that gentrification in West London was "already occurring prior to the considerable increase in improvement grant provision". Rees and Lambert (1985) are not alone in arguing that planning policies largely ratify private market decisions. Similarly with estate agent behaviour (Munt

1988). In which case, one is forced back on the macro-economic conditions under which gentrifiable housing is produced and also consumed. In the next section, I look at the macro-economic changes which have caused the form of consumption to change.

9.4 Domestic technologies and gender relations in the gentrification process

9.4.1 Women in the gentrified housing market

Female participation in the economy was boosted by the Second World War, just as it had been in the First, although the boost was less in terms of numbers and more in terms of an expanded range of sectors in which women were able to participate. Women accounted for only 30.8% of the labour force in 1951, compared with 30.7% in 1931 (OPCS 1931, 1951). They accounted for about 40% of the labour force nationally in 1981 (OPCS 1981 Summary Tables Table 1).

Humphries and Taylor (1985) describe the course of female employment in London since 1945. Most of the growth in this employment was in office work, as the City of London strove to retain its financial pre-eminence, but also with the continuation of the shift toward service employment (Gershuny 1973). Tourism, advertising, and fashion also became major sources of employment.

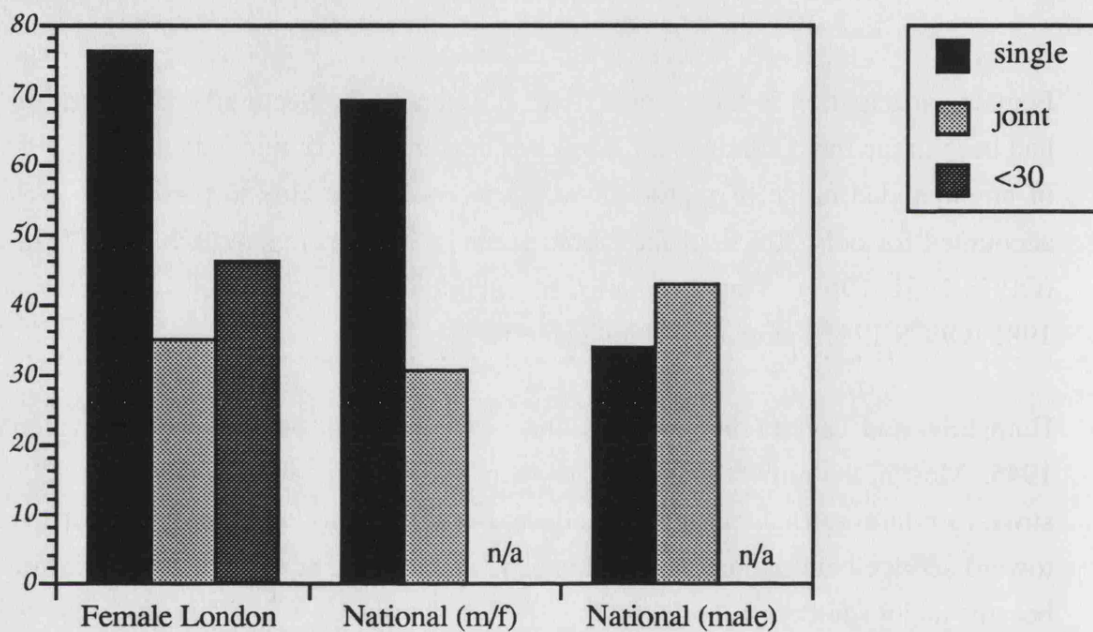
Of these sectors, the major source of employment growth for both male and female was in financial services. Munt (1988) provides a detailed set of tables showing the occupational change, 1951-1981, in grouped S.E.G.s for 7 Inner London boroughs (City, Camden, Hammersmith & Fulham, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Tower Hamlets and Westminster). S.E.G. I occupations increased by 3% points, to 19% over this period, while all the others declined, except S.E.G. IV, semiskilled and service. Munt interprets this as due to the growth of demand for a service sector "to 'service' the changing occupational structure, the change [being] in favour of professional and managerial structure" (Munt 1988 p1183). However, it is not easy to put this interpretation on the data. Munt does not consider the effect of the New Towns policies on the composition of the workforce, which, as has been shown, tended especially to attract skilled labour from the inner cities.

A more telling problem with Munt's data is that it considers only males in S.E.G.'s. Women are increasingly purchasing residential property on their own account.

According to figures published by the Nationwide Anglia Building Society (1988), the proportion of women borrowing from the society on their own account almost doubled (from 8.2% to 15.9%) in the ten years 1975-1985.

Figure 9.2

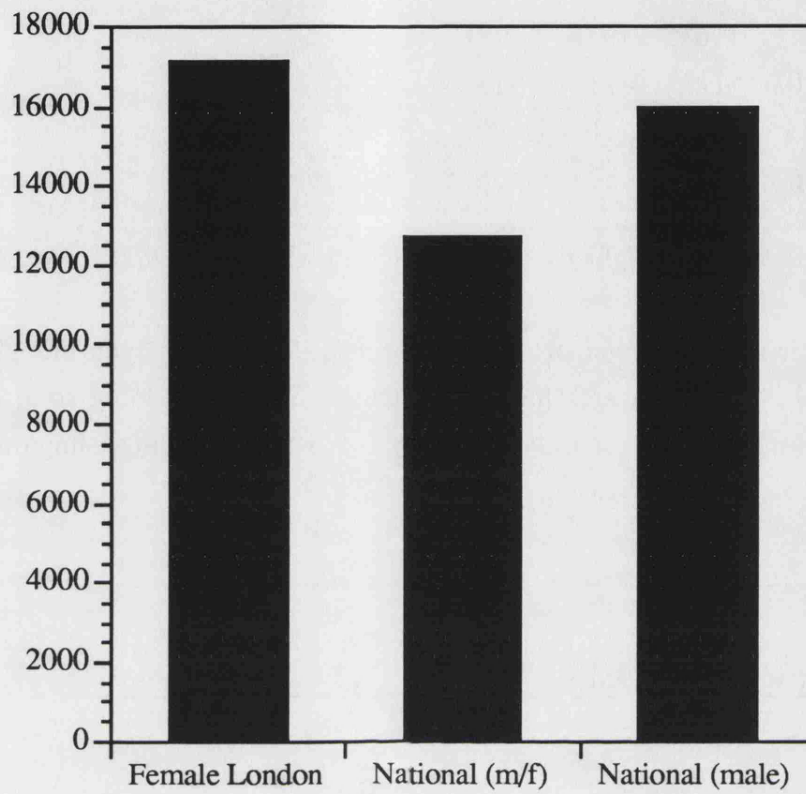
Female Mortgagees in London compared with national situation



source: Nationwide Anglia Building Society

In the London area 76% of these female borrowers were single. 35% were purchasing jointly. 46% of these purchasers were under 30, with an average salary of £17,160 annually. 48% of all females were first time buyers, 52% in London. The impact of female entry into the housing market cannot therefore be ignored in a study of gentrification.

Figure 9.3
Salaries of Female Mortgagees in London compared with national situation



However, great caution needs to be exercised with figures on women's participation in the housing market, in particular their participation in the gentrification process. To put their participation in context, I present below some figures on the interactions between incomes and house prices in gentrified Islington.

In 1971, over 50% of Islington owner occupiers were high income earners (more than £4,160) and 39% of Islington's male S.E.G. I population lived in owner occupied stock (Pitt 1977). Despite the increases in owner occupation, totals remained low.

Table 9.2 shows levels of owner occupation for the UK, London and Islington 1951-81. The 1951 figure for Islington is unknown, but I am estimating (for reasons see below) that the proportion of Islington's housing stock which was in owner occupation did not rise significantly during the 1950's.

Table 9.2

Levels of owner occupation

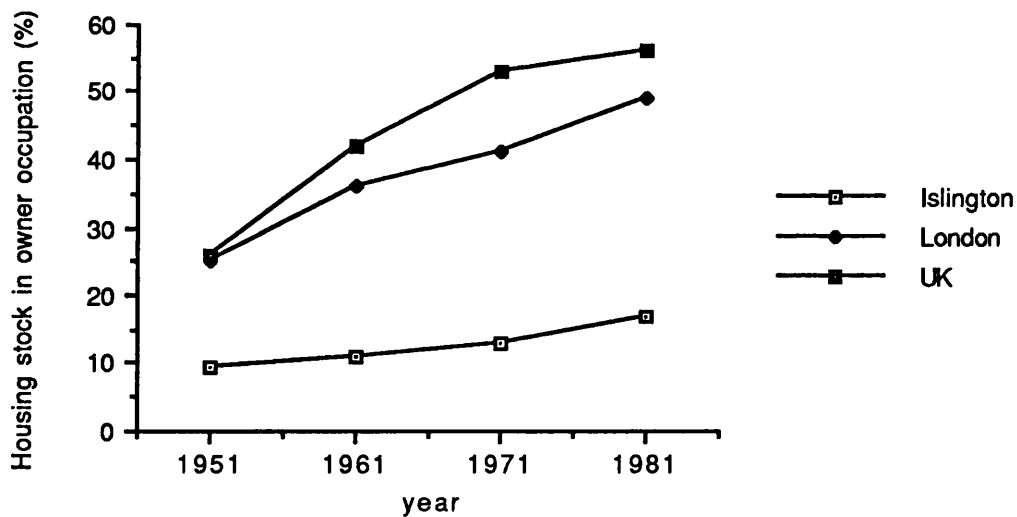
	1951	1961	1971	1981
Islington	9-10	11	13	17
London	25	36	41	49
UK	26	42	53	56

(source: Pitt 1977, Conway 1985, Merrett with Grey 1982)

Figure 9.4 shows the changes in owner-occupation levels 1951-1981. Even though owner occupation was rising all through this period nationally, it was doing so at a decreasing rate. By contrast, within the London region as a whole including Islington, owner occupation was rising at an increasing rate.

Figure 9.4

Changes in owner occupation 1951-1981



(source: Table 9.2)

Table 9.3 shows the trend in incomes in this period. From the available statistics, I have compared the average with the upper decile of male white collar workers. This was the closest set I could find for income trends in S.E.G. I, the significant group for gentrification. The increase in wages and house prices are very closely linked, as would

be expected given mortgage companies' practice of tying mortgage lending to a multiple (usually 2.6 to 2.7) of borrowers' incomes. In 1981, the average income of borrowers for purchase of new properties was £9,500, for all properties £8,700 (Social Trends 1983). These yield price/income ratios of 2.9 and 2.7 respectively.

Table 9.3

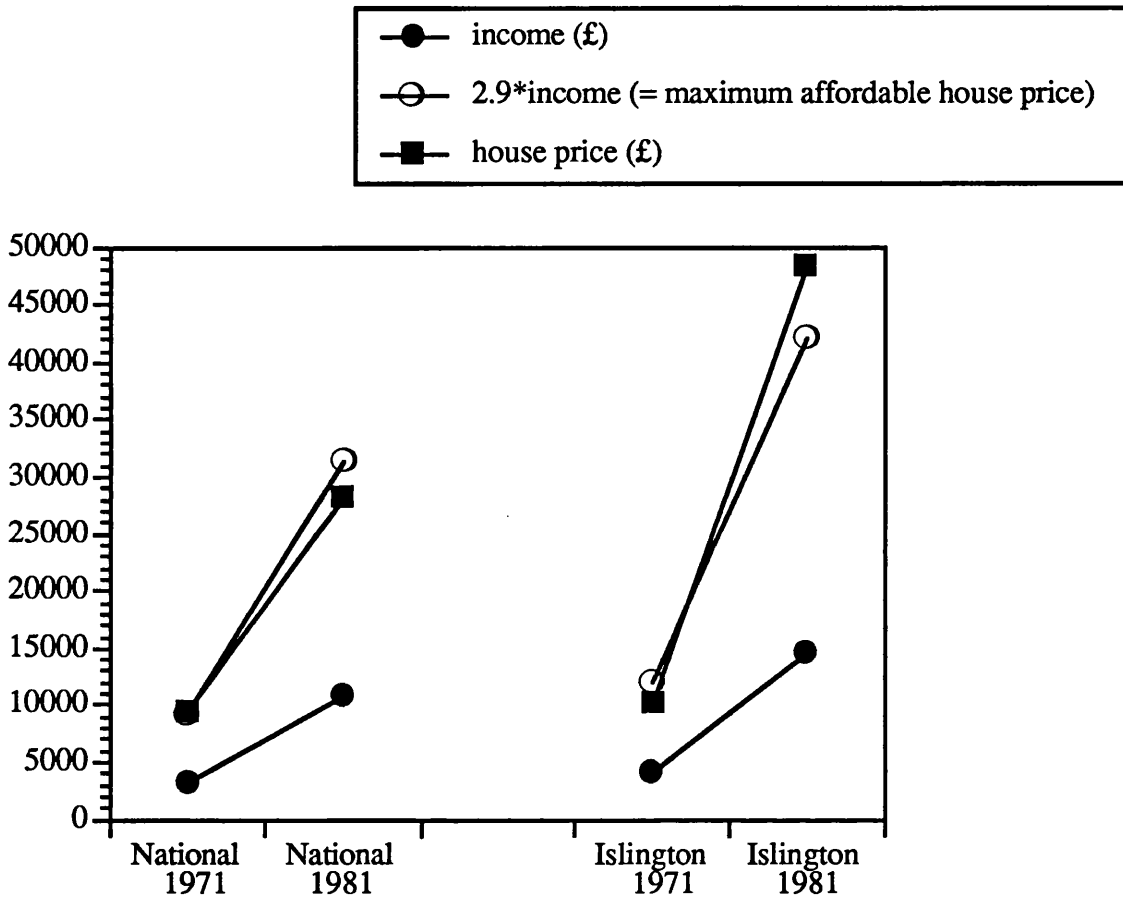
Incomes of male white collar workers 1951-1981, weekly wages

		1951	1961	1971	1981
High incomes ¹	£30	n/a	£60	£209	
Average	£12	£20	£34	£159	

(¹upper decile white collar workers, source: Social Trends)

From these ratios and the figures presented in Tables 9.3 and 9.4 (below), some evidence on trends in house prices and the maximum permissible mortgage advances may be presented for the UK and for Islington (Figure 9.5 below). It can be seen that whereas incomes and mortgage advances rose faster than house prices nationally, for Islington, the opposite was the case.

Figure 9.5
Trends in incomes, maximum mortgages and house prices
1971-1981
National and Islington data



The weekly income of a high income earner in 1981, £209, works out at £10,868 annually; multiplied by 2.9, this yields an implicit house price of only £31,500 in 1981. This happens to be the average price of one and two bedroom flats in Islington in 1981. (Estimated from estate agents advertisements in the *Islington Gazette*, January 1981 - December 1981; the sample size of prices quoted is however very small, only 15, yielding a co-efficient of variation $\{s/\bar{x}\}$ of 28%).

Assuming that Pitt's high income earners increased their incomes at least at the same rate as those in Social Trends' upper decile over the decade 1971 to 1981 (and there is no obvious reason why they should not have achieved at least this), they would have had an income of £14,500 in 1981. Multiplying by 2.9 gives a figure of £42,000, the average price of unmodernized properties in the borough ($n = 15$, $\{s/\bar{x}\} = 21\%$). Multiplying by 2.7 however gives only £39,125. The average price of a modernized property in Islington in 1981, however, was some £58,200 ($n = 34$, $\{s/\bar{x}\} = 27\%$). This is 36%

higher than the price of an unmodernized property and some 48% higher than even Pitt's high income earners would be able to pay.

Having made this point however, it is as well to stress that the figures quoted are not ironclad. The co-efficients of variation are such that even if the figure of £58,000 was reduced by 27%, this would yield a figure of £42,500, which would be right at the limit of Pitt's high income earner's ability to pay. There was in fact some evidence of houses remaining unsold and prices dropping slightly. One property which came on the market in February 1981 at £59,000 had fallen to £56,000 by August.

P.Williams (1976) reckoned that these price movements meant that Islington properties were tending to come into line with other Inner London house prices in the 1960s. In other words, the investment of domestic technologies was bringing the flow of housing services from these properties into line with modern properties of equivalent size and design, as suggested in Chapter 7. The evidence from the 1981 figures further suggests that real capital gains were to be had for those who had already purchased their properties in 1971. Again, this is what might be expected from the arguments presented in Chapter 7.

By 1981, the only way in which an upper decile household could afford a property in Islington would be if it contained two upper decile adults in employment. Assuming that these two adults were male and female yields the following results. Average female white collar wages in 1981 were £96 weekly, and the upper decile of female wages was 173% of this figure. This would yield an income of £166 per week, £8636 annually. A dual income heterosexual couple in the upper deciles of income earners would then have a joint income of £19,500. Multiplying that by 2.9 gives a figure of £56,560. In short, in 1981, a single upper decile income earner could afford a fiat in Islington, but it would have taken two upper deciles in full time employment to afford to buy a house. This gives some measure of the capital gains to be made from property investment in Islington.

Table 9.4

House Prices 1951-1981 (current prices)

	1952/3	1961	1971	1981
Islington	£2620 ¹	£3,100 ²	£10,210 ²	£48,250 ⁶
London/SE	£2302 ⁴	£3450 ⁴	£6920 ⁴	£30,000 ³
UK				
new ⁵	....	£2810	£5510	£28,100
average ⁵	....	£2722 ⁽⁴⁾	£5775	£23,000

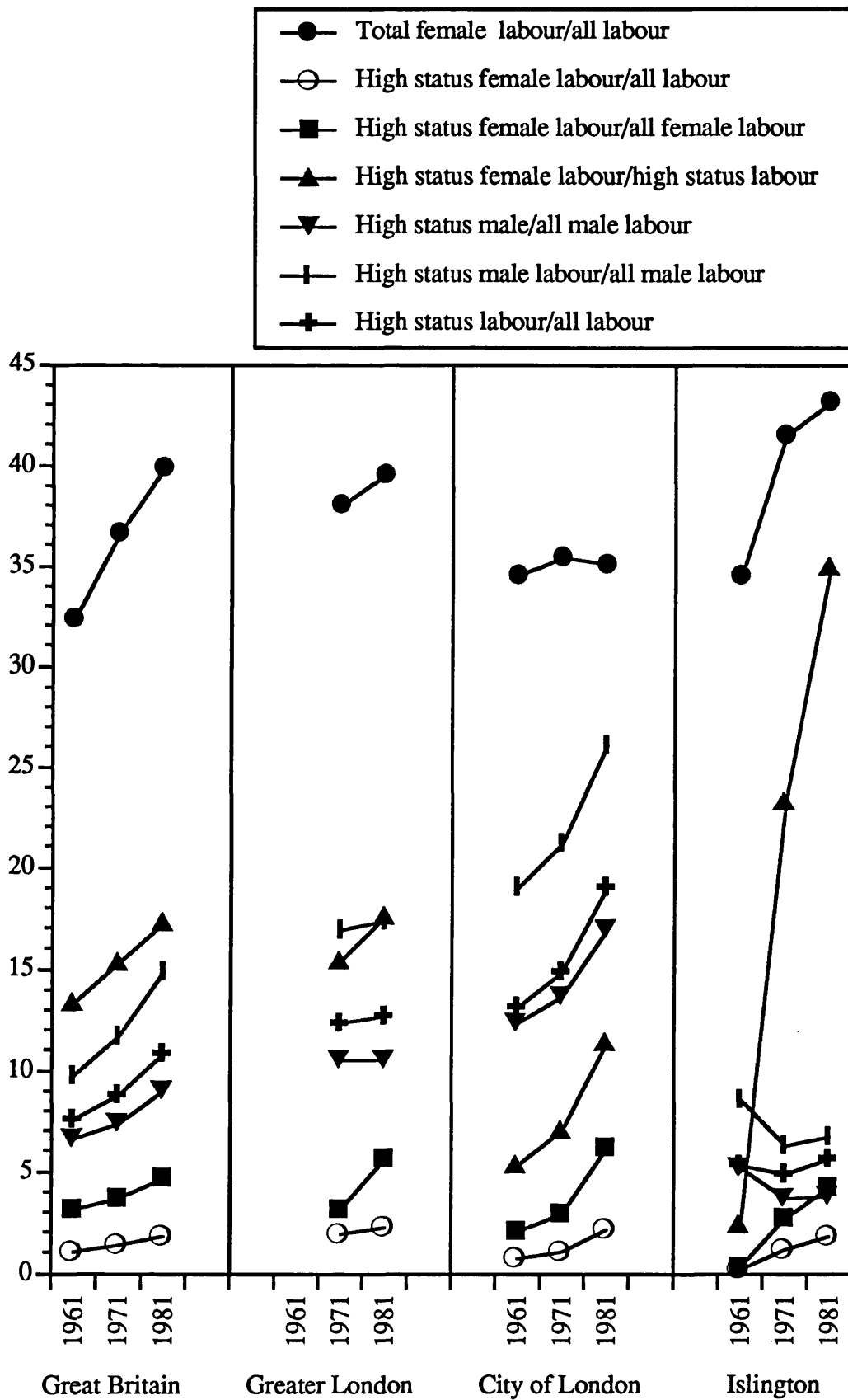
(sources: ¹Humphries & Taylor 1985, ²P.Williams 1976, ³Regional Statistics, ⁴Holmans 1990, ⁵Social Trends ⁶All properties: estimated from Estate Agents' advertisements, *Islington Gazette* 1981 - sample size 64, co-efficient of variation 35%,)

This also gives a clue as to the where of gentrification. If the cost of new building sets the price of all housing, regardless of its actual historic and renovation costs, as most commentators agree (Chapter 7 above), then households will in the long run be allocated to housing on the basis of its price and their income. The unprecedented ability of developers to rehabilitate old properties to modern standards more cheaply than it would cost to rebuild those properties, means that gentrifiers come to be allocated to the inner city.

On the other hand, it does not tell us very much about the impact of changing gender relations as causal factors in the gentrification process. Specifically, just from looking at these figures it cannot be determined whether house prices in Islington rose in response to demand from women entering the upper echelons of the labour force, and expressing their new found economic muscle in the housing market, or whether women who would otherwise given up a career on marriage have been forced to remain in full-time employment simply to help meet with the mortgage repayments. Did the entry of women into the labour market push up the price of housing or did the rising price of housing drag women into the labour market?

If the purchase of gentrified houses does increasingly require the resources of a two-income household, and single women are increasingly entering the market for property, therefore, their occupational dynamics cannot be ignored (Bondi 1990). Tables 9.5 & 9.6 (summarized in Figure 9.6) provide an attempt to redress this balance by considering the growth of the female labour force during this period and, in particular the growth of high status female employment.

Figure 9.6
 Women in the labour force
 1961-1981



Note that the census categorizes occupational groups by residence, but industrial status by place of work. These categories only overlap at the aggregate level. I have therefore used the following joint occupational/industrial status categories in defining high status for the purposes of constructing these tables, "self-employed with employees", "managers large establishments", "professional workers". This is a fairly reasonable approximation to Munt's groupings¹. For comparison, a analysis of female employment for the 1981 census S.E.G. I category (1981a) is provided for Great Britain and for Greater London.

Tables 9.5a & b compare the participation of women in the labour force nationally and regionally. Comparisons are provided between women's participation in the labour force, the proportion of that participation which can be considered high status, and between the relative success of women and men at obtaining these high status posts. If women were to be represented in high status occupations at the same rate as their participation in the labour force, Figure 9.6 would show the triangles and the solid circles overlapping precisely. If women were to be equally represented with men in high status labour, the proportions of high status female (male) labour to total female (male) labour would be the same, i.e., the squares and the vertical bars would overlap precisely, along the line of the crosses (high status labour as a proportion of total labour). High status labour accounted for 10.98% of total labour in 1981.

¹ Employers and managers in central and local government, industry, commerce etc. - large establishments; Employers and managers in small establishments; Professional workers - self employed; Professional workers - employees; and farmers-employers and managers (Munt 1988 p1186).

Table 9.5a

Status of women in the labour force 1961-1981

	1961	1971	1981	(1981a)
<i>Working in Great Britain</i>				
Total female participation in the labour force (% total employed)	32.4	36.6	39.9	(38.8)
High status female participation in the labour force (% total in employment)	1.0	1.34	1.86	(0.39)
High status female labour as a proportion of total female labour	3.1	3.7	4.6	(1.03)
High status female labour as a proportion of total high status labour	13.3	15.3	17.2	(10.5)
High status male participation in the labour force (% total in employment)	6.6	7.4	9.0	(3.3)
High status male labour as a proportion of total male labour	9.7	11.7	14.9	(5.46)
High status labour as a proportion of total labour (% total in employment)	7.6	8.8	10.8	(3.73)

(source: OPCS Censuses 1961, 1971, 1981, Summary Tables, Table 1. 10% sample)

Female high status labour however constituted only 4.6% of total female as against 14.9% for men. This meant that female high status labour constituted a mere 1.86 percent of the total labour force. High status males on the other hand constituted 9 percent of total labour.

Table 9.5b

Status of women in the labour force 1961-1981

	1961	1971	1981	(1981a)
<i>Working in Greater London</i>				
Total female participation in the labour force (% total in employment)	...	38.0	39.5	(41.2)
High status female participation in the labour force (% total in employment)	...	1.9	2.2	(0.71)
High status female labour as a proportion of total female labour	...	3.1	5.6	(1.7)
High status female labour as a proportion of total high status labour	...	15.4	17.6	(15.6)
High status male participation in the labour force (% total in employment)	...	10.5	10.5	(3.8)
High status male labour as a proportion of total male labour	...	16.9	17.3	(6.5)
High status labour as a proportion of total labour (% total in employment)	...	12.3	12.7	(4.5)

(source: OPCS Censuses 1961, 1971, 1981, Economic Reports, Table 1)

Using the Census categorizations gives lower absolute values of the percentages in the high status occupations, but does not alter the relative gap between the position of women in the labour force generally and women in high status occupations (39% and 10% percent nationally and 41% and 16% in Greater London). In any case, the important thing to note is the upward trend in female employment, and the painfully slow upward trend in high status female employment.

Tables 9.6a & b compare female *employment* in the City of London with occupational status among female *residents* in Islington. If it is true that Islington has been subject to gentrification because of its proximity to the City (cf Local Economy Policy Unit 1991),

then the City comparison is appropriate. Similarly it makes sense to look at occupational status in Islington by place of residence, rather than workplace, as when compiling the tables for Great Britain and Greater London. Table 9.5b showed that although more female workers in Greater London are in high status occupations than the GB average, nonetheless they still only remain at approximately half their notional strength in these occupations. Table 9.6a indicates why perhaps this is.

Table 9.6a

Status of women in the labour force 1961-1981

	1961	1971	1981
<i>Employed in City of London</i>			
Total female participation in the labour force (% total in employment)	34.5	35.4	35.1
High status female participation in the labour force (% total in employment)	0.69	1.04	2.16
High status female labour as a proportion of total female labour	2.0	2.9	6.2
High status female labour as a proportion of total high status labour	5.3	7.0	11.35
High status male participation in the labour force (% total in employment)	12.4	13.7	16.9
High status male labour as a proportion of total male labour	19.0	21.2	26.0
High status labour as a proportion of total labour (% total in employment)	13.1	14.8	19.0

(source: OPCS Censuses 1961, 1971, 1981, County Reports, Table 3)

Interestingly, though the proportion of high status labour is higher in the City than anywhere else, it is exceedingly male dominated. Women only comprise 35% of the City labour force, compared to 41% in the conurbation as a whole, which adds up to only

11.5% of the high status jobs, even though at 2.16%, they have managed to capture quite a high(!) proportion of high status jobs compared with the national average. However whereas there is an approximately 5 to 1 ratio between male and female participation in high status labour in Great Britain and in Greater London (1.86 & 9.0 percent and 2.2 & 5.0 percent, respectively), there is an almost 8 to 1 disparity between male and female high flyers in the City of London.

Compare now the representation of women working in high status jobs among Islington residents.

Table 9.6b

Status of women in the labour force 1961-1981

	1961	1971	1981
<i>Resident in Islington</i>			
Total female participation in the labour force (% total economically active)	34.5	41.5	43.1
High status female participation in the labour force (% total economically active)	0.13	1.11	1.8
High status female labour as a proportion of total female labour	0.33	2.67	4.2
High status female labour as a proportion of total high status labour	2.4	23.2	35.0
High status male participation in the labour force (% total economically active)	5.2	3.7	3.8
High status male labour as a proportion of total male labour	8.5	6.3	6.7
High status labour as a proportion of total labour (% total economically active)	5.3	4.9	5.6

(source: OPCS Censuses 1961, 1971, 1981, County Reports, Table 1)

While still not equally represented on the basis of their participation in the labour force, the difference between the proportions of male and female Islington residents in high status occupations is a mere 2 to 1. Women resident in Islington in 1981 account for 35% of all high status labour, as compared to 43% of all labour. This figure, which has risen from 2.4% in 1961 (compared with a 1961 national average of 13.3%), indicates dramatically the impact high status women have had on the Islington property market.

Figures published by the Nationwide Anglia Building Society (NABS) tend to confirm the importance of high status female labour in the London property market (NABS 1989 - see also Figures 9.2 & 9.3 above). These figures showed that in 1988 41% of female borrowers in the London market had incomes in excess of £18,200 annually, compared with only 21% of women nationally, but also compared with only 30% of men nationally. This is in line with the 1981 figures for high status female labour in Islington. 14% of all women bought properties worth over £70,000. Almost all of these were located in London or the South East.

The rise in high status female residence in Islington matches the rise in house prices relative to incomes mentioned in the discussion of Tables 9.3 & 9.4. However, the evidence of Tables 9.5 & 9.6 show that it is not the high prices that have forced women to go out and work. The minuscule participation of women in high status occupations both in Islington and beyond can only be interpreted as evidence of just how strong are the effects of patriarchy in British society (Duncan 1991, Walby 1989, McDowell 1986, Foord & Gregson 1986). Women would hardly be leaving the home to help with the mortgage payments for a while if their chances of getting a job which paid a salary commensurate with their mortgage requirements were so low. It must be concluded therefore that prices of gentrified property have responded to the entry of women into high status occupations.

To conclude, this section has sought to highlight some of the gender issues in the gentrification process. It has shown the importance of women in this process in two ways, as contributors to joint house purchase, and as purchasers in their own right. The spectacular rise in the proportion of high status female labour resident in Islington since 1961 parallels the growth in property prices in the area. However, it does not appear that the causes of this female-led gentrification lie in the growth of the financial services sector. Women do equally spectacularly badly in terms of success in City careers. Not much support for postindustrialism here, even when given a feminist twist.

It would be wrong therefore to conclude from the forgoing analysis that the streets of Islington are filled with high powered female executives. The proportion of women

resident in Islington working in high status occupations was only 1.8% of the total Islington labour force in 1981, 4.6% of the total female labour force. This is not high. It would suggest that though of great interest in understanding the processes of gentrification, female participation in the labour markets does not help account for the causes of gentrification.

9.4.2 Domestic technologies and domestic employment

Bondi (1991) also draws attention to the fact that increased participation in the labour force is not a uniformly glamorous experience for all women. Most women still work in low paid service sector jobs. I have concluded from this that gentrification cannot be explained by changes in gender relations in the workplace. Could, however, those changes in gender relations which have had an impact on the gentrification process be a secondary effect of developments in domestic technologies? Cowans (1983) and Hardyment (1988) have both argued that the impact of domestic technologies was to raise expectations about standards of cleanliness about the house, so that ironically, women work longer hours performing housework now than they did before the advent of (especially) electricity into the home. Walby (1990) disagrees. She argues that while this might be true for women not in paid labour, women who are economically active are able to combine their jobs both as paid workers and unpaid homemakers, because of the savings in time that domestic technologies permit. At the same time, for women in high status occupations, domestic technologies might permit them to hire in domestic service on a part-time basis. As well as making gentrification financially possible, therefore, they may also permit some women to participate directly in the process, as well as causing some other women to have their labour subsumed within the process, as a new breed of domestic servants.

Chapter 8 left domestic technologies still acting as a medium promoting an ideology of woman as domestic scientist, as compensation for an isolated suburban existence. These technologies were however becoming markedly cheaper. Compare the trends in house prices with those of an automatic washing machine over the same period. A washing machine is obviously not the be-all and end-all of domestic technologies, though as Cowan (1983) and Hardyment (1988) both make clear, it has been possibly the most significant of all domestic technologies in terms of its impact on the management of domestic work and its class relations. Attempts at creating a mechanical alternative to scrubbing clothes by hand form among the earliest of applications of technological principles to domestic labour. Despite all the attention given to their development, the

cost of these machines in 1951 was still extremely high, as noted in Chapter 8. As the flagship domestic technology, the comparison is therefore instructive.

Table 9.7

Automatic washing machine prices 1951-1981 (current prices)

	1951	1961	1971	1981
Automatic washing machine				
new	£110	...	£145	£220
second hand	£80	£70		

(sources: *Ideal Home*, *Exchange & Mart*, *Islington Gazette*)

The price of a fully automatic washing machine (Bendix, Indesit, Hoover Keymatic), incorporating all the latest improvements, fell from around 4% of the purchase cost of housing to less than 1% over this period, less than 0.5% in Islington. If the figure of £31,500, the average price of a 1981 Islington flat is used, the ratio rises to 0.69%. If the figure of £42,500, the average price of an unimproved property is used, the ratio falls to 0.52%. Again, this is what would be expected if the arguments in Chapter 7 held.

Table 9.8

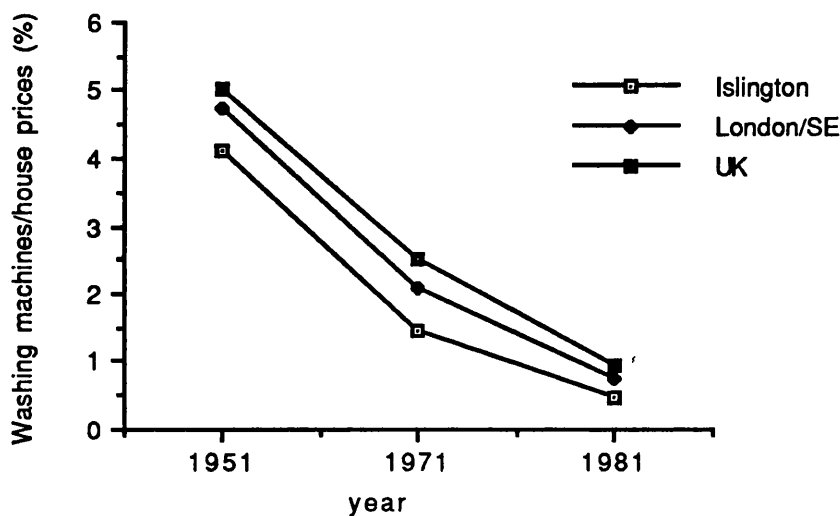
Automatic washing machine prices (new) as a percentage of average housing costs 1951 - 1981

	1951	1961	1971	1981
Islington				
average	4.1	...	1.45	0.46
unimproved flat				0.52
				0.69
London/SE		4.74	...	2.09
				0.73
UK		...	...	2.5
				0.95

(sources: Table 9.4, Table 9.7)

These figures are graphed out below. Despite the absence of data for 1961, the trend is clear. Domestic technologies have fallen sharply in relation to house prices.

Figure 9.7 Ratios of washing machine prices to house prices 1951 - 1981



(Source: Table 9.8)

Obviously an overall set of domestic technology prices would be preferable to only one. However no such set of prices exists. Indices for rehabilitation expenditures exist, but not in terms of unit costs of rehabilitation inputs (Holmans 1990). However, if the relative prices of all domestic technologies have fallen at the same rate as those for washing machines (and Hunkins' comparisons would suggest that this is so - Chapter 8 above), then the non-labour costs of investment in an unimproved property would have fallen by about 100%. It of course cannot be proved from these figures that this is the percentage by which non-labour costs have fallen. However, in 1980 19% of the output value of the construction industry took the form of housing rehabilitation and this category made up 48% of total recorded housing output (Merrett with Grey 1982, p198). In 1971, the equivalent figures were 11.5% and 28.5% respectively (HCS 1969-1979). In other words, the rehabilitation sector expanded considerably during the 1980s. I do not have figures for earlier periods.

More importantly perhaps, the relative cheapness of domestic technologies, combined with the value of a gentrifier's time, may mean that Gershuny's arguments about buying in services can be applied to gentrification (Hardyment 1988 argues this point). Domestic labour has become very expensive for gentrifiers to perform themselves, but it could be relatively cheap to purchase: that is, the dreams of the turn of the century feminists and socialists about the liberating potential of domestic technologies, their capacity for the reorganization of domestic labour, and the buying in of domestic

services, may be about to come true, though in a very class specific way.

However, the census data is ambiguous on this point. Tables 9.9a, b & c show the evolution of domestic labour since 1931. Note that in these tables, the percentages are all taken as a proportion of the economically active labour force, and are figures for employment of those resident within the census boundaries. This is for two reasons. Percentages of economically active is a better measure than simply percentages of those in employment. Note for example the smaller figures for female participation which result when all the economically active are taken into account. Note also the very small rise in female employment, a mere 8.1% over 50 years.

Table 9.9a

Domestic labour 1931-1981
(% economically active)

Great Britain

	1931 ^a		1951 ^b		1961 ^c		1971 ^c		1981 ^c	
	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f
Women in the labour force	...	30.70	...	30.80	...	32.40	...	36.50	...	38.80
Domestic servants in the labour force	1.6	6.7	0.51	1.80	0.22	1.15	0.15	0.80	0.03	0.33
Female domestic servants/total female labour (%)	...	21.8	...	5.8	...	3.55	...	2.19	...	0.84
Male domestic servants/total male labour (%)	2.25	...	0.68	...	0.03	...	0.25	...	0.05	...

^aEngland & Wales 100% ^bGreat Britain 100% ^cGreat Britain 10%
(source: OPCS Occupation and Industry Tables 1931-1981)

Figures for the economically active can only be given by place of residence, and not for place of work. In this instance however, it is doubtful whether women engaged in domestic service in Islington would travel very far to undertake that employment. Therefore, it is possible to compare participation rates by economically active in the borough.

The extent to which women depended on domestic service for employment, as late as the 1920s and 30s can be clearly seen from Table 9.9a. However, female workers in

London were less dependent on this sector.

Table 9.9b

Domestic labour 1931-1981
(% economically active)

London

	1931 ^d		1951 ^e		1961 ^f		1971		1981	
	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f
Women in the labour force		35.1		34.3	...			36.5		38.8
Domestic servants in the labour force	0.8	36.81	0.51	2.26	...		0.07	0.52	0.03	0.33
Female domestic servants/total female labour (%)		19.39		6.5	...			1.6		0.90
Male domestic servants/total male labour (%)	1.29		0.78		...			0.12		0.05

^d London & Middlesex ^e census defined London conurbation ^f data not available
(source: OPCS County Reports - Occupation and Industry Tables 1931-1981)

The "missing link" which a 1941 census would have been able to provide means that the timing of the dramatic drop in domestic labour as a category of employment cannot be precisely specified. It is not possible to tell whether the trends charted were already under way before 1939 or not. Nonetheless the war must have had a tremendous impact on the decline of domestic labour (Mack & Humphries 1985).

There are no signs in the national or London trends that domestic service has experienced anything other than a steady decline in this sector. The figures for Islington are however more ambiguous.

Table 9.9c

Domestic labour 1931-1981
(% economically active)

Islington

	1931 ^g		1951 ^g		1961 ^g		1971		1981	
	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f
Women in the labour force		37.6		36.2		34.5		41.5		43.1
Domestic servants in the labour force	0.18	2.76	0.02	0.57	0.03	0.35	0.39	0.65	0.02	0.19
Female domestic servants/total female labour (%)		7.34		1.57		1.02		1.60		0.55
Male domestic servants/total male labour (%)	0.28		0.04		0.05		0.67		0.03	
Domestic servants (raw data)	326	5138	42	969	60	640	420	700	20	230

^g Islington & Finsbury

(source: OPCS County Reports: Occupation and Industry Tables 1931-1981)

As can be seen, the numbers in domestic service resident in Islington have historically been extremely low (even though female participation rates have been similarly high), reflecting no doubt the lack of middle class demand for domestic labour in the borough. But there are mysterious blips in the trends, such as the drop in female participation rates between 1951 and 1961, and in particular also the rise in domestic service, in particular male domestic service, between 1951 and 1971, and especially after 1961. Domestic service is not a category of employment which is liable to much change in definition between one census and the next. The numbers quoted are however from a 10% sample, not the whole population. Given that the numbers are so small the estimated figure of 420 may simply be a sampling error.

There is also a marginal (9%) rise in the numbers of women employed in domestic service between 1961 and 1971, (against a background of declining importance in this sector for female employment) but neither trend is continued through to 1981. Again, it is unclear why this should be so. The economy at this point was in the throes of Mrs Thatcher's economic experiment (Keegan 1985). However these figures are for occupational groups and therefore apply whether one is in employment or not. Maybe

women working in this sector got fed up and sought employment elsewhere during 1971 to 1981, or simply retired. Or maybe new forms of domestic services, such as pre-cooked meals and microwaves freed up a little extra time which could be devoted to doing the things the 'help' was previously paid to do. This is not a very highly researched area.

However, one important point which this analysis does bring out is that when commentators talk of dramatic rises in female employment in recent years, this is not correct. What there has been however is a dramatic shift in the sectors in which women work. I have already noted the very slight rise in female participation in the (paid) labour force since 1931, but in 1931 domestic service accounted for nearly 21% of all female employment nationally and this had fallen to less than 1% in 1981. Domestic technologies have had a considerable impact in causing this shift (Glucksmann 1981, Miller 1983, 1991). When commentators talk of the rise of female participation in the paid economy, what they really should be pointing out is the rise of female participation in the *male* paid economy.

There is however little evidence to show that domestic technologies have had much effect on the organization of the domestic economy, paid or unpaid, in this process. Women, whatever their occupational status, are still likely to be responsible for the bulk of the housework done in home (Cowan 1983, Hardyment 1988 Walby 1990). Progress in domestic technology production has done little except cheapen, probably considerably, the process of rehabilitation. While I have argued that their impact on class relations has been considerable, there is little evidence that domestic technologies have promoted changes in gender roles which have led in themselves to an impact on gentrification via participation in the labour and thus the housing markets. Although the changing class relations involved in the introduction of domestic technologies have meant increased opportunities in other sectors of the economy, women's employment prospects in total have not dramatically increased since the 1930s. Apart from the enhanced status of the women benefitting from this process, the gentrifiers have not brought with them a new model of how the domestic and social economy might be organized in the future.

9.5 Social change and gentrification: causes and effects

9.5.1 Causes

I have argued, against those who would seek the origins of gentrification in qualitative changes in the bases of accumulation, that the introduction of domestic technologies was the primary enabling factor allowing for gentrification to become a possibility. Ironically, it was its application to housing which had originally been designed for servant use that helped bring about gentrification. However, the domestic and gender relations, which the production of that housing had such a role in helping constitute, did not appear to have changed that much. Just as there was little evidence of post-industrialism in the impact of gentrification, there was little evidence of new forms of organization of domestic labour.

The trends in social composition of Islington residents from 1971 to 1981 were as shown in Table 9.10 below.

Table 9.10

Socio-economic composition of Islington residents 1971-1981
(% economically active or retired persons)

S.E.G's	1971	1981	Difference	
1-4, 13 Professional, Managers	7.7	11.2	+3.5	
5-6 Juniors, Intermediate Non-Manual	28.1	30.1	+2.0	
8,9,12,14 Foreman, Skilled-Manual, Self-Employed	21.4	19.5	-1.9	
7,10,15 Personal Service, Semi-Skilled	20.1	20.4	+0.3	
11,16 Unskilled, Armed Forces	10.3	8.7	-1.6	
17 Inadequately Described, Not Stated	12.1	10.2	-1.9	
Total Persons (working, seeking work, retired)	127,230	99,890		

(source: L.B.Islington, Planning Department - reworked from Census data)

The percentages given here for S.E.G. I differ slightly from those quoted in the construction of Figure 9.1. This is because of the different denominator used in the calculations, persons here as opposed to heads of households in Figure 9.1.

Against a background of a falling population, S.E.G. I's have increased proportionally to the rest of the population. However, comparing percentage point differences in this way hides the true scale of the change which has occurred. Table 9.11 reworks these figures using actual population data.

Table 9.11

Class specific population decline in Islington 1971-1981

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	1971	1981	%change 1971-81	predicted 1981	difference (4)-(2)	'real' change (5)+(1) (%)
S.E.G.s						
I	9797	11188	14.2	7723	3465	35.4
II	35752	30067	-15.9	28182	1885	5.3
III	27227	19479	-28.5	21462	-1983	-7.3
IV	25573	20378	-20.3	20158	220	0.9
V	13105	8690	-33.7	10330	-1640	-12.5
VI	15395	10189	-33.8	12135	-1946	-12.6
Totals	126849	99991	-21.2	99991	0	

Overall % change -0.788

(source Table 9.10 - n.b. the totals do not quite match in the two tables because of rounding in the percentages quoted in there)

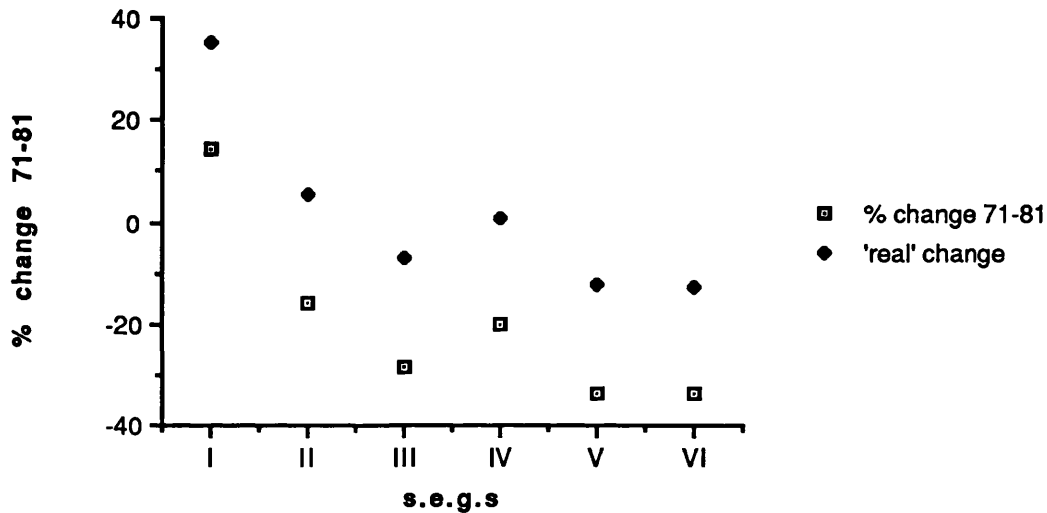
Column (6) shows the 'real' rates of change in socio-economic classes in Islington. It shows the extent to which change in the S.E.G. composition of Islington residents is above or below that which could be expected from the falling numbers of residents. Overall, population decrease in the borough's economically active population was -21.2%. If this decrease was evenly distributed among all classes, the resulting class distribution should appear as in column (4). The difference between the actual and the predicted distribution shows the real effect of population change in the various classes. This is given in column (6). Figures 9.4a and 9.4b graph the percentage and raw data respectively.

Overall, S.E.G. I's resident in the borough increased only by 14% over the period 1971-

1981. But when the effects of population decline are taken into account, this works out at a real increase, over where the 1981 population is concerned, of 36%. S.E.G. II's, junior executives, also increased, in 'real' terms, though at a much lower rate. S.E.G. IV's, personal services & semi-skilled, remained more or less constant.

Figure 9.8a

'Real' and actual percentage changes in class composition of Islington 1971-1981

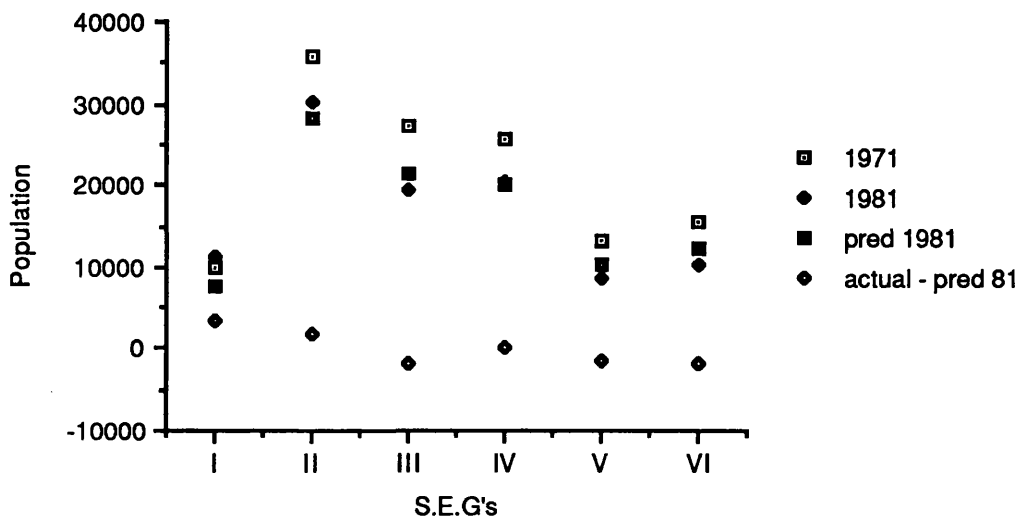


(source Table 9.11)

Figure 9.8b brings out quite clearly the fact that despite the large 'real' increase in S.E.G. I's in Islington in the period 1971-1981, their overall numbers remained nevertheless very low.

Figure 9.8b

Class-specific population change in Islington 1971-1981



(source: Table 9.11)

The populations in the other groups did experience 'real' rates of decline. These groups, skilled manual and unskilled, are clearly not functional to the economy of the City. Rose (1985) argued that gentrification was a contradictory process, because the gentrifying population, who tended to hold executive positions in downtown corporations were displacing "crucial service workers and clerical support staff for the headquarters' functions of the CBD of the corporate city". The experience of gentrification in Islington appears to support Beauregard's (1986) contrary hypothesis that the displacement that characterizes gentrification occurs to groups no longer functional to the capitalist accumulation process. This analysis is borne out by the Local Economy Policy Unit, who have shown that Islington and Hackney are regarded by City employers as potential residential locations, but not as sources of recruitment for its workforce (*Guardian* Nov 8 1991 p17). Hamnett & P.Williams (1979 p13) have also argued that:

It is frequently assumed that gentrification has proceeded through the purchase of working class owner-occupied property by the middle classes, but the... evidence [from P.Williams' study of the process of gentrification in Islington] tends to support the view that it occurs through the diminution of the private rented sector and the displacement of low status and often elderly tenants.
(1979 p13)

The existence of a large group of retired working class tenants implies a decline in employment opportunities for the categories of work that these tenants had formerly engaged in, i.e., the prior creation of a vulnerable population - vulnerable that is to being displaced by the gentrification process. The actual rates of population decline in Islington among the semi-skilled and manual groups would appear to bear this out. In fact, rates of decline in the population of the semi-skilled and manual groups are not nearly so marked, when the overall effect of population decline is taken into account. Their 'real' rates of decline are only between a third and a quarter of their actual rates. If change in the occupational structure is occurring, such as the change to a post-industrial society, it has been occurring far too slowly to account for the occurrence of gentrification. An analysis of multiple deprivation carried out by Townsend (1987) on behalf of the Low Pay Unit shows that, of the 755 wards in Greater London, all of Islington's wards are in the worst 140, apart from St.Peter's, at 177, and Canonbury West at 217. Admittedly, the worst Islington ward of all, St.George's, ranks as high as 97th, but there was no ward within Islington which one could say was marked by the high consumption oriented living standards which could be supposed to mark post-industrialism. And this is after 30 years of gentrification in the borough.

The opportunities created by the advent of domestic technologies must be countered by the extremely low number of houses surviving from the nineteenth century. The census of 1891 quotes a figure of only 8,578 houses in Islington SE and 5,563 houses in

Barnsbury, the areas which constitute the gentrified parts of modern Islington. This gives us the maximum number of houses potentially available for gentrification. But given the extent of bomb damage in Islington during the Second World War, and slum clearances subsequently, present numbers must be even lower.

This low number helps explain why, once domestic technologies are invested in an inner-city building, its value soars. There are so few of these buildings that the simple laws of supply and demand ensure that the price for them will be high, once renovated. The renovation affects the downward shift in occupancy rates in two ways. First the technologies permit the running of a larger property per unit of domestic labour. Second, high levels of occupancy were imposed by the level of rents in relation to the low incomes of the multiply occupying tenants. The higher incomes of the new occupiers mean that they can afford to 'rent' larger units from themselves.

And it is the short supply of this housing, though critical in understanding why gentrification involves spectacular rises in the price of housing in gentrified neighbourhoods, which is at the heart of the problem. In 1971, Islington ranked 28th out of 32 London boroughs in terms of owner-occupancy with only 13.4% of its housing stock owner-occupied. By 1981, this figure had risen to 16.95% but Islington had slipped to 29th place in the league table of owner-occupation in London. Even at 16.95% however, the rate of owner occupancy in Islington remains extremely low in comparison with the national average of 56%, and not all of this would represent gentrified stock. Highbury, for instance has never known any significant downward trend in status or relative value (Zwart 1973 p25). Other components would, as mentioned, represent council house sales.

Where's the beef? Why *does* gentrification attract such attention? It poses interesting questions for theories of urbanization of which I hope I have identified the crucial one, that of the role of domestic technology. But quantitatively it is insignificant. As mentioned already, in 1891, the total housing stock of Islington SE and Barnsbury was only some 14,141 dwellings. By 1901, this figure had fallen to 13592. This is not a very substantial peg on which to hang the accounts of post-industrial society which gentrification is claimed to represent.

9.5.2 *Effects*

One reason for concern nonetheless would be the social effects of displacement, either

by eviction or through being priced out of the market. Islington is not the only area of London to have experienced gentrification, so even if the housing stock of Islington is comparatively small, the total numbers threatened by displacement in the whole of London would still be substantial. Such arguments overlook four things. First, gentrification as it takes place in New York or Docklands loft or warehouse conversions involves no displacement at all. Gentrifiers in these locations occupy disused industrial premises. Second, they overlook the impact of government policy, both in its promotion of New Towns and in its emphasis on promoting rehabilitation. Third there is the continual reorganization of the bases of accumulation in capitalist production. Government policy has been to move people out of the overcrowded inner city, and the manufacturing jobs on which these people depended have also gone. If the housing stock is to be rehabilitated through the efforts of its occupiers, then displacement in these circumstances seems a logical option, not an untoward effect.

Fourth, as also noted, there are not very many gentrifiers. Let us suppose for arguments' sake that each S.E.G. I who moved into Islington between 1971 and 1981 displaced 3 other people from the borough; houses which had been subdivided to provide accommodation for three working class families were restored as a single family dwelling for a gentrifying S.E.G. I family. Let us further suppose that all families were the same size. Then every S.E.G. I who moved into Islington would displace three working class people in S.E.G.s III to VI. This would still only account for 18% of Islington's loss of its working class population in this period. To be fully responsible for Islington's population decline in this period, each S.E.G. I, and every member of their family, who moved into Islington would have to have displaced over 20 other people each. Figures on displacement are in themselves hard to come by (LeGates & Hartman 1986), but even so it is hard to imagine that each member of a gentrifying S.E.G. I family could be responsible for that much displacement. To argue that the effects of gentrification on London as a whole are indeed substantial, when the total numbers of surviving Victorian and Edwardian properties are added up, does not get around the problem that the numbers of gentrifiers themselves do not appear to be that great. Secondly, though the figures for Islington suggest rapid rates of in-migration of upper-middle class people into the borough, Figure 9.1 suggests that this is little more than a catching-up exercise, whereby Islington is approaching the national average. This would support the argument that gentrification is a transitory phenomenon, the result of the disembodiment of technical progress in the provision of housing services as a result of the cheapening of domestic technologies. I have already suggested that analysis is coloured by the fact that no-one likes gentrification and that gentrifiers are therefore regarded as legitimate targets. The expressed concern over untoward effects of gentrification such as displacement, when compared with the actual impact, would seem to bear this out.

9.6 Conclusion: why *is* there so much controversy over gentrification?

I have shown that the causes of gentrification are very simple, the application of domestic technologies to existing structures. I have also shown that gentrification has been facilitated by long-standing government policies, and that quantitatively, its impact is negligible. So where *is* the beef? Bondi notes that fundamental to gentrification is contrast:

This perspective implies that gentrification is, by definition, a process of transition. It is, therefore, liable to be self-defeating in that, if an initial invasion of new territory is successful, the source of contrast may eventually be entirely expunged.
(Bondi 1991 p117)

This returns us to the themes of gentrification as fashion, as discussed in Chapter 3 and the larger questions of culture discussed in Chapter 6. Just now I stated that the "simple laws of supply and demand" could explain the rise in property prices once the buildings became renovated. Whatever the reasons underlying the conditions of supply and demand however, the social consequences of gentrification cannot be deduced from the economic rationale for its existence, namely the gains from applying domestic technologies to an existing housing stock. If gentrifiers are seizing upon areas which, in the act of being seized upon, makes those areas fashionable, then domestic technologies merely facilitate this activity.

Nor, as I have also argued, can they be deduced from theories of economic class. Fashion itself has no intrinsically class or status connotations. But fashion is used to make statements about identity, and as R. Williams makes clear, these statements, like all other communications between individuals-in-society, are imbedded in the culture of that society (R. Williams 1977). Although I have argued that class considerations cannot explain gentrification, I have been careful to avoid any suggestion that societies in which gentrification occurs are not class based. Class *is* fundamental to gentrification, but not in the directed unmediated fashion indicated by SCA (Chapter 4 above). This argument forms the conclusion to this thesis.

10 The 'country' in the 'city': gentrification, class and hegemony

10.1 Aims and Issues

The last three chapters have demonstrated how gentrifiers gentrify because they can, and why they might want to. They are able, within the limits set by the financing process, to invest domestic technologies in old properties, which their Victorian forebears had abandoned, and thereby make windfall profits from the rise in property values which flow from this. However, it is also apparent that gentrification is of only limited quantitative importance, and is a transient phenomenon to boot, characteristic only of this period of adjustment to the rehabilitation possibilities offered by the cheapening of domestic technologies. What then drives the gentrification debate on? What gives gentrification such political and social significance when it is of such limited quantitative and historical importance? Furthermore the account of gentrifiers' motives in gentrifying has been largely passive. The question as to why people might actively wish to gentrify has yet to be properly investigated. To answer all these questions it will be necessary to return to themes presented in Chapters 1, 3, 5 and 6, thus shifting attention back from the question of gentrification as a housing market phenomenon to the question of the construction of identity in the city, and the role of a sense of place in constructing that identity.

Chapter 6 discussed how conditions of modernity render it necessary actively to create a sense of place. In the anonymous city, houses, in their role as homes, represent the stable moment of Park's 'mobility, stability, consciousness' triad, and this gives effect to housing in constituting a 'sense of place'. Issues of status and identity would not have any 'purchase' on gentrification, if housing in general (including gentrified housing) did not itself have an important role in the construction of identity. Beginning with the personal should not implicitly mean neglecting questions of class and class consciousness, however. As Blanchard (1985) argues, quite correctly, an understanding of class consciousness can only begin from an understanding of individual consciousness (cf. Chapter 6.4). Personal identity under conditions of modernity is, as D.Sayer (1991) makes clear, founded in class-based exploitation. In this chapter, I wish to explore how sense of place is specifically affected, not just by the experience of modernity generally but also by the specific experience of class society. In particular, I shall argue that this sense of place is constructed within the context of an ongoing hegemony which seeks to overcome the class contradictions which lie at the heart of the capitalist mode of production (cf. Chapter 1). It is the way in which the constitution of

houses as 'places' is articulated within/appropriated into a particular hegemonic project that class relations enter gentrification.

Understanding how issues of identity and place relate within and to this wider context is therefore crucial to understanding the significance of gentrification. I shall argue that while, quantitatively speaking, gentrification itself is not significant, contests over gentrification resonate throughout a much wider cross-section of society insofar as they relate on the one hand to the struggle to maintain a dominant, yet contested, hegemony, and on the other, to the construction of identity through a sense of place.

From a cultural materialist perspective, the question of hegemony is an inseparable part of the question of the material conditions of production and reproduction. One cannot look just at work and housing, without also looking at the meanings bound up in and produced with them. At the same time, the importance of hegemony must not be allowed to obscure the fact that any accumulation process does not simply depend on the reproduction of the social relations which constitute it, it also depends on the accumulation of material products (or in the case of gentrification the lack of accumulation of material products, i.e., houses available to be gentrified). Indeed it is the emphasis placed on looking at the actual material production of gentrifiable houses in Chapters 7, 8 and 9 of this thesis which enables it to overcome the difficulties of conceptualization and explanation of gentrification from which other analyses have suffered. Every other analysis has simply taken it for granted that the capacity to produce gentrified housing exists. Nevertheless, to understand the controversy over the material processes of gentrification it is necessary to understand their symbolic aspects, and this means taking the metaphorical aspects of gentrification seriously, not dismissing them as obscuring, in some chaotic fashion, the 'real' relations of gentrification (cf. Chapters 2 & 3). Only in examining how the metaphor of gentrification itself invokes persistent themes in a dominating and long-standing hegemony, is it possible to show how gentrification relates to class.

10.2 Hegemony and place

A successful hegemony (or hegemonic project - Hall 1980 - 1988 p168) is one able to articulate personal experience convincingly, but, in a manner which suggests that that experience is natural, therefore inevitable and therefore unchallengeable. Hegemonic practices always involve processes of struggle and contestation, however; they are not unchallengeable themselves (R.Williams 1977 pp112-125). As Hall writes:

'Hegemony' implies: the struggle to contest and dis-organize an existing

political formation; the taking of a 'leading position' (on however minority a basis) over a number of different spheres of society at once - economy, civil society, intellectual and moral life, culture; the conduct of a wide and differentiated type of struggle; the winning of a strategic measure of popular consent; and thus the securing of a social authority sufficiently deep to conform society into a new historical project. It should never be mistaken for a finished or settled project. It is always contested, always trying to secure itself, always 'in process'.

(Hall 1988 p7)

Hegemony proceeds by means of 'selective tradition' (R.Williams 1977): from the myriad events which have occurred in the past, only hegemony emphasises only those which advance its strategy to render natural the current, historically specific, forms of class-exploitation that it seeks to defend.

Social science depends on the same processes of selective tradition as do hegemonic practices: of all the events that have occurred in social life, the social scientist makes a selection in order to ratify his or her explanation of those events. Thus Smith highlights 'structure' while Ley, looking at the same processes, highlights 'agency'. The hegemony exercised by the social scientist over his or her material, while it can be challenged by other, equally hegemonic accounts, is further evidence of the truth of Nietzsche's dictum that power produces knowledge rather than vice versa (Chapter 3 above).

Successful construction of hegemonies 'from above' depends on making connections with personal experience 'from below' (Hall 1988 p8). R.Williams (1977) argues that it is at such points of connection that hegemonic practices are at their strongest but also at their most vulnerable, since most open to challenge. A sense of place constitutes one such point of connection.

The concept of 'place' is not to be regarded as a pre-existing independent entity; it is always created and re-created by the inhabitants of that 'place' (R.Williams (1973a - 1980). This means that 'place' is created and re-created with reference to personal experience and therefore to memory. A 'sense of place' is consequently experienced at the personal or individual level, rather than at the collective or class level (cf. Chapter 6). However, memory is inevitably selective, and thus it is that personal experience of a sense of place can be retrieved and adapted to a particular hegemonic project.

10.3 Class Struggle, Status And The Structuring Of Identity

As argued in this thesis, the question of identity is one which Marxists have tended to ignore, as Hall & al. (1988, 1990) concede. Blanchard, comparing and contrasting Engels' and Baudelaire's motives for writing about the city makes clear the reason why:

[For Baudelaire] life in the city is primarily a question of identification with the others with whom he shares a common space...

This quest for the self, which was of no concern to Engels, because the social critic flatters himself that his only problem is to know others in their external material context, *is the fundamental problem in the city*.

(Blanchard 1985, pp104/5, 106 emphasis added)

The quest for the self is the fundamental problem because status and identity are so fluid in the Soft City (Raban 1974). However, I have also argued (6.6 above) that status and identity are rendered fluid by the constant re-organization of work under conditions of capitalist accumulation, and introduced the concept of indirect, positional, forms of class struggle in order to bring out this experience of class more clearly. Whereas direct, confrontational, struggle is over participation in specific labour processes, positional struggles are for central status with regard to the processes of capitalist accumulation (Redfern 1992).

As discussed above and in Chapter 3, status is displayed and ratified in the consumption of possessions (D.Miller 1987, McCracken 1988, Wilson 1985), in particular in the possession of private property. But private property is predicated on conditions of civil society, and in such a society other people are, as Marx said, not a realization of the property-owner's freedom, but a barrier to it. The right to exclusive occupation of an area, the right to real property, naturally (under capitalism) denies that right to others. Ironically, "Property", therefore, "must be willing to bear the cost of government and the law" (Offer, 1981 p401); ironic because it must be willing therefore to permit governments to appropriate property, in taxes.

The pursuit of status via property raises many other contradictions among the obligations, dependencies and insecurities which accompany such a pursuit.

Like Isaiah Berlin's fox, this book 'knows many things'. ... the development of land law and the distribution of tenures, the unfolding of political discourse, the certitudes of economics and the constraints of the economy, the development of interest groups, the growth of social movements, and the mental and cultural dimensions of ownership. Behind this diversity of appearances, one senses a stubborn hedgehog, who 'knows one big thing'. This is the pursuit of security and esteem: fleeting possessions that can only be captured and secured by the institutions of property.

(Offer 1981 p.xiii)

It is not so much the hypocrisy, or unattainability of the ideals sought, in the pursuit of status in a society which apparently only property can secure; rather it is that, given such a society, this is the 'necessary form' of the contradictions which lie at its heart. Indeed given that those contradictions have not substantially altered, one can see why gentrification could have such an important function, not merely as a means to assisting personal accumulation, but also as a means of acquiring status in a specific cultural conjuncture. However, as Chapter 6.6 argued: "Gentrification undermines the ontological security of the inhabitants of a place by permitting gentrifiers to turn it into a new place, of *their* own. It is here that the resistance to gentrification begins...".

However, even active resistance to gentrification from the potential displacees does not imply *class* struggle between them and their displacees. Rather, gentrification should be regarded as condensing the results of positional struggle for central status in the labour process. This is not to suggest, as do the postindustrialists, that gentrification 'expresses' the attempt of some social group to create, constitute or reconstitute their class or status position, that gentrification is 'expressed' through housing, and therefore has an ideal existence prior to or separate from housing (for the same reasons as 'place' has no such prior existence either). Status is, notoriously, expressed through symbols. But, as R. Williams writes, the meanings such symbols convey "is always *produced*; it is never imply expressed" (1977 p166). Housing, like other forms of consumption, has a dual role: in the reproduction of labour power; and in the shaping, maintenance and enhancement of status. However, it is also a place in which those other forms of consumption and status formation are carried on. It is the sense of place which these activities engender, and the space which these activities occupy, which gives housing its unique role in positional forms of class struggle over the labour process.

Gentrification cannot therefore be thought of as an explicit or unmediated outcome of positional struggle, either. Contests over the meaning of an urban place, and the status to be derived from it, help understand the *hegemonic* significance of gentrification 'from below', that is, from the point of view of questions of personal security (status) both of those displaced by the process, and also the pretensions to status exhibited by the gentrifiers. This is how descriptions of contests over gentrification are usually framed (Pitt, 1977, Schaffer & N. Smith 1988, Chapter 3 above). However, such descriptions are only half the story, and this is why gentrification's metaphors are so inadequate. Gentrification also needs to be understood 'from above', from the point of view of those doing the displacing, as forming a bridge between a real material source of experience and its representation, "through specific ideological forces and campaigns" (Hall 1980 - 1988 p137), in terms of a more general hegemonic project (Hall 1980 - 1988 p154 & 10.4 below). It is in this context that the metaphors of 'country' and 'city' are produced.

Only then are they adapted and put to use in the service of gentrification.

10.4 The country and the city

Of all the metaphors associated with gentrification, the most important is that of 'gentrification' itself. The term 'gentrification' is derived from 'gentry', the English non-aristocratic rural landowning class. London & Palen (1977) report a lively debate on a range of (equally metaphorical) terms, such as inner city revitalization and urban renaissance, thought suitable for the processes covered by the term gentrification. Despite this, the original coinage, by Glass (1963) has stuck, not just in the UK, but in all other Anglophone countries for which the processes of middle class occupation of working class areas has been reported. The explanation of why this should be, I believe, explains the reasons why gentrification attracts so much attention. This explanation also provides a suitable coda to all the themes of this thesis.

Williams argues that the very completeness of the interaction between environment and "society" can allow the facts of human labour in the construction of that environment to be quite unrecognized (R.Williams 1972-1980, Jackson & S.Smith 1984 pp193-194), appear natural, and to become therefore the subject of a dominating hegemony. R.Williams (1973b) develops this argument by exploring the history of ideas of country and city in English literature, specific ways of seeing and not-seeing class exploitation.

Throughout English history, the exploitative social systems, first feudalism and then agrarian capitalism, through which the land has been worked, have at the same time represented the countryside thus created as Arcadian paradises, centred on the landlord's country-house. With the country-house and grounds symbolizing heaven on earth, all social relations which went into the maintenance of house and grounds were deemed harmonious, by definition. The exploitation of rural labour on which the whole edifice depended could thereby be overlooked, in some cases, even physically removed, as in the case of the mediæval village of Woodstock, demolished and rebuilt beyond the walls of the grounds of Blenheim Palace in the course of its construction for the first Duke of Marlborough.

As capitalism moved from the country to the towns, literary attention turned to the new forms of social, though still exploitative, relationships being created in the towns. It was impossible to cover up the consequences of exploitation in the towns, despite Engels' suspicions (cf. Chapter 3). However, those consequences were typically not attributed to

the social system which had created both city and country, in their various ways, but to 'the city' or 'city life' itself. The vision which developed therefore was one in which the exploitation which had created the city was not so much ignored as obscured by the hustle and bustle of the city.

This developing image of the city led in turn to developments in the imagery of the country. Writers living and working in the city began to take over the imagery of the country as Arcadia as a point of reference for their attempts at describing the experience of the city. The country, in other words, was heaven because the city was hell, and the country was now defined as everything the city was not. The country became, not merely a site of innocence however, but a place to retreat or retire to when city life became too much; rarely, if ever, was it seen as the site of labour. City dwellers, along with the occupants of the country houses, now connived at the existence of rural exploitation.

With the development of Empire, the perception of London changed again as the country house metaphors, centering paradise in the seat of local power, came to be applied to London, formerly the Great Wen, but now the seat of Imperial power: "one of the last models of 'city and country' is the system we now know as Imperialism" (R. Williams 1973b p335). The contrast which could now be drawn between progressive city and backward country harked back to the mediæval slogan *Stadt Luft macht frei*, but with a significant difference in the meaning of *frei*. In mediæval times, as Sennett (1991) points out, the city was seen as a refuge from feudal obligations; 'freedom' meant sanctuary. However, in modern times, this sense of sanctuary has retreated from the city to the home; "an Englishman's home is his castle" is an exact idiom for this development.

Freedom in the modern city came to be seen less in terms of escape, and more in terms of possibilities, enlargement of identity, heightening of faculties, *and* a heightening of danger (R. Williams 1973b p280 ff.), while the ideas of sanctuary and refuge formerly associated with the city, and now associated with the home, came, in a last ironic twist, to be associated with the country, most notably in the case of the so-called 'Home counties' surrounding London.

These literary images of country and city which developed with the development of capitalism itself are evidence of the development of new forms of consciousness, as well as the persistence of the older forms. The new sense of mobility (Chapter 6 above) was one response to the experience of the modern city, the sense of marginality yet another (*ibid.*) and both of these surrounded new structures of feeling (3.7 above) as to what constitutes a sense of place. These structures of feeling were and are persistently expressed in metaphors of 'country' and 'city': 'country' as a place of refuge, security,

status and identity; 'city' as a place of adventure, insecurity, and lack of status (and therefore no identity).

These images can be linked to other aspects of modernity — marginality, in particular, as Oliver's description of the architectural styles adopted in the creation of suburbia demonstrates: suburbanites as marginal men and women, buying into an Arcadian image of Merrie Englande:

Poised between a recent history, which for many was best forgotten, and an uncertain future; anxious only to secure a worthy home in a good clean environment for a growing family, the occupant of Dunroamin's semi-detached was happy with echoes made of Britain's Tudor past and largely oblivious of the ironic observations made as to his taste. Blurred, inaccurate, romantic, patriotic, the 'Tudorbethan' timbers, leaded lights to casement windows, chevron and herringbone pattern brickwork on the more expensive detached houses were all triggers to the responses which the mythological Elizabethan age evoked.

(Oliver *et al.*, 1981 p164)

It is this experience, from below, that informs the metaphors of country and city which provide the vocabulary of gentrification. In this view from below, the country or the home not only appears to be a retreat from the pressures of city life, but actually *is* such a retreat ("reification is a social process, not a... category error." D.Sayer, 1991 p65).

Nonetheless, the antinomies of country and city depend on accepting also a particular class view of the country, on denying in one way or another the exploitative class relations which have formed the present shape of the country (and also the city). The displacement of the obvious relations of class exploitation in the country leads it to be seen instead as a 'natural', and/or 'timeless' state, a consolation, a reconciliation between 'man' and 'nature', after the unnaturalness of the 'city. But it is a reconciliation achieved only by acceptance of a myth, in which all labour in the country, and all requirement *for* labour as well is magically dispensed with. It is through this myth that the 'country' is a consolation, since the lucky prizewinner gets the comforts of the rural retreat, without having to face the consequences of the exploitative system under whose rules he and/or she won their prize.

Although Williams develops his arguments in the context of English literary history, these arguments are capable of being more widely applied. Williams (1973b) himself makes this claim in his chapter on *The New Metropolis*, where he considers the extension of the system of 'country and city' to the world at large. The claim is implicit also in the discussion of *The Figure in the City* (Chapter 20), in which Williams uses the examples of Balzac, Baudelaire and Dostoevsky, to illustrate his themes. Nonetheless,

it is true, as Pinckney (1989) points out, that Williams' analysis "leaps... from England to Third World in a single bold extension of cultural imagination and political sympathy... The simplest meaning of 'new metropolis' - not world-system but the internal mutations of the European capitals as a result of such a system is effectively from the book" (p14).

Williams rectifies this omission in *The metropolis and the emergence of Modernism* (1985). Here, the relation between internal mutations and development of artistic forms is made through the unprecedented rates of immigration into these cities: "it cannot be too often emphasised how many of the major innovators were, in this precise sense, immigrants" (R.Williams, 1985 p21). In an analysis which precisely parallels Park's discussions of culture and civilization (6.5 above), Williams argues that the experience of immigration, and the consequent need to develop new means of communication in a world full of strangers, created a "community of the medium: of... practices":

Thus language was perceived quite differently. It was no longer, in the old sense customary and naturalized, but in many ways arbitrary and conventional. To the immigrants especially, with their new second common language, language was more evident as a medium - a medium that could be shaped and reshaped - than as a social custom. Even within a native language, the new relationships of the metropolis, and the inescapable new uses in newspapers and advertising attuned to it, forced certain productive kinds of strangeness and distance: a new consciousness of conventions and thus of changeable, because, now open, conventions.... all were now passed through this crucible of the metropolis, which was in the important cases no mere melting-pot but an intense and visually and linguistically exciting process in its own right, from which remarkable new forms emerged.

At the same time, within the very openness and complexity of the metropolis, there was no formed and settled society to which the new kinds of work could be related. The relationships were to the open and complex and dynamic social process itself, and the only accessible form of this practice was an emphasis on the medium: the medium as that which, in an unprecedented way defined art.

(R.Williams 1985 p22)

This passage is interesting for two reasons. First, as Williams (1973b) recognizes, sometimes, it is impossible not to attribute these new forms of consciousness to the metropolis itself, which is itself, like Modernism, an international phenomenon:

at times these [ideas of country or city] express, not only in disguise and displacement, but in effective mediation or in offered and sometimes effective transcendence, human interests and purposes *for which there is no other immediately available vocabulary*. It is not only an absence or distance of more specific terms and concepts; it is that *in country and city*, physically present and substantial, *the experience finds material which gives body to the thoughts...*

(R.Williams 1973b p350, emphasis added)

Second, the emphasis on the medium in modernity, explains the importance of gentrification as fashion, not as a mode of (conspicuous) consumption, as Jager analyses it (Chapter 3 above), but as a production/practice, of self-definition, of

meaning, in the modern metropolitan environment.

The main thrust of Williams' (1985) argument however is, that despite its pretensions to the contrary, the images forced into consciousness by the experience of the modern metropolis are not ones divorced from past history. The older forms of expression continued to serve as means of describing urban experience, as Sharpe also explains:

since many readers of [the city poems of, e.g., Baudelaire or Whitman] have not lived in London or Paris, New York or Paterson, even when the poems were first published, it is also clear that poems like "Les Sept Vieillards", and "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" speak to their audiences through widely shared presuppositions about the representation of the city, and understanding of the urban myth and textual conventions that each reader must possess.

(Sharpe, 1990 pxii)

All of these associations of ideas obviously need specifying in the different contexts in which the contrast is made: "ideas of the country and the city have specific contents and histories",

but just as clearly, at times, they are forms of isolation and identification of more general processes. ... At every point we need to put the historical realities to the ideas...

(R.Williams 1973b p350)

Carter (1985), Sennett (1990) and Sharpe (1990) all comment on the religious significance of the grid layouts universally established in North American cities. According to Sennett (1990 p62), the grid layout was intended to eliminate not only difference within the city, but to eliminate any distinction between city and country, thereby aiding the inward orientation of action and character in the Protestant psyche. Distinctions between city and country nonetheless survived, notably in idea of the frontier as a place of, if not innocence, then certainly of authenticity (3.3 above) which then contrasted favourably with the corruption and (literal) sophistication of the big cities 'back East'. In Australia, 'the outback' has similar associations, in Canada, 'the True North, strong and free' (Shields, 1990). Of particular interest however is the establishment of 'Country Clubs' in both North America and Australia, which serve entirely the same functions as the 'country' in English literature. Despite the fact that the oldest (and usually therefore most prestigious) country clubs are often to-day surrounded by later suburban developments, the 'country', in both North America and Australia, as well as in England, remains the ideal of those who have successfully manoeuvred their way through the systems of class and urban exploitation.

"Country" and "city" are metaphors not just of exploitation, but of place - "place" in the 'city' and "place" in society. It is that dual sense of place which gives rise to the political importance of gentrification as an element in hegemonic practices. One objective of

hegemony is to lay claim to (or to bid for) status as a member of the "imaginary community of the nation" (Hall 1988 p8). Gentrification, I shall show below, attempts to create and then lay claim to exclusive membership of the 'imaginary community' of the 'one-nation' - therefore classless - (gentrified) 'neighbourhood' (cf. Pahl 1975, Williams 1986). As well as condensing an aspect of a specific conjuncture in urbanization and capitalist accumulation and the hegemonic strategies surrounding these issues, gentrification is also fulfilling a need (for identity through the construction of a 'place'). In creating a place for themselves, gentrifiers at the same time exclude the original inhabitants from belonging to this place. In fulfilling a need for themselves, to create meaning in their lives under conditions of modernity, they deny the original inhabitants the ability to fulfill the same need.

10.5 Hegemony and the role of class relations in gentrification

Gentrification, as Bondi points out, is a matter of contrast (1991). However the contrast she points to is one between (comparatively) rich and poor. Gentrification has also been defined in terms of its contrast with the suburbs, because of the challenge it offered to theories of urbanization and urban growth (Ch.7 above). The intuition that something radically different was occurring in cities with the onset of gentrification is one which has carried through to the literature, postindustrialism in particular, hence the contrast with the suburbs - gentrification: a new form of housing for the middle class, *ergo* a new middle class. I want to argue in distinction to both Bondi and the postindustrialists that the contrast upheld by gentrification is really between 'country' and 'city'.

Images of country and city, which dominating hegemonies have represented (and re-presented) the effects of the development of capitalism back to its subjects, are ways of seeing and not-seeing class-based exploitation. In gentrification, in the country instance, not-seeing the positional struggles involved as ones related to exploitation either of the groups who have been displaced or indeed of the gentrifiers themselves. This is a function which the exchange professionals (estate [*sic*] agents in particular) mediating the process are well served to carry out. As a result of their mediation, the gentrifier never has to deal with the displacement he or she has brought about.

There is however another form of displacement in the gentrification process. The metaphor implicit in the term gentrification is not only an attempt to import 'country' relations into the city. It also makes a statement about the 'city' of hustle and bustle, anonymity and danger:

It is of the utmost importance to analyze, precisely, the mechanism through which the tilt in the crisis of hegemony from consent to coercion is publicly signified... how it wins legitimacy by appearing to be grounded and connected, not simply in myths, fears and speculations, but in the experience of ordinary people... Crucially... it is sustained by what we might call a *displacement effect*: the connection between the crisis and the way it is appropriated in the social experience of the majority...

The second stage is where the moral panics converge and overlap: where the enemy becomes both many-faceted *and* 'one'; ... the thin end of that larger wedge: the threat to the state, the breakdown of social life itself, the coming of chaos, the onset of anarchy...

(Hall et al., 1978 - Hall 1988 pp36/7)

The 'city' metaphor which sustains gentrification has just such a displacement effect as Hall describes here. All of the moral panics quoted are also and at the same time, characteristics of the 'city' of sin and disease (Sontag 1978 - Chapter 3 above), in opposition to which the 'country' offers such a consoling vision. In a gentrifying area, the gentrified properties are the ones with the burglar alarms, or video camera entry systems. In the UK, the 'reclaiming' of the inner-city by the middle classes for the forces of law and order is one in which the state, both central and local, has long had a stake.

In the aftermath of the 1987 general election in the UK, the Sunday Times ran a series of interviews with former Conservative MPs who had been defeated in inner city constituencies: all urged the government to pursue strategies which would in one way or another break Labour's 'stranglehold' on the inner city. The hypothesis advanced by Ley (1974), that the black ghettos in US American cities could be best interpreted in terms of Caesar's *Gallic Wars* - The Inner City As Frontier Outpost - could now be reversed. Here, it is not the blacks but the yuppies who, it is intended, should occupy the inner city frontier outposts on behalf of the conservatives. Similarly, in local government, the strategies of social engineering pursued by Wandsworth and Westminster Councils, selling off council properties to redevelopers for 'luxury' accommodation in marginal wards is by now well known. These strategies are partially responsible for the so-called Battersea effect, where longstanding Labour seats in inner-London constituencies have fallen to the Conservatives in recent years. However, despite their attentions to the inner city, and the operation of hegemony in gentrification must not be thought of in terms of some conspiracy by Conservative politicians in central and local government. In gentrified Islington, which has consistently returned Labour councillors, nonetheless, the gentrifiers took over the apparatuses of the local state, beginning with the Barnsbury traffic management scheme (Ferris 1972, cf. Chapter 9 above). Restriction and control over mobility helped turn their 'space' into their 'place';

precisely, however, to control the encroachment of traffic and thus the 'city' into their 'space'. This only serves to demonstrate the way hegemony is 'lived', even by those who would, in other areas and on other fronts, define themselves in opposition to it.

If my interpretation of gentrification as importing country relations into the city is correct, then the challenge gentrification apparently poses to theories of urbanization is less strong than the postindustrialists suppose. However, it does add further weight to the need to investigate the origins of gentrification in the development of suburbia. The difference between gentrification and suburbanization is that in the latter, 'home' is realized by going to the 'country', so far as that is possible. In the former, 'home' is realized by bringing the 'country' into the town; more precisely, by bringing a particular (selective) tradition of 'country' relations into town. Just like suburbanization, gentrification depends on importing the "country" way of not-seeing exploitation outlined by R.Williams as a means of coping with the "city". Davis reports how the 1930s suburbanites were described as "pioneers" (Oliver & al. 1981 p79) in the territories of suburban 'Dunroamin'. N.Smith has consistently criticized the frontier imagery of gentrification (Schaffer and N.Smith 1989, cf. Chapter 3 above), but this imagery appears the result once again of social process, not simply category error, evidence of just such an hegemonic strategy in operation.

The idea of "urban pioneers" is as insulting as the idea of the original pioneers in the West. Now, as then, *it implies that no-one lives in the areas being gentrified — no-one worthy of notice, at least.*

(N.Smith 1982, p139 ftn 1)

The precise metaphorical location of 'the country' may be different in different contexts, but wherever the location, the 'city', is common throughout modernity, and, as the 'city's Other, the 'country' plays the same role in each case — that of granting the viewer the privilege of not-seeing the exploitation which has created the image thus presented.

The importance of class in gentrification issues is not therefore the supposed differences between the (so-called) middle class and the (so-called) working class, but the *experience* of class. Marginality is not just a condition of modernity, but of capitalism. As I argued in Chapter 6, everyone who can be considered to be part of the proletariat, in other words, sells their labour for a living, is in some sense living on the margins of culture and civilization, partially incorporated and partly excluded from the modes of capitalist production, partially included and partially excluded from the imaginary community of the nation, trying to remain central, but always in danger of being rendered peripheral to the capitalist accumulation process. Hegemony offers consolation for the insecurities it itself helps create. It is in this sense that gentrification helps people interpret their lives in class-specific ways, and frames the demand for gentrified housing in a class-specific

form. In this sense also gentrification is both a product of a dominating hegemony, and helps carry that hegemony forward.

If gentrification is significant, it is because it illustrates a moment in a hegemonic contest over changing interpretations over what is 'natural' over time (R. Williams 1972 - 1980) as forms of exploitation, in this instance, forms of capitalism change. Stedman Jones' account of the 'gentrification of the bourgeoisie' in terms of the ironies of this nineteenth century urban gentry visiting its new-found status on the poor, and bitterly resented for it, can be compared with the activities of the Jeremys and Pamelas chronicled by Raban (Stedman Jones 1974, Raban 1974). These activities can be regarded as similar attempts, as those engaged in positional struggle, to take on the 'leading positions' of society (Hall 1988 p8) .

To summarize, the encouragement given to gentrifiers by government (central and local) policies on the one hand connects with a series of disarticulating and rearticulating discourses in which the "country" metaphor is reinforced through the mediation of the "exchange professions", so that the gentrifiers (Jeremy and Pamela) do not engage directly in the displacement created by gentrification. Instead, gentrification is presented as "reclaiming" the inner-city, and those displaced presented as "marginal". On the other hand, the strategy is not one which succeeds without conflict. It is in the resistances encountered in the process of carrying that hegemony forward that the impact of gentrification has resonances for far wider sections of the population than its quantitative significance would suggest.

Gentrification, as I argued in Chapter 3 can best be understood in terms of Nietzsche's ontology of resistances (Conolly 1988). The challenge to identity created both by the re-evaluation of a place through the processes of gentrification, and by the labelling process this implies is not one which is simply accepted by those affected by the change in the sense of that place. Indeed the otherness engendered in the working class inhabitants of the gentrified area by the gentrifiers' views of *them* as exotic, colourful characters to be found only in the alien 'city', itself helps to create the resistance to gentrification. Inasmuch as gentrification is a qualitatively new process, it engenders its own resistances. However, the themes of "reclamation" and "improvement" are ones with which the potential displacees may also identify, though the medium through which these processes are constituted is not themselves, but the newcomers. In other words, aspirations toward reclamation and improvement of an about to be gentrified neighbourhood may well extend to the potential displacees as well as to the potential gentrifiers. The difference however is that the investments required are funnelled not via the displacee, but via the gentrifier.

The term 'gentrification', then, has stuck, despite a wide range of proffered alternative descriptions. It has stuck, in Anglophone countries generally, because of certain associations between visions of the 'country' and the visions of a certain class, visions associated with a dominant and dominating hegemony, even though the in-movers are not necessarily, nor even usually, from the non-aristocratic rural landowning class (the original gentry). Gentrification is well named because it signifies the bringing of this version of the 'country' back into the 'city'. This vision of the 'city' is one which obscures rather than ignores the relations of class exploitation which underlie it. Therefore one must not regard the 'country' way of seeing as a callous and wilful refusal to accept the consequences of profiting from a particular conjuncture of exploitation relations, though it may be all of these. Instead, like the alternative vision of the 'city', it is a feature of the dominant and dominating hegemony, and one which carries that hegemony forward. Gentrification is a specific instance of the selective tradition which that hegemony promotes. It is this reference to the wider themes of this dominating hegemony which gives gentrification its resonances, and causes it to attract so much attention and controversy.

In questions of gentrification, one comes to realize, it is very difficult, not only to separate questions of form from questions of content, but also even to decide which out of the material artifact - the gentrified house, or its symbolism - the statements it makes, **actually is the form and which the content.** This indicates not only the futility, but also the theoretical mistakenness, from a cultural materialist perspective, of attempting to make a separation of the form and content of social production, whether it be of gentrified housing in particular, or of commodities or value in general. Culture produces particular forms of material production, both in the way that production is undertaken, and in the material products that result, as well as producing particular forms of social relationship and consciousness.

Taking seriously the metaphorical aspects of gentrification also enables one to avoid the sterility of the debates over what to call the phenomenon and over whether or not it is a 'chaotic concept'. As a metaphor in a particular hegemonic discourse it possesses a 'contradictory unity' which notions of a 'chaotic concept' in the gentrification literature seem unable to address. It would be unsuccessful as a metaphor in this hegemonic discourse if that metaphor were simply a myth, i.e., had no material referent. However, as seen in Chapter 7, gentrification is only part of a continuum of potential improvements to the housing stock. The metaphor of gentrification thus appropriates aspects of a real material process and change in the constraints and opportunities yielded by the housing market. In so doing, those using, benefiting from, *living* this metaphor are participating

in the constitution of an hegemonic discourse in which real anxieties of identity arising from living in a particular capitalist city in a particular period of crisis in capitalist conjunctural relations are resolved via the creation of new meaning in and for the places in which they live; and the potential for creating this meaning is given only by the peculiar circumstances of the impact of domestic technology on a capitalist housing market, on a housing market in a capitalist, class, society. Gentrification could only occur, in its metaphorical and material unity, in a class society.

However, just as, in capitalist societies, these processes of production and reproduction are contradictory unities, so also are the "class-laden" meanings they condense and constitute. The interpretation of gentrification offered in this thesis may be regarded as evidence of the validity of this proposition.

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Robert Park.

Park's writings have been published by the Free Press, Glencoe Illinois in 3 volumes of *Collected Works: Race and Culture*, 1950; *Human Communities*, 1952; and *Society (and the news)* 1955. A number of writings are not however to be found in these collections, for example 'The Crowd and The Public and Other Essays, and only selections appear in the *Collected Works* from 'Introduction to the Science of Sociology', written in collaboration with Burgess and Mackenzie. Selections from all of the above are to be found, together with a useful introductory essay in Turner (1967, ed.) 'On Social Control and Collective Behaviour' Chicago: U of Chicago Press. The reader is referred to any, each, or all of the above when a quotation is taken from Park's writings. Thus 'The Urban Community as a Spatial Pattern and a Moral Order' was originally published in 1925 in the *American Sociological Society's Publications*, Vol. 20, under the title 'The Concept of Position in Sociology'. It was reprinted under its present title in 'The Urban Community' (E.W. Burgess ed., 1926 and appeared in Vol II of Park's *Collected Works* (Park 1952). In the text and in the bibliography, this then is given as

'The Urban Community as a Spatial Pattern and a Moral Order'

Park, 1925, 1926 - 1952 px

where x is the page number in the 1952 edition.

Where 1967 appears in brackets in the bibliography, it is to indicate the inclusion of the article quoted in the Turner selection. If 1967 is the year quoted in the text then the number quoted there applies to that edition.

Where more than one article was published by Park in the same year, these will only be distinguished by the suffixes 'a', 'b' etc where these appear in the same volume of *Collected Works*.

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