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New Scenarios for Racial and Social Segregation in the Politics of Public Space and Social Fear

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NEW SCENARIOS FOR RACIAL AND SOCIAL SEGREGATION IN THE POLITICS

OF PUBLIC SPACE AND SOCIAL FEAR

By

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the politics of public space and social fear that work to create new scenarios for social and racial segregation in the processes of gentrification, such as privatization, fortification, and symbolism in public art in a major southern metropolitan city. The Public Art Program of Atlanta, Georgia is implementing public art projects at various sites, chosen based on being in depressed neighborhoods in the hope that it will bring new life to blighted urban areas and change the current use of space. Through an applied anthropological and multi-perspective approach, this study explores how middle and upper class residents currently regard their in-town neighborhood, surrounded by historic black universities and neighborhoods, public housing, and having a highly visible homeless population. Fortification, privatization, and residents' response to the public art project speak profoundly to the processes of gentrification that are occurring there.

INDEX WORDS: Gentrification, Segregation, Public space, Social fear, Fortification, Privatization, Public art, Atlanta

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

As a couple of friends and I crossed the street from my apartment near downtown Atlanta, we walked past a gas station where the disadvantaged tend to congregate, ask to wash your windows or pump your gas for a nominal fee. We continued around the corner, past an empty lot and across a formidable alley, where we choose not to acknowledge the likely illegal activities occurring among loiters. As we walked past a large pawnshop and numerous abandoned stores, we crossed the path of a solemn looking individual asking for directions, luggage in tow, apparently just arriving at the bus station down the street, the atmosphere suddenly changes. Its transience lends to its diversity. It felt almost as though we entered another city, only having traveled a couple of blocks. The blighted streets suddenly turn into a bustling, eclectic mix of brightly lit art galleries and cocktail lounges. We found what we were looking for: this in-town neighborhood of Atlanta has organized a community-wide event, hosting a diverse collection of art fans and explorers out for a night on the town.

It is apparent to me immediately that the gentrification and revitalization of this neighborhood birthed a unique community. A diverse collective of individuals are taking part in a process of reinvention that is attracting visitors and new residents alike. It is slowly changing these blighted streets into a walking community, something this area had been lacking. Unfortunately, these process work to exclude the socially marginalized physically and symbolically. I will explore how the politics of public space and social fear create new scenarios for social and racial segregation in processes of gentrification, such as privatization, fortification, and symbolism in public art.

Project Goals

The goals of this research project have been to analyze the steps of fortification and segregation that are employed in the face of a changing social landscape. Adaptively remodeled buildings, not originally designed for residential use, reflect current social conditions in their reinvented design. The revitalization of a nearby public park and the development of a privately managed park has become an issue of debate among the neighborhood. In May 2007, the City of Atlanta introduced plans to install a gateway sculpture in the public park. This park surrounded by an Atlanta Housing Authority mixed-income development, the Villages at Peach Ville, public housing, and a historic African American church and regularly filled with homeless and drug activity, is not currently utilized by middle and upper class Peach Ville residents and rarely by residents from the other surrounding communities either; it has been abandoned to unchecked behavior. With the development of a privately managed park in its future, middle and upper class Peach Ville residents have not been particularly supportive or incredibly interested in its rejuvenation despite its close proximity.

Regardless of the middle and upper class Peach Ville residents' interest in the Public Art Program gateway project, the pubic art may not actually prompt them to utilize the park unless advocates are successful in changing its current use. A grassroots community organization, the Friends of Public Park and community leaders from the low-income area surrounding Peach Ville, are working to secure funds to provide activities that will encourage use and ownership of the park. They are working to change its current condition in coalition with the City of Atlanta's efforts, such as new

playground equipment, youth programs, and art festivals in addition the Public Art Program gateway project.

This site, Peach Ville and its surrounding communities, mixed-income and public housing, historic black colleges and residential neighborhood, conjoined by a public park abandoned to the homeless population and drug activity, provides specific instances of urban change in a gentrified landscape. The common model of gentrification where middle and upper class people move into working class neighborhoods and eventually displace the previous residents cannot be applied so easily here. Previously an industrial area, the innovation of the creative class has led to the re-invention of this space. In a sense, the rise in property values has displaced some that could not keep up with the rents but it has effectively made millionaires out of those who bought early.

Although the purchase and development of old warehouses and manufacturing buildings had not necessarily displaced anyone, the current political take on public housing is effectively displacing neighboring tenants, lending to the changing demographic make-up of the area. The replacement of public housing with privately managed mixed-income developments is greatly reducing the number of low-income units in the city. Parties such as the City of Atlanta Public Art Program are effectively working to change the social landscape; its placement of a nationally recognized artist's work in a blighted area is in the hope of attracting tourist attention and commerce to the area and contributes to the future exclusion of its current socially marginalized population. Overall, this particularly unique set of circumstances makes Peach Ville an ideal location for the research of gentrification and our current understanding of its processes.

Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Productions of Place

Globalization and information technology are creating a new global system of cities, changing relationships among cities, and reconfiguring the physical arrangement of activities within metropolitan areas of post-industrial cities. Globalization is at the same time both concentrating and dispersing capitalism at all levels. Deindustrialization and global capitalism has led to the restructuring of US cities; originally businesses tended to cluster and form agglomerations in order to be in touch with other businesses. In today's technological age, information can travel anywhere in the world instantaneously and the need to be near other businesses is no longer important. Educated and affluent people are able to live anywhere and still participate in the intellectual, professional, and economic life of urban centers. The new ease of travel and communication in the twentieth century has virtually reversed the trend of urbanites in the city center and suburbanization has flourished; rural folk reside in the high-density center while urbanites commute. The exclusion and residential segregation perpetuated by the suburban middle and upper-middle classes exacerbate racial and class tensions within cities. In contemporary North American cities, the resurgence of in-town living, prompted by long commutes, pollution, wasted time and the desire to be near cultural and social centers has created unique situations. Fear, insecurity, and cultural diversity are associated with the urban center, which prompts the upper classes to barricade themselves within socially segregated and homogeneous gated communities and leads to the development of carefully monitored and controlled fortified enclaves.

David Harvey (1989) examines the cultural, political, and economic changes in the postmodern era in light of the emergent methods of experiencing space and time. He highlights the relationship between Postmodernist cultural forms, entrepreneurial capital accumulation, and 'time-space compression' within our society. Deindustrialization resulted in an increase in consumerism and consumption; technological innovations fueled the compression of space and time and ultimately globalization. Harvey (1989) links shifts in cultural life to structural adjustments in capitalism, which changed the ways people create and experience space. Postmodernity facilitated political and economic changes in the urban realm that resulted in deindustrialization, which in turn facilitated different forms of gentrification in major cities around the globe. During the modern era, social projects regarding place were the motivating forces behind the production of space, but Postmodernity led to a more individualized, fragmented production of space (Harvey 1989:66). The modern construction of space stifled diversity, viewing it as disorganized and ugly, promoting homogeneity; instead postmodernists set out to find ways to aesthetically express diversity, whether real or imagined. The process of redefining space and place has led to further complications of gender, race, and class within city centers.

Dominating modern era suburbs were an architectural similarity and racial and economic homogeneity. Harvey demonstrates how Postmodernism called for the rejection of meta-narratives and instead played on plurality, rejecting the suburban ideal and instead promoting mixed-use developments (1989:9). It is integral in the forces of gentrification employed in the architectural sense that the move away from modernism called for a new form of construction that led to renovation and rehabilitation of modern

era buildings into a more satisfying urban environment (Harvey 1989:40).

Postmodernism began to praise pluralistic and organic design for urban revitalization in order to achieve a sort of 'collage city' instead of the zoning of space for specific activities (Harvey 1989:40). As a result, the potentials for profit in neglected city centers become ripe for investors and developers. Recreated, previously industrial wastelands become upper class echelons. Forms of architecture, public space, and economic enterprises are vital in analyzing the meaning behind social productions of place. Architecture is an example of a cultural artifact that serves as a reflective and influential juncture between cultural production and the public (Harvey 1989:59). Harvey (1989) states, "Postmodernism in architecture and urban design tends to be shamelessly market-oriented because that is the primary language of communication in our society" (77). Despite cultural influences and impacts in the shift from Modernity to Postmodernity, Harvey views capitalism as the driving force in changes in the urban landscape that have led to suburbanization, the decline of the urban center, and a subsequent return to urbanity.

Regardless of Postmodernisms' penchant for fragmentation, difference, and otherness, class-based society has continued to facilitate the domination of some over most. Place is shaped through the eyes of the cultural mass; media, film, arts, universities, etc, a group often controlled by the elite (Harvey 1993:26). The more the cultural mass is able to express its values, the more likely it will be in line with the dominating economy and cultural politics of place (Harvey 1993:27). Due to the shifting relations between space and place, spatial boundaries have diminished due to increases in exchange, movement, and communication while place-bound identities have become

more important. Modernization, industrialization, and capitalism contribute to rootlessness. This triggers a search for alternative constructions of space, which in turn leads to a search for an authentic sense of community, a deep respect, and attention to the needs of the other people, which involves more than physical space, but a place with meaning. Harvey (1993) sees the conflicts between Modernism and Postmodernism as also a conflict between economic and cultural politics of place (28). Essentially, place is defined culturally, yet those that define culture are often economically dominant, bringing economics to the forefront and placing culture secondarily within the process of defining place.

Mobility of Capital

Neil Smith's (1996; 2006) concepts of capital investment are similar to Harvey's (1989) ideas of capital accumulation in urban revitalization. Smith (1996) first recognizes capital investment in the determination of gentrified space, and asserts that secondly sociopolitical opinions are enacted on a gentrification frontier. In the 70's and 80's cities across the nation were in a state of fiscal crisis, operating indebted government institutions. This was largely a result of suburbanization and urban economic disinvestment, which led to the decline of city centers. Today, gentrification is the result of reinvestment in the center. According to Smith's rent-gap theory,

> The root cause of gentrification lies in the geographic mobility of capital
> and the historical patterns of investment and disinvestment in the urban
> landscape: suburban investment through much of the twentieth century
> and consequent disinvestment in urban centers establishes the economic
> and geographic conditions for a major site-specific reinvestment in the
> center, taking the form of gentrification. [196:2006]

In years past, state-sponsored postwar urban renewal encouraged private market gentrification. Today, this along with the privatization of inner-city land and housing markets since the 1990's has provided a platform for large-scale multi-faceted urban regeneration to be established.

When Ruth Glass coined the term gentrification in 1960s London, it described a transparent process of middle- and upper-middle-class hip professionals who were bold enough to live within close proximity of lower class residents, but a decade later, it was British urban policy (Smith 2006:191). What began as a postwar housing phenomenon is today a carefully orchestrated urban regeneration led by various government institutions, private investors and government-private partnerships within cities around the globe. A once local phenomenon is now global; it is occurring in unlikely spaces such as previously industrial areas and small towns as well as world cities such as New York. These processes are highly varied, diverse, and un-evenly distributed because of "assorted local economies and cultural ensembles" that are connected in "complicated ways to wider national and global political economies" (Smith 2006:193). Despite the fact that gentrification evolved from a quaint instance in London, it is today a socially organized global event; its class-based process continues to remove working class residents from urban centers. In a changing social, cultural, and economic landscape, gentrification has taken on a discrete process and has become a significant dimension of contemporary urbanism.

Smith (1996) contends that explanations for gentrification are often divided into two categories: cultural and economic but he feels that "over and against" cultural explanations are economic arguments (51-52). He presents gentrification as a tool to be

used against minorities, working class, poor, and homeless through public policy and private investment, spatialization and ultimately in a class war (Smith 1996:92). He challenges the view of gentrification as simply the middle class demand for urban living and highlights its political, cultural, and economic influences. The new urban frontier is a "resolutely economic creation" where nationalism, individualism, and class and racial superiority are manifested (Smith 1996:51). Cultural trends such as changing middle-class lifestyles, socially distinct communities, patterns of consumption and production have been used to explain the processes of gentrification (Smith 1996:52). Smith contends, "The cultural resonance comes to make the place but the place is made available as a frontier by the existence of a very sharp economic line in the landscape" (1996:189). Despite changing cultural trends, Smith highlights economics as the underlying cause of changing urban space. Areas that had previously been laid to waste through disinvestment are ripe for reinvestment on the gentrification frontier, often with little regard for current residents or future displacement.

Race-based Inequality

Public housing was successful in the sense that it was superior to the structures that it replaced; on the other hand, it always lacked funding and failed to meet the goals of construction that it set for itself as a result. Kenneth Jackson (1985) believed that the result, if not the intent, of public housing was racial segregation, the concentration of poverty in inner cities, and the reinforcement of the image of suburbia as place of refuge from the problems of race, poverty, and crime. The spatial distribution and limited amount of public housing was a result of the fact that it was enacted only by voluntary

action. Therefore, municipalities had the power to build when and where they wanted.

As a result, public housing reinforced racial segregation and was located in city centers

not in suburbs (Jackson 1985:225). The goal of clearing slums was to retain property

values and revive sagging tax structures not to re-house the poor. Because public

housing was not built on low density, cheap land outside the city center, it was confined

to existing slums, further concentrating the poor in the central city and reinforcing the

image of suburbia as an escape from the social pathologies of the disadvantaged (Jackson

1985:225).

The original intention of public housing was for the working poor, or those

deserving help. Welfare mothers were not welcome, although by the 1960s that had

changed and public housing gained the reputation as a permanent home for the underclass

rather than a temporary shelter for the temporarily disadvantaged (Jackson 1985:227).

Some argued that the government had actually destroyed more low-income housing than

it had created, stigmatized as the projects, public housing equated with young, black, and

dangerous, and reinforced racial segregation (Jackson 185:225). The average person saw

the failure of public housing as the fault of the cultural characteristics of the poor, which

prevented them from improvement. Like other poverty programs, public housing failed

because they assumed that changing just one aspect of the poor experience would alter

their lives for the better (Jackson 1985:220).

Smith (1996) challenges the cultural symbolism of the "back to the city"

movement of suburbia as an expression of individual consumer sovereignty and asserts

capital investment as the determinant in the reshaping of the blighted urban environment

(53). Smith notes that "blighted" is a social euphemism for the results of economic

disinvestment by property owners and the state and often refers to poor Black or Latino neighborhoods (1996:208). The government's urban renewal programs that often served these groups failed. Their simplistic idea that better housing would improve the lives of the poor was ill informed, and they failed to make additional plans; as a result, public housing became racialized and feared.

Despite the fact that racialization is socially constructed, it has material consequences and there are many theories as to why race-based inequality persists. The 'culture of poverty' theory, first described by anthropologist Oscar Lewis (1959), was prominent in the 1960s. It viewed certain groups as having culturally induced behaviors that precipitate their poverty. At the same time, historic racial segregation has had the effect of concentrating poverty. It was often believed that structural forces systematically place some into poverty but their children remain because of their adaptations to it. In, "From Institutional to Jobless Ghettos," William Julius Wilson (1996) argues that the situation of blacks has actually gotten worse and that the problem lays less in racism than in the changing structure of the US economy. Less discrimination has actually made the situation in black ghettos worse, upwardly mobile blacks leave the ghetto, as a result, community leaders and role models are gone, and concentrated poverty feeds pathology. Theories such as these support racism as a set of culturally acceptable beliefs that defend the advantages that whites have obtained in American society.

As many of those that had retreated to the suburbs after World War II begin to return to urban areas and encounter the poverty of marginal populations, patterns of land use and population density lead to segregation and exclusion. The suburbs, stereotyped as being socially isolated, sterile, anti-community, elitist, insular, sexist, patriarchal,

intolerant, and based in hyper-consumerism (Jackson 1985; Baxandall 2000; Duany 2000) cause the return to urbanity to be enveloped in bringing the features of the suburbs to city centers. The city is stereotyped as being blighted, having squalid conditions, over-crowded, unsafe, and unhealthy (Jackson 1985; Baxandall 2000; Duany 2000). Whether or not these stereotypes hold any truth, the suburban ideal and urban fear is exemplified in the return to urbanity; public space is privatized, gated, and under surveillance. The privatization of public space results in social and ethnic islands, based on the service industry that serves the rich and promotes racial and ethnic separatism. The rich absorb the majority of space while the quarantined poor are crowded into proportionally small slums. The large socio-economic differences within cities results in an "architecture of fear" and fortified enclaves become the norm.

Architecture of Fear

Teresa Caldeira (1999; 2000) asserts that fortified enclaves are a new form of organizing social differences and creating segregation, where the construction of walled residences and businesses aims to keep out the marginalized. She analyzes how violence and fear lead to practices of segregation and spatial transformations in contemporary urban cities (Caldeira 2000). This explains how political and social momentums help to shape the urban landscape. These ideas can apply to many metropolitan cities that are utilizing walls, separations, and guarded boundaries to organize differences in public space. Gated communities are the result of the criminalization of the slum and inner city. The fortified enclaves of the upper classes allow for minimal if any interaction with the poor. This alienation results in the development of the informal economy and any

intervention often results in negative effects, not that the politicians and urban elites around them, who work to keep these folks down, care to intervene. The easiest way for them to deal with the urban poor is to criminalize them and categorize them as dangerous and to be feared.

Setha Low (2001) examines the exclusion and residential segregation perpetuated by the suburban middle and upper-middle classes that exacerbate racial and class tensions at the edge of cities. She explores the fear, insecurity, and cultural diversity associated with the urban center that prompts the upper classes to barricade themselves within socially segregated and homogeneous gated communities. Low's spatial analyses address the idea that urban fear prompts a search for a sense of safety and security that motivates people to move to gated communities in suburban areas (1999; 2000; 2001; 2006). The rise in popularity of in-town living has prompted this phenomenon to occur in urban centers as well. Underlying this issue is the discourse, which reveals the reasons behind urban fear. Changes in social composition, such as multiculturalism and mixed income feed this social insecurity.

Overall, Low (2001) asks the question as to what motivates the desire to live within gated, walled, and guarded communities. This requires an understanding and definition of the motivations that are identified as guiding factors. These range from the urban fear generated through the incessant, high profile, nightly news reports of crime to the comfort level of middle and upper class people in relation to the lower classes to unfamiliarity and subsequent fear of multicultural communities. Secondly, and more concretely, Low (2001) questions how the discourse of urban fear perpetuates these motivations by analyzing responses to inquiries as to why the choice was made to move

to a gated community. Low's understanding is that the social world increasingly requires

urban fortification, policing, and segregation. This is realized through the infrastructural

and physical construction of gated communities.

> Communities respond to middle-class and upper-middle-class individuals'
> desire for community and intimacy and facilitate avoidance, separation,
> and surveillance; they bring individual preferences, social forces, and the
> physical environment together in an architectural reality and cultural
> metaphor (Low 2001:48)

The physical barriers to racial and economic diversity parallel that of the mental barriers

that people have conceptualized to protect themselves from the social threat of difference.

Social Fear

In his analysis of culture and political leadership, Antonio Gramsci (1992)

developed the concept of cultural hegemony as a means of maintaining the state in a

capitalist society. This concept holds that a diverse culture can be ruled or dominated by

class and that everyday practices and shared beliefs provide the foundation for complex

systems of domination. Individual common sense allows individuals to deal with

everyday occurrences but it also inhibits their ability to see the ideology imposed upon

them by the larger society (Gramsci 1992:233). By focusing on their own experiences,

they often fail to see larger social oppression. Regardless, each person contributes to

overall hegemony by subscribing to the ideology of the dominant class.

Capitalism, Gramsci (1992) suggested, maintained control not just through

violence and political and economic coercion, but also ideologically, through a

hegemonic culture in which the values of the dominant class became the "common

sense" values of all. As a result, working class people identify with the values of the

dominant class, and work to maintain it. Without fear, capitalism would not have the economic sanctions to make it profitable. For example, cutting back on government programs raises social fear and the media teaches us that preventative consumption, such as gates, fortification, and security avoids the negative consequences of not being prepared. We are taught fear yet fail to see its function in everyday life.

Social fear is perpetuated through racist, classist, and sexist ideas that are drawing the lines of our cities and suburbs. These ideas can be traced back to colonial times. In her analysis of the intersections of gender and class in the politics of fear in European colonies, Ann Stoler (1989) highlights how overseas European communities were constructed by pitting race, class, and gender differences against each other (501). European men expressed their virility by keeping European women under close control and teaching them to fear native men as a means of keeping them apart and controlling both. "The presence and protection of European women was repeatedly invoked to clarify racial lines," since men of color were believed to see them as desired sexual figures (Stoler 1989:508). White men constructed white women as favorite victims, and accusations of rape and the resulting laws were a response to native men's demand for civil rights, not increases in actual incidences of sexual assault. The perceived threat of native men on the colonial system was interpreted in terms of them being sexually threatening to European women.

Sexual sanctions applied to both men and women, colonized or colonizer, in order to maintain the social category of "white" but gender inequalities were essential to colonial racism and imperial authority, revealing ways in which gender and class intersect. Feminist theorists hold that gender relations can be viewed as an organizing

principle of society. European women were taught to fear men of the colonized nations so that they may maintain their community of "common class interests, racial attributes, political affinities, and superior culture" (Stoler 1989:502). Despite its having been disproved as a biological concept, race has long been and still is an organizing factor in European-dominated societies. Since race was so important to defining power, gender and sexual relations had to be tightly controlled so that neither the biological nor the political lines would be blurred, which contributed to the construction of racial boundaries.

Similar dynamics of race, gender, and class can be found in white culture and class politics in the United States. Class and gender discriminations were translated into racial attitudes and subsequent fear and still are today. Despite the fact that violent crime in the United States is declining, people continue to believe that crime is on the rise. This mass fear is often due to the fact that the media reports incidents of crime daily, often perpetuated by black males, and by stressing specific instances of violent crime people are led to believe that crime is on the rise, even when this not reflected in statistics (Comaroff 2006:217). Criminal black males are often featured in the media without acknowledgement that whites' contribution to crime rates is even higher. "Numbers become a vehicle for the experience of the unreal, an experience that transforms the abstract into the sensate, the unknowable into the known" (Comaroff 2006:221). The media also fails to articulate the fact that the United States has lower murder rates than many countries but that these crimes happen predominately in inner cities.

Philippe Bourgois's inner-city research on social marginalization reveals the political economy of street culture. Racial segregation and economic marginalization are

tools that the system imposes on minorities and the underground economy of the drug trade is often the only means for a family to subsist economically at the risk of criminalization or incarceration (Bourgois 2003:1). As an extension, drug abuse is often a symptom of the dynamics of social marginalization and alienation in the struggle with poverty (Bourgois 2003:2). Men and women are able to make much more money through illegal drug trade than they can at a legitimate minimum wage job (Bourgois 2003:4). As a result, inner-city street culture has emerged as values and ideologies that are in opposition to mainstream society (Bourgois 2003:8). "Although street culture emerges out of a personal search for dignity and a rejection of racism and subjugation, it ultimately becomes an active agent in personal degradation and community ruin (Bourgois 2003:9).

There is no doubt that capitalism cannot exist without poverty, but the media tends to focus on the burden of the poor on the middle and upper class's shoulders not the burden placed on the poor through institutionalized classism and racism. This shortsightedness is brought to fruition in the gentrification of cities that leads to the displacement of the poor. The popular stereotypes of the city as a concrete jungle that has been plagued with violence since its inception and as a frontier to be conquered contribute to its perception as dangerous. These untruths are used to justify the response of the middle and upper classes to barricade themselves within gated communities and the fortified enclaves that New Urbanism employs.

New Urbanism

        Culture and material conditions shape social life through a relationship between space and society. People create and shape urban space according to their needs despite that the fact that actions and behavior are shaped and constrained by physical settings. This socio-spatial dialectic forms the relationship upon which social, family, and ethnic status act in social space. This relationship between urban social space, such as neighborhood and community, society, and individuals is determined by structures such as law and family, institutions such as state and church, and individual agents. A neighborhood often contains a group that is similar in demographic, economic, and social characteristics; it may be the same residential location but it is not necessarily a basis for social interaction. Whereas a community does enjoy a degree of social interaction, a uniformity of customs, speech, tastes, or in other words a culture, it is imagined. A majority of people recognize it even though they may not interact regularly or at all, it is recognizable by a set of ideas, values, attitudes, customs, and territory.

        New Urbanism sought to join neighborhood and community by creating livability, walkability, and sustainability in an urban environment. Plazas, squares, sidewalks, cafes, and porches provide rich settings for interaction and public life. This focus on the public realm, according to New Urbanism adds character, builds value, promotes security, and helps residents feel proud of their community (Congress for the New Urbanism 2007). Since the early 1990s, the principles of New Urbanism can increasingly be applied to a full range of scale of projects from single buildings to entire communities.

> The overriding principle of traditional neighborhoods and what we think
> of as good urbanism are walkability and investment in the public realm
> (public spaces and zones); who wants to walk if the public realm is bad?
> Walkability means that things are built on a human scale, not an

automotive scale. Pedestrians are safe from traffic and safe from crime.
There are destinations to walk to. Distances are relatively short. And the
walk is interesting. [Congress for the New Urbanism 2007]

New Urbanism and Smart Growth communities are in a sense a renaissance in the wake

of suburbanization, a rejection of the wasteful space and auto-dependency of the suburbs

and a return to urbanity encompassed by walkability, connectivity, and diversity.

New Urbanism repels the cookie cutter homes of the suburbs and embraces

mixed-use developments and mixed housing types. The design of these communities is

intended to create space that is pedestrian friendly and it is believed that this high quality

pedestrian network and public realm makes walking pleasurable. The resulting use of the

streets creates a sense of security, promotes community, reminiscent of Jane Jacobs'

(1996) eyes on the street, and is essentially a form of urban fortification. Mixed-use

within neighborhoods is intended to promote diversity in age, class, culture, and race.

Regardless, even the least expensive of these developments is out of range for most,

excluding those that cannot afford to live in these new urban environments. This change

shifts the urban emphasis to beauty, aesthetics, human comfort, and creating a sense of

place and creates a new scenario for social and racial segregation.

Spatial and social are inextricably linked, one affecting the other at various

intervals and impacts. From suburbanization to urban sprawl and loft living to mixed-use

developments urban space reflects urban social life. In all the cases presented above,

forms of architecture, public space, and economic enterprise are vital in analyzing the

meaning behind social productions of place. Caldeira (1999; 2000) and Low (1999;

2000; 2001; 2006) demonstrate how fear, insecurity and social and cultural diversity are

associated with the urban center, which prompts the upper classes to barricade

themselves within socially segregated and homogeneous gated communities and the development of fortified enclaves that are carefully monitored and controlled. Harvey (1989; 1999) sees the cultural promotion of capitalism as the driving force of the changing face of the postmodern city, while Smith (1996) first recognizes capital investment in the determination of gentrified space, and asserts that secondly sociopolitical opinions are enacted on a gentrification frontier.

Chapter 3: METHODS

The ethnographic methods I used to explore gentrification dynamics in Peach Ville are participant-observation, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaires. As a reflexive ethnographer, I must take into consideration how I make fieldwork decisions and what material I choose to be included in my analysis. As a white lower-middle-class female, I must consider my subjectivity; situations that I experience are unique to me, yet I need to be aware of the fact that those of similar social backgrounds will create similar perceptions, experiences and interpretations of the world. My assumptions, interests, and theoretical position will reflect in and influence my choices in my ethnography. The level of my involvement has made it difficult to remain objective or retain an unbiased point of view, and at times, my biases have shown. However, as a participant-observer, I refrained from voicing my opinion if I thought that it would assist in my respondents' interpretation of an event or issue. Although the relationship between my respondents and me is not as extensive as classical participant-observation, it does extend outside the parameters of a simple interview, anywhere from acquaintances and mentors, to co-workers and friends, or as retailer and consumer.

Participant-observation

I first gained entrance into the neighborhood of Peach Ville in August 2006 as a resident; I moved into the mixed income development on Atlanta Housing Authority land, the Villages at Peach Ville and stayed until February 2007. Although I no longer live there, I continue to be involved in the area in numerous different roles. As a

participant-observer, I regularly attended neighborhood events such as its cultural arts events, frequent local restaurants and clubs, volunteer for community events, and visit a local salon. In October 2006, and again in October 2007, I volunteered for an annual event, which highlights the neighborhoods unique lofts and invites a large number of visitors into the area. Being positioned in one of the lofts while visitors pass through, chat with you and among themselves, provided insight into why loft living and Peach Ville is seen as desirable to outsiders as well as insiders and what is seen as undesirable about the area as well. Spending time with other volunteers and residents throughout the day and at the party afterward provided a sense of acceptance, ownership, and community that I have enjoyed since I began my research.

I began attending monthly Peach Ville Neighborhood Association meetings in September 2006; due to the amount of time that I spent in the area many residents and business owners came to know me by name and recognize me as a fixture at these meetings as well as at other neighborhood events. These meetings provided insight into the current debates as well as plans in the neighborhood. The association votes on issues such as liquor licenses and zoning changes, which reflect the wants and likes of current members. Numerous middle-upper class residents in the community decided that it was necessary to form a public safety committee in extension of the neighborhood association during the summer of 2007; I became involved in that process from its inception and attended monthly meetings for four consecutive months. The attendance at the first meeting was minimal, eventually over twenty people attended to discuss crime, safety, and quality of life issues. A police officer regularly attends either of these meetings as well as various city council members, which provides another point of view in my work.

In January 2007, I began interning at a marketing agency located in the heart of Peach Ville, where I remained until September 2007. This afforded me the opportunity to be in the neighborhood at various times of the day at various times of the week. It also put me in very close contact with others who were in the neighborhood on a daily basis and were able to share their experiences with me. I was also able to observe how the business interacted with the street, visitors, and neighborhood issues, through methods such as doorbell entry, surveillance, and alarms. While the owners and employees were very much involved with their immediate neighbors, I did not witness a larger connection with the neighborhood as a whole or an investment in community events. This reflects the fact that they were renters, providing a notable contrast to other businesses whose owners were also property owners and more vested in the area.

During the May 2007 Peach Ville Neighborhood Association meeting I met a Project Supervisor from the City of Atlanta Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs Public Art Program and I began interning with them shortly afterwards. This participant-observation is particularly relevant because of the planned installation of a gateway project in Public Park, situated immediately across the street from the neighborhood of Peach Ville, bordering a historic black college and surrounding public and mixed-income housing; one of which is the apartments where I once lived. Support of this project has been difficult to conjure and it has become an issue of debate in Peach Ville. This position has granted me the opportunity to observe how representatives from the city interact with residents, how the project is accepted and embraced, or not, by residents, how residents view the city's decision making process and its plans, and the residents expressed lack of faith held in regards to city projects. I also have become a

link in the chain of communication between individuals in the different communities surrounding the project and the city representatives. My close and regular interaction with the Public Art Program has afforded me the opportunity to create and maintain connections between the city and residents that may not have developed otherwise.

Since September 2007, I have been volunteering at the community center, which serves the residents of the Village at Peach Ville and the public housing that border the park. This public housing is slated for demolition and will be replaced with additional Atlanta Housing Authority mixed-income apartments. I am also currently participating in the formation, marketing, and recruitment of members for The Friends of Public Park, which is seeking to alter the current condition of the park in order to make it a more welcoming place for people of diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. The director of the community center mainly spearheads this group, a grassroots effort, along with a professor from one of the historic black colleges youth programs, which officially adopted the park. The Friends of Public Park has emerged as an important voice in this changing social landscape. This particular participant-observation has become more and more the focus of my work. I am currently assisting in research and grant writing to fund its formation as a non-profit organization, planning for a community garden, an after-school arts program that will utilize the park, and to promote youth entrepreneurship opportunities. I have also designed a logo contest for the Friends of Public Park in an effort to raise awareness of the history of the park, its current condition, and the future projects that will be occurring there. At the same time, the contest will reward a member of the community and gain a recognizable symbol for future correspondences regarding the Friends of Public Park group.

Semi-structured Interviews

In addition to my participant-observation, I have been opportunistically conducting semi-structured interviews since the summer of 2007 to determine how the tactics for reinvention of housing and place is affecting other social factors and to explore perceptions of safety in Peach Ville. In addition, I inquire as to why they chose to migrate to this area and how they experience community and diversity within the confines of the neighborhood and in surrounding areas. These interviews have a general outline, but responses are open-ended and solely in the respondents' own words rather than inadvertently guided by preconceived notions of the ethnographer that may be the result of more structured interviews, although this may still happen based on the direction of my questions. This is at the same time an advantage and a disadvantage; by conducting semi-structured interviews, the respondent is able to control the conversation and introduce new topics that another respondent has not addressed and this may cause difficulty when doing comparisons among respondents. Despite this fact, it provides room for the introduction of topics that I may not have considered but are important to the respondent and to the conversation. However, in the end, interviews may vary greatly depending on the individual's views and interests, but not so much as an entirely unstructured interview. Respondents vary from developers and private investors to business- and home-owners to visitors and renters, in order to analyze their perceptions of race and class relations and safety.

Other Methods

I also conducted a self-administered questionnaire that provided the respondent with a general outline of the topics that I am researching while allowing the conversation to open up to other issues of relevance. This may be a disadvantage in the sense that the respondent will have a framework of my interests and they may respond as to what they determine I am looking for versus their actual thoughts or feelings on the subject. All of my respondents will remain anonymous, but since this is comparably a small and tight knit community, the identification of these individuals may not be difficult. When choosing quotes to incorporate into my ethnography I have been careful not to use anything that would be particularly identifying or damaging.

This information was collected along with an analysis of the physical types of rejuvenation, the intention of which is to provide clues as to the wants and desires of the community. In order to uncover the changing racial and socio-economic make-up of the neighborhood I compare records since the onset of gentrification in the 70s to today. I have tried to gauge just how much the neighborhood has changed, both physically and demographically, in order to determine the extent this may have affected race and class relations. I compare where people of different racial identities and economic backgrounds interact to determine whether this areas diversity is manifested as inter-racial socio-economic interaction or simply as fleeting moments. I also analyze real estate advertisements to determine the wants and desires of the middle and upper classes in the urban realm, which overwhelming represent the desire for gated communities, private enclosures, and in-town location. I also collected monthly newsletters while living in the area as a renter, which will serve to identify the issues that the management

and residents deem as relevant to their daily lives, such as safety and security. I have researched the areas history on the Neighborhood Association web site, the Atlanta Housing Authorities web sites, and both the Woodruff and Georgia State's libraries' archives collection. A well-informed, long-term resident and business owner, who has prominent role in the neighborhood association, also contributed to my review of Peach Ville's history.

Reflexive Ethnographer

Depending on which area I am in, the Villages at Peach Ville, the community center, the neighborhoods of the historic black colleges or Peach Ville, I am often quite different in terms of racial identity, class, and status from other community members. The Villages at Peach Ville is made up of primarily black residents; many are students, or low-income families since it is in a historically African-American area surrounded by public housing and the historic black colleges. Everyone I saw working on the grounds, whether it was in the office, at the pool, or doing the landscaping, was black. The entire time that I lived there, I witnessed two other white residents besides myself; I was a minority in this apartment complex and my race was an issue regularly commented on. Neighboring residents often referred to me as "white girl" and "snow flake," intended to be derogatory or not, it highlighted my difference from the majority of residents in the area.

The black men that regularly hung outside my apartment many times selling drugs, drinking and generally attracting an often-loud crowd intimidated me. Obviously, congregations of black men are not inherently dangerous; however the activities that I

witnessed were decidedly so. Still, I must be careful not to perpetuate negative

stereotypes. Despite my desire to live in a racially integrated area, this space was

primarily African American. I was viewed as an outsider and I viewed myself as so.

Similarities often grant an inside access, and my pale skin, gender, and economic status

became markers on which to judge me. I assumed that my presence in a historically

African-American neighborhood would cause me to be viewed as an outsider. However,

in many cases, my race and social status played less of a role than I anticipated. When I

attend meetings at the community center, I am often the only white person in attendance,

and race is regularly a topic of conversation. Despite this, I am treated as an equal and

my presence is appreciated while distrust is expressed for other white figures in the

surrounding communities and institutionalized racism is seen as a constant battle. My

experiences in or around the historic black colleges have been similar, being distinctly

different from the majority of residents and students, because of race and often of class.

The neighborhood of Peach Ville consists primarily of upper class, often, white

residents, which is in sharp contrast to the surrounding communities. At the same time,

many of the businesses in Peach Ville cater to the historic black college students whose

late night partying and loud music causes conflict with area residents who view their

behavior as a quality of life issue that they often equate with racial stereotypes. This has

placed me in difficult positions; my lower-middle class background has not provided me

with some of the cultural capital, taste in expensive art and wine, for example, that the

residents of Peach Ville often possess and as an extension expect in their community. I at

times relate more to the students and find myself wanting to defend the late night

partying as nothing more than college age fun; reminded of my position as an ethnographer I try to remain neutral in these debates.

The cost of housing in Peach Ville effectively excludes those who cannot afford to live there; including me, but its close proximity to downtown, the historic black colleges and neighborhoods, public housing, and homeless shelters keep the streets of Peach Ville racially and economically diverse. While many residents claim to embrace diversity, their reactions to what they view as disturbances they see outside their windows prompts conversations that demonstrate otherwise. This also has often put me in a difficult situation when white middle- and upper- class resident's debate and complain regarding the businesses that cater to individuals different from themselves as well as the homeless shelter in the area. I am placed in a position where my opinion is wanted yet I patronize these businesses and participate in some of the activities that they see as a "quality of life" issues in their neighborhood. When the residents complain about activities that I witness, such as bars that claim they are restaurants in order to have zoning changes and licenses approved that are obviously bars more prevalently than restaurants, I am placed in a position between the two as a patron and a researcher. When I witness young men that seem intimidating to some innocently linger on the sidewalk after hours and I hear the accusations that are thrown at them, I am placed in a situation where I want to defend them, but I recognize that I am an observer and choose to keep my opinions to myself.

By participating in the cultural activities in Peach Ville, I adhere to the meanings behind their organized activities and agree to subscribe to their moral regulations that may contradict my personal beliefs. In this regard, I am able to experience events as they

do, and associate myself with their concerns, but the situations listed above often come into conflict with my own beliefs. It would be impossible for me to be completely detached and neutral from the situations in which I participate. At times, my opinion may differ greatly from an informant, but by incorporating multiple voices on the issue, I can avoid following only those that fall in line with my own.

I also must be careful and aware that my presence and participation may change the opinions, responses, and outcomes of the people and situations in which I interact. This effect may not be contaminating. Rather it can be used to analyze how people chose to represent themselves when they know they are being observed. Instances like this can be used to reveal social ties rather than disrupt them. By being involved in the communities that I am researching, I have the opportunity to be actively engaged in the life of people in my chosen setting that I would not have had access to otherwise. This participation in the daily life and struggles of these community members and organizations provides a telling experience of social life. While many of my respondents are long-term residents with strong ties to the community, many others are renters whose ties are fleeting. Although I was once a resident, my experience will always be shadowed by the fact that this is a transient experience in my life versus those who are vested for longer periods. Mundane events that are of great interest to me may be merely seen as another day in the life of my respondents.

I am often recognized in the neighborhood as the Georgia State University student doing research on the area, sometimes as the snooping researcher around whom you need to be careful what you say because I will write it down, and at other times as a welcome contributor to the neighborhood by volunteering for events. People have literally,

stopped mid-sentence, commented on my presence, and carefully chosen the rest of their thoughts. I have taken this as an opportunity to ensure respondents that I do not intend to make any individual come across negatively and that I will ensure their anonymity. During the process of putting overheard talk and witnessed events into writing there is a lot of room for misinterpretation, cultural stereotypes or my own perceptions to be incorporated into my final report. Through participant-observation, I will be able to identify cultural meanings and social structures that are important in the neighborhood of Peach Ville that may not have been disclosed to me otherwise.

Informed Consent

Generally, my subjects are aware of the research that is being conducted. However, in some situations, such as large community gatherings, it would be impossible to make everyone in attendance aware of my motives. At smaller events, such as neighborhood or public safety meetings, the board members and regular attendees are aware of my research but at times late arrivers or new residents may express curiosity as to why I am jotting down notes. In most situations, I informed them of my intentions, but occasionally this was not feasible. In these situations, I was careful not to identify any individual or use their voice without their consent. These ethical issues can be avoided by providing informed consent in which I present my research in terms that the informant can understand and make them aware of any consequences of their participation, of which there should be none, who I am, why I am doing this research, and who is backing it. This process is free of both coercion and incentives, but I have to continue to consider how the disclosure of my research will affect people's responses.

My continual presence in the neighborhood since August 2006 as a resident, an employee, a volunteer, and as a consumer provides me with opportunities to observe life among the people working and living in the neighborhoods, including their interactions with homeless individuals, visitors, and other residents, which often vary depending on numerous factors including race and class. This deep hanging out and immersion in the various communities concerned has allowed me to draw many of my conclusions about what happens in the neighborhoods from incidents that I either witnessed or participated in, instead of relying on the voices of others. I often paid attention to comments in response to certain situations and asked questions on the spot instead of relying solely on interviews.

My involvement with diverse groups of people, all of whom have a stake in the area provides me with a multi-vocality that will be essential in my presentation of the issues in these connected but divergent neighborhoods and communities. I have been careful not to favor certain voices over others, when choosing themes they must encompass all viewpoints involved. In what follows, I seek to be careful when choosing excerpts, attentive to persuasiveness or evocativeness in order to prove my opinion, and I recognize that actors are often ignorant to the larger social processes occurring around them, even if they are aware, they may not be comfortable in their position and not know how to talk about it. Being able to address my theme from different angles will deepen my reader's understanding of the events that are happening here. My experiences in Peach Ville have been rewarding and challenging, but my intensive long-term involvement in the community has fostered numerous relationships that will provide critical insight into the dynamics occurring here and continue after this research.

Chapter 4: RESEARCH SITE

Peach Ville, the site of my ethnographic research, is a formally dilapidated post-industrial area that has been, and still is, in the process of revitalization, through both government intervention and private investment. The close proximity of government-funded public housing, privatized mixed-income housing, and upscale lofts reveals the extent of differences in lifestyles and socio-economic status within this area. Real estate advertisements expose perceptions and desires of potential loft residents, for example private patios, secured parking and security alarms, providing insight as to the level of escape from the public street within housing choices. New developments reveal social constructions of fear in its architecture such as interior private courtyards, underground parking, and built-in conveniences such as a grocery or coffee shop, in contrast to the other housing in the area. The taste driven market reveals useful insight into postmodern construction, which provides an escape from public space and allows a retreat into private, controlled space. Whether the residents feel safe or not, and if not, why, divulges deep seated fears, such as assumptions about people of different socioeconomic backgrounds and racial identities other than themselves, that even I was victim to in my first impressions of this in-town area.

My main area of focus, this post-industrial neighborhood in a downtown area of Atlanta, exemplifies gentrification and segregation and their effects on race and class relations through gating and fortification. Being in a major metropolitan southern city, Peach Ville is important in the analysis of gentrification's impacts on race and class relations because it lies between the central business/financial district, separated only by

rail lines and the primarily African American area that is home to the city's historic black colleges. Its location tends to keep its streets diverse. Its changing socio-economic and physical make-up demonstrates the movement of capital in the built environment. Prior to industrialization, Peach Ville was residential and African American. During the industrial era, the railroads that serve the city, lined with light manufacturing and warehousing on the edge of downtown, pushed African American residential areas further out. Area churches, a firehouse, and a recently burned down school are the only remaining evidence of the residential community that was once part of this area. Peach Ville's landscape has drastically changed numerous times in its history; today it is again becoming primarily residential through the adaptive re-use of previously industrial spaces, revealing current race and class issues in its various manifestations.

Because of the shift from an industrial to service-based economy, parts of Atlanta's city center became neglected and abandoned. Buildings deteriorated, infrastructural maintenance lapsed, and vice came to dominate empty lots. As manufacturing and warehousing became less important to the area, wide-open inexpensive spaces for various activities became available. In the 1980s, a few speculative investors jumped on these vast open spaces and began to create inexpensive live/work or retail space. Over the years, Peach Ville has developed into a full-blown arts district with over fifteen art galleries and countless studios. Recently, the rise in popularity of loft living, long commutes, wasted time and resources, pollution, and a desire to be near cultural centers and entertainment districts has prompted a resurgence of in-town living. This, in conjunction with Peach Ville's art scene, has created a landscape of rising property values, which often increases without any physical changes to the

infrastructure of the buildings themselves due to the taste driven real estate market. Investors that got in early have seen an exponential return on their investment and the starving artist hardly has a place here anymore.

"Traditional Urbanity"

Atlanta's desire to be recognized as an international city prompted city officials to attempt to return downtown to "traditional urbanity," which they defined as having "public character" (Rutheiser 1996). This had been missing since the flight to the suburbs following World War II (Rutheiser 1996). Racism, economic affordability, and social pressure as well as the mass production of automobiles contributed to white flight since blacks were most often unable to follow. White flight, facilitated by state and federal governments who funded highways, allowed suburbanites to work in city centers where the jobs remained but commute from racially and economically homogenous communities. The construction of highways in Atlanta divided and isolated in-town black neighborhoods from goods, services and white neighborhoods, many times near industrial areas, as was occurring all over the country.

In a postmodern city, you see a sprawl to the suburbs while the city center retains its civic duties (Caldeira 1999). In the "visitable" city, you see a return to the structure of a modern city, walkable streets lined with shops for instance (Rutheiser 1996). Atlanta sought to combine the two; downtown becomes "cleaned up" in order to be comfortable for the middle or upper class traveler or suburban visitor, drawing people back to downtown for its interests rather than simply its civic responsibilities, especially in response to the 1996 Olympics being hosted downtown. The concept that Charles

Rutheiser (1996) described as a return to "traditional urbanity" endeavor took place in part through the placement of pedestrian friendly benches in high traffic areas, which often creatively prevent the homeless from being able to lie on them. The city also installed improved lighting in areas of downtown that were highly visible to the international visitors the city hoped to attract and viewed as dangerous by the city dwellers themselves. These spaces had lost their "public character" and in order to encourage foot traffic and foster a sense of community, the city took these regenerative steps.

Despite efforts towards returning the public to public space, fear and violence have dramatically altered the re-invention of space into place that is fortified and private. This fortification results in forms of spatial segregation that draws distinct lines between socio-economic classes and complicates race relations. Fear whether real or imagined is justification for these modern day processes of segregation that go beyond race and more solidly works to enforce class boundaries. Still, Atlanta's less than progressive past seemingly has not been forgotten, having been known for race riots, being the home of the Ku Klux Klan, having a reputation for violent crime, and having a substantial homeless population, among others. Regardless, city officials and private investors alike are set in developing Atlanta into one of the next great international cities.

Racialized Reputation of Danger

In the 1970s, downtown Atlanta had a large African American population and had acquired a racialized reputation of danger, prompting white suburbanites to view downtown as crime ridden. Urban sprawl and suburbanization led to an emptying of

downtown streets by the middle and upper classes leaving them to the criminal and marginalized, as was often the perception if not the reality. The modern architecture of downtown, with its facades and continuous streetscapes, traditionally had encouraged a lively street life. The postmodern architecture of suburban neighborhoods and strip malls separated spaces of interaction, causing a dependence on automobiles and a lack of community in its homogenous sprawling spaces. "Suburban" has replaced "rural" in the urban/rural dichotomy where the city is dirty and dangerous in comparison to its rural, or in this case suburban, safe and tranquil counterpart. The influx of the middle and upper class back into downtown prompted by long commutes, an increase in pollution, access to entertainment and simply wasted time, following the previous flight to the suburbs predominately in the 1950s and 1960s; the face of the city is changing. In a search for the safety and security that the suburbs offered, in-town living is fortified and gated. This process has transformed and molded modern architecture into a cultural metaphor that speaks to the city's postmodern race and class relations.

It is important to consider both the context and the emergence of particular kinds of spaces and the types of social practices associated with specific instances of urban change, in order to engage more productively with issues of race and class. The urban landscape is constantly changing due to political and economic forces. These processes include imagined boundaries and difference, changing ideologies and cultures, and globalization. Some theorists see a racialized topography to blame for Atlanta's failure to thrive, because outlying white areas developed at the expense of the city's black core (Gregory 1999; Keating 2001; Rutheiser 1996, 1999). Over the past few decades, dilapidated and crime ridden downtown has seen a cycle of disinvestment and

reinvestment. Government programs, such as tax abatements and subsidies, and private

investment led to revitalization and gentrification in ways that speak profoundly to public

and private space, the development of place, and race and class relations. Despite having

the reputation of being one of the most segregated cities in the country, gentrification has

led to the diversification of some in-town areas. Between 1980 and 1990 the segregation

of Atlanta continued its trend of increase but the metro area showed a decrease due to the

rise in popularity of in-town living (Keating 2001). The city's population, impacted by

dramatic expansions in numbers and diversity that caused an increase in cultural

heterogeneity, has further complicated issues of class and race.

Fortified Enclaves

New construction in Peach Ville is designed as fortified enclaves. This type of

fortified construction has been used in the rehabilitation of former warehouses, meat

packing and manufacturing plants all over Peach Ville. A development currently under

construction consists of first floor retail, providing virtually constant eyes on the street, in

addition to surveillance equipment and like-minded occupants who are concerned with

the quality of their own street as well as neighboring streets as a function of creating a

successful business. Parking will be underground to reduce the possibility of chance

encounters with marginal individuals as you enter your home or a business. There will be

an internal courtyard, closely monitored and again reducing interaction with the street.

Homes will be above retail and the roof will host a pool and patio separating the middle

and upper class residents from the marginalized population on the street. These lofts

often front the street with little or no green space between them and the sidewalk or even

the street, the lack of which prompts residents to retreat to the rear of the buildings or rooftop gardens further reducing interactions with the street.

The city's investment in outer areas, such as "the new downtown" of Buckhead, and middle-class flight to suburbia led to the subsequent disinvestment of in-town, often African American areas (Keating 2001) . The reversal of this trend calls for new and creative ways, such as fortified enclaves, to define who belongs and who does not by inscribing boundaries into the landscape that used to be a function of the exclusionary suburbs (Caldeira 1999). These enclaves are often represented by the same characteristics as many suburbs: private property for collective use, physically separated, turned inward away from the street, controlled by security to define inclusion and exclusion, private and autonomous, and tend to be socially homogenous for the middle and upper classes. A new development in Peach Ville will feature enclosed parking, an internal courtyard, and shopping facilities to address the desire for live/work/play atmosphere but at the same time separate themselves from the public street itself. Fortification has become common in city centers, where ghetto communities are adjacent to areas undergoing race, class, and cultural changes. These enclaves exemplify socio-spatial manifestations in its sharp contrast from the surrounding communities economically and culturally.

Displacement

Although the neighborhood itself lacks traditional housing, the rising cost of living in its adaptively re-used spaces has effectively excluded a great portion of the city's population, especially the neighboring primarily African American and low-income

communities. The surrounding area displays evidence of displacement of low-income residents through the neglect and subsequent demolition of government-funded public housing and the use of the land for private investment. These developers lease the land from the Atlanta Housing Authority and are required to rent a fraction of its units to low-income tenants. This mixed-income situation, intended to improve the quality of life for low-income tenants, reduces the number of low-income units that had been previously available. One of these developments, the Villages at Peach Ville, situated on land that was once the site of public housing and had a reputation as some of the most dangerous in the city, is across the street from additional public housing, slated for demolition as well, with portions boarded up and fenced off while its remaining residents slowly leave.

I became a resident of this mixed-income housing in August 2006, when I moved into the garden-style apartment homes, built by a private investor on land owned by the Atlanta Housing Authority. This land, leased on a fifty-year term, is the former location of low-income housing projects mentioned above and situated immediately on the periphery of the lines that establish the up and coming arts district of Peach Ville. It is required that 20 percent of the apartments be reserved for low-income residents, a fact that may have prevented me from living there had I known due to my own fears and assumptions, but has proven to have been an asset in research terms. Having moved there without having seen the area or the apartment I was quite surprised by the poor condition of the housing and infrastructure surrounding the historic black colleges, revealing a sharp divide in the economic landscape.

This "gated community," which was next to an all women's private college and immediately across the street from public housing, was easily accessible via broken gates

and incomplete fences. Drug dealers hung outside of my door near the complex

dumpsters and across the street from the courtyard of the public housing that remained.

The condition of the surrounding streets, their illegal activity, my minority status, being a

single white female in a primarily African American area, and my fear prevented me

from traveling one block over to the arts district without a group of male friends, as a

comforting escort, or the nearby park that I would later become involved. Crime was a

concern, and friends, residents, and police officers who attended neighborhood meetings

advised me that I should avoid walking the streets alone, especially late at night since a

lone female would most likely be a target.

Cleaned Up for Middle Class Consumption

When I was on the streets of Peach Ville, what various websites had exclaimed

was Atlanta's version of New York's Soho seemed nothing more to me than an

abandoned warehouse and manufacturing district. The streets, described as lively seemed

empty and intimidating. The southern edge is comprised of retailers that seemed to have

been and continue to gear towards serving the low-income housing that used to dominate

the area. When I did venture into the neighborhood for a community event, after we

passed empty storefronts, we came to enter the portion of the neighborhood that seems to

have already been cleaned up for middle-class consumption. These circumstances led me

to ask questions regarding the disinvestment and the subsequent re-investment that

seemed to be occurring in Peach Ville and its bordering communities. I was immediately

intrigued, and as time progressed I focused all of my research energy on this particular

junction of communities, including public housing, mixed-income housing, historic African American neighborhoods, and Peach Ville residents.

Issues of surveillance are also important attributes on which to reflect. The homes in Peach Ville are often condominiums that have monitored parking and entrances, security alarms and fencing. Due to a construction company's tax incentive-motivated developments in the area, Peach Ville's designation as an Empowerment Zone, and because its headquarters is located in the neighborhood, they are required to give back to the community. It has been determined that this will take the form of sixteen cameras throughout the neighborhood that will be live fed to the local police. While some may view this as a necessary step towards public safety, others view it as an outright violation of their rights. Nonetheless, the vested business owners and residents are supportive of these plans. Safety and security are of primary concern, demonstrated through the neighborhoods development of a Public Safety Committee, its use of a text message alert system to keep people aware of crime in the area and to notify them to be on the lookout for criminals, and its request for additional police presence.

The nearby college campuses and the businesses that serve them within the neighborhood also cause conflict. Many residents see late night partying, congregating, and double parking as a threat to their quality of life and assume loitering on the street will lead to problems. These residents have brought their suburban ideals of homogeneity, driveways, and zoned single use into a diverse, mixed-use urban environment and debates ensue. Businesses that are in old warehouses often lack windows on the street so they turn to video surveillance and intercom controlled entry systems. Residents put gates on doorways, designed originally as business entrances, so

that the homeless cannot sleep on their stoop and an intruder has an additional layer to penetrate. Parking lots are fenced despite residents' own admission that they do little to prevent theft or trespassing. The constant attention attributed to issues of safety, whether real or imagined, life threatening or simply a quality of life issue reveals the area's preoccupation with its exclusionary practices intended to keep the criminal element and marginalized at bay.

Recently, the neighborhood voted to allow zoning changes on its northern border in an effort to increase its density, trying to attract things like its own grocery, the lack of which the residents regularly complain about. There is a grocery store only a few blocks away that primarily serve the historically black neighborhoods and college students, but they often expressed their choice not to go there. The development will also create a privately managed public park. The community input in this project is telling of their wants and likes much like realtor ads. In discussions with the developer they are curious about furniture that will not allow anyone to lay on it or can be removed at night, whether or not there will be cameras, and who will manage the park since the city cannot be relied on to do so. The future development of this park is currently relevant in relation to the City of Atlanta Public Art Program and its involvement in a public park in the area.

Peach Ville: Then and Now

The importance of the neighborhood of Peach Ville to Atlanta lies in its relationship to the railroad, which shaped the streets, the buildings, and ultimately the land uses. After the civil war, Atlanta expanded as a rail distributor and the area grew as a residential district. The varieties of initial establishments in the area were conducive to

living within walking distance of needs and work ([Peach Ville] Master Plan 2000). In the late 1800s this was primarily an African American residential community, remnants of which remain such as the many churches in the area and the close proximity of the historic black colleges, but by 1915 the housing was completely replaced with warehouses and manufacturing ([Peach Ville] Master Plan 2000). These businesses followed the rail lines and shaped the streets.

In the first three decades of the 1900s, the streets were flanked with two and three story brick buildings. Lumber and cattle yards became meatpacking houses fueled by industrialization ([Peach Ville] Master Plan 2000). Between 1950 and 1980, deindustrialization caused industry and trade to leave the area as residents across the city moved to the suburbs. Buildings were abandoned and the area became bleak and deteriorated. Since the 1980s, artists slowly began moving in to the area to take advantage of the large open spaces. Peach Ville's Master Plan identified a large percentage of properties within the neighborhood as still being vacant, dilapidated, severely deteriorated, or sub standard (2000). Today the rise in popularity of loft living and the desire to live in-town has contributed to reviving these old buildings and returning some of the residential component back to the neighborhood.

Figure 1: Early [Peach Ville]

In 1990, Atlanta was the fourth most segregated city in the nation, especially in its residential housing patterns (Keating 2001:42). Atlanta is thought to have fairly benign race relations in regard of its history as a civil rights frontier, but upon closer examination, statistics reveal that blacks face racial discrimination in location and quality of homes (Keating 2001:42). Following desegregation, affluent blacks accompanied white flight to the suburbs, leaving the city concentrated primarily with black poverty. Atlanta saw a trend of concentrated development on the cities north side, while the south side remained primarily black and poor, a third of them without access to cars; jobs were increasingly farther away, with none or poor public transportation (Keating 2001:8). Buckhead became dominantly white, as the relocated and reconstituted white downtown (Keating 2001:20). Many Atlantans equated downtown with poor and black and avoided the city leaving it with a sagging tax base.

A racialized topography has been blamed for Atlanta's failure to thrive, by highlighting the outlying white areas that have developed at the expense of the city's black core (Keating 2001; Rutheiser 1996). According to the 2000 US Census, the area including the downtown neighborhood of Peach Ville was 49% White, 35% Black, 13% Asian with very few reporting outside these racial categories, and 43% of these individuals falling below the poverty level (US Census Bureau 2000). This is in sharp contrast to the surrounding areas where very few reported being of a race outside of the black or white categories, and where the majority is black, although it is similar in the sense that it also has a very high poverty rate like the surrounding communities. The neighborhoods to the west and south, historically black neighborhoods that include the historic black colleges are 97% and 93% black and 1% and 4% white, respectively, with

roughly over 30% of residents falling below the poverty level (US Census Bureau 2000). The neighborhoods to the south and east are also predominately black, 76% and 70%, and 18% and 23% white, with both areas having over 38% of residents below the poverty level (US Census Bureau 2000). The high levels poverty in and around the area causes middle-upper class Peach Ville residents to regard the surrounding communities in a negative light, assuming that their neighborhood issues stem from their close proximity to poverty.

Fortification reveals the conflicts among the various communities that intersect in Peach Ville. These different communities are comprised of 1) upper-middle class Peach Ville residents, 2) residents of the bordering mixed-income housing and nearby public housing, many of whom are young families or students from the nearby historic black colleges, and 3) the homeless and drug addicts who often occupy the streets and utilize area resources, such as shelters, churches, and abandoned spaces. All three groups are often affected by various government and private investment initiatives enacted in the area. While the main area of focus is the Peach Ville community, which consists mostly of middle and upper class residents, primarily represented by whites, it is surrounded by and often hosts people of lower socio-economic status who are often black and whose priorities often conflict. Each makes a claim and has a vision in the neighborhood making this is a contested space since there are competing ideologies among these diverse communities.

Chapter 5: ETHNOGRAPHY

> [Peach Ville] is a historic downtown neighborhood, unique
> in Atlanta. Its future is informed by its colorful past:
> markets, shops, restaurants, and residences enjoyed by
> diverse peoples. In this urban oasis situated amidst
> business, government, transportation, sports, entertainment,
> and convention facilities, old buildings are given new life.
> The community takes pride in its streetscapes, green
> spaces, public art, and historic structures. [Vision
> statement – [Peach Ville] Master Plan 2000]

Peach Ville's' vision statement presents the neighborhood as an urban oasis in a historic downtown area, attracting visitors through its unique mixture of businesses and loft housing, yet the discourses of residents and visitors alike express the fear associated with the lower and under classes requiring a certain extent of fortification before it can be enjoyed. The deterioration of nearby public housing and the Atlanta Housing Authority's re-visioned mixed-income replacements reveal the shortcomings of city planning according to resident testimony, including myself. Middle and upper class residents response to fortify, gate, and monitor their community only exacerbate race and class lines by inscribing them into the physical environment. Examining the level of racial diversity in Peach Ville and surrounding areas and the steps of fortification in its development has allowed for an analysis of spatial segregation based on social fears and on race and class. Looking at Peach Ville as pseudo-suburbia situated within the downtown area allows many comparisons to be drawn between the flight to the suburbs and the subsequent desire to return to in-town areas with the added features of fortification and gates. Social fear is generated through ideologies of race and class and serves as an instrument of social reproduction physically manifested through processes of gentrification.

This chapter covers a wide variety of concepts: gentrification, the discourse of social fear and perceptions of safety, fortified enclaves and gated communities, class and race relations, and an intersection of modern and post-modern architecture resulting in spatial segregation. The goal of this research has been to analyze the steps of fortification that are employed in the face of a changing social landscape by looking at if and how gentrification has affected the demographics, perceptions of safety, and crime and has exposed the motivations behind residential segregation. The close proximity of government-funded public housing, mixed-income housing, and upscale lofts reveals the extent of differences in lifestyles and socio-economic status within this area. Government programs, such as tax abatements and subsidies, tax allocation districts, and private investment led to revitalization and gentrification in ways that speak profoundly to public and private space, the development of place, and race and class relations. Typically, upon creation, tax allocation districts have vacant commercial and residential properties, blighted conditions and numerous vacant buildings or are in need of significant environmental remediation, such as Peach Ville.

Fear and violence have persuaded the middle and upper classes to fortify themselves within closely monitored enclaves, providing an alternative for urban living. The extent of this phenomenon within Peach Ville is quite evident in the current restructuring of space. Despite the fact that downtown has seen an influx of different classes and races segregation persists. Charles Rutheiser has referred to the revitalization of downtown Atlanta as "Jim Crow in twenty-first-century drag" (1996:6). The public spaces of the streets are left to the poor and homeless while fortified enclaves serve to separate the middle and upper classes from the marginalized. This process creates walls,

fences, and surveillance that serve to separate wealth and poverty, differentiating between public and private space and highlighting social inequalities.

Peach Ville: Fortified Enclaves replace Industrial Areas

Atlanta has a history of outward expansion, which has consumed much open space and placed great stress on all the different modes of transportation from and to the city. People who fled to the suburbs were left with long commutes back into the city for work and pleasure, which were perceived as a drain on the environment and time, prompting many to return to urban living. This often consists of young, childless, professionals who value their time and enjoy the options downtown living has to offer. In turn, this has led to the development of live, work, and play communities, once dilapidated areas are renovated as people desire to live closer to urban centers.

The Peach Ville neighborhood is one of many of these in-town regenerative areas, having been an industrial center and virtually abandoned during de-industrialization, the rise in the trend of loft living has attracted the middle and upper class to this warehouse district. Many of the 1920s era two or three story, brick railway buildings that line the

Figure 2: View from upscale lofts

streets have already been renovated into live/work loft space. They have become homes, art galleries, restaurants, bars, and retail space mainly along the two streets that form the heart of the neighborhood. My very first experiences in the neighborhood of Peach Ville were intimidating; I personally would not have felt

safe walking alone. The blighted streets, my status as a single, white female, and the social fear instilled in me since my childhood cautions me to be careful as to where I go alone, especially at night. As time went on and I got access to the inner workings of the area, I was exposed to a much different experience than that of the street.

New developments and revitalized warehouses in Peach Ville are designed as fortified enclaves. The modern architecture of the early twentieth century is reformulated to barricade itself from the street by designing rear and roof top patios while entrances are gated and under surveillance. Peach Ville is a transient area, with a nearby Greyhound station and MARTA, homeless shelters, and vacant lots that facilitate loitering along side extensive renovations and revitalization causing very distinct class boundaries to be formed. For example, lofts on one end of the neighborhood display a sign toting itself as "authentic 'upscale' residential lofts," easily priced over 200,000 dollars, yet the view is a landscape decimated and in disrepair. I have never seen a resident on the streets immediately fronting the building; it is entered through either underground parking or an internal courtyard. The vacant shopping strip across the street is well recognized in Peach Ville for having been the site of the fatal shooting of the neighborhood association's former president that occurred while he was working as a security guard for a liquor store. The neighborhood rallied in response to have these businesses closed and they remain so until this day.

In the past year and a half, I have observed the businesses on this side of the neighborhood, which serve a primarily poor, black demographic. Many change occupants quickly or are boarded up. However, others have been fixtures in the neighborhood, serving the Villages at Peach Ville where I lived, the Atlanta Housing

Authority's replacement for the public housing that once was here and had the reputation as some of the most dangerous in the city. This edge of the neighborhood also has the

Figure 3: Former public housing and vacant lot

two most convenient gas stations in the area that the upper class white residents avoid, and my middle-class friends urged me not to visit. I often referred to the alley behind one of these gas stations as "crack alley," a sentiment that many agreed with due to the activity that was often witnessed occurring there.

As a single white female I have been taught through incessant media reports of crime, traditional gender roles, and racial stereotypes that I should fear desolate urban areas and that poor, young, black, and male equates with dangerous and should be avoided. Conversations with residents regarding this area reveal similar fears and assumptions, which causes them to avoid these businesses, often regardless of gender or race, revealing class divides. The homeless, who are most often black, are left to loiter on the street, in empty lots, or in a nearby public park while the middle and upper classes are guarded behind fences. The gated entrances, private courtyards, and patios provide an escape from deteriorated parts of the city.

The upper class residents often acknowledged the fact that fences do little to prevent crime and that often they are affected only by crimes of opportunity, yet fences are employed to delineate space. Still, violent crime is a concern in the neighborhood. This past summer the community formed a public safety committee and a neighborhood watch to address these issues. There have been recent reports of car jacking, armed

robberies, and gunfire. Crime is often blamed on the surrounding communities, which

produces social boundaries. Crime is also used as an excuse to exclude marginalized

populations, such as the homeless. Upper class residents regularly denounce the presence

of the underclass, which serves to spatialize their

definitions of who belongs (Guano 2003:356). A resident

complained at a public safety meeting that the homeless

line up outside of his door at 4:30 every evening, since a

shelter is located on one of the main thoroughfares of the

neighborhood and his new home happens to be nearby.

Figure 4: Barbed wire fence

The shelter is incapable of serving all of those in need and

therefore accepts people on a first come first serve basis, prompting many to arrive early.

This is seen as an inconvenience to this residents' idealized space and is denounced as a

public safety issue. It was also noted that crimes spike in the early morning hours when

this shelter requires everyone to vacate the property since it does not have funds to

operate during the day.

Many crimes are simple quality of life issues that inconvenience the middle and

upper class residents of Peach Ville, such as loitering, but there is violent crime in the

area as well. A middle class white female told me a story of one of her first experiences

in the neighborhood,

> …the street life is pretty crazy. When we first moved in, it was like there
> was a war going on in the neighborhoods south of here and around here
> …there was gunshots, sounded like semi-automatic weapons like every
> night…one night this girl…all of a sudden I hear yelling and screaming,
> she goes, 'I can't believe that bitch just stabbed me.' She just sat down on
> the curb and just waited for the cops to come. That was like New Year's
> Eve, right when we had moved in, and that whole like two, three week,

four weeks maybe, around New Year's Eve, it was just like a war, like
there was gunshots like every single night.

The public safety committee formed a 911 alert system that sends emails or text messages
to residents so that they may immediately be aware of crime in their community and be
on the look out for potentially dangerous criminals. The community has also received a
grant, with the help of a developer in the area, which will be used to install sidewalk
surveillance cameras monitored by the Atlanta Police Department. The community's
level of organization has been noted as exceptional, since it was the only neighborhood in
Atlanta to receive this grant.

Unfortunately, examples of violent crime such as this are used as justification to
target the marginalized population of the neighborhood. At a neighborhood association
meeting, reports from hired off-duty officers yielded numerous arrests for loitering and
homeless who appeared to be scoping cars. The off-duty police had cost the
neighborhood 11,000 dollars between April and July of 2007 and they collected 2,700
dollars in donations in the month of June, demonstrating how important these issues are
to this small community. A black, female police officer in attendance at one of the public
safety meetings suggested that you should not be on the streets late into the night when
crimes typically occur, especially women, essentially placing blame on a potential victim,
who should apparently know better than to be alone on the streets late at night. The
public safety committee also distributed a list of suspicious activities, which included
loitering.

Fear and violence have persuaded the middle and upper classes to fortify
themselves within closely monitored enclaves, providing an alternative for urban living

(Caldeira 1999:83). The extent of this phenomenon within Peach Ville is evident in the current restructuring of space. Despite the fact that downtown has seen an influx of different classes and races, segregation persists. An upper-middle-class black business owner in Peach Ville said

> I definitely think Atlanta is a divided city. Black professionals, black industry, city politics are African American based, strong African American base, black colleges. I think we see segregation with where people have different lifestyles and go separate places.

Regardless of the diverse make-up of the Peach Ville neighborhood, he believes that certain races and classes congregate in different locations, creating a racial divide within establishments that is also class motivated. A restaurant that this black business owner referred to as a "networking" site and meeting place was mentioned by a white business owner as being a location where he felt "reverse racism." This provides evidence of social differentiation, the creation of class boundaries, and the persistence of racial segregation. The juncture of race and class in the in-town neighborhood of Peach Ville is seen by some as a harmonious blend, but as a source of conflict in the eyes of others. The influx of the upper and middle class back into downtown Atlanta blurred the lines of segregation only to be redrawn in new ways, which creates distance between the social classes.

The formation of fortified enclaves produces spatial segregation explicating social inequalities, which fuels segregation, while outwardly casting the appearance of diversity (Caldeira 1999:102). Not all types of diversity are equally welcome in the neighborhood; the predominance of homeless in Peach Ville provides visual evidence of the unequal disbursement of capital between the classes. Race complicates the class issue: the majority of homeless are black males, and the majority of the upper class is white.

Surrounding residential areas are also primarily African American. When blacks succeed in the white upper class realm, they are often questioned and treated with disbelief. A black business owner whom I interviewed stated that six years ago, when they moved to Peach Ville,

> …the area being primarily a white demographic, we raised an eyebrow. What are they doing here? We receive lots of shipments…instead of [being] welcomed, we were questioned. The committee made a call to police; this was our first experience from the neighborhood.

The black business owner felt that "I still get the evil eye, looked upon with suspicion," due to his race. The company was receiving business related shipments and since the warehouse did not have any windows, the informant felt that this fueled suspicions as to whether or not they were legitimate. In his opinion, the fact that they were black pushed the issue to the extent of getting law enforcement involved to quell their fears.

A black male resident told a similar racially defined story. After returning to his loft following a night of drinking, he fumbled with his keys at the door. A white tenant approached him and questioned his right to be there. He believed that his neighbors assumed that he did not live there based on his skin color. Although these middle class black males felt that their initial experiences in the neighborhood were strained, one of them stated that he did believe that it was progressing.

> I'm seeing it, I'm seeing it. For a while besides the landlord, I think we were the only young African American faces in the neighborhood. [A particular art] gallery, they are attracting a lot of diversity, so are a lot of other galleries. But, I think they were one of the first to really embrace and break into the urban culture and showcase a lot of their art here. So, I think they exposed a lot of people. But it's just a mindset, it's a very diverse mindset, all levels of cultural relevance, sexual orientation, business ownership, even types of stores, you don't have the chain stores, you have the little independent shops that cater to trendsetters, you know art, food. It's a destination point for sure, but it's also something that

encourages diversity for the people that live here. Because it's diverse,
you have different things that you can go and be a part of.

He mentions an art gallery as successful in promoting urban culture and being seen as

more open to diversity by acting as, and attracting, "trendsetters." Despite the fact that he

has experienced racism in the community, he believes that it is progressing as a diverse

neighborhood fueled through art.

Artists and the gay community, seen by an upper class white informant as a

gateway to diversity, are credited with being more open-minded, a trend often noted in

gentrification.

…and groups of artists come in because the rent is cheap, so artists alone,
you get a pretty diverse group of people as far as their makeup and the
way they think. And, then after the artists, it seems to happen a lot, you
get the gays, because they're a little more adventurous too…

He went on to say that, if the gay community is accepted in the area, it opens the door for

others to come in, especially straight middle class whites. According to another white

business owner, this progression paves the way for further diversification.

I think the diversity of the neighborhood… we've got young families, you
know, new little kids, single professionals, people of all color, gays,
straights, retirees. I think we've got pretty much everybody represented,
for that matter, I think it's economically diverse. You still have individual
artists that got their space back when; they're not the highest on the
economic earnings, students, but then we've got gallery owners that sell
very high end art work, we've got heads of corporations, pretty diverse. I
think we have a creative mix of people, stepping out of the box.

It is important to note that not all types of diversity are equally welcome. Though there is

an outward appearance of racial and cultural diversity, economic diversity manifests itself

in a much more obtrusive manner. Regardless of the wide range of financial status, the

most obvious divide is that between the middle and upper classes and the marginalized. Homelessness is rampant in part because of the neighborhoods proximity to downtown, shelters, and area churches who offer services.

Quality of life issues are expressed in Peach Ville residents' sediments towards urban living. The offence may not necessarily be illegal just disturbing to "decent" neighborhood residents. One of the white residents in Peach Ville I interviewed said

> No, I don't think race plays any issues around the neighborhood, you know we live in the city, its diverse, it's great. I think what issues plague our neighborhood are when it gets out of control. In any urban community, you are going to have parking problems, noise ordinances, when you have a lot of clubs and restaurants. I think that those are our major issues; those are the only things that I see causing a problem.

In other words, this informant does not identify race as a source of struggle; rather, general urban issues cause conflict. Some of the upper class white residents I interviewed did not directly indicate race as a reason why they did not patronize certain businesses, although some did. Most often "loud music," "lack of menu," or "double parking" was identified as reasons that they did not support these businesses. The residents are often white middle-upper class and visitors are often black college age students. A local establishment boasts their daily drink specials and nightly DJs; absent is the menu. The majority of the bars' clientele does not even arrive until after midnight. Impromptu street parties are brought to an end before they even start when nosey neighbors intervene. The middle and upper class suburban ideal of driveways for private use, substantial space between homes, quiet after dark, and a separation of retail from residential is challenged in an urban environment.

If new establishments wish to locate in Peach Ville they must go before the neighborhood association and have the community's support before being able to receive

city permits. This allows the community great control over the type of establishments in the area and additional businesses are often denied based on parking, noise, and liquor sale issues. When a new business recently came in front of the neighborhood association, they were denied a liquor license because they expressed the desire to become part of a "club district," Peach Ville residents, instead, insisted that they are a residential community. Peach Ville residents often chastise a current establishment over the fact that it presented itself to the neighborhood association as restaurant, but instead is a cocktail lounge with a limited menu. The type of crowd that it attracts until the late night hours, often young and black, is in contrast to what the neighborhood views as ideal establishments. The residents' view of their neighborhood as residential competes with visitors or new establishments who view it as an entertainment district. Although Peach Ville wants to be recognized as a destination point, they seek to, and their level of community organization allows them to, keep tight control over their environment.

There are also restrictions placed on new developments in Peach Ville because of its designation as both a historic and landmark district. A developer who has been involved in Peach Ville since the 1980s is working on a new development currently under construction and he understands the wants of the community. One of their demands is a grocery; the neighborhood, however, lacks the residential density that prevents larger retailers from establishing themselves in this small in-town community. As mentioned, although there is a chain grocer less than a mile away, middle and upper class residents expressed the fact that they avoid this location since it primarily serves the poor African American demographic to the north and west of Peach Ville. As a solution to this dilemma, the developer proposed that Peach Ville vote to allow a zoning change on the

north side of the neighborhood closest to downtown that would allow building a high-rise instead of the current restriction of three stories. This increase in density will attract the types of business that the community desires.

In addition to the compromise, the developer also offered to place a privately managed public park on the southern edge of the new complex closet to the heart of the neighborhood. I attended the neighborhood association meeting when the developer revealed his plans for the currently vacant lot and was able to determine what is most important to residents. Peach Ville is a historic and landmark district so there are zoning and codes that limit how high new construction can be built so that it fits into the current architecture of the area. This development will be graded, meaning that the portion of the

development that fronts Peach Ville will meet the current height restrictions, and the section behind that would require a change in code in order to be higher than three stories and the northern end will be high-rise creating the density that the neighborhood desires. The

Figure 5: Gated entrance

entire first floor will be retail, providing the security of eyes on the street and the park will connect it to the neighborhood. This park is highly anticipated by residents who have expressed their desire for more green space. The neighborhood voted to allow this zoning change because the high rise will give Peach Ville the density required to create enough clientele to demand a grocery or drug store. I see these zoning changes as a calculated response to their lack of comfortable space.

The conversation regarding the park reveals the fears and wants of the middle and upper class Peach Ville residents, especially in light of the nearby public park that residents avoid, because it has been abandoned to the homeless population and drug activity. Questions were focused on how the marginal population in the neighborhood would be controlled in this privately managed public space. The homeowners association would be responsible for maintaining the park and making it welcome for those deemed welcomed while physical means would be used to determine who belongs. The developer's response supported the idea of constant eyes on the street by placing retail establishments with glass fronts along the park. The discussion focused on security guards, cameras, and options for furniture that could be removed at night or do not allow anyone to lie on it. This would work to prevent the homeless from camping out here as they are in the nearby City of Atlanta Park. These steps would work to make it feel safe and welcoming for middle and upper class residents to enjoy while excluding the marginalized.

In Peach Ville, realtor ads overwhelmingly represent the desire for gated communities, security features, private enclosures, and in-town location. Real estate advertisements can be used to determine, or shape, the wants and desires of the middle and upper classes in the urban realm (Caldeira 1999). The amenities listed on these ads often include security alarms, private gated parking, and roof top patios. These enclaves often are represented by the same characteristics: private property for collective use, physically separated, turned inward not to the street, controlled by security to define inclusion and exclusion, private and autonomous, and tend to be socially homogenous for the middle and upper classes (Caldeira 1999:87). The new development in progress in

Peach Ville will feature enclosed, underground parking, an internal courtyard, and shopping facilities to address the desire for live/work/play atmospheres but at the same time separate itself from the public street.

Villages at Peach Ville: Gated Communities replace Public Housing

When I moved to Atlanta in August 2006, I was a resident of mixed-income apartments, the Villages at Peach Ville, which is required to lease 20 percent of its units to low-income residents while the rest are offered at market value. Despite my usual practice of exercising outdoors in my hometown, walking, biking, and playing tennis and despite the fact that a park was only one block from my apartment and has tennis courts and paved trails, I never once ventured into that park. The fear impressed upon me through the media, gender roles, and racial stereotypes has taught me to fear transient urban areas, especially those populated with young black men, and I was under the impression that the concentrated poverty of public housing and its associated crime still lingered in the area. There is substantial loitering at neighboring businesses, apparent rampant drug use, and a seemingly high concentration of homeless.

Figure 6: Public housing

Nearby public housing is in very poor condition with many of its windows boarded and is in plans to be demolished within the year. This neglect drives many to move out of the housing prior to being asked to leave, distorting the rates of those that are

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displaced due to its demolition. This also destroys ties to the community since many of these residents will resort to less expensive areas outside of the city. The modern design and layout of the public housing promoted interaction, creating a face-to-face oriented community with patios facing each other, shared sidewalks, and courtyards with playgrounds and basketball courts. These low-income housing projects are an example of concentrated poverty that incidentally facilitates a perception, if not a reality, of criminality, and therefore fear. These homes were known as some of the most dangerous housing projects in the city, were in a state of disrepair, and only blocks from Peach Ville.

This design is notably different from the mixed-income developments that are replacing public housing all over the city. The gated mixed-income garden-style

Figure 7: Mixed-income housing

apartment, where I lived, is a development on land owned by the Atlanta Housing Authority. It is leased to a mega developer in the area on a 50-year term, and is required to devote a certain percentage of units to section 8 housing (Rutheiser 1996:64). The goal of the mixed-income model is intended to be an increase in the quality of life of low-income residents. Yet, the postmodern construction of this gated community promotes privacy by turning the apartment entrances internally and away from the street. Each unit having two entrances further decreases the odds of interaction. The parking lot is sectioned off per building and provides no sidewalks, further decreasing interaction. This design lends to residents

simply coming and going, encouraging commuting instead of pedestrian traffic, much like the result of suburbanization. In many ways, it has failed to achieve the goals set out for it, to be better than the public housing it replaced thus failing to promote a sense of community.

The Atlanta Housing Authority's theory as to how to build strong communities included the revitalization of neighborhoods by transforming public housing projects into mixed-use, market-rate, mixed-income communities in the mid-1990s (Atlanta Housing Authority 2008). In addition, Atlanta Housing Authority intends to build on lessons learned to address the remaining public housing developments.

> AHA's revitalization and community building process is based on four guiding principles: (1) deconcentrating poverty; (2) utilizing private sector "know-how" and market principles; (3) community building (housing and neighborhood schools, recreation, commercial and retail); and (4) raising standards of personal responsibility and accountability. [Atlanta Housing Authority]

The Atlanta Housing Authority states that their objective is to eliminate forever-distressed public housing projects in the city of Atlanta, and replace them with vibrant mixed-use, market-rate, mixed-income communities (Atlanta Housing Authority 2008). The Atlanta Housing Authority's goal of mixed-income communities is to raise the experiences of low-income people to that of the middle-class (Atlanta Housing Authority 2008). Yet, the fences, gates, and alarms provide a false sense of security in an attempt to separate itself from the transience of the area. Some would argue that this development brought middle-class lifestyle down to that of a low-income lifestyle unfortunately an idea that my own experiences support.

In cities across the nation, officials have pledged to preserve and even expand low-income housing, replacing dangerous projects with new communities that keep both

poor and "work force" residents in the mix, although most fail to replace all the public housing units, especially not in the same neighborhood, severing community ties (New York Times 2007). The federal government no longer pays to build housing projects, which in many cities became symbols of concentrated poverty. Since the early 1990s, cities began to tear down distressed projects, to be replaced by mixed communities built with private partners (New York Times 2007). It seems that city planners have learned from some past mistakes but the continuing problem is that not all razed public housing will be replaced. The displacement that is caused is difficult to judge since many residents leave long before they are forced out because the quality of housing declines severely when plans are made for eventual destruction. The re-invention of public housing in the area is mixed-income and marketing will be aimed at the historic black university students, not low-income families that have already left the area.

Moving into the apartment from another city, I did not have the opportunity to see the property before I arrived. It advertises as a gated community, ideal for young

Figure 8: Public housing

families or students with its close proximity colleges and downtown. My particular apartment was on the street that bordered the remaining public housing and lacked fences, leaving my front door exposed to the street. Upon arrival, I was shocked at the fact that well-to-do families would send their young women to the private all-girl school that also bordered the

property regardless of the activity that occurred on the streets here. Young black men would drink beer from a cooler and listen to music while selling drugs in a driveway for the dumpsters next to my apartment. As a result of this type of activity, the law abiding

majority often loses control of public spaces, then live in fear of their neighborhood (Bourgois 2003:10). Despite numerous complaints to the leasing office, this behavior was allowed to continue since it was a space that was rarely used, and these young men often took advantage of this space after the leasing office closed. This behavior was intimidating to me and I often avoided using my front door in order to avoid it, especially since my presence was regularly commented on, both as a female and a minority. When friends would come to visit, it was obvious that they too felt intimidated often regardless of race, gender, or class.

One particular evening, while quietly sitting on my couch studying, I was startled by the sound of a gunshot right outside my door. Having grown up in an urban area, this sound was familiar to me; however, the fact that it was so close was frightening. Despite my concern that someone could be hurt right outside the door, I also did not want to become involved or become a target myself. I waited to see if there was any more activity but it was eerily quiet the rest of the night. While hanging out drinking and listening to music is not inherently dangerous, the other activities associated with this space were. While during the day many young women used this street because of its close proximity to their campus, at night it was a much different demographic.

Even the space inside the gated community was at times intimidating; even though it was designed to control who had access inside of the gates it often failed in practice. The gates were regularly out of order and allowed access to anyone who desired. One evening, inside the gates, a homeless man seeking help approached me. While his intention was not to hurt me, his presence in this supposedly controlled space put me on guard. While some of my young black male neighbors, many of them students

expressed that the activity occurring here did not bother them, many others had a different opinion. The experiences of a black female neighbor were similar to mine, feeling intimidated by the activity that occurred here; she expressed a desire to move as soon as possible. I left when my short six-month lease ended; I did not feel safe living there out of fear for not only my property but also my physical safety.

Blame for the quality of living, or lack thereof, at the Villages at Peach Ville is often placed on the surrounding public housing. Conversations with my neighbors and interviews with other residents reveal dissatisfaction with the apartment complex. An internet forum provides insights into other residents' experiences as well; only 29 percent of postings recommend living there (Apartment ratings 2008). In April of 2006, a former resident of the Villages at Peach Ville posted on-line comments about the apartment complex in relation to its area.

> This place is awful. There are rats and bugs everywhere; junkies all over the place. My car was stolen three times. The management is ghetto and disrespectful. The apartments are nasty and they stink. Badass kids run around all day and night. People from the project across the street come to the apartment and stalk people to find their next victims to rob or rape. [Apartment Ratings 2007]

Another resident stated, "My car was broken into while I was home and it was parked in front of my apartment and the neighbors cars were also broken into; some of them more than once. Don't move here, save yourself" (Apartment Ratings 2007). The vast majority of these posting reveal a negative sentiment for the Atlanta Housing Authority property in relation to its low-income neighbors.

In October of 2006, a former resident also posted the following response, which corresponds with a warning provided to residents from the leasing office. "Various

break-ins, peeping toms, etc... Horrible for the money they want" (Apartment Ratings

2007). Yet another resident posted in the summer of 2006, stating that

> I have been living in Phase II for six years and my apartment was just
> broken into by a so-called homeless person, drinking a can of beer at 7:00
> a.m., he was in the breezeway, so how did he get in the gate? Well, he
> walked right in. The Atlanta Police Department was called out to
> investigate and they did not check on [Peach Ville] drive. This guy
> climbed the balcony and came thru my bedroom window, while APD was
> at the door and said it was a false alarm. We broke our lease and are
> getting the hell out of [Peach Ville]. [Apartment Ratings 2007]

My own experience was similar. Someone attempted to steal my car while it was parked

right outside my bedroom window. I was awoken by the sounds of my neighbor coming

home in the early morning hours. The next day he informed me that he had seen a group

of young men outside our apartment and we concluded that he had interrupted them

before they had managed to pry my lock completely away from the door. While, this

type of property crime does occur virtually anywhere in an urban environment but it

highlights the ineffectiveness of gates and fences. The proximity of the Villages of Peach

Ville in relation to downtown demands high rents yet the quality of living is often seen as

more similar to the area public housing than their upscale loft neighbors.

The Villages at Peach Ville's monthly newsletter expresses the fear experienced

by residents and their public safety concerns. In the six months that I lived there and

collected these monthly handouts, five of them had a paragraph devoted to public safety

issues. The July 2006 newsletter, the first that I received, a small paragraph noted car

vandalism and a robbery. However, the October 2006 was entirely devoted to public

safety concerns. The newsletter states, "Courtesy officers are reporting that residents are

still allowing homeless persons in the community to wash their cars. Please refrain from

this for you and your neighbor's safety." The same newsletter also has a paragraph that states

> Over the past week, we have had reports of a peeping tom(s) prowling throughout our community. The person(s) are shining a flashlight through windows, banging on doors/windows, have appeared early morning hours, and are dressed in all black.

The newsletter also mentions the fact that residents had been placing their trash next to, instead of inside, the dumpster, which was attracting not only rats that were infesting apartments, but also homeless people to rummage through it. It also describes an assault that occurred in the fitness center prompting the office to begin closing it earlier in the evening. The newsletter concludes with regret of having to inform residents of these activities and invites them to attend the next neighborhood watch meeting. Because of illegal activities and crime, residents feared the grounds of their own apartment complex, the surrounding community, and did not make use of its resources such as the nearby City of Atlanta Park.

Public Park: Art Replaces Poverty?

Recently I have become involved in Public Park, the park near my apartment that I had avoided the previous year, by interning with the City of Atlanta Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs Public Art Program. I also began volunteering at the community center that borders the park and serves the Villages at Peach Ville, both during the summer of 2007 after I had moved to another part of the city. This gave me the opportunity to explore the park first hand and to become a part of the conversation as to why its current condition is not inviting for area residents, which include students of

the bordering historic black colleges, the residents of the Villages at Peach Ville, and the residents of the neighborhood of Peach Ville itself. I could relate since I did not feel comfortable walking around the area, much less spending time in this park; it is not a space that I would visit or utilize due to my in bedded fears. Surrounding residents also expressed fear in consideration of illegal activities, such as drug sales, that they witnessed occurring there and the fact that homeless people sought shelter here, often within the playground.

Previously, I had never seen what was actually occurring in the park, I had just assumed due to the drug activity, homelessness, and loitering that I regularly witnessed in the area that this was not a place that I would be welcomed or I wanted to be. Despite the risk of criminalization or incarceration, the drug trade is often the only means for a family to subsist economically because of racial segregation and economic marginalization. With so many individuals in the Peach Ville area living below the poverty line it is no wonder that there is so much drug activity occurring there. This oppositional culture and illegal enterprise often result in violence, substance abuse, and rage that is evident in our inner-city areas such as those surrounding Peach Ville and its public park.

The park's location is ideal for tenants at the Villages at Peach Ville, the remaining public housing residents, university students and Peach Ville residents since it is located were these communities meet. There is also a historic church, which provides meals to homeless people every Saturday morning. Nevertheless, whether rich or poor, black or white this park is avoided by most except for a marginalized population. The park, abandoned to illegal activities, will continue to be viewed as dangerous and avoided without a unified demand from the surrounding communities to reclaim it. Numerous

groups have emerged in the attempt to change the social landscape of Public Park, the City of Atlanta Public Art Program, an after-school high school youth program through one of the historic black colleges, and the Friends of Public Park, a recently formed grass-roots volunteer group that operates out of the community center that borders the park.

The community center serves the Villages at Peach Ville, the director of which is a black woman financed by the developer that leases the land from the Atlanta Housing

Figure 9: Empty lot near Public Park

Authority. The Friends of Public Park is devoted to encouraging diverse use of the park, which the director views as the ideal method to change its current use. We are working to develop events that will utilize the park such as a youth entrepreneurship program, a community garden, cultural arts festivals, and scheduled neighborhood clean-ups. The park is located on Peach Ville Drive, the east side of which is the neighborhood of Peach Ville while the west side is historic black universities. Currently surrounding the west side of the park are university tennis courts and an abandoned lot littered with huge piles of trash that is apparently the university's property. There is also the public housing development, already beginning the process demolition, despite the fact that some sections still have residents.

The city of Atlanta's plans to install public art and new playground equipment, the community centers goals to develop a community garden and youth entrepreneurship activities and the university program's adoption of the park are products of

conceptualized space. These plans are in contrast to the parks current spatial practices of

drug use and homeless retreat. The case of Public Park highlights Lefebvre's (1991)

triad, demonstrating space as a process, produced in inseparable, yet shifting physical and

social contexts. The triad is comprised of representations of space that are imagined,

spatial practices such as policy initiatives, and representational space, which is space as it

is lived and experienced. Spatial practices embrace production and reproduction and

ensure continuity and some degree of cohesion making it difficult to change (Lefebvre

1991:33). However, representational spaces embody complex symbolisms, sometimes

coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also

to art (Lefebvre 1991:33). Lefebvre's (1991) three categories are a beginning from which

to analyze space as an activity and to ask questions about the dialectical relations in terms

of which space is formulated and functions because of various players, such as the City of

Atlanta, the surrounding communities, and those excluded from other social spaces that

are populating the park. The city's Public Art Program gateway project is attempting to

contribute to changing the spatial practices in this public space.

A City of Atlanta – Fulton County Recreation Authority Park Improvement

Revenue Bond was issued in 2005 to fund various projects for the Department of Parks,

Recreation, and Cultural Affairs. The public art project involves federally funded

"Opportunity Bond Municipal Art Projects" (handout May 2007). The locations for these

projects were chosen based on being in depressed neighborhoods in the hope that a

project like this would bring new life to areas that were previously run down. Public

Park was chosen for the proposed gateway "because of its importance as a rich cultural

destination and potential for being a commerce, tourism, and arts hub" and because of its

close proximity to the historic black universities, Peach Ville, and downtown, which makes it suited for a gateway project (handout May 2007). The ultimate potential outcome outlined by the Office of Cultural Affairs is "to change public space so that it is more inviting" through "the unification of diverse communities in a changing social landscape" (handout May 2007). However, without ongoing support and continued use of this space the park will fall back into its current use, that is, if the city's goals can be met and the park can be turned around to satisfy the tastes of middle class consumption in the first place. The Office of Cultural Affairs is taking on the enormous task of re-inventing the space that the park currently occupies.

Surrounded by public housing and serving as a refuge for the city's homeless population and drug activity the parks location and reputation has prevented residents from utilizing the park. Socio-spatial exclusion is manifested in segregation. Exclusion is expressed in urban space through economic discrimination, political discrimination, and cultural exclusion (Madanipour 1996).

> The homeless have an interesting role, having been excluded from their
> socio-spatial context, they then cluster in particular parts of cities, usually
> deteriorated and abandoned, spatializing again what were often thought of
> as de-spatialized areas [Madanipour 1996:161]

Despite it being legal for people to enter public space there may be symbols that express who are accepted and who are excluded. Rosalyn Deutsche (1996) speaks of how through legal, physical, or symbolic means access to public spaces is granted to certain social groups while excluding others. Public art is a symbolic means to designate who belongs and who does not. If the Public Art Program is successful in its goals this public space will be re-invented into one that is inviting to diverse groups of people;

neighboring residents and tourists alike, but symbolically works to exclude the homeless population and drug activity.

Following a meeting with the Friends of Public Park and representatives from the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs, the director of the community center, a black female, the president of the Peach Ville neighborhood association, another black female, and myself walked across the street to look at the park. The meeting was an opportunity to bring together two divergent neighborhoods, Peach Ville and the Villages at Peach Ville, into the process of revamping the park and finding ways to engage residents in the process. We began a discussion of the current situation in the park. We recalled that the Public Art Program project supervisor mentioned that she had spoken to the reverend of the historic African American church, which borders the park. He spoke of how security was required whenever they had events such as choir or band practice. He did say that in general all drug activity would stop when the space is being used for these types of activities, but he also pointed out that it resumes as soon as the last car leaves the parking lot bordering the park.

According to the director of the community center, it is normal to see congregations of men hanging out on the basketball courts, drinking, and selling drugs. The conversation went on with the understanding that once people start using the park for its intended activities, children at play, basketball, or tennis, the homeless people and drug activity will essentially go away although this will not address the underlying issues that cause homelessness or a resort drug activity. Individuals that have been marginalized socially, economically, and culturally tend to have long-term negative relationships with mainstream society and it is difficult to address these issues (Bourgois

2003:12). However, it was also discussed, with other parks as examples and references, if the police are known to be watching the illegal activity will decrease, but it will still not work to address the underlying causes. Unless the police are made aware that the community cares about this space and wants it patrolled, they will not necessarily make their presence heavily known.

When we crossed the street to the park from the community center, to our left was a large pile of garbage completely blocking the sidewalk, spilling out through a chain-linked fence alongside of it, and seemingly of no one's interest to clean up. The director

Figure 10: Garbage at Public Park

of the community center remarked that this is actually on the university's property. The city came out to clean up the sidewalk but the nearby lot is still littered with trash. The sewer smells particularly bad in this location. The mulch has decomposed or washed away down the slope of the park along the side street and the plastic ground covering is exposed. The ground and bushes are covered in garbage ranging from beer bottles and fast food wrappers to discarded blankets and drug bags.

Before venturing into the park, we looked at the lot in between the park and the university tennis courts. It is overgrown and obviously uncared for; there is a dumpster and piles of garbage ranging from furniture to tires. We discussed how the maintenance of this space would not only help to unite two spaces it could also defer any activities that may be occurring in this un-watched space. From the sidewalk there is trail entering the

park between the courts and the rolling hills, here you can see the small piles of possessions left by squatters and men napping on the lawn.

Residents assign a high value to community order and at the community level, disorder, and crime are often inextricably linked (Wilson and Kelling 1996:259). The fact that the park is not cared for demonstrates that no one cares and this "untended behavior" leads to the breakdown of community controls. "A jungle develops: abandoned property, weeds, broken windows, adults stop scolding children, unattached adults replace families, teenagers express anti-authority and loiter and disobey, litter accumulates that no one removes, drunks and panhandling ensues" (Wilson and Kelling 1996:261). Residents will think that crime, especially violent crime is on the rise and will modify their behavior accordingly; there are connections between disorderliness and fear. The neighboring residents of the

Figure 11: Public Park slide

park see its litter and squatters as a signal that this space that is uncontrolled and uncontrollable. In response to this fear, people avoid these spaces. We have forwarded the photos of the piles of garbage on the sidewalk to the university and asked them to take action to clean up and help change the perceptions of the park.

The fence of the basketball and tennis court is collapsed in places, although not preventing the court from being able to be used for playing basketball as well as drug sales, I have been told. The tennis courts have piles of garbage in each corner. A lot of it is leaves, but it apparently has not been cleaned in some time. I wondered when the last

time anyone actually used that tennis court especially when the university also has clean courts nearby. Despite the fact that a landscape architect from the city had just told us that Atlanta parks would all have their courts repainted, Public Park is not included on their list. The walls of the basketball courts are used as benches and a grassy space and a fence separate the park from the church.

As we walk up the slope there is a large congregation of men, all black, middle aged, hanging out, smoking, and chatting in small groups. They greet us with a genuine, upbeat intonation. There are four large octagons with playground structures in them, two of them with sand. The first is a cone shape made up of circular steps that is built up

Figure 12: Public Park playground

quite high, high enough that you cannot see the other side, which has a slide that faces the playground. The men are using the steps as benches situated at varying heights in small groups or alone. Around the curve of the first octagon are three more. One of them has four concrete benches that had recently been painted, by a university group, which has adopted the park, but the tables are missing. The rear of the church is along this space, although separated by a fence, Saturday mornings the church provides breakfast to the homeless here. This space between the courts, the steps, the rear of the church where there are a few additional, traditional benches, and the parking lot seems to be the area with the most activity. Far enough away from the street on each side, on a hill and shaded by structures so that it cannot be easily seen that this space is full of activity.

One of the octagons has three large concrete tubes, which remind me of what sewers must be made of. Inside each of these tubes are someone's belongings and a make shift bed. In the final octagon was a typical playground set with an area to climb up to and a slide. This also has a tube-like feature that someone is using with some foam padding as a shelter. From here, there is a small parking lot off to the left, the playground to the right and rolling hills in front of us to the east. There is a nice view of the skyline, partially obstructed by the numerous, mature trees. A couple of the small trees were damaged beyond recovery, but the grass is in decent condition. From each of the corners bordering Peach Ville Drive there is a winding, circular walking path that would create an ideal layout for the art fairs or markets that the city has discussed with the Friends of Public Park and the neighborhood of Peach Ville as a possibility for the future use of the park. Overall, we comment on how nice of a park it could be. Residents of all social and economic classes, however, express the desire that the park be ridden of its negative elements, namely homelessness and drug use, in order to make it a safe for children to play and comfortable for them to visit.
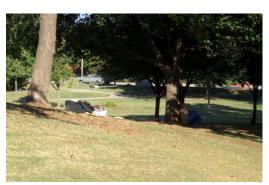

Figure 13: Squatters at Public Park

On my second visit to the park, the community center director and I went to take some photographs. As we enter the park, just as the last time there are men gathered in this space. This time it seems to be younger men, sitting along the wall. We do not necessarily receive as warm of a welcome as we did the first time we visited the park; rather I feel that we are being curiously watched. There is also another group of men standing along

the sidewalk bordering the parking lot, where there is one car. As we walked through to the playground area to photograph how these structures were currently being used, a woman approached us. She hollered out friendly, "Hey, what are you doing, writing a thesis?" I told her in fact that I was, and she went on to ask what school and give me her praise. She then went on to say, "We're not all homeless, we just ain't got no where better to be at." She then said that this is a high crime area and that if I take photos of people, they would run. I ensured her that I did not intend to take any pictures of people, only the park, and I was very careful as to where I aimed my camera.

Elijah Anderson (1996) speaks of how urban residents feel intimidated by streets and parks, an issue in city centers where ghetto communities are adjacent to areas that are undergoing race, class, and cultural changes. The racialized, uneven development that occurred as a result of the economic restructuring of de-industrialization led to white flight; de-segregation led to middle class black flight. In the end, the residential areas surrounding the historic black colleges suffered from a lack of a tax base and the infrastructure suffered. Amenities, like parks apparently receive little attention and become racialized and feared. Independently I would not have visited the park and I understand why the residents of Peach Ville do not use the park, why university students do not hang out there, and why parents from the Villages at Peach Ville do not bring their kids there to play. Making plans for the future use of this park includes changing the current use of the park and the director of the community center sees this use as the key factor in making the park a safe place to be.

Separated from downtown by railroad lines and surrounded by public housing and the historic black neighborhoods, the Peach Ville community's conversation is often

focused on issues of public safety. The local sub-culture of well-off urbanites that reside in Peach Ville has chosen to avoid Public Park despite their outcries for more green space. The only physical barrier between them and the park is a busy street, Peach Ville Drive, but one that can be crossed nonetheless. The physical appearance of the park is in a state of decline and its users are more often lower class blacks than the middle- and upper-class residents of Peach Ville, undermining any sense of community that Peach Ville's residents can relate to in this park. The park lacks diverse users, although I have seen children at play; most often, the activity occurring here is intimidating to surrounding residents. It has been abandoned to the homeless and drug activity, which I am sure, has its own thriving underground economy, and this has resulted in the exclusion of Peach Ville's residents, university students, and The Village at Peach Ville's families. Without a unified demand to reclaim this park, its use will go on unmonitored and unchecked.

I interned with the City of Atlanta Public Art Program, whose goal was to match federal dollars in order to host cultural arts events in the park prior to the installation of the public art. I was tasked with identifying leaders in the business community in close proximity to Public Park. We then met with these business leaders to explore the possibility of expanding the project by leveraging funds to engage artists and community members in additional projects such as, temporary art with children and community residents, art fairs at Public Park with Peach Ville artists or artists from the historic black colleges, or artist workshops. Attempts to secure meetings with business owners have been difficult; those that have responded have required re-scheduling for various reasons, deadlines have been set, re-set, and often re-set again.

Due to my ties with the community of Peach Ville, my initial assignment included identifying businesses that have a stake in the surrounding community, have a history of contributing to charities or being involved in community outreach, and were financially capable of a donation. Once they were identified as such, they would be initially contacted to invite them to be involved in the project. The goal was to raise awareness and gain community support and in the end, additional funding. Many of the business leaders in the community attended the neighborhood association meeting where I was introduced to the project, so I began conversing with some members of the community that I knew were aware of it. To my disappointment, initial community response was nowhere near as excited as I was. Since Peach Ville is intent on improving their community in so many ways, such as safety and appearance, I expected to find the community to be in support of the Public Art Program.

A Public Art Program handout concludes with the statement "We are excited by the potential of this Public Art project to become a model for neighborhood unification as Atlanta moves towards economic development through public and private initiatives" (handout, June 2007). The initial outreach efforts in Peach Ville occurred when representatives from the Public Art Program meet with gallery owners on May 9, 2007. According to the Public Art Program, they were met with "enthusiastic interest" and "suggestions for moving forward." From this meeting the Public Art Program was added to the agenda of the next neighborhood association meeting, where I was introduced to the project. In a synopsis that was provided at my following meeting with the Public Art Program on June 17, 2007, it was noted that the questions raised by the community gave a "clear sense of the significant potential" of this project (handout, June 2007). The

questions of the gallery owners addressed by Public Art Program regarded issues of public safety and park amenities. The handout also noted that a Public Art Program representative had spoke with residents on the side of the park bordering the historic black colleges who expressed the same sort of safety concerns. Overall, the initial project outreach was met with support, Peach Ville artists expressed the interest to hold a larger meeting, and the Peach Ville Neighborhood Association offered to write a letter of endorsement.

My own experience regarding the response of the residents and business owners in Peach Ville was not as positive. The Public Art Program presented its project with a budget of $300,000, yet the Opportunity Bond is only providing $150,000. My initial task with the project was to identify businesses that would be most likely to contribute to interim projects proposed for the park while the permanent Gateway project is organized. Having contacts in Peach Ville through my thesis research, I mentioned my involvement to a few of these individuals. The response I received could be equated with a huff. They did not seem as enthused about the project as the Public Art Program summary had reported. Granted, I did not speak with the same individuals that the city had: one of the business owners, a white middle class man, with whom I spoke inquired into why they needed that much money. He commented sarcastically that they could give him $150,000 and he would put up a sculpture, being an artist himself. Another business owner, a middle class black male, expressed his interpretation of potential disinterest; Peach Ville residents see the park as "the other side of the tracks" and it is not a space that they visit or utilize.

This causes me to reflect on the inefficiency of the government at all levels. The funds that are allocated for these projects are limited, and a two-year completion period is common. The lack of resources to complete interim projects in the park and the limited amount of time the city representatives actually spent on the ground talking with the community were particularly detrimental to its success. If I had not been simultaneously interning with the Public Art Program and volunteering at the community center bordering the park, these two groups would not have met and an important part of the conversation would have been missing. The city proposed temporary art projects, workshops, and fairs, but these amounted to nothing more than suggestions for projects that the community could take on themselves. With a lack of funding, resources, or interest in attempting to change space by imposing different practices than those that are currently common in the park, these attempts at community involvement resulted in nothing more than ideas that had no means of fruition.

Jane Jacobs (1961) writes in *The Life and Death of Great American Cities*, "people do not use city open space because it is there and because city planners or designers wish they would" (90). It is necessary to increase the popularity of the park among the surrounding neighborhoods since unpopular parks "have the same problems as streets without eyes, and their dangers spill over into the areas surrounding, so that streets along such parks become known as dangerous places too and are avoided" (Jacobs 1961:95). It essentially boils down to the fact that the park itself cannot be seen to improve the quality of the neighborhood, but rather it is the neighborhood's use of the park that will cause its condition to improve. A neighborhood park is a "creature of its surroundings" and is the result of the way that "its surroundings generate mutual support

from diverse uses, or fail to generate such support" (Jacobs 1961:98). The Public Art Project and the new playground equipment will only be successful in changing the current condition of the park if they attract a diverse group from the surrounding communities into the park. Art can serve as a symbol and put perceptions of life into a park but only a genuine mix of economic and social diversity that will result in "people with different schedules, has meaning to the park and the power to confer the boon of life upon it" (Jacobs 1961:101). In its current state, the park seemingly only attracts those that have been expelled from other social spaces: drug dealers, addicts, and homeless people.

It is frustrating in the sense that when I became involved in the Public Art Program I was wide-eyed with enthusiasm due to the positive spin that the city representatives had placed on their project. I expected the community of Peach Ville to be just as excited as I was but most often found that people saw the project as hopeless and had little faith in the City's predictions for change. Seeing this as an opportunity to "bring together diverse communities in a changing social landscape," the impression that is given is that of community voices calling out for change. However, in reality the project amounts to not much more than a symbolic means to attract commerce and tourism in order to eventually change the way that this space is currently being used. In its current state the park is seen as intimidating to surrounding residents, regardless if they are from the historic black neighborhood, Peach Ville, or the Villages at Peach Ville.

Without community involvement the face of the park will not change and the currently un-checked behavior that is occurring here will continue. The City of Atlanta Public Art Program sought to identify key players in the neighborhoods, such as business

owners and developers. However, they failed to identify community motivators, such as the director of the community center bordering the park. If the president of the Peach Ville Neighborhood Association had not introduced me to the director, the City of Atlanta would have missed an important voice, who is more vested in the park than other leaders in the area. She has so far collected $23,000 in grant funds that will be utilized to establish a community garden and youth entrepreneurship opportunities in the park, in my opinion far exceeding the any "change" that the City of Atlanta may impose through its Public Art Program.

Despite the fact that Public Park is located across the street from the official confines of the neighborhood of Peach Ville, it is far from their mind as part of their community. It is most often viewed as the "other side of the tracks." Meanwhile, on the opposite side of Peach Ville, portions of land that belonged to the railroad industry are currently unused and slated to be developed into green space, anxiously awaited by residents. A developer heavily situated in Peach Ville since its rejuvenation, is responding to the demands of the community by including a privately owned and managed park that will be open to the public in his new development. Community input noted that this would require 24-hour surveillance, park furniture that would prevent anyone from sleeping on it, and regular maintenance. The excitement surrounding this park, in my impression, far exceeded that of the re-invention of Public Park.

The area of Peach Ville has just recently seen revitalization. Having been essentially abandoned during de-industrialization, it has seen a comeback since the late 1980s and early 1990s as Atlanta's premier arts district and the home of many new urban residents. Many of its upper-middle-class residents see the prevalence of homelessness

in the area as a public safety issue. Atlanta is no longer intending to finance many existing homeless shelters and the one located in Peach Ville is already overwhelmed with the number of homeless that seek refuge there. I have been told that in the past when the shelters in other parts of the city were full, homeless people would be bused to Peach Ville. If they are not able to gain access to the Peach Ville shelter, the community is left with an even higher number of homeless people in the area. The landscape of the area also fuels this phenomenon. Being surrounded by the railroad and expressway bridges, temporary shelter is often sought within close proximity of Peach Ville's middle-upper class residents. The industrial past of these streets also facilitates homeless refuge; numerous vacant lots and retail-like entrances provide space to rest.

Recommendations

The public spaces of the streets are left to the poor and homeless people while fortified enclaves serve to separate the middle and upper classes from the marginalized. Fear causes people avoid these spaces. Urban residents feel intimidated by streets and parks in city centers where ghetto communities are adjacent to areas that are undergoing race, class, and cultural changes. The physical appearance of the park is in a state of decline and its users are more often lower class blacks than the middle- and upper-class residents of Peach Ville, undermining any sense of community that Peach Ville's residents, regardless of race, can relate to in this park. Peach Ville residents are already in the process of developing their own privately managed park similar to other public/private parks in the Atlanta area. Regardless of the potential outcome of the public art project in Public Park, Peach Ville residents will be relaxing in their very own,

self-controlled space. However, if the community seeks a truly inclusive, truly democratic public space it may cause a little discomfort in its users every now and then (Berman 1986; Mitchell 1995). People must learn to accept it if they want to live in a truly "diverse" neighborhood. Unfortunately, it is more likely only certain types of diversity will be welcomed and others will excluded through symbolic and physical means. This information can be used to empower urban planners in these communities.

Setha Low, Dana Taplin, and Suzanne Scheld have compiled "lessons for promoting and managing social and cultural diversity" in their book, *Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity* (Low 2005:4-5). These lessons were formulated from a series of ethnographies relating to parks and can be used as guidelines for decision making in regards to planning, management, and design of park projects. These lessons state that 1) if people's histories are not represented or they are erased they will not use the park, 2) income and visitation patterns must be considered to provide access for all social groups, 3) social interaction can be maintained among diverse groups by providing safe, spatially adequate territories for everyone within the larger space, 4) differences in the ways that social classes use and value public space must be considered, 5) restoration should not focus only on scenic features; facilities must also be addressed, and 6) "symbolic ways of communicating cultural meaning are an important dimension of place attachment that can be fostered to promote cultural diversity" (Low 2005:4-5). These lessons demonstrate that social diversity can be maintained in public space and can be used to judge its success.

Since the park is part of a historically African American neighborhood and named after a teacher from one of the historic black colleges it is important that these identifying

traits be incorporated into the revitalization of the park, possibly in connection with the Public Art Program. Since access to the park is free, symbolic means to access should be considered. Ideally, all social groups would be included in the park's reinvention; however, the illegal activities that often occur here must be addressed in another way. Providing facilities for the homeless people that frequent the park should also be taken into consideration. The potential outcome outlined by the Office of Cultural Affairs is "to change public space so that it is more inviting" through "the unification of diverse communities in a changing social landscape" (handout, May 2007). The gateway project is intended to be a cultural destination and it may prove to be ideal as a tourist attraction. Being in a high traffic location, it may become a recognizable landmark for residents and tourists alike. The park being surrounded by public housing and serving as a refuge for the city's homeless population has prevented residents around Peach Ville from utilizing the park. If the Public Art Program is successful in its goals this public space will be re-invented into one that is inviting to diverse groups of people; upper class residents of Peach Ville, mixed-income residents at the Villages at Peach Ville, university students, or the tourists that the Public Art Program hopes to attract. However, it will exclude those groups that are viewed as threatening, homeless people, drug dealers, and addicts who will be forced to resort to other areas. In order to change life, this space will be changed through physical and symbolic means.

The city currently lacks options to provide to the homeless people, drug dealers, and addicts that are currently frequenting Public Park, instead the Public Art Program and the plans to install new playground equipment will effectively usher these people to other parts of the city instead of addressing underlying issues. The director of the community

center has considered alternatives for the homeless people who regularly inhabit the park. There is the possibility employing them to clean up the current condition of the park and thereby creating a sense of ownership so that they may care about and feel vested in its future condition. A fully welcoming space for them is hard to imagine yet sweeping the "problem" under the rug is not actually going to solve it. The church that borders the park does have a meal program that operates on Saturday mornings. Conversations have revolved around leveraging funds to create a more complete program such as access to showers and toilets, an overnight shelter in the basement of the church, or employment services. If the church is empty most of the time, why not do something to utilize this space and do something about the homeless situation in the park that it borders? There is also the possibility of installing self-cleaning public toilets, which are currently located in Woodruff Park and in the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority system without the problems associated with traditional restrooms (Exeloo 2008).

> The Exeloo's advanced design and technology features provide you with more than just a public restroom. Our computerized models' electronic monitoring systems provide your location with the technological equivalent of a security guard, bathroom attendant, janitor and night watchman without the expensive labor costs normally required with traditional designs. [Exeloo 2008]

The number one problem to these solutions is the fact that the money is not there to finance them as other shelters in the city are closing because of a lack of funding.

Another option to address the homelessness problem in Public Park could be modeled off a tactic that the Atlanta Police are now employing. They have a new approach when encountering homeless residents who loiter at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (City Newsbytes 2008). Project H.O.P.E., Homeless Outreach Prevention Emergency Services, is a unit of the Zone 5 Atlanta Police Department,

whose officers are specially trained to identify the needs of the chronically homeless, specifically those with mental health issues (City Newsbytes 2008). Officers work with the 24/7 Gateway Center and other partners to direct homeless residents toward supportive transitional services and in 2008, APD and HJAIA launched H.O.P.E. Team–Airport, HTA (City Newsbytes 2008). In 2007, Airport APD officers had approximately 700 encounters with homeless residents, now HTA directs these residents toward service-organizations that will assist them with self-sufficiency and at the time of the article, HTA had referred 44 homeless residents to the 24/7 Gateway Center (City Newsbytes 2008). "We can address the homeless issue at the Airport from a holistic approach," said Major Daryl Tolleson, Airport Section Commander,

> With an approach of helping the homeless get into treatment, housing, job training, employment, and family reunification through our partnerships, we move away from the traditional law enforcement strategies and become a more proactive partner with those whose goal it is to return people to self-sufficiency. [City Newsbytes 2008]

Before this approach would be effective law enforcement would have to be drawn to this park, currently the activity here is unchecked. Without a community demand for policing the activity in the park will continue and the homeless here will be left with few options.

Not all the people who use the park are homeless; many are addicted to drugs that they know they can find in the area or in the park. Instead of ushering people out of the park the community center is attempting to create opportunities for them to opt for a different, healthier, lifestyle by implementing "Youth Market." The program will address healthy eating by creating a community garden and an entrepreneurial opportunity for local high school youth to organize and own their own "fresh air open markets" where they can distribute fresh fruits and vegetables in their own community. This project

affords a great and unique opportunity to introduce healthy living and eating in a neighborhood that is predominately made up of low income and African American residents and students. The goal is to develop activity, use, volunteerism, and ownership of the park, which will increase neighborhood participation, foster intergenerational relationships, and provide a foundation for getting youth involved in their community through park projects and scheduled physical activities. Although it does not address the underlying issues of drug abuse and the underground economy, it does provide other entrepreneurial options for youth. This will provide an alternative use for the park and the people perpetuating illegal activity will be forced to relocate. This may not address the underlying social problems that cause the high proportion of drug activity in the neighborhood, but it will provide an alternative for youth.

The City of Atlanta Public Art Program is working to fuel symbolic means of social change without any real consideration for the impacts on the disadvantaged that currently utilize the park. I have worried that I am essentially part of the problem, not the solution. On the other hand, my involvement with the community center provided me the opportunity to be involved in grassroots efforts that do take into consideration the park's current population like the possibility of employing the homeless to clean up the park or incorporating the neighboring church into programs to help these people better their lives. Neighborhood unity will be the driving force in the implementation of programs that will effectively change public space, developing and empowering neighborhood groups to make recommendations regarding community issues.

The neighborhood of Peach Ville is already in the works to develop a privately managed public park that will exclude marginalized groups through a fortified enclave

like setting. Businesses will border the park, allowing for constant eyes on the street; the park may be under video surveillance or security guards will be hired, and furniture will either be removed at night or will be constructed to not allow people to lie upon it. I see this as threat to the success of the City of Atlanta's Public Art Program since neighboring Peach Ville residents have shown little interest in revamping Public Park because they will have their own park that will closely monitored and controlled. I predict that Peach Ville residents will be more likely to relax in the new private park than they would be comfortable venturing in Public Park even if its developments are successful in discouraging its current users from continuing to use it in the manner that they do.

The project supervisor with whom I intern met with the developers of this private park/new construction endeavor; she is convinced that the development will not be a threat to the success of their project. Personally, I disagree. From the feedback, that I have gotten on the ground Peach Ville residents view Public Park as the "other side of the tracks" and are not motivated to make it a comfortable place for them. Although they are very much excited about securing the new green space of this privately managed public park, they will be able to mold it to their liking by providing input to the developers who are heavily connected with the area.

Although hope is not lost, the president of the neighborhood association informed us that there was an individual looking for a space to have regular art fairs in Peach Ville. There is an empty lot comfortably within the boundaries of the neighborhood that could serve this type of event. This space has been approved to be used but it is slated for development in the near future and will no longer be available. The president sees this as an opportunity to lure the residents of Peach Ville over to Public Park in order to reinvent

the way this space is currently being used. She compared the residents' current complaints of not having a park to that of their complaints of not having grocery store. While Peach Ville residents proclaim, "we need a grocery store!" she responds, "there's one right down the street, but they won't go there," much like Public Park. We agreed that the most likely reason that they do not go to the nearby grocery is that it serves historically black neighborhoods, whose residents are often of a different racial background and socio-economic class than themselves. She plans to reinforce the idea to the residents of Peach Ville that Public Park is their neighborhood park. Its proximity to the neighborhood is undeniable; the lines that are separating them are imaginary. The racial and class difference from its current users is seen as the issue as to why Peach Ville residents do not currently utilize the park. With the presidents' support, the Friends of Public Park may be able to change the perception of Peach Ville residents about Public Park and encourage its use, by engaging them in planned activities such as an art fair or neighborhood clean-up initiatives.

I plan to provide continued support to the Friends of Public Park, the Youth Market project, and the City of Atlanta Public Art Program. I will continue to be a member of the Friends of Public Park group by planning monthly meeting, distributing e-mails on the groups' behalf, and seeing the logo contest that I designed through until its completion this summer. I will be working as a consultant for Youth Market by compiling relevant neighborhood demographics, designing a survey, and community outreach. I also will continue my internship with the City of Atlanta Public Art Program and work to maintain a relationship between the city and grassroots efforts like the Friends of Public Park. It was important to the city to create a synergy between

themselves and the communities that would be affected by their project. Recently, my role has continued to provide community outreach by assisting in hosting a breakfast to bring community leaders together in the Public Art project. The three finalists that the city has chosen for the public art project in Public Park will attend the next Friends of Public Park meeting where the community will be able to convey to the artists what would best symbolically represent their neighborhood.

Only the future will tell what is in store for Public Park. Peach Ville residents are already in the process of developing their own privately managed park similar to other public/private parks in the Atlanta area. By the time the public art goes in Public Park, Peach Ville residents will be relaxing in their very own, self-controlled space. Conversation concerning its development surrounds safety features and means to exclude the undesirable elements that are in Public Park. The public art project serves as a symbolic means to re-invent the park. Grassroots efforts like those of the community center director, that strive to revive the park, and the phasing out of public housing in the area, and the locations rising popularity as a cultural destination will work together to change to social make-up of the landscape and change is inevitable. Urban residents will continue to resort to privatized parks unless the park is seen as safe by surrounding residents.

Chapter 5: CONCLUSION

One can see evidence of the processes of gentrification just by walking the streets in Peach Ville. Generally, downtown Atlanta has not been viewed by the middle and upper classes as safe. The influx of the upper and middle class back into downtown Atlanta blurred the lines of segregation so they were redrawn in new ways that create distance between the social classes. Segregation is fueled through the creation of place, often outwardly casting the appearance of diversity. Living and working in Peach Ville has provided opportunities to reveal the thoughts of residents and business owners while experiencing the types of social fear that they encounter. This fear is socially and ideologically constructed and yet another name for racism and classism which leads to an indiscriminate fear of all black and homeless men. Gender politics intersect with racial politics and economic exploitation in multiple ways. Women are taught to fear men and transient urban areas, especially those that lack "eyes on the street," preventing them from walking alone or after a certain time of night.

The transformation of downtown Atlanta is not complete; Peach Ville is actively pursuing its future as a true walking community. Peach Ville's vision statement totes itself as an urban oasis in a historic downtown neighborhood, attracting visitors through its unique mixture of businesses and a group of diverse residents, yet the discourses of residents and visitors alike express the fear associated with the lower and under classes requiring a certain extent of fortification before it can truly be enjoyed. The primarily white middle and upper class residents' response to fortify, gate, and monitor their community only exacerbate race and class lines by inscribing them into the physical environment. The media tends to focus on the burden of the poor on the middle and

upper class's shoulders, not the burden placed on the poor. This shortsightedness is brought to fruition in the gentrification of cities that leads to the displacement of the poor through physical and symbolic means.

As a research site, Peach Ville provides an array of specific instances of urban change in a gentrified landscape. Having previously been an industrial area, deindustrialization caused Peach Ville to become neglected and eventually prime for reinvestment. Middle and upper class suburbanites return to downtown, in order to be closer to entertainment and work, resulted in homes that were designed to separate them from the transience of the street, highlighting social differences. Simultaneously, public housing is being replaced with mixed-income private-public collaborations that do not provide as many low-income units that used to be available in the area contributing to its changing demographics. In addition, the city of Atlanta's installation of a nationally recognized artists' gateway project in Public Park is another step towards transforming Peach Ville and its surrounding communities into middle class neighborhoods. Grassroots community organizations are also working to change current social conditions. My research also highlights black agency in gentrification, a topic that requires further investigation. In addition, class tensions reveal the disparities in wealth between economic classes in the United States and warrants further exploration. It is important that this site be examined in the future to determine the success, failure, or shortcomings of the initiatives that are being enacted.

The common model of gentrification where middle and upper class people move into working class neighborhoods and eventually displace the previous residents cannot be applied so easily here. Since Peach Ville had been an industrial area, there were not

any residents to be displaced. Instead open spaces became artist studios and live/work spaces and eventually evolved into high-end loft homes. However, low-income neighboring residents are being displaced due to the current political take on public housing that has reduced the number of low-income units available. Peach Ville residents' reaction to the Public Art Program and lack of interest in Public Park highlights the fact that they are concerned primarily with events occurring within the confines of their neighborhood and that they view the surrounding communities as the "other side of the tracks" perpetuating social and racial segregation. Community activists from Peach Ville and its surrounding communities also promote a middle class lifestyle by trying to find methods to usher homelessness and drug activity out of their neighborhood to other parts of the city. Unfortunately the resources to effectively help these populations is not readily available, funding that has been secured by the grassroots community groups is focused on youth and changing the future of the neighborhood not addressing its current underlying issues.

Fear, insecurity, and social difference have been associated with Atlanta's urban center, which prompts the returning upper classes to barricade themselves within socially segregated and homogeneous gated communities and leads to the development of carefully monitored and controlled fortified enclaves, such as Peach Ville. Forms of architecture such as gated communities, public space like Public Park, and economic enterprises that produce fortified enclaves are vital in analyzing the meaning behind social productions of place, which results in spatial segregation that draws distinct lines between socio-economic classes and complicates race relations. Politics of public space and social fear create new scenarios for social and racial segregation in the processes of

gentrification, such as privatization and fortification. The exclusion and residential

segregation perpetuated by the returning suburban middle and upper-middle classes

exacerbate racial and class tensions within Atlanta. As modern architecture is molded

into a post-modern ideal, the race and class tensions become all the more evident.

Despite efforts towards returning the public to public space, fear and violence have

dramatically altered the re-invention of space into place that is fortified and private.

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APPENDIX: Interview Questions*

Age?
Sex?
Resident, how long?
Business Owner, how long?

Why did you move here?

What are your perceptions of what Peach Ville was before its renovations?

Describe where you grew up.
Was it diverse?

What are your earliest memories associated with diversity or discrimination?

Could you describe any relationships or experiences with people who seemed different from you in terms of class, race, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomics, political views, sexual orientation?

Could you describe any experiences that made you aware of your or another's class, ethnicity, race, gender, or sexual orientation in Peach Ville?

What role does Peach Ville play in developing your vision of unity and diversity?

How have your actual experiences in Peach Ville in terms of diversity and community compared with your expectations of diversity and community in Peach Ville?

What are your thoughts and feelings regarding Peach Ville's approach to addressing diversity, if any?

What is your ideal regarding a vision of community?
How have you tried to actualize your vision of unity and diversity?
Describe your experiences in this process.

Could you describe any relationships or experiences with people who seemed different from you in terms of class, race, ethnicity, socioeconomics, or sexual orientation in Peach Ville?

Describe experiences you've had in Peach Ville in which you were aware that you or another person was different in terms of gender, age, class, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, or socioeconomics?

*Interviewees were asked some or all of these questions.