

Macro-Anxieties in a Micro Community

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A strange reversal has taken place. Where it was once the poor who did not trust or want to participate in the census, now, in the foothills of Scottsdale, Arizona's mountains, exclusive gated communities with home owner associations are not letting in the census takers.¹ They do not want to be counted. They do not want to be counted on. They do not want to count. The federal government is not welcome there — only their own government. These communities are suspicious. There is a fear of association. There is fear in the association.

The Bay Club and the Racquet Club; La Contessa; McCormick Ranch; Gainey Ranch, McCormick Ranch, DC Ranch and Scottsdale Ranch; The Sands: their names portray a lifestyle wrapped with ease and exclusivity. These are the names of various "gated" or "walled" communities in Scottsdale, Arizona. The phenomena of the gated community in the United States has been well documented. For the most part, it is seen as a determined extension of a suburban typology beginning with Ebenezer Howard's Garden City, Bill Levitt's Levittown, and Del Webb's Sun City. Critical assessment of the rise of the walled community usually centers around questions of exclusiveness, security, and property value. Most debates center around the idea that inhabitants of gated communities buy into the development for reasons of safety, although it is widely acknowledged that belief in an increased property value comes in as a close second driving force for acquisition. Although the gated community is a hotly debated issue, little research has been done into its basic social and developmental mechanisms and structuring devices. This paper will be an attempt to unpack the typology of "gated community." It will examine the communities' constituent elements through a critique of the mythology of exclusiveness; relate this emergent typology to a nostalgic and re-contextualized version of the city's skyscraper; and finally will suggest that the psychological mechanism which structures the societal mechanism that creates the gated community is that of paranoia.

In the late nineteenth century an Englishman by the name of Ebenezer Howard envisioned a new type of town or city that would be based upon the concept of gardens or greenbelts which flowed around the nucleus of the city in concentric circular patterns. This idea was a direct response to the desuetude of the modern city caused by the ravages of capitalism and the Industrial Revolution. Although industry had catapulted Howard's native Great Britain to a position of world power, it had also left the English landscape littered with factory towns that spewed garbage onto their streets and into the air.

Howard constructed a model for a city that would not do away with the industrial centers, one that would begin to create satellite communities to draw people out of the darkness and congestion and into more pastoral industrial landscapes. In 1898 he published a book entitled *Tomorrow: A Path to Real Reform* which was reprinted a few years later as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*. This book was widely sold,

reprinted, and disseminated in the United States at the turn of the century.

Howard's plan, which was greatly influenced by the writings of Karl Marx, called for buildings to be built over a six thousand acre site that was owned by a limited company of four individuals. The limited company would own the land and would put out mortgages to interested individuals and companies. Each Garden City would have a limited population of around thirty thousand inhabitants and once that figure was reached new satellite communities would be built to house the overflow. These thirty thousand inhabitants would live on about one thousand acres of land: about one and one half miles in diameter.² Howard felt that this plan would allay the overcrowding of the industrial city. The center of the community would have a nucleus park that would be about four and one half acres in size and would be surrounded by principal public buildings. Around the park there would be a Crystal Palace that would serve as a kind of shopping mall. In addition, industry would be allowed and encouraged on the outskirts of the city, but this industry would have to rely only on electric power to cut down on pollution. The perimeter of the city would be comprised of about five thousand acres of agricultural land that an additional two thousand farmers would live upon. "This greenbelt would provide food for the city, prevent its expansion beyond the planned optimum size, and isolate it from outside forces that could change it."³ Howard saw the Garden City as combining the benefits of the city and country into a more **holistic** environment. The anxiety of the late nineteenth century would be allayed by his semi-utopian community. Here, instead of the insistent separation of city and country life called for by many politicians and social engineers, city and country life would be blended together with an appropriate amount of nostalgia for the pre-capitalist/pre-industrial society alongside the benefits reaped from capitalist economic strategies.⁴

A number of Garden Cities were built by disciples of Howard; the most notable of these communities were Letchworth in England and Hempstead Gardens in London. Hempstead was to become quite successful and a well-liked alternative to the satellite Garden City Community. Instead of trying to place the Garden City outside of the important centers of commerce, as they did rather unsuccessfully with Letchworth, the design team of Robert Parker and Raymond Unwin decided to try Garden City concepts inside of an established city: London. Here concepts such as the dead-end street and a highly developed civic center were developed as well as "a new approach to the network of streets laid out in relation to the green areas and to their different functions." Later, the dead end street or the cul de sac was to become a major force in American town planning. Parker and Unwin believed that the alienating and depersonalizing city would be overcome by "the systematic and organized reemergence of nuclei in which values such as 'quality' and 'community' " would be stressed. They said "a decent home and garden for every family, that

is the irreducible minimum.”⁵

The Garden City Idea was brought to the United States by the Regional Planning Associations of American, also known as the RPAA.⁶ This group of planners and writers were bent on bringing socially responsible urban and rural planning and housing to America. The ideas of this group can be traced to the success of projects such as Radburn, NJ; the Greenbelt program; and the Tennessee Valley Rural Electrification Administration. The RPAA was well aware of the importance and impact of Howard’s book *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* and they believed that greenbelts and limited-size towns for work and living would be a good alternative to the overburdened American city.⁷ The main concept behind Radburn, NJ was to build a town that would be planned to respond to what they termed “contemporary good living.” Norman Bel Geddes wrote that Radburn would be “[a] town built to live in—today and tomorrow—a new town newer than the garden cities and the first major innovation in town planning since they were built.”⁸ Radburn was begun in 1928 and by the end of the Depression it became clear that the idea of uniting industry with housing would not materialize. Its’ founders Clarence Stein and Henry Wright were forced to concede that Radburn would essentially function in the role of a suburb.⁹

The “Radburn Idea” as it became known across the country was comprised of a few key moves that were to change the shape of development forever. Among these moves were the concepts of keeping vehicle traffic separate from pedestrian traffic and reversing houses so that “living areas face a large interior greenbelt and the kitchen and service areas faced the street.”¹⁰ In addition, an important aspect of the Radburn Idea was the safety and well being of children. Distances that children had to travel to school were kept down to no more than a half mile radius from their homes. Roads were separated into service and pedestrian access and children could wander the community on the pedestrian roadways without ever having to cross a vehicle access. Play grounds were plentiful as were community centers and there were two community pools. The family was a central motivating factor behind the Radburn Idea. According to Evan McKenzie in his ground breaking study of private communities and private governments entitled *Privatopia*, the “most enduring contribution [of Radburn] may be the form of private government, based on restrictive covenants administered through a homeowner association...”¹¹ A homeowners association “is an organization of homeowners residing within a particular development whose major purpose is to maintain and provide community facilities and services for the common enjoyment of the residents.”¹² Most importantly for the study of the rise of gated communities in the United States, Radburn was to help develop the housing types known as common-interest developments (CIDs) and planned-unit developments (PUDs).

Evan McKenzie clearly identifies the definition of common interest development. He defines common interest developments as a form of common ownership of private residential property that is coupled with individual use or ownership of a particular residential unit. CIDs include: condominiums, planned developments, or stock cooperatives and community apartments. He goes on to say that there is mandatory membership of all property owners in an association that governs the use of community owned property and regulated the use of the individual unit. There is a set of governing documents called the CC&R which provide for the financing of the association and mandates the procedures for its governance, and the rules that owners must follow with respect to common areas and individual units.¹³

McKenzie has found during his research that the CID and its predecessor the Garden City have a number of things in common.

American CIDs are both like and unlike the garden city. The similarities include master planning of large scale communities; isolation of the development from its surroundings and protection against change; capitalization on dislike of city life to attract residents; development of a government based on a

corporate charter and attempts to replace politics with management; and creation of a government with greater powers than that of the city.¹⁴

Where the CID and Garden City differ are the stresses on social and physical dimensions of community life. In the American CID the stress of planning is on the physical plant and the economic value of the land and housing, where the social and economic structures of the community (which is the stress of Howard’s concerns) are not valued. According to McKenzie, the resulting new American communities are never truly self sufficient and real with a true economic base.¹⁵

In the early 1960s the Urban Land Institute (ULI), a Washington-based planning and development research think tank, began to adopt policies on the use and management of open space and common property.¹⁶ The ULI had already criticized the prevalent planning practice in America of suburban large-lot, low-density zoning.¹⁷ The concept of common interest development was seen as a viable solution to the problem of low-density housing eating up the open spaces in the United States at a staggering rate. The idea of a higher density development was vigorously promoted by institutions such as the ULI and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Higher density in a suburban condition was seen as a solution that was thought to be compatible with the “maintenance of property values and exclusionary practices in suburbia.”¹⁸ As Dennis Judd points out, the practice of exclusion had always been seen in the housing industry as an idea synonymous with low density development. Exclusion kept property values high and obviously kept neighborhoods relatively homogenous. As soon as it was realized that a change had to come about in terms of land use in suburban situations, the same exclusionary practices were appropriated on behalf of the cause of high density development.¹⁹ In promoting higher density development, the ULI and the FHA were also bending to pressures from developers who wanted to keep down the cost of development while satisfying the needs of homeowners and public agencies who wanted to maintain open spaces and the feeling of nature in their communities.²⁰

According to Evan McKenzie a number of factors contributed to the rise of CIDs in the United States. He notes that “for housing to be built at a profit, the land, construction materials, labor, and other expenses must add up to a per unit cost that is lower than the projected selling price of the house...”²¹ Land prices began to rise and builders had to buy more expensive sites onto which they could build their developments. This increase in land costs demanded that builders and planners had “to find way to place more houses on less land. Developers were also keenly aware that the countryside was being gobbled up by one subdivision after another and that preserving open space was becoming much more important to the local government agencies that granted construction permits.”²² They achieved this so-called balance with the development of CIDs which allowed them to shrink the lot size while maintaining the appearance of a more natural landscape. The smaller lot size married with common held open space created “low cost amenities like parks, and tennis courts without increasing the size of the overall development.”²³

“Cluster Subdivisions” were the natural antidote to traditional subdivisions such as the Levittowns which were more or less laid out on an orthogonal system. Houses would be grouped fairly closely together in what was called a “module” and “by grouping the houses on small lots a developer could either leave part of the land in its natural state, saving development costs, or build some relatively inexpensive amenity on it. In 1960 the American Society of Planning Officials put out a report entitled “Cluster Subdivisions” and it noted that most cluster designs provide for special features such as parks, swimming pools, golf courses, or tennis courts, on common land.²⁴ Not only would cluster subdivisions begin to raise the dollar value of the land upon which they were built, but they would also save costs to the builders and, in addition, the Urban Land Institute seemed to

be very interested in and concerned with maintaining a strong feeling of exclusivity within this new housing typology by the means of the home owners association— an idea adapted or adopted from the initial experiments in Radburn.

Looking to Radburn, NJ as the most important source demonstrating the power of home owner associations, Charles Ascher, in his report *Cluster Subdivisions*, maintains that “open spaces in cluster developments should not be dedicated to the public, but should be privately owned and maintained by home owner associations.”²⁵ The politics of exclusion became a prevalent discourse early on in the debate over common interest development.²⁶

The idea of Homeowner Associations and privatized open space was not new and had its roots in place well before Radburn, NJ was developed. In 1966, the Urban Land Institute produced a technical bulletin entitled *The Homes Association Handbook* in 1966. This report recorded the history of the homeowners association and maintenance and ownership of common open space in residential developments as having its origins in early seventeenth century England:

When the Earl of Leicester built his London townhouse and laid out Leicester Square in front of it. By 1700 the square was surrounded by buildings and, by 1743, the property owners had employed a legal device to assure the exclusive use and maintenance of this park... [a] century later the idea was introduced to America in Gramercy Park, built in 1831 by Samuel Ruggles... (he) “laid out a square in the London fashion, and surrounded it with an eight foot fence with gates to which residents in the neighborhood had keys.”²⁷

The concept of the Homeowners Association quickly made its way to the American shores and was put into use at Gramercy Park, New York where those who owned townhouses around the small urban park were the only people allowed access to the land. Louisburg Square in Boston was soon to follow, one of the most exclusive associations in America, and eventually Forest Hills, in Queens, NY. David Dillon points out in his article “Fortress America” that in the late nineteenth century St. Louis, Missouri had developed “a sizable network of private gated streets for its beer barons.” The major common denominator between all these associations was the fact that they were based upon a set of restrictive, and fairly impenetrable, covenants that guided how present and future generations of home owners could use the land, common space, and how, in fact, they could use and change their own home. Covenants could restrict the age of the tenants, size and type of pets, color they painted their house, kind of awning they hung off their windows, etc. etc. As Evan McKenzie points out, the homeowners associations are a type of private government which, in many cases, supersedes the laws of the Federal Government. Today, thirty two million Americans belong to some form of community association and the number is expected to double by the end of the century. One would think that local governments would see these associations as assaults to civil liberty and as a obvious form of social segregation, but in fact most local governments are quick to “embrace the associations because they relieve community pressure to build and maintain new parks, playground and other facilities.”²⁸

Homeowner associations as a means of governance were supported by the ULI as an advantage for promoting exclusionary practices.²⁹ Existing on private or semi-private areas they may exclude undesirable elements or trouble makers drifting in, youngsters who “take over facilities and push out the residents.” Those not living close by and unable to benefit from small local parks should neither be required to support such areas by public taxes nor allowed to invade the quite and privacy of those enjoying the benefits created by private methods.³⁰ Certain watchdogs groups such as Citizens Against Gated Enclaves have begun to form in opposition to this pernicious process and that group sued the city of Los Angeles “for allowing the residents of fashionable Whitley Heights, near the

Hollywood Bowl, to gate public streets against outsiders. In January 1993, a superior court judge ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, saying that “the city owes a duty to the public not to allow gates on public streets.”³¹

The idea of a gated community is not new, as Professor John Stilgoe of Harvard University points out his article “America’s Joka-machi”; pre-modern Japan developed a type of housing called *joka-machi*. Stilgoe states that *joka-machi* was not developed against the invasion of enemy armies, but “against lawless marauders, warlords, and criminals too powerful for police.”³² Walled cities were common in the medieval world and we can look all the way back to ancient china and see the Wall of China as “the oldest, longest standing and most famous wall of all.”³³ Many European cities, especially those near the Mediterranean, are comprised of walled villas and housing complexes. Thus, the idea of placing a wall around housing is neither new to society, nor surprising given the complexities of human nature.

In the United States, we begin to see housing complexes being walled-in around the mid 1960s. As illustrated, many exclusive enclaves in the United States had been walled -in communities in the early twentieth century, but, for the most part, the United States was relatively free of gated and walled housing for the general public up until the 1970s. Most of these were retirement communities. Not only did the wall in these communities serve to keep out undesirable, as they usually do, but also they served to distinguish the population inside as quite separate socially from those outside. People moved to retirement communities because they wanted to ghettoize themselves from more heterogeneous populations around them. We could call this phenomenon *auto-ghettoization*. Most of these retirement communities built in the 1960s are found in the sunbelt states such as Florida, Arizona, and California. Their names exude a feeling of ease and community such as: Leisure World, Sun City, or Century Village.

Around the early 1970s we begin to see references to walled and gated communities cropping up in the annals of the ULI. One of the earliest references found is to a community called the Woodlands in Memphis, Tennessee; this is found in the January-March 1974 Urban Land Institute Project Reference File. The description of the Woodlands is quite mundane, yet it is peppered with a number of telling nuances. It describes an eighty four unit PUD of one or two story townhouses. It states that almost fifty percent of the land is open space and that “considerable attention has been given to creating an urbane and sophisticated residential environment.”³⁴ Suddenly the narrative shifts to a description that includes the phrase “including a wall around the property, and a carefully devised land plan intended to provide maximum privacy together with a sense of community and opportunities for interaction.” The narrative discusses the fact that the Woodlands is in an affluent section of Memphis and that most of the surrounding property has been built up of single family homes. The site itself is on the grounds of an old mansion. In a discussion of land use the author notes the “looped private streets and townhomes clustered in buildings containing between three and eight units. Private streets were necessary to effect the security system. The Woodlands is surrounded by a wall, and two entrances have been provided from adjacent streets. The main entrance is through the gatehouse on Goodlett Street which has a manned security post.” In addition to the walls surrounding the complex, each individual townhouse is bordered by brick walls “which have been constructed between units affording each residence maximum privacy. Individual homes are protected against burglary and fire by a security system The system is also designed to notify the gatehouse of the need for emergency aid in the event to illness.” The market for these units targets empty nesters and “persons living on large farms near Memphis who transact business and maintain social ties in the city...” The author notes that one of the biggest market considerations was “the desire of both groups for security.” Although the author of this project review begins his piece

by stating that encouraging meaningful interaction between inhabitants was a primary concern, the majority of the essay is dominated by discussion of walls and security concerns. Following the first paragraph's call for social interaction, the author never mentions the concept again.

The idea of securing a community against an outer unknown is certainly not a new sentiment in the American mind. Fear of nature was an overriding sentiment for the early settlers of New England. In his book *Common Landscape Of America, 1580-1845* John Stilgoe describes the eighteenth century New Englander as being "a creature of town, of man-made order, and he understood the forest, like murder and witch-craft, as a threat to social and psychological stability." Stilgoe describes this fear as stemming from "subtle conditioning by two generations of Puritan clergymen, who used the forest as a chief symbol of the infernal chaos latent in all men and restrained only by reason and society."³⁵ Slowly the American began to overcome this fear of the forest and began to embrace America's wilderness. The wilderness became a new symbol of sublime freedom and romantic heroism and the unknown of the forest was embraced. In its place a fear of the city and its evil was supplanted in the American psyche. The fear and distrust of the city led to the development of communities like Radburn, NJ and eventually to the populating of suburbia. More "natural" or naturalized landscapes were seen as clean, healthful, and hygienic and the city was seen as dirty, unhealthy, and disease ridden. The suburbs were embraced as a curative both emotionally and societally for the city. This sentiment lasted well into mid-century with the development of the Levittowns on New York's Long Island, in New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. But, the burgeoning suburbia also had its problems and institutions such as the Urban Land Institute saw the problems of sprawl and the shrinking American landscape as ones that needed to be ameliorated. The mid-century embracing of concepts of New Towns and Gated Communities is not surprising given the situation. These concepts were once again looked on as potentially curing a certain problem or ill of society. In addition, they were economically and developmentally driven concepts that would help to raise land value and keep down development cost. Developers needed to implant new fears in the American psyche to help sell their ideas. Like the religious leaders of the young America, the new developers preached a story of deliverance from the evils of the other and the necessity for walls to contain good and restrain evil. Across the centuries the story remained the same. In the new narrative of the developer the actors changed. Leisure and amenity became the new religion and security delivered us from the evil outside.

There are approximately thirty thousand gated communities in the United States.³⁶ About four million Americans live behind gates or walls. As early as 1983 journalists began to pick up on this strange and rather disturbing accretion of walled in housing complexes that were being built across the United States, most in the Southern and Southwestern states. An article in the *New York Times* with the title "Some Rich Towns Being Walled Off," discussed the town of Indian Wells, California: a suburb of Palm Springs. The community had a population of about fourteen hundred people and was about a hour by car from the nearest city. The author of the article states this fact with a bit of hesitancy and remarks that it seems to be "an unlikely candidate for such tight security measures." According to the article, it was the isolation that made the town want to cut itself off from the outside world.³⁷ But it was the seed of fear that began to plant itself in the American mind in the late '60s and '70s with images of crime being strewn across our televisions on a daily basis. By the mid-70s the crime rate in America had risen to epidemic proportions and cities such as New York, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Washington were under siege. This fact would explain the trend toward more doormanned buildings and better security and police measures in those communities, but it does not explain why those living in what was once considered the safe haven of suburbia would start to wall in themselves.

The truth was that economics was the driving force behind this movement. In an article in the *Phoenix Gazette*, Glen Creno relates the following story: "Gated entrances give a home builder a powerful marketing tool. But Brown downplayed the notion that it is strictly marketing by fear and said it is more a matter of supplying an asked for product. 'Isn't that what most marketing is about?' he asked. Schuck agreed. He said marketing a subdivision's security is a good strategy."³⁸ As was discussed earlier, developers needed a way to use less land at a greater profit as the United States began to use up more and more of its open space. In addition, to draw people out of their single family homes in traditional neighborhoods into these newly developed neighborhood, the developer had to come up with tactics that would convince the buyer they needed to live there. Like television advertising that both blatantly and subliminally convinces consumers that they "need this!", the developer quickly learned that they could sell homes by preying on the fears and desires of people

Having a fence around their neighborhood makes people think they have locked crime out, although police studies and recent crimes — including the recent kidnapping of a Huntington Beach child from a gated complex — dispute that. But whatever the reason, security gates are translating into speedier house sale — and more money — for real estate developers. "Its an amenity that all homeowners seem to enjoy" said Brian Theriot, direct of investor relations for J.M. Peter Co., one of the area's largest builders of expensive homes. "Rather than being an extra trimming on the Christmas tree, as it used to be, it is now part of the tree." Brian Weinstock, president of Weinstock Construction in Studio City, said the homes he builds in gated communities often sell out before development is completed, while non-gated homes take as long as 60 days to sell... Although it cost about \$80,000 to gate a community, Weinstock said, he can make his money back by selling the homes faster. A house in a closed community generally sells within 30 days, compared to two months for houses in non-gated neighborhoods... The quicker turnover means an added \$3,000 profit per house from the interest saved on the outstanding construction loan, he said.³⁹

It was a **perception** of safety while being enveloped by leisure amenity and the attributes of home-town America: community, community space and activities, shared values, and shared interest in land value that helped the developer of the gated community to achieve a fast and high rate of success.

The vicissitudes of the gated community are many ranging from cluster mansions within a highly secured prison-like environment to a groups of condominiums located around a cul de sac and walled in with no gate. There are as many different types of gated communities as there are types of apartment buildings in New York City.⁴⁰

The people who live within these walls are incredibly vulnerable. Security analysts will state that these communities are much safer than non-gated communities, but the statistics show otherwise. Police in Newport Beach and Irvine, California did studies in the mid 1980s that showed that the property crime rate in gated communities was comparable to that in similar non-gated communities. Horrifyingly, in 1989 a twelve year old girl was kidnapped from her home inside a gated community in Huntington Beach, California, raped, and then pushed from her abductors truck about a mile from her home. The suspect arrested in the case had recently worked on construction inside the complex.⁴¹ One might reason that the gates had made the inhabitants feel safer, letting down their guard within their complex, only fearing that without and not that within.

Ironically by 1995 the ULI, which pledged to be an objective resource for urban planning and growth and to contribute to "higher standards for land use," was highlighting The Country Club of the South in Atlanta, Georgia. This 899 acre, luxury gold course community was complete with an eighteen hole Jack Nicklaus gold

course and twenty-four hour security with staffed security gates. This project was the first of its kind in the area and was developed by a Jack Nicklaus concern called Nicklaus/ Sierra Development Corporation. **Security combined with leisure was seen as the key to its success.** The irony of the narrative here is the constant juxtaposition of rhetorics of leisure and security. The development industry was able to successfully equate the leisure life style of the American Dream with the concept of increased security. By 1995 Leisure and Security had become inseparable concept in the highly competitive development market. The Nicklaus name and design expertise were critical in establishing the golf course as an unusually desirable golf experience, which has greatly enhanced the desirability of the surrounding community as well. The 24 hour secured environment provided a level of comfort and safety not previously offered in the Atlanta area and especially appealing to upper income home buyers. These factors together with **an attractive heavily wooded site**; a desirable residential suburban location, and experienced developer able to deliver a high quality community environment, has made CCOS one of the most prestigious places to live in the Atlanta area.

The paradox here is that now the once feared woods have been gated in and made part of the secure environment. No longer is the American myth about the unknown and potentially dangerous forest applicable. Now the forest has been tamed and made into a developers amenity. The cultural memory of the forest as a dangerous and unpredictable place has been supplanted by the desire for the forest as a attractive addition to your manicured environment. No longer do the animals and potentially dangerous societal dropouts who might live in the woods need to be feared, but now the community that resides outside of the woods is perilous. The transposition of these two terms is phenomenal.

So, leisure is to be afforded by the stunning world-class golf course and through the ability to potentially disappear into the woods surrounding your cluster manor. Security will come from the twenty-four hour limited access program which includes a staffed gatehouse and twenty-four hour roving patrols that are supposed to act as a deterrent to criminal activity and to offer constant public safety services to residents. "The Property Owner's Association (POA) staffs the gatehouse and the safety patrol and provides for maintenance and repair of the eleven miles of community roads (all of which it owns); the association also provides landscaping and maintenance for the community common areas, the gatehouse, the five and a half miles of perimeter and community fencing, and the community recreation centers."⁴²

According to the report, once the land was secured by the developer they had a country road that belonged to the National Park Service, who has land bordering the development, rerouted and then granted the NPS some riverfront land to make up for the inconvenience. "Once this deal was struck, the site could be planned and designed with an entirely private and secured street system, a critical aspect in the project's positioning as a secure and exclusive community." This allowed them to completely secure and consolidate their holdings within fences and gates. They assembled the sites with the purchase of one large parcel and then smaller ones along the park road frontage. "The acquisition of these smaller parcels was critical to securing a controlled environment and was costly in some instances. "The controlled environment which was managed by staffed gatehouses and separate entrances for the golf club was kept homogeneous in appearance by designing streets that were relatively narrow, twenty-four feet wide, and accented with "handsome wrought iron mailboxes, which every home owner is required to purchase... Homes are strategically located to promote a feeling of seclusion on each and every homesite."⁴³

Much like Radburn, NJ the safety of the children was a concern, although working with pedestrian only roads and access roads for service does not seem to have been taken into consideration. Instead the developer provided "two significant parcels of property for two

community recreations centers." The children who live within the country club have their own set of amenities such as community swimming pools, football/soccer field, playground and "a pavilion for get together and parties," but they do not have access to any children who do not belong within the confines of their controlled environment. All social relations have been reduced to a very small common denominator. Fear of the cultural and societal has replaced the fear of the landscape. Even the concept of an unknown or undesirable mailbox has been removed from this equation with the residents being required to purchase the pre-designed and approved item from the association.

As the roads are all privately held and the gates are all secure the public police force does not have easy access to this community. The Rent-A-Cop type security patrol which will drive the eleven miles of roads are not technically police and cannot make arrests, but they can enforce the rules of the compound. All entrances are gated and manned twenty four hours a day, thus all visitors and service people have to be announced and checked in. The affluent community that surrounds the Country Club is essentially excluded from this community and those that live within the walls of the Country Club are sequestered from any serendipitous meetings with those from without. Once they enter into the gates of their community they are enveloped in a world that has been ostensibly rid of any disturbances or undesirable types.

In densely populated urban centers questions of security are necessary or understandable. The city is unpredictable; it is constituted by a variety of socio-economic groups and a heterogeneous racial population. It would be wrong to suggest that racial stereotypes do not exist in our society and the city's equalizing effects do not erase deep seeded racism and fear of "otherness." Most city dwellers do not know their neighbors—often they don't even know the people with whom they share a party wall. The metropolis is an alienating place, one that promotes a sense of unease with those around you. It is a common feature of any major city to see doormanned buildings. A number of skyscraper and apartment building typologies can be identified in the city: townhouses (single family or multiple) these buildings do not have doormen and rely on a double set of outdoors and intercom system to monitor who comes in and out of the building; smaller walkups, also do not have a manned door and they too rely on the intercom or buzzer to let visitors in and out; large apartment buildings without a doorman, these buildings house a great number of residents but still rely on the intercom system, often these buildings have a seat or counter for a non-existent guard—giving both the inside and the outside the appearance of greater security; large apartment buildings with a guarded door during part of the day; large apartments with twenty-four hour security. The comparisons to the types of gated communities are obvious. "People like to live within walls because they give the illusion of security. And it has acquired a certain social connotation as well. It's become the thing to do, like having a doorman, or a chauffeur."⁴⁴

All these building types developed out of the need for securing our doors against an undesirable and unknown element, perhaps criminal, which is more prevalent in dense urban situations. The growth of secured buildings was a direct response to real dangers in the city and also to a perceived fear on the part of its inhabitants. In addition to the issues of security, the issue of exclusivity should not be overlooked in any discussion of guarded buildings. Buildings that have a doorman are perceived to be more exclusive. People who dwell in buildings with a doorman are perceived to have greater wealth and social standing. So, there is a double coding at work in the manning of doors in apartment buildings: one the one had the human barricade is considered to help keep out and monitor and unknown quantity and on the other hand the door man is seen to embody an idea of exclusiveness and high social standing.

Because of the need for this kind of security and the rising crime rate in America's major cities, many Americans began to escape to

the quickly developing suburbs of the 1950s and 1960s. The suburban situation, a more homogenous community where you have greater contact with your neighbors and are able to watch over your neighborhood, was termed the American Dream from the late 1950s onward.

The question then becomes, Why did the suburbs (which are relatively free of violent crime) turn to the typology of guarded compounds or buildings? There is no question that certain American cities are vastly dangerous and unpredictable and the development of secure buildings is directly proportional to these very real and perceived dangers. But, why have gated communities spread to the most exclusive cities and sections of suburbia in the nation? Gated communities promote an ideal of carefree living, private amenity, and privatized open space. Through the examination of communities such as the Country Club of the South in Atlanta or La Contessa in Scottsdale, we have seen that these places are often alienating and without casual interaction between neighbors. The “community” that the developers pretend to engender is actually torn apart in these situations. Once you begin to doubt even those in the same neighborhood and same social standing as you, then is it not natural that those you are walled in with will be the natural target for your suspicions and doubts. The buildings of New York City may be THEMSELVES guarded against crime, but the streets are still public and once you leave the security of the buildings and enter into the social contract of the street you are engaged with society in all its permutations. The gated community extends the security of the urban apartment building beyond literal necessity and begins to create a mythology of unnecessary fear and paranoia in its inhabitants. The suburbs are, for the most part, socially, ethnically, and economically homogenized. They are really quite safe. Once a wall is put up around a parcel of land that once already considered exclusive, thus made **more exclusive**, then the question begins to twist and torque. Is the threat real or imagined? Who are the communities trying to keep out or more importantly who are they trying to keep in? The gate and the wall not only serve to keep out the public and monitor the activity of those that surround it, but also it serves to keep in the inhabitants and even more carefully monitor them. Every time you use your key card to come in and out of the gate, your comings and goings are recorded. It is not different than using a bank card. Someone would be able to access files that states when you come and go, how often and at what time.

Earlier in the paper the idea of the garden city or the suburb as being a holistic environment — a cure for the perceived ravages of urbanism, was brought up. The anxiety of the nineteenth and early twentieth century was to be ameliorated by a curative dose of landscape, community, shared values, and relatively safe living. With the development of the suburban environment was supposed come a sense of calm and end of fear. Georg Simmel’s blasé attitude would be replaced by a new energetic and positive mind set.

This type of optimism and hope lasted through the post-war years in America and brought the American public to the brink of a radical new world in the 1960s. By 1965 America’s faith in New Deal idealism and the prosperity engendered by a postwar economy had been shaken by a war in Korea and a new war beginning in South East Asia. Race relations were shaken as the African American began to claim his and her rightful place in the American public and housing projects meant to be a cure for poverty were beginning to show their age and ineffectiveness. The American city was a burgeoning mess of fake Seagram’s and Lever Houses. The city was as alienating as ever and it was once again a place to be feared. Every night men and women commuted to their safe havens in the suburbs and asked for no more than a safe home free from the strife of the city and the anxiety of a radically changing American landscape. The American developer was, as we discovered earlier, bent on making a huge profit from the dwindling land supplies and he began to instill yet another fear in the suburban psyche. The fear of the city was transformed into the fear of everything other — even ones near

neighbors. As gated communities began to proliferate across the landscape, the inhabitants began to buy into a kind of insidious paranoia of everything without.⁴⁵

Paranoia is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as “1. a rare chronic psychosis characterized by systematized delusions of persecution or of grandeur usually not associated with hallucinations. 2: a tendency on the part of individuals or of groups toward excessive or irrational suspiciousness and distrustfulness of others.”⁴⁶ The second meaning is quite interesting when read against the exigencies of the gated community. Once we saw “community” in its entirety as begin not only protective and safe, but also as interactive and open. The community was a place where strangers were welcomed and neighbors left their doors open at night. Places like his still exist across the United States, but, as we have seen, a new phenomenon has crept up on us and our common beliefs about what is neighborhood and community. These ideals are slowly being eroded by a fear from within.

In Sigmund Freud’s terms *Paranoia* is primarily caused by a repression.⁴⁷ A repression is simply turning something away and keeping it at a distance from the conscious.⁴⁸ In paranoia there is a “primary experience” which releases a certain “unpleasure” in the individual. The experience is then repressed. Instead of looking inward and relying on self-reproach in conjunction with the primary experience, the individual turns to his fellow man and projects his own anxiety onto them. The symptom formed is distrust (sensitivity toward other people). “The determining element of paranoia is the mechanism of projection involving the refusal of self-reproach.”⁴⁹ In CG Jung’s *Psychological Types*, the description of the paranoid type becomes a perfect metaphor for the kind of prevailing attitude in the gated community.

This restriction to one theme enriches the associations that cluster around it and consolidate one particular complex of ideas, but at the same time the complex is shut off from everything extraneous and finds itself in isolation, a phenomenon which Gross... calls “sejunction.”⁵⁰

Sejunction is when a complex breaks off into a number of separate ideas that have no connection with one another or only quite a loose one... “the isolated complexes exist side by side without any reciprocal influence; they do not interact, mutually balancing and correcting each other.”⁵¹ If we are to begin to exchange these terms, we can read sejunction as a process inherent in the making of a gated community. The gated community creates a sejunction in the greater community by isolated it and its ideals from the outside. Those who participate and live in the gated community usually buy into it because the amenity it provides jives with their own interests. An example of this would be the Racquet Club in Scottsdale. Most of the initial residents of the Racquet Club bought there because the main theme was tennis. The original complex was structured around a series of championship tennis courts: the best you could find. People who bought into this community early on paid a hefty association fee, and still do, for the upkeep of the courts. People who moved into the Racquet Club and did not like tennis would probably be ostracized on some level and also would be annoyed by the club house atmosphere and the constant sound of balls being hit. So, by its amenity and its theme, the Racquet Club sejunctioned from the community around itself. This same phenomenon could be seen in many different associations. Golf is an incredibly popular theme for the gated community and many people buy condos or land in these communities just to be a member of a good golf club. The main activity of the community is golf-based. All the houses usually are attached to the course in some way, and the main activity and conversation of the inhabitants centers around their “game.” After the initial sejunction the complexes begin to metamorphose into the paranoid idea. Here Jung explains the process:

Though firmly knit in themselves, with a logical structure, they are deprived of the correcting influences of complexes

with a different orientation. Hence, it may easily happen that a particularly strong and therefore particularly isolated and influenceable complex becomes an "over-valued idea," a dominant that defies all criticism and enjoys complete autonomy, until it finally becomes an all controlling factor manifesting itself as "spleen." In pathological cases it turns into an obsessive or paranoid idea, absolutely unshakable, that rules the individuals entire life.⁵²

When discussed in terms of the gated community or gated "complexes" we can read the process clearly defining itself. The complexes themselves are cogently organized. Those who buy into the complex are clear on their reasons for participation. Once the individual(s) is isolated from other complexes (say the golf people are separated from the tennis people) the idea of one's own particular complex becomes an overriding and overvalued idea. The associations that you form with other "like" you become the only associations you make and your ideals and ideas are so closely linked to a like mindset that outside ideas become threatening as the dominant idea of the association becomes a "controlling factor." Finally, only those who share these ideals are acceptable and all others are deemed suspicious. The ideas and desires of those on the outside are repressed by the inhabitant. As Freud points out "what undergo repression may be... psychical trends which have for other reason aroused strong aversion."⁵³ So, by the mechanism first of the gated and later of ideology the inhabitant of the gated community begins to repress undesirable ideas, people, races, etc. One begins to wonder why others want to associate with the individual, what they want from him or her.

This conception of the growth of a paranoid idea may also explain why, during the early stages, it can sometimes be corrected by suitable psychotherapeutic procedures which bring it into connection with other complexes that have a broadening and balancing influence. Paranoiacs are very wary of associating disconnected complexes. They feel things have to remain neatly separated, the bridges between the complexes are broken down as much as possible by an over precise and rigid formation of the content of the complex. Gross calls this tendency "fear of association."⁵⁴

This "fear of association" leads to the ultimate breakdown of a working community when a number of gated communities are developed. Each complex functions with their own rules, regulations, and, basically, governance. The defining laws and constitutions of the United States are, in many cases, repressed by this association. The social contract, which is the basis for our government, becomes a moot point as the only contract that is viable in the gated community is the real estate contract and the of the community.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹ Doug Snover, "Exclusive Enclave Bans Census Takers; Workers turned away at the gates," *The Arizona Republic* (Dec. 13, 1995), p. 8.

² Evan McKenzie, *Privatopia: Homeowner Association and the Rise of Residential Private Government* (New Haven, Yale University Press: 1994), p. 4.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ McKenzie, p. 10.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² The Urban Land Institute, *The Homes Association Handbook*, Technical Bulletin 50, (1966).

¹³ Ibid., pp. 126-127

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ According to the Home Page for the ULI on the World Wide Web, The ULI is a not for profit organization that is an education and research institute that is supported and directed by its members. "Its mission is to provide responsible leadership in the use of land in order to enhance the total environment." It was established in 1936 and has about 13,000 members from 50 countries representing "the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines... As a nonpartisan organization, the Institute has long been recognized as one of America's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development."

¹⁷ Denis R. Judd "The Rise of the New Walled Cities" in *Spatial Practices: Critical Explorations in Social/Spatial Theory*. ed. Helen Liggett and David Perry (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications International Education and Professional Publishers), p. 156.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.,

²⁰ McKenzie, p. 84.

²¹ Ibid., p. 83.

²² Ibid., p. 84.

²³ Ibid., p. 81.

²⁴ Charles Ascher, *Cluster Subdivisions*, American Society of Planning Officials, (1960) as quoted in McKenzie, p. 85

²⁵ McKenzie, p. 88.

²⁶ Here the question of how agencies with government funding, such as the Urban Land Institute and the Federal Housing Administration, could promote exclusionary practices of development in the late 1950s and early 1960s should be raised. Although it is not within the scope of this paper to research the ethicacy of these practices, it is an important question and asks to be thoroughly researched and documented.

²⁷ The Urban Land Institute. *The Homes Association Handbook*, Technical Bulletin 50 (orig. printing 1964, revised printing March 1966), p. 35.

²⁸ David Dillon, "Fortress America," *American Planning Association*, vol. 60, No. 6 (June 1994), p. 11.

²⁹ The questions that statements such as these raise are obvious and numerous and, perhaps, too lengthy to go into here, but this kind of writing supported by government funding and promoted as a new type of urban solution to suburban housing is the kind of thinking that encourage gated communities to flourish in the United States in the early 1970s.

³⁰ The Urban Land Institute, *Innovations vs. Traditions in Community Development*, Technical Bulletin no. 40 (Washington DC: The Urban Land Institute, 1961), pp. 32-33 as quoted in McKenzie, p. 88.

³¹ Dillon, p. 11.

³² John Stilgoe, "America's Joka-machi," *Planning Commissioners Journal*, no. 15 (Summer 1994), p. 16.

³³ Peter Marcuse, "Walls of Fear and Walls of Support," in *Architecture of Fear*, Nan Ellin, Ed. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), pp. 101-114.

³⁴ Urban Land Institute: Project Reference File, vol. 4. no 1. (Jan. - Mar. 1974).

³⁵ John Stilgoe, *Common Landscape of America, 1580-1845* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1983), p. 52.

³⁶ Adam Pertram as cited in Edward J. Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder, *Fortress American: Gated and Walled Communities in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 1995), p. 1.

³⁷ The New York Times Co. *The New York Times Late City Final*

Edition (June 27, 1983), Section A. Page 12, Column 4, National Desk.

- ³⁸ Glen Creno, "Developers Build Privacy, Safety; Gates, Guard Gain in Popularity," *The Phoenix Gazette* (May 27, 1994), p. C1
- ³⁹ Jim Carlton, "Behind the gate; Walling off the neighborhood is a growing trend," *The Los Angeles Times* (Oct. 8, 1989), Sunday Home Edition Park 1, Page 3, Column 1.
- ⁴⁰ Edward J. Blakely and Mary Gail Synder have written a number of articles and will soon be coming out with a book on the phenomenon of gated communities in the United States. They have done an enormous amount of research on the typology of the gated community and on questions of privatization and public access within the walls. Their forthcoming book *Fortress America* will be the most extensive study published on this topic. Blakely and Synder have identified three main types of communities. Lifestyle Communities, privatizing amenities, especially recreation; Elite Communities, marketed for exclusion and prestige; and Security Zone Communities, often street closures where crime is endemic. They point out that the Lifestyle Communities "were the first mass-marketed developments,... they include three types: Retirement, Golf and Leisure, and New Towns. The residents say that their primary motivation for choosing to live in a given development is the amenities provided... The security measures seem to be more an attempt to establish freedom and control than to protect against criminals; few of the suburban residents of gated communities have any personal experience with crime." Next they identify the Elite Communities as being protective of economic and social status in addition to offering amenities and lifestyles. They see the Elite Communities as the most traditional type of gated community in the United States and as being the direct heir to the walled and gated homes that the wealthiest echelons have always enjoyed. "These developments feed on exclusionary aspirations and the desire to differentiate. The services of the gate guards and security patrols add to the prestige of exclusivity; residents value the simple presence of a

security force more than any service they may actually provide." The final type of enclave that they distinguish is the Security Zone Communities or what they dub the Valley of Fear. They see these as the fastest growing type of gated complex and it is "characterized by closed streets and gated complexes of the Low Income, Working Class and Middle Class perches. Poor inner city neighborhoods and public housing projects are using security guards, gates and fences to keep out drug dealing, prostitution, and drive by shootings.... Whether crime is acute or infrequent—the threat actual or only perceived—the fear is very real."

- ⁴¹ Carlton, p. 3.
- ⁴² Urban Land Institute: Project Reference File. (April - June 1995), p. 23.
- ⁴³ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴ David Dillon.
- ⁴⁵ Recently an inhabitant of a Scottsdale, AZ gated community called **Stonegate** was overheard saying that she was not allowed to plant the trees that she wanted: they had not passed the associations approval. She wanted to plant an Italian cypress and it was vetoed. The board didn't think it was appropriate for the theme of the community. In addition, they said she could only plant "clean trees", trees that don't have seed pods or lose their leaves. Male trees are preferable.
- ⁴⁶ J.A. Simpson and E.S. C. Weiner, *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
- ⁴⁷ Peter Gay, *A Freud Reader*, p. 94-5
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 569-70
- ⁴⁹ Gay, p. 95.
- ⁵⁰ Jung, pp. 276-77.
- ⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵² CG Jung, p. 277.
- ⁵³ Sigmund Freud, *General Psychological Theory*, Trans. Phillip Rief, (New York: Collier Books, 1963), p. 37.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid.