

“THIRD WAY” URBAN POLICY AND THE NEW MORAL POLITICS OF COMMUNITY: CONFLICTS OVER THE VIRTUOUS COMMUNITY IN BALLYMUN IN DUBLIN AND THE GORBALS IN GLASGOW¹

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Abstract: While the United Kingdom’s emerging brand of Third Way Urban Policy (TWUP) often associates itself with a kind of anarchic vision of self-regulating and self-reproducing local communities, it can in fact be thought of as a thinly veiled moral crusade against vulnerable residents living in deprived neighborhoods. Indeed TWUP might be best conceived as a “flanking support” for the neoliberal turn in urban governance in British cities; morally commendable communities are defined as those who can reattach themselves to the “mainstream” and stand on their own two feet *within* the terms set by neoliberal market economics. When these morally charged interventions fail to connect locally, they have the potential to stir conflict over who has the authority to judge forms of community life. Mapping and accounting for the uneven development of moral conflicts over community is therefore a pressing concern. To this end, this paper presents a comparative analysis of the different ways in which moral disputes over community have surfaced in two neighborhoods, in particular—the Gorbals in central Glasgow and Ballymun in north Dublin, neighborhoods that have become iconic of the British *approach* to urban renewal. [Key words: Third Way, neoliberalism, moral politics, community resistance.]

THIRD WAY URBAN POLICY AND THE NEW MORAL POLITICS OF COMMUNITY

The Rise of Third Way Urban Policy

Since coming to power in 1997, the Labour Party in the United Kingdom has sought to broker a new formula through which the twin imperatives of economic growth and social justice might be reconciled amidst the rise of the global economy. Through continuing conversations with the writings of Anthony Giddens, the chief philosophical guru of the new formula and originator of its title the “Third Way,” state restructuring remains fluid and its final form unpredictable (Giddens, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001). At its core, nonetheless, the Third Way seeks to chart a novel course between the old political

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landscape of left and right, and in so doing aspires to reinvigorate the role that public institutions play in market economies.

Specifically, according to the U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair, the Third Way is premised upon three core principals (Jary, 2005): (1) *economy*—acceptance of fiscal disciplines but with an emphasis upon building human capital and revalorizing education as part of the development of a new knowledge economy; (2) *civil society*—the foregrounding of new concepts of citizenship that reprioritize rights as well as responsibilities; and (3) *public services*—to intervene in areas of market failure and to personalize service provision to meet better the needs of vulnerable groups.

Having been in power for nearly a decade, it is not surprising that it is now possible to detect the imprint of New Labour's Third Way programs across all the main public policy domains. While the mechanisms through which principles have become translated into practice varies in each case, Third Way restructuring is particularly evident in contemporary housing, education, health, social, and urban policy (Giddens, 2002; Jary, 2002). Reflecting the wider program of welfare reform from which it derives, Kearns (2003, p. 53) note the way in which Third Way Urban Policy (TWUP) in particular is based on a collection of arguments that seek to steer a middle course between Fordist Keynesian (state interventionist) and neoliberal (free-market) positions:

Rather than leaving neighbourhoods to the operation and efforts of the property and labour markets, or intervening as a nanny state to shore up failing enterprises...the notion is that self-help activities undertaken within existing market and governmental structures is the way forward for disadvantaged groups and communities.

In skeletal form, these arguments can be summarized as follows: (1) The Fordist Keynesian welfare state, insofar as it sought a universal bricks and mortar solution to urban regeneration, has created serialized landscapes populated by communities of despair, wastage, withdrawal, and disengagement. (2) Neoliberal approaches in turn have further intensified social polarization and the "trickle-down" philosophy has failed to deliver for poor communities; marginalization and alienation have deepened. (3) Learning lessons from the failure of unfettered neoliberalism, the Third Way recognizes that state intervention remains necessary and that urban deprivation cannot be solved solely through the operation of the market. (4) Reflecting on the failure of the Fordist Keynesian welfare state, however, it also assumes that intervention must avoid creating a climate of welfare dependency. (5) The solution is for the state to intervene only to the extent that communities can be rehabilitated so that they can stand on their own two feet and reproduce themselves autonomously in the market economy. (6) In so doing, the Third Way recognizes the need to redefine concepts of citizenship—state intervention will be provided but in return communities are expected to be comprised of active citizens; welfare is to give way to workfare. (7) To instil such active citizenry, attention needs to focus on rebuilding local social capital—taken loosely to refer to the vibrancy, intensity, and inclusivity of local social networks; greater social capital is presumed to be midwife to increased participation and the formation of more sustainable communities. (8) Social capital can be nurtured in itself by a variety of interventions; urban design, social mixing, skills training, community empowerment, and an enhanced role for the voluntary sector all play a pivotal role in germinating social capital.

Toward a New Moral Politics of Community

While TWUP often promotes a kind of anarchic vision of self-regulating and self-reproducing local communities, it can in fact be thought of as a thinly veiled moral crusade targeted toward vulnerable residents in disadvantaged neighborhoods in British cities (DeFillipis, 2002; Raco, 2003; Black and Keith, 2004). While these residents might well be casualties of capitalist restructuring, they do bear some responsibility for the ways in which they react to their economic circumstances. The state can help, but communities themselves need to learn that irresponsible behavior exacts a cost for which someone has to pay. Residents need to address their own “failings” and “weaknesses,” which result in such social “ills” as welfare dependency, benefits fraud, truancy, teenage pregnancy, single-parent families, graffiti and vandalism, anti-social behavior, substance abuse and alcoholism, obesity, poor diet, and lack of exercise.

According to Imrie (2004), Fyfe (2005), and May et al. (2005), while professing a deep commitment to local empowerment, TWUP is indeed best approached in terms of Foucault’s concept of “governmentality.” TWUP serves as a new kind of normative communitarian discourse shaping the “conduct of conduct” of community and voluntary groups—reifying concepts such as “sustainable communities,” “social capital,” “quality of life,” and “active citizenship”; introducing new infrastructures of intervention and a new community of regeneration professionals and associated practitioner literature; and promoting new measures and metrics of evaluation. In turn, these instruments of governmentality have exercised a strong disciplinary force on local communities, making use of a convoluted apparatus of rewards and penalties to impose moral assumptions about which forms of community are “good” and “bad”/ “right” and “wrong”/ “just” and “unjust”/ “worthy” and “unworthy” and to establish the first contours of a new “shadow state.”

What kinds of interests might this new mode of governmentality be serving? Within the political economy literature, some critics argue that TWUP operates as little more than a flanking support infrastructure for the deeper neoliberalization of British urban policy (Fine, 2001; Peck and Tickell, 2002; Callinicos, 2001). Initially designed as an *alternative* to free market approaches, the concept of community is being put to use *within* neoliberal accumulation strategies as a fiscally prudent, ideological tool capable of dealing with deepening social divides. TWUP is defining a new moral agenda for marginalized neighborhoods that is resonating with “roll forward” neoliberalism and is becoming a resource for the various “actually existing” neoliberal urbanisms that are crystallizing in British cities (Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Peck, 2003).

To the extent that there is merit in these critiques, mapping and explaining the uneven development of what might be called the *new moral politics of community* presents itself as an important research agenda. The concept of moral politics of community chimes with renewed interest within human geography in engagements between space, morality, and ethics (Philo, 1991; Matless, 1994; Proctor and Smith, 1999; Stump, 2000; Smith, 2000, 2004; Cloke, 2004; Valentine, 2005). Within the field of ethics, of course, distinctions are often made between meta-ethics (the phenomenological origins of morality per se within the human species), normative ethics (the standards that we ought to live by), descriptive ethics (lay and populist understandings of right and wrong in everyday life), and applied ethics (how specific and concrete moral controversies might be solved). To

date, moral geographies have tended to be most interested in descriptive ethics, albeit that there has arisen a renewed interest recently in the normative contributions that geographical theory and praxis might make (Cloke, 2004; Valentine, 2005)

In particular, geographers have sought to map the complex and conflictual geographies of morality, defined as the different moral assumptions and supporting arguments that particular peoples in particular places make (Philo, 1991). These assumptions have been shown to cultivate moral stereotypes of places as varied as asylums and mental health institutions, religious sites of worship, striking natural landscapes, and tourist centers, and people who are defined as “different” or “others” by the “mainstream” on the bases of class, gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, age, and disability. And these stereotypes have given birth to culture wars and local struggles over meaning.

Insofar as TWUP is making fundamental assumptions about the worth of lives of vulnerable residents in disadvantaged neighborhoods in British cities, these people and places too surely deserve central attention. Is TWUP really serving as an ideological prop to roll forward neoliberal urbanism? What specific moral assumptions inhere within different concrete interventions? Into what local moral worlds are these assumptions being deposited? To what extent are policy practitioners sensitized to local cultures and how far do they tailor their strategy to make it resonate with local communities? How do local communities respond when confronted with conceptions of the “ideal” community with which they disagree? Why do some local communities react while others do not? What contours do moral conflicts assume in places, how do they run their course and with what effects?

The aim of this paper is to contribute answers to some of these questions by presenting case studies of the grounding of TWUP in two well-known social housing housing estates, the Gorbals in central Glasgow and Ballymun in north Dublin.³ While Ballymun is located in the Irish Republic, its approach to regeneration has been heavily influenced by British TWUP and alongside the Gorbals in Glasgow, is taken here to be a paradigm example of New Labour thinking if not practice. The paper argues that the rise to prominence of moral conflicts over the value attached to different forms of community has been fundamentally shaped by the structures of ownership of the social capital agenda in each

³This paper is based upon research projects which the authors have undertaken in Ballymun and the Gorbals. Ballymun: Beyond a range of secondary literature produced by state organizations and community groups, the account of Ballymun offered here makes use of four principal sources of information: (1) first, field visits in November 2002, May and June 2003, and May 2004, incorporating interviews with 20 key movers and shakers in the neighborhood; (2) a feedback session organized in a local community center in October 2003 at which preliminary findings were reported back to over 30 members of the local community; (3) an analysis of both local and national media coverage, including scrutiny of all articles on Ballymun’s history and regeneration contained in the *Ballymun Echo* (1996–present), *Northside People* (1997–present), *Ballymun Concrete News* (1998–present), *Local News* (1996–present), *Irish Times* (1987–present), *Irish Independent* (1996–present), and *The Examiner* (1997–present); and finally (4) an examination of all questions on Ballymun raised between 1996 and the present, in the Seanad and Dáil, Ireland’s upper and lower parliaments, respectively. The Gorbals: The account of the Gorbals offered here draws on three main sources beyond secondary literature produced by local state agencies, community and voluntary organizations, and local historians: (1) first, two rounds of focus group discussions were held with four groups of long-term residents in the Gorbals who identified themselves as being most marginalized at the start of the current regeneration of the area in 1996–1997; (2) interviews with management groups and members of local community organizations and voluntary sector bodies involved within the area were conducted during the period between 1999 and 2004, and (3) interviews with key players in the city council, regeneration agencies, and the health board.

neighborhood. In gaining insights into competing claims over proprietorial rights over social capital, attention must be focused *both* upon the way in which TWUP is locally produced *and* the histories of community activism in both neighborhoods.

In presenting our case studies of Ballymun and the Gorbals, we have chosen to adopt a comparative methodology to deepen the analytic contribution of the paper. In the first section of the paper, we describe the ways in which TWUP has become manifest in both locations, focusing on the importance placed in each location on building social capital. While sharing core, generic Third Way principles, the scale and nature of urban regeneration being undertaken on both estates varies to the extent that it is possible to speak of the localization, or better still, *local production* of TWUP. In the second section (“Recovering the Local Worlds ...,” we then provide an overview of the historical unfolding of both neighborhoods, paying particular attention to those events that have had the most significant bearing upon the subsequent local embedding of TWUP. Here, we offer the concept of “compassionate wounding” as a lens through which the history of failed social housing estates might be viewed. Drawing upon these first two sections to provide a backdrop to contemporary claims of ownership over social capital in both locations, in the final section we develop a reading of the character of moral disputation over the meaning of community in both Ballymun and the Gorbals today.

Giddens, of course, offers the Third Way as a social democratic alternative for any capitalist state keen to counter unfettered market economics and has launched a debate on what he terms the “global Third Way” (Giddens, 2001). And it is evident from the geographical reach of this debate that Third Way thinking has worked its way into policy circles and even public policy itself in many parts of the advanced capitalist world. While recent research on the trafficking of public policy ideas has tended to focus on the global diffusion of neoliberal discourse and practice (Peck, 2003, 2004), perhaps then, there is a need to similarly examine the ways in which the Third Way has become transplanted, transmitted, and filtered in different national contexts. In concluding, therefore, the paper reflects upon the more general relevance of the analytic framework erected for urban geographers working in other advanced capitalist cities.

THE LOCAL PRODUCTION OF THIRD WAY URBAN POLICY IN BALLYMUN AND THE GORBALS

Manifestations of TWUP in Ballymun and the Gorbals

The housing estates of Ballymun and the Gorbals are currently in the throes of significant regeneration projects. While undertaken in the name of the Third Way, these regeneration projects vary greatly in terms of their location in their respective cities, the range of partners at play, the source and scale of the finance involved, and the nature of the concrete interventions being undertaken. When refracted through the two neighborhoods, TWUP would appear to be being *locally produced* in important ways. Why is this so?

Situated some six miles to the north of Dublin city center, Ballymun is the Republic of Ireland’s most famous failed social housing estate. The regeneration of this estate is somewhat unique in that the ambition is a wholesale demolition and reconstruction of the neighborhood. In June 1997, a new private limited company, Ballymun Regeneration Ltd., wholly owned and financed by Dublin Corporation, was established to oversee

the regeneration. By March 1998, Ballymun Regeneration Ltd had drawn up its Masterplan, a plan that envisaged a complete overhaul of the estate within a decade (Ballymun Regeneration, Ltd., 1998). Due to slippage, as of June 2006, the project is estimated to be only half complete.

The Gorbals is located immediately to the southeast of Glasgow city center and stands as one of the most infamous of Glasgow's inner-city modernist housing developments. In contrast to Ballymun, the focus is upon the incremental renewal of particular sites through innovative public private partnerships involving various tiers of the Scottish state, quango bodies, voluntary and community groups, and various factions of finance, property, and retail capital. While the much vaunted *Crown Street Regeneration Project* launched in 1990 continues to stand as the flagship development (Fawcett-Thompson, 2004), attention has now turned to other sites and the regeneration of Queen Elizabeth Square in particular is emerging as the next major focus. The overall regeneration of the neighborhood depends upon the ability of the state to stitch together these individual developments.

How can these different manifestations of TWUP be accounted for? From 1993 onward, guided by a series of "roll forward" or "interventionist" neoliberal economic policies, Ireland has secured a newfound fame as a basing point for United States transnational corporations (O'Hearn, 1998, 2000, 2001; O'Rain, 2000; Taylor, 2003), creating the Celtic Tiger phenomenon. Amidst the glitter of downtown Dublin, however, growing social inequalities have undermined the case that "trickle down" will eventually prove to be a panacea for growing urban deprivation (Allen, 1999, 2000; Tallon, 2000; Saris et al., 2002; Swyngedouw et al., 2002; Bartley and Treadwell Shine, 2003; Cori, 2005). Ballymun has emerged as one of the most visible examples of communities left behind by the Tiger. With growing fiscal surpluses, the Irish state, through Dublin Corporation, now has the resources to do something significant about this national blackspot.

Despite its renowned attempts to reposition itself within the global economy through place-imaging and hallmark events (Paddison, 1993; Boyle and Hughes, 1994; Boyle, 1997; Mooney, 2004; Turok and Bailey, 2004), Glasgow too remains a city with stubborn social and economic divides. The neoliberal experiment designed to transform the city from a de-industrial backwater to a post-industrial metropolis has largely failed and the economic benefits of property based, city-centered focused, culture-led urban regeneration have also failed to trickle down to many communities in the city. Unlike Dublin Corporation, fiscal constraints have meant that the city council has been *forced* to work with the private sector, to draw capital into the regeneration process in a more socially useful way. The downtown location of the Gorbals has been viewed as one most likely to attract private capital and, consequently, the area has witnessed some of the city's more imaginative partnership arrangements.

Despite their different surface appearances, both regeneration projects serve as icons of TWUP in their own ways (Table 1). In each case, the most fundamental objectives are to: lift local residents out of welfare dependency; to reposition both neighborhoods within the market economy; to reattach locals to the mainstream; and therein to create so-called "sustainable communities." Cutting across these objectives, each project foregrounds the importance of building social capital, thus energizing local residents and refreshing their enthusiasm for work and community service. Such social capital is itself to be fortified by

TABLE 1. COMMON THIRD WAY INTERVENTIONS IN BALLYMUN AND THE GORBALS DESIGNED TO CULTIVATE SOCIAL CAPITAL

Interventions	Goals
Urban design	Create civic and community spaces for interaction Employ sensitive landscaping and high quality build Create safe spaces for interaction across age, gender, and other social groups.
Social mixing	Develop new cadre of community leaders and role models of active citizenship Support multi-identity communities and break down monopolistic hierarchies Improve consumption power and encourage development of local, private services
Skills training	Build capacity of community to engage in labor market, including employing locals in projects Improve local economic confidence/optimism Develop focused initiatives to enhance self-worth Remove barriers to entry to labor markets
Supporting voluntary groups	Nurture active citizens to reduce welfare dependency Build capacity of the third sector Increased use of voluntary and community organizations to foster self-help
Community involvement in regeneration planning	Empowering local community participation in formulation, implementation, and evaluation of regeneration strategies

trusting the local community with co-authorship, co-management, and even co-ownership of projects.

Arguably, the building of social capital finds its clearest expression in the pre-eminent role which is given in both projects to urban design in particular. In Ballymun, urban design is approached as a fundamental mediator of the strength and weakness of civic life (Pritchard, 2000). The landscape and land use patterns of the old estate have been held partly culpable for the degree of alienation, isolation, and disengagement experienced by residents (Figs. 1 and 2). The spatiality of the new estate then, including patterns of land use, the quality and safety of public spaces, the geography of social mixing, and the design of new buildings, has been viewed as a crucial mediator of the formation of healthy volumes of social capital (Figs. 3 and 4). This in turn has resulted in the proposal of 15 key design ideas that have focused upon improving architectural design, landscaping, and public art as well as rearranging transport routes, patterns of service provision, recreational spaces, business parks, and tenure mixes so as to create five distinctive sub-communities (Coultry, Shangan, Silogue, Balcurris, and Poppintree), all gelling to form an overall community centered around a new town center (Fig. 5).

Likewise, in the Gorbals, the manipulation of urban design is viewed as pivotal to civic re-engagement and active citizenship. The barren and dehumanized landscape, symbolized most famously by Sir Basil Spence's post-war high-rise towers and multi-storey flats, is now viewed as part of the problem (Figs. 6 and 7). Innovative urban design is therefore perceived to be an essential ingredient of the solution (Fig. 8). As part of the Queen Elizabeth Square development, for example, 400 high-rise flats and maisonettes of



Fig. 1. Environments which alienate—Ballymun from street level. *Source:* M. Boyle (May 2004).

1960s vintage are to give way to 520 new “living units” (Fig. 9). Based on a mix of private housing and publicly owned flatted villas, the housing layout is to incorporate aspects of traditional tenement life; the old communal backcourts are to return along with private gardens. Emphasis is to be placed on integrating existing community facilities (school, church hall, health center, police station) into the new locale and introducing traffic-calming measures (including a 20 mile per hour speed limit on all roads). Civic parklands, contemplative gardens, and tree-lined boulevards are being introduced to transform the local ambience and streetscape.

New Claims to Ownership over the Social Capital Agenda

In what ways are regeneration practitioners making new claims of ownership over local social capital? In answering this question, it is first necessary to reflect briefly upon the recent upsurge of interest in this concept. Indeed, over the past decade, arguably no single concept has more aggressively captured the scholarly imagination across the social sciences than social capital. And yet it remains a concept that is vague, slippery, poorly specified, and in danger of meaning all things to all people (Portes, 1998).

Wrestling with the competing definitions of social capital provided by seminal thinkers such as Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988, 1990), and Robert Putnam (1993, 2000), researchers within the field of urban policy have sought to define, operationalize, and measure notions of social capital in ways that can inform the process of community regeneration. Kearns (2003, 2004), for instance, outlines three components to social capital: the social networks used by people, the social norms adhered to in people’s



Fig. 2. Ballymun's tower blocks and the central power station. Heating on the old estate was turned on and off by the central power station: Residents could not even control the temperature of their own homes! *Source:* M. Boyle (May 2004).

behavior, and the levels of trust people have in civil society and state institutions. On this basis, a community that is rich in social capital can be described as one characterized by cohesion, cooperation, participation, and mutual support. Such communities have a colorful, vibrant, and inclusive army of community groups and social networks. On the other hand, a community poor in social capital can be described as one where people become isolated, suspicious of others, and reluctant to participate in social, economic, and political life. A community lacking in social capital can be said to be characterized by a breakdown of the social fabric that knits people together and an absence of overt expressions of civic participation.

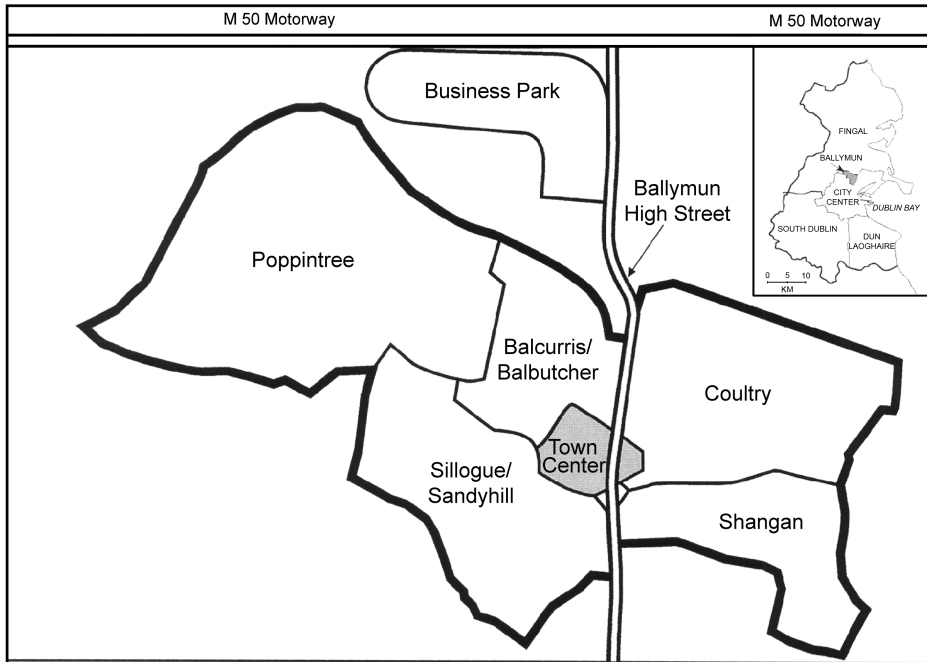
Rather than dealing with social capital as an object to be defined and measured, our approach instead places emphasis on the ways in which different interest groups appropriate social capital for their own ends. That is, our concern is less with social capital as



Fig. 3. Urban design and community building in Ballymun—new streetscapes. *Source:* M. Boyle (May 2004).



Fig. 4. Urban design and community building in Ballymun—new living quarters. *Source:* M. Boyle (May 2004).



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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving the motorway environment: savior rather than scourge 2. Creating places rather than spaces: making Ballymun feel like livable home 3. Establishing a road hierarchy: making through roads rather than cul de sacs 4. Improving public transport: removing the need for large car parks 5. Improving the town centre: connected and focused rather than unserved and isolated 6. Promoting corner shops: rather than container or mobile shops 7. Identifying five neighborhoods: rather than one sprawling Ballymun 8. Improving legibility: distinctive and different places rather than uniformity | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Improving public open spaces: railed parks rather than verges or fields 10. Promoting better security: frontages to public space and doors on to the street 11. Reconstructing Ballymun Road: a town main street as opposed to a dual carriageway 12. Expanding shopping: incremental renewal and growth rather than a new shopping center 13. Creating civic facilities: to serve north Dublin rather than just Ballymun 14. Providing public art: collaborative and relevant, rather than applied and obscure 15. In search of an architecture: local inspiration rather than foreign transplants |
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Fig. 5. The 15 key design ideas and the construction of five new neighbourhoods in Ballymun.

a real entity and more with the various ways in which social capital is imagined, mobilized, and deployed. Given the multiple claims that are currently being made over social capital, ownership becomes of pivotal significance in shaping the kinds of moral politics of community that develop in any neighborhood.

In understanding contemporary proprietorial claims over social capital, it is useful to distinguish between social capital as being building and social capital as a tool for bolstering human capital. In its purest form, being building speaks in terms of what it is doing

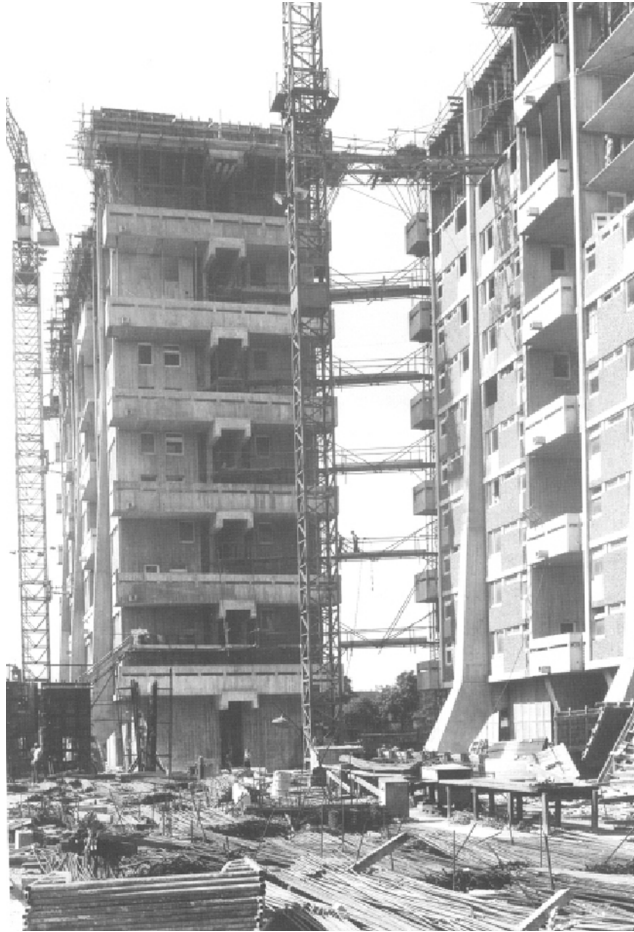


Fig. 6. The New Gorbals—urban planning comes of age. *Source:* Glasgow City Council Development and Regeneration Services (1964).

for human dignity, self esteem, hope, and respect for locals, with the instrumental function of the intervention being a means to an end rather than an end in itself. Projects focusing on human capital, in contrast, provide forms of existential therapy that seek to build people back up again so that they can perform some pre-defined, socially useful function—whether it be to serve as a reliable employee or an active community volunteer.

We use the notion of *being building* here to encompass three particular forms of empowerment onto which human capital projects often map only tangentially: *body building*, *subject building*, and *citizen building*. *Body building* refers to those regeneration interventions that actively try to improve the physical health and safety of residents. Here the emphasis is upon producing sufficiently healthy citizens so that attention can then be paid to dealing with the production of meaningful life trajectories. *Subject building* refers to the range of regeneration projects that are attempting to improve mental



Fig. 7. The Gorbals as a modernist utopia. *Source:* Glasgow City Council Development and Regeneration Services (1965).



Fig. 8. Urban design for community building (Crown Street, Gorbals). *Source:* Glasgow City Council Development and Regeneration Services (1995).

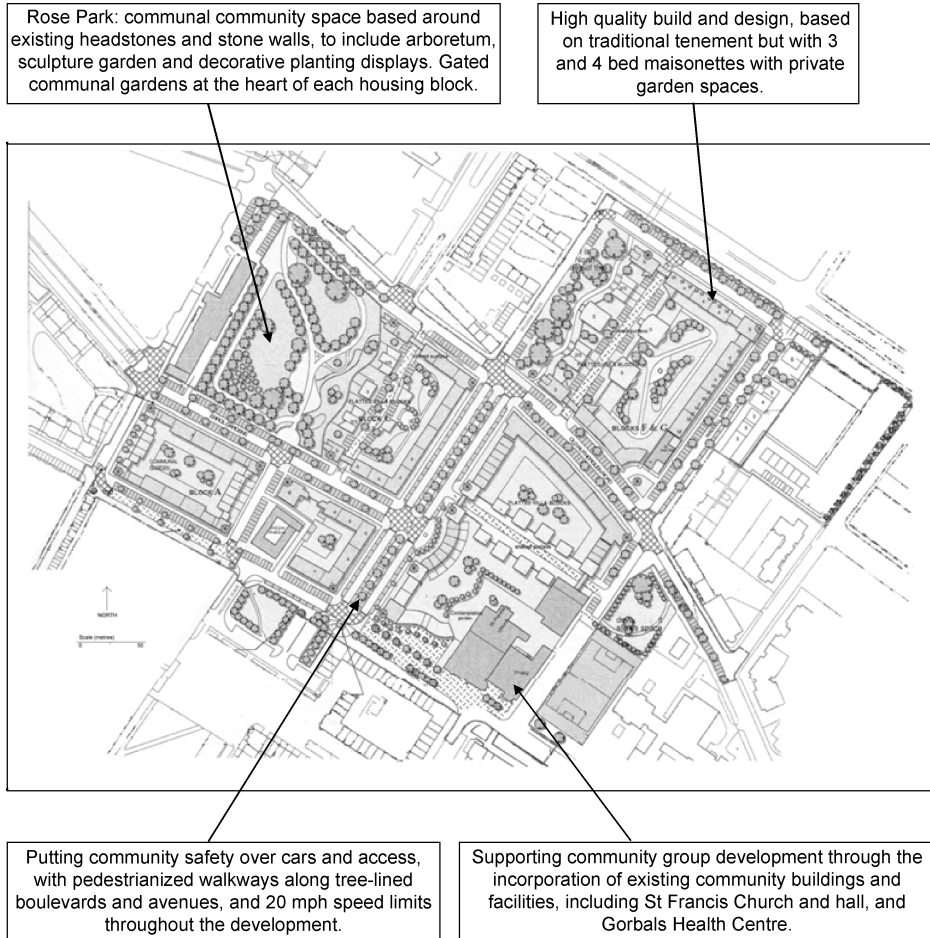


Fig. 9. The “New Gorbals” Queen Elizabeth Square.

health and repair the psychological harm done by alienation, including dealing with everything from low levels of self-confidence through stress, anxiety, bad nerves, depression, and suicide. Here the focus is upon healing existential wounds and equipping people with the assurance needed to engage with the world effectively. *Citizen building* refers to regeneration projects that attempt to build very specific types of subjects, subjects that are equipped to honor the obligations that attach to the rights that are bestowed upon them. In this instance, furnishing people with an understanding of their legal rights, assisting them with their dealings with the state, and providing them with the resources necessary to facilitate greater participation is paramount.

In both Ballymun and the Gorbals, the regeneration practitioners are clearly appropriating social capital primarily for the fortification of human capital. In each case, investment in the local stock of social capital has been shaped by a reluctance to involve those who are perceived to have refused to become responsible and govern themselves in the

past (Rose, 2000). In searching for new active citizens, the lead regeneration organizations have tapped into alternative groups within and outside of the communities. In Ballymun, this has involved seeking out fresh talent from within the community and bypassing those groups that have previously foregrounded social capital as being building. In the Gorbals, new cohorts of active citizens have been recruited out of the incoming gentrifying groups attracted by the regeneration. These groups are swaying more to human capital than being building and can be approached as foot soldiers for New Labour in the area.

RECOVERING THE LOCAL WORLDS INTO WHICH THIRD WAY URBAN POLICY IS BEING EMBEDDED

Histories of Compassionate Wounding

While the metamorphosis of TWUP into distinctively different local forms plays a significant role in shaping which social constituencies have emerged with proprietorial control over the social capital agenda, our reading of the moral politics of community that have arisen in Ballymun and the Gorbals focuses equal attention on the prior histories of both communities. In presenting an overview of the unique biographies of both neighborhoods, the following discussion will center on the importance of what we will call “histories of compassionate wounding.”

The concept of “compassionate wounding” was coined by Sociologist Richard Sennett. In *Respect* (Sennett, 2003), Sennett revisits Cabrini Green, the housing estate in Chicago where he spent his childhood. A utopian urban experiment when it first opened in 1942, Cabrini Green has steadily fallen into decline and disrepair and has become widely stigmatized as one of America’s most dangerous and deprived ghettos. Sennett’s focus is upon the existential injuries that can accompany the historical mismanagement of citizens by the state, referred to as “compassionate wounding.” By this Sennett means to draw attention to the ways in which the capitalist state, despite its best intentions, can often aggravate alienation and further demean already marginalized groups. Projected initially as flagships for new regimes of redistributive justice, modernist housing estates like Cabrini Green now (although note the ongoing transformation) serve as dehumanized “sink estates.”

Sennett’s concept of compassionate wounding provides a useful vehicle through which the histories of Ballymun and the Gorbals can be read. Both communities have been profoundly wounded by modernist planning and utopian urban experimentation. While equally bruised and battered, both communities have emerged from compassionate wounding with different degrees of life nevertheless. These differences have played a significant role in shaping the capacity of local residents to enter into debate as to who has moral authority to judge the value of different forms of community.

In Ballymun, the existential injuries inflicted by compassionate wounding have served as a catalyst for the flourishing of an incredibly dense network of local community groups. Not surprisingly, these groups have been relatively well equipped to articulate counter-claims over ownership of the social capital agenda. While Ballymun was born as a modernist housing scheme, in the Gorbals modernist planning sought to deposit a new landscape on a neighborhood that had already been wounded by previous failed utopian

experiments. As a result of injuries inflicted during prior botched interventions, modernist planning did not trigger widespread community activism but instead further fragmented the already demoralized local community, clearing the way for the state to mount a full takeover of local social capital.

Ballymun: Down but Not Out!

Ballymun was built in the period 1965 to 1969 by the National Building Authority (NBA), a central government quango. The ambition was the creation of a futuristic landscape, a new utopia, comprising seven 15-story towers, nineteen 8-storey spine blocks, and ten blocks of 4-storey flats to house 20,000 residents (Figs. 1 and 2; Power, 2000; Somerville-Woodward, 2002). Like so many peripheral estates constructed in the 1960s, it did not take long for the utopian dream to lapse into a dystopian nightmare. By the mid-1980s, Ballymun stood in ruins, Ireland's most famous icon of the failure of modernist planning.

In many ways, the spiral of decay the estate entered into in the 1970s was created by the premature discharge of responsibility for its running from the NBA to Dublin Corporation and the Corporation's subsequent inability in the 1980s, under fiscal pressure, to do more than administer some basic services from a distance. Without doubt the greatest damage was done in 1985 with the establishment of the national Surrender Grand Scheme. In an effort to encourage greater private ownership of housing in Ireland, this scheme paid IR£5,000 to citizens who were prepared to move out of the state sector. Almost immediately, the most able sections of the Ballymun community left the area, including those in employment and those that served as its leaders. In 1985, lettings of flats rose to 1171, almost 50% of the total stock (Somerville-Woodward, 2002).

With selective out-migration, income levels dropped and services in the area began to deteriorate further. Many vacant houses became vandalized and homeless people began squatting. Perhaps most seriously of all, the estate became perceived as a dumping ground for Dublin Corporation's "problems" and the replacement stock comprised a large proportion of Dublin's antisocial tenants, single parents, single men, and people with mental health problems. Now stigmatized as a "sink estate" in the national press (Kerrigan, 1982), those who could get out did and all too quickly the estate became little more than a "transit camp" for the disaffected.

This spiral of decay served as a trigger for widespread community mobilization. While community activism in Ballymun dates from the mid-1970s, it was not until the rapid decline of the estate in the early 1980s that real community politics took off. While the Surrender Grant Scheme of 1985 represented the final straw, the catalyst for a more general mobilization of the community came in 1984 with the closure of the Bank of Ireland branch in Ballymun. Already deprived of many basic services, the decision by the Bank to close its branch generated outrage.

In response to this event, the Ballymun Community Coalition (BCC) was established. This group erected three pillars that it perceived would lie at the heart of the regeneration of the estate: a new community-controlled credit union (1987), the country's first community-owned job center (1987), and a new Housing Task Force (1987). While the Ballymun Community Coalition was unquestionably the most significant group to emerge in the 1980s, the period since has also witnessed a mushrooming of a much wider

collection of community groupings. Today, a remarkably dense network of around 148 community groups is active in Ballymun.

At the heart of community activism in Ballymun is the desire to help residents cope with the existential anxieties they have had to endure by dint of their residence in a “sink estate.” While all community groups have a purely instrumental rationale for their existence, the majority harbor the more profound goal of building up human beings once again from the existential deformations to which they have been subjected. Reflecting body building, subject building, and citizen building, prime initiatives would be: *Badig*, a group established to address mental health problems on the estate; the local *Drugs Task Force*, an impressive organization that combats drug abuse; the *Ballymun Concrete News*, a local newspaper that counters negative stereotypes of Ballymun circulated in the national press; the *Community and Family Training Agency*, a training agency with a strong humanistic ethos; the *Ballymun Regional Youth Resource*, which seeks to instill confidence and self-assurance into the lives of vulnerable children; and the *Community Action Programme*, which promotes greater awareness of citizen entitlements and obligations.

The Gorbals: Beaten into Submission

Originating in the optimistic climate of reconstruction that prevailed toward the end of the Second World War, the *Clyde Valley Regional Plan*, prepared by Sir Patrick Abercrombie (1953–1956) for the Scottish Office, sought to tackle the complex social and economic problems of the entire west of Scotland. Recognizing overcrowded inner city slums to be the region’s greatest problem, Abercrombie identified a need to disperse between 250,000 to 300,000 people from central Glasgow—through a campaign of slum clearance and the construction of new towns. The City Corporation, initially unhappy at losing its tax base, responded with its own *Bruce Plan* (1957). While agreeing that slum clearance in the city center was required, the *Bruce Plan* emphasized population retention within tower blocks and peripheral housing estates within the city boundaries.

In the end, a compromise between the *Clyde Valley Regional Plan* and the *Bruce Plan* was agreed, which entailed slum clearance, the development of tower blocks, the building of peripheral housing estates, and the construction of new towns. Slum clearance was to be undertaken in 29 Comprehensive Development Areas according to priority. The Hutchesontown-Gorbals Comprehensive Development Area (CDA) was the first to be formally approved in 1957 and soon became a well-publicized example of the Corporation’s determination to transform the urban landscape. Between 1961 and 1971, the population of the combined Gorbals and Hutchesontown wards fell from nearly 45,000 inhabitants to just over 19,000. To great acclaim, the area came to be dominated by new high-rise blocks. Utopia had arrived.

As with Ballymun, it did not take long for the utopian spirit to collapse into dystopian despair. Slum clearance had swept away the wide streets, the enclosed washing greens and the corner shops that had engendered community spirit in the previous decades. As with similar projects across the U.K., residents found the new high-level corridors poor substitutes for the wider streets as meeting venues, and the dark, windswept spaces between and beneath the high-rise flats were no replacement for the backcourts of the tenements, where much of the local gossip had taken place. By 1974 the Comprehensive

Development Area scheme was abandoned and the Gorbals stood as one of its most visible casualties.

Unlike Ballymun, the failure of modernist planning in the Gorbals did not serve to generate a vibrant and sustained base of community activists, and indeed the Gorbals has become recognized as an area with low levels of politicization and limited volumes of social capital. Why has compassionate wounding exacted a heavier penalty in the Gorbals? At one level, responsibility lies with the response of Glasgow Corporation (and from 1975 Glasgow District Council) to early community protests. Initially, as in Ballymun, the Gorbals community did become active in voicing opposition to neighborhood decline, but the Council's response of relocating activists and community leaders out of the area stultified the development of sustained and vibrant opposition.

At a deeper level, however, the quiescence of Gorbalites needs to be located against the wider backdrop of the neighborhood's longer history. If slum clearance and the high-rise solution had been the Gorbals' only experience of a failed utopian vision then perhaps the neighborhood could be more easily compared with Ballymun. Circulating within the local community nevertheless are memories of the litany of failed urban experiments that have been visited upon the area. This history of broken promises has been transmitted between generations in the form of a lively oral history, and was significantly implicated in undermining the community's capacity to survive its destruction by modernist planning. When set into this longer historical context, the Comprehensive Area Development scheme in fact may be read as the straw that eventually broken the camel's back.

The story of the Gorbals can be traced to the early 19th century. In 1802, John and David Laurie embarked upon the construction of a fashionable and exclusive suburb—to be called Laurieston—characterized by broad classical streets named after English nobility. Planned around a showpiece set of two elegant tenement buildings, the Laurie's utopian aspiration faltered as the rapid development of industrial works nearby in the mid-19th century meant that the area never became a fashion icon. Instead, rail connections linking Govan Ironworks to local collieries divided the neighborhood. In place of the exclusive suburb envisaged, workers' tenements were to dominate the area throughout the 19th century.

Increasing bouts of cholera and plague associated with poor sanitation, squalid living conditions, and narrow city streets encouraged the city authorities to set up a City Improvement Trust in the 1880s. This Trust was empowered to purchase and demolish slum property, to widen and re-align streets, and build houses intended for "the poorest classes." The Gorbals was among the first of the areas to be redeveloped and served as a test bed for the renewal of other parts of the city. Drawing on the work of Baron Haussmann in Paris, and commissioning famous architects such as Alexander "Greek" Thomson, a new utopian vision was hatched. The main streets was demolished and replaced with a variety of wide open streets lined with commercial activity and new tenement housing; water and sanitation was installed; and the Gorbals Cross was built as a new focal point for the area. Within 40 years, the Gorbals housed 90,000 people and became renowned for its strong community spirit and its capacity to assimilate various waves of immigrants—the Highlanders, the Irish, the Jews, and the Lithuanians (Smith, 1999).

During the 1930s and in particular at the time of the post-1945 war housing shortage, however, many of the larger tenements and houses were subjected to subdivision, resulting



Fig. 10. The backcourts of 1950s Gorbals tenements. *Source:* Glasgow City Council Development and Regeneration Services (1955).

in high residential densities (averaging 458.6 persons per acre). This was compounded by low levels of investment by (largely) private landlords, a visible decaying of the property stock, and a decline in the quality of the sanitation infrastructure (one toilet for every three houses). Once again, the Gorbals had descended into a slum: alcohol abuse became a significant local problem in spite of temperance movements and by the 1950s the neighborhood had become infamous across Europe for its squalor, levels of criminality, overcrowding, and lack of sanitation (Fig. 10).

MORAL DISPUTES OVER THE SOCIAL CAPITAL AGENDA IN BALLYMUN AND THE GORBALS

Is it possible to detect moral disputes over the kinds of communities which regeneration projects are seeking to valorize? If so, do these moral disputes vary in character between neighborhoods? To what extent can these differences be attributed to locally specific battles over proprietorial control of the social capital agenda? In what ways are these battles a product of the ways in which TWUP is being locally produced *and* the different histories of the neighborhoods into which regeneration projects are being inserted?

Toward a New Moral Politics of Community in Ballymun

In Ballymun at least two constituencies appear to be making claims over the social capital agenda. On the one hand, Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. is actively trying to exploit

social capital to buttress human capital. In contrast, the vibrant base of community groups inherited from previous rounds of compassionate wounding is approaching social capital in terms of its being building potential. Not surprisingly, therefore, Ballymun Regeneration Ltd.'s Masterplan has failed to resonate with the humanistic ethos guiding many community groups. This, in turn, has given birth to a vigorous debate locally over whose notion of social capital should have primacy in the broader regeneration project. This debate is crystallized in the ongoing conversations that are being held between the local Community Action Programme and Ballymun Regeneration Ltd.

The Community Action Programme (CAP) was established in 1990 as an umbrella organization with a mandate to energize community activity on the estate. Although recognizing that Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. had invested a great deal of time and effort in devising extensive consultation procedures, CAP has been critical of the extent to which local community groups have had a say in the preparation and implementation of the Masterplan. In their view, the energetic and indigenous community base, having over 30 years of experience, ought to have been empowered to speak on behalf of the estate. While official consultation mechanisms provided a forum for community groups to channel their concerns, these structures were viewed as largely bypassing existing groups.

CAP's critique of the consultation process was developed into a major publication titled *On the Balcony of a New Millennium: Building on Thirty Years of Community Experience, Expertise, and Energy* (Community Action Programme, 2000). This influential publication offered recommendations to four particular stakeholders: Ballymun Regeneration Ltd., other statutory agencies working in Ballymun, the Department of Environment and Local Government, and the community itself. To Ballymun Regeneration Ltd., CAP recommended that the consultation process be restyled to involve more centrally the existing base of community groups. To the community, CAP advocated that groups become more organized, more structured, and more professional and having put their own houses in order, should then form a democratically elected network that would represent a powerful singular voice for the estate. This they referred to as the Ballymun Community Network (Bcon).

According to Ballymun Regeneration Ltd, the consultation process on which they embarked was deliberately designed to include but to go deeper than existing community groups and was consequently more democratic than even the proposed Bcon. To them, many community activists embodied the spirit of the 1970s and 1980s—"fractious shouters," "moaners," "agitators," and "grandstanding" activists. This they view as inappropriate to the new realities of Ballymun. For Ballymun Regeneration Ltd., what was needed now was "doers not shouters" and for this reason they first sought to reach deep into the community to tap a fresh reservoir of talent that might serve for the new times and second to invest in this talent to upgrade local human capital.

Since CAP published *On the Balcony ...*, it has worked hard with Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. to implement these recommendations, and some progress has been made. Local community groups in particular have developed strategic plans for their futures, improved accountability, created an army of specially trained community workers, and erected the Ballymun Community Network. Nevertheless, it is true to say that both the community sector and Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. continue to exist in an uneasy alliance. Community groups have largely been forced to work with the *realpolitik* in

which they find themselves, but continue to perceive that their collective wisdom is being insufficiently utilized.

In Ballymun, then, a history of compassionate wounding has given birth to a vibrant base of community activism. Indigenous community groups have mobilized largely around a “being building” agenda. Driven by a vision of mainstreaming the Ballymun community back within the market economy, Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. has in contrast been more concerned with appropriating social capital to build human capital. Not surprisingly then, a heated moral politics of place has developed around this critical distinction. According to Ballymun Regeneration Ltd., Ballymun’s community activism is a relic of historical conditions. Community activists in contrast recognize that they have a limited future unless they conform to the state’s vision of what constitutes a sustainable community.

Toward a New Moral Politics of Community in the Gorbals

In contrast, in the Gorbals successive rounds of compassionate wounding have left in their wake a dejected and apathetic local community that has failed to claim any proprietorial control over the social capital agenda. At one level, this has cleared the way for the state to appropriate social capital to nurture human capital without significant local contest. However, the picture has been further confused by the recent introduction of a new breed of middle-class gentrifier. Exploiting local apathy, these incomers have not only populated the new housing developments but have also colonized the committee structures of existing and newly established community groups. As such they too are now seeking ownership over the trajectory of local social capital.

Repeated attempts by the state to involve the local community in the regeneration of the Gorbals have fallen on deaf ears. Prior rounds of compassionate wounding have left a legacy of cynicism and disengagement. Without the option of delving deeply into the community to identify, stimulate, and support community builders, in the Gorbals there is an implicit acceptance by the state that the local community lacks the capacity to reattach itself to the mainstream. Consequently, new incoming gentrifiers have been viewed as an important constituency through which citizen building might be engendered. Not surprisingly, therefore, each new development has sought to introduce fresh talent into the neighborhood.

In what ways are these gentrifiers shaping moral disputes over the value of different forms of community life in the Gorbals? Firstly, incomers have proved to be more reliable foot soldiers of TWUP and the New Labour agenda than the existing community. Consistent with city-center urban renaissance projects elsewhere, many of the incoming residents can be accurately described as young, liberal leaning, and middle class (Ley, 1980; Lees, 2003). These new urbanites have colonized the very mechanisms that have been the product of TWUP—the New Gorbals Housing Association, the Crown Gardens Residents Association, and Gorbals Healthy Living Network among others—and parachuted into the Gorbals a fresh genre of community organizations and groups that more closely embody the values of the Third Way.

Second, the creeping acquisition of the social capital agenda by gentrifiers has cast incomers into new relationships with indigenous locals. As they preach the gospel of the Third Way among locals, they too have found their message falling on deaf ears. While

locals betray some positive emotions toward aspects of the new Gorbals, by and large their cynicism toward the state has metamorphosed into a distrust of incomers and a feeling of continuing impotence. In redesigning the fabric of the community, incomers have sought to endear themselves by promoting the concerns of many of the longer term residents: single mothers (child care, road safety, school provision, ground-level flats), the retired (personal safety, community spirit, housing, and local shops), and married couples (community involvement and spirit). It is as yet unclear as to the direction that community politics will take under the stewardship of gentrifiers, but to date they have not yet brokered a human capital agenda into the neighborhood.

CONCLUSION

If TWUP is intermeshing with neoliberal urban policy to produce a unique hybrid form of “actually existing neoliberal urbanism” in British cities, is it possible to extend the notion of a new moral politics of community to cities in other advanced capitalist nations? How parochial is the conceptual armature erected above? While it would be erroneous to conclude that the vocabulary of TWUP is well known let alone influential in urban policy circles beyond the United Kingdom, it would seem important to refute the claim that the kind of moral politics over community life that have been investigated here are provincial to the British experience and that of its nearest neighbor Ireland.

Even if not part of a conscious strategy, urban policy programs would appear to be being dismantled, transformed, and reworked universally in ways that touch base with many features of TWUP. One immediately thinks here of Sennett’s (2003) depiction of the shift from “bureaucratic welfare” provision to “liberated welfare” regimes in the United States and his tracing through of the implications of this shift for the regeneration of Cabrini Green housing estate in Chicago. Equally, Kleit’s (2005) assessment of the use of mixed housing as a policy tool in the New Urbanist HOPE VI communities in the United States, and more generally, Herbrechter and Higgins (2006) *Returning to Communities* both point to the renewed importance placed on the concept of “community” in the regeneration of deprived neighborhoods in Europe, Australia, and the United States.

In a grandiose panoramic overview of the history of thinking about cities, Baeten (2002a, 2002b) has detected a dialectical interplay between periods of utopian planning and reflection and phases of dystopian fears and anxieties. According to Baeten, we live in a period in which the city has once more become a site of malaise and malignancy. These “hypochondriac geographies of the city” have in turn paved the way for neoliberal solutions and their accompanying “revanchist utopianisms.” Simultaneously, they have been midwife to the birth of a whole series of culture wars with which the local state has had to struggle. These culture wars have been studied by Sharp (2000, 2005) and Ruppert (2006), who have pointed to the morality politics that revanchist conservatism has triggered over phenomenon such as topless bars, casino gambling, needle exchange programs, abortion clinics, and gay rights.

Even if not formally part of a coherent national urban policy program that has the formal qualities of TWUP, it would seem that there are important parallels to be drawn between strategies to ameliorate urban deprivation and ghettoization in the United Kingdom and those that are undertaken elsewhere. Roll forward neoliberalism would seem to be approaching deprived neighborhoods, socially excluded spaces, and so-called

sink estates with a surprisingly common “cultural” agenda irrespective of the particularities of the national context. Mapping and explaining the uneven development of a new moral politics of community across neighborhoods in a wider variety of advanced capitalist cities, therefore, would appear to be a more general pressing concern.

On this basis, we conclude by noting that it might be profitable to enquire into the general significance of three aspects of the analytic framework outlined for research on the regeneration of disadvantaged neighborhoods in a variety of national settings.

1. It would seem important to assess how the application of moral geographical frameworks in this context resonates with the wider literature on moral geographies that is surfacing. Moreover, beyond the focus on descriptive ethics adopted here, there would also seem to be merit to probe into the extent to which geographers might want to engage in normative ethical discussions. Recently for instance, Paul Cloke (2004) has criticized geographers for writing about the importance of being ethical while doing very little practically about it. While recognizing the power of critiques of foundationalism, Cloke implores geographers to think hard about the real ethical and moral implications of their research and teaching and to live out their principles in everyday life.

2. Occupying center stage in the paper has been the concept of proprietorship over local social capital. As the case studies of Ballymun and the Gorbals testify, exploiting the ambiguity that surrounds the concept, social capital is being claimed by many interests and is being put to many different uses. The extent to which it is controlled by branches of the state, local community groups, the wider lay community, and/or incoming gentrifiers, therefore, is pivotal to the precise form that moral contestation takes. As such, an appreciation of the property rights over social capital that prevail in cities with a wide variety of historical roots would appear to be a fruitful avenue of enquiry.

3. Finally, we have argued that locally specific patterns of proprietorship are the product of both the localization of TWUP and the biographies of the neighborhoods into which such policy is deposited. The core argument advanced is that the uneven development of a new moral politics of community is a reflection of the degree of synchronicity between the moral assumptions which inhere within TWUP and the local value systems that stem from the communities being targeted by this agenda. This in turn requires a deeper appreciation of the social relations that mediate the local production of regeneration projects and the humanistic geographies and existential histories of each community.

Insofar as this paper has sought to challenge “official” assumptions about what constitutes the virtuous community, it has at the least allowed alternative visions to be ventilated. To think that the tremendous amount of human wastage and ruined lives that languish in so-called “sink estates” can simply be turned around overnight to create neighborhoods full of active and engaged citizens, ready for the challenge of living and dying by the rules of the market, is clearly misguided. This would appear to be a lesson that regeneration practitioners worldwide would do well to remember.

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