

**BOOK REVIEWS**

**Sarah ATKINSON, Sara FULLER, Joe PAINTER (eds.), *Wellbeing and Place*, Ashgate, Farnham 2012, 254 pp.**

In this edited volume two concepts – wellbeing and place – which are inextricably linked are explored. The volume emerged from an international conference organized in 2009 by a team at Durham University UK, where the editors Sarah Atkinson, Sara Fuller and Joe Painter are based. The contributors have been written by social scientists from a range of disciplines, some of whom are able to draw on practical experience as policy-makers or practitioners. The chapters fall into two broad categories, those determining wellbeing's relationship to place and those contesting the definitions and relationships of wellbeing and place.

The book is composed of fifteen chapters and brings together a range of perspectives on wellbeing across different disciplines including those addressing immediate applied policy concerns and these offering more critical academic engagements. The chapters mostly engage with wellbeing as a personal, individual attribute and largely address health and psychological dimensions of wellbeing. The majority of chapters relate to high income and Anglophone settings, particularly, but not exclusively, to the United Kingdom. But in some chapters wellbeing is examined beyond Europe, including Thailand and Bolivia. The chapters can be grouped into two sections, those that explore the dynamics that determine wellbeing in relation to place and those in which authors explore contested understandings of wellbeing both empirically and theoretically.

The first two chapters offer readers an overview of wellbeing and place. In the Introductory chapter the editors provide a useful context for the book, noting that the processes of wellbeing or becoming are deeply spatial, and they can be linked to a sense of community. Wellbeing, they highlight, is conceptualized and defined in different ways, and is used by public policy-makers in contested ways. In chapter 2, 'Wellbeing: reflections on geographical engagements', David Conradson with a presentation of the historical trajectories of different conceptual engagements with geographies of health and wellbeing. These range from more collective welfare understandings through to current interest in personal subjective assessments.

Helen Beck in her chapter 'Understanding the impact of urban green space on health and wellbeing' reports on research undertaken in the UK to build an evidence base on the state of urban green space and its role in enhancing health and wellbeing. The focus switches to rural England in the following chapter when Mylène Riva and Sarah Curtis provide a quantitative analysis of the issues affecting wellbeing, defined as positive and

self-reported health. They highlight issues of concern centring on employment and aspects of the life-course. The theme of the life-course is picked up in the next two chapters, the first with regard to older adults. In her chapter, Rose Gilroy looks at the spatial and social challenges of wellbeing and ageing within an examination of current public policy measures in the UK. Gilroy highlights the importance of the local to older adults, with the home and neighbourhood having strong affective attachment. In his chapter 'The role of place attachments in wellbeing', Gordon Jack takes the theme of attachment to place as his central focus, and demonstrates the significance of this for children's wellbeing and the development of identity in the UK. He presents identity and wellbeing as dynamic processes.

In a chapter entitled 'Am I an eco-warrior now? Place, wellbeing and the pedagogies of connection', Andrea Wheeler examines initiatives for more sustainable living in schools located in the English Midlands and northern England. In the following chapter, 'Is "modern culture" bad for our wellbeing? Views from "elite" and "excluded" Scotland', Sandra Carlisle, Phil Hanlon, David Reilly, Andrew Lyon and Gregor Henderson examine particular values that characterize modern culture, such as individualism, which may impact on personal, subjective wellbeing, with particular reference to life in urban Scotland. This chapter concludes the cluster of chapters that form the first section of the book.

Section one looked at relationships between wellbeing and place in ways that speak directly to the concerns of policy-makers, looking at wellbeing as an outcome, and some chapters highlighted issues sometimes overlooked by policy-makers, such as the contribution of green spaces to wellbeing. The second cluster of chapters in the book explores the tensions in situated experiences of wellbeing, and begins to contest the mobilization of place as a contextual backdrop. The second section of the book starts with Stuart Muirhead's chapter, 'Exploring embodied and emotional experiences within the landscapes of environmental volunteering'. Muirhead examines the connections between environmental volunteering, green spaces and personal wellbeing in Scotland, through volunteering, giving time and energy volunteers contribute to a wider environmental goal.

In the next two chapters the authors allow the reader to reflect on wellbeing and place beyond the shores of the United Kingdom. In 'Place matters: aspirations and experiences of wellbeing in Northeast Thailand', Rebecca Schaaf highlights competing visions of wellbeing emerging in Thailand in relation to national and global modernization forces, while the global forces promote individualized aspirations, the national forces value more traditional forms of community cohesion and unity. These tensions are also explored in the following chapter by Melania Calestani in the context of urban and peri-urban Bolivia. The focus returns to the UK in the next chapter when Karen Scott in 'A 21st century sustainable community: discourses of local wellbeing' analyzes the planning and implementation processes of a place-shaping intervention in a deprived area in the UK. The theme of multiple meanings within social and cultural spaces links Calestani's and Scott's chapter. In the following chapter Lorraine Gibson focuses on contested meanings of wellbeing between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents in a community in Australia. In the penultimate chapter, Jo Little focuses on personal wellbeing in the UK in the form of the spa, presented as a new therapeutic space. This is a fascinating examination of the spa in terms of gender, the body and identity. In the final, more theoretical chapter entitled 'Place, place-making and planning: an integral perspective with wellbeing in (body) mind (and spirit)', Ian Wight attempts to bring the edited collection to a close through highlighting the fact that wellbeing

and place transcend individual disciplines and professions, they are about integrations. He therefore concludes the book by suggesting a more integral approach, through the application of integral theory developed by Ken Wilber.

This book is very accessible and the chapters are clearly written, but there is a very strong empirical bias to work undertaken in the UK. That said, the book does address very topical issues, and while the focus is on wellbeing and place largely from the perspective of one advanced capitalist economy, the UK, the issues raised will be of interest to the wider readership of the *European Spatial Research and Policy*. The book could have been strengthened by the editors writing a concluding chapter, bringing together the themes of the book and pointing to future research.

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**Marco BONTJE, Sako MUSTERD, Peter PELZER, *Inventive City-Regions: Path Dependence and Creative Knowledge Strategies*, Ashgate, Farnham 2011, 270 pp.**

In an increasingly competitive global knowledge-based economy, urban planners and policy-makers face the challenge of building and sustaining their cities' competitive base. But this competitive challenge brings with it a conundrum. In the age of the Networked Society, building competitive strengths means mobilising coalitions, building networks and actively leading change. But once these communities of change-leaders are mobilized, they acquire a life of their own, and can be overtaken by complacency. Whilst Dublin might have been lionized in the 1990s as an example of a city that had built new knowledge-intensive industries, the nemesis of the global crash and the complete collapse of the Irish property sector swiftly dealt with that hubris and its attendant complacency. More generally, cities' long-term health lies in their capacity to continually reinvent networks and coalitions, as well as their competitive strengths, to continually re-position and re-adjust themselves effectively within global circuits of capital.

Many of the studies of recent years that have attempted to understand this process have suffered slightly from the Dublin syndrome. Most cities have tended to do well because of the long global credit boom. The easy option has been to give the credit for that success to urban governance coalitions in line with the theoretical expectations from urban planning theory. But with cities now facing genuinely problematic times, and successes being much harder to book, it is much fairer to be able to assign success to place specific urban governance particularities. So the time is certainly ripe for a volume that explores these issues in more detail, and in particular, what is the 'alchemists stone' of urban governance that can allow places to create coalitions that bring success, and then dissolve or transform them when they reach the end of their life.

This is the academic conversation in which Marco Bontje *et al.* have found themselves participating, and their ambition in the volume is to identify the urban governance

conditions under which cities can transform themselves to specialize in knowledge and creativity, something they expect will only ever apply to a very limited number of cities. Given the importance of the subject and the timeliness of the analysis, the theme clearly has the opportunity to make a substantive contribution to a pressing academic debate which at the same time has significant policy implications. The volume carries endorsements from both Sir Peter Hall and Allan Scott on the rear cover. Promising ‘a uniquely well-researched and informative analysis of a key contemporary issues’ and that ‘It will become essential reading’, this sets the expectations high for what readers can expect in the volume in return for their £65.

The book is structured around a series of seven case studies of cities that have been engaged in attempting to make the switch towards knowledge-based creative cities, and in which those transformative change processes are charted. The seven cities, in five countries, are Amsterdam, Munich, Barcelona, Helsinki, Birmingham, Manchester and Leipzig, and were chosen because they were case studies in a research project undertaken by the authors: there is otherwise no intrinsic logic apparent in their selection. Each empirical chapter has a common structure, providing some background to the city, its long-term developments, more recent trends, its unique position, current urban policies, urban co-operation and competition, and the current policy debate. Each chapter concludes with a format SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) analysis for the respective city.

At approximately 25 pages each, these empirical chapters form the bulk of the book’s contribution. They are framed by a set of extremely brief complementary chapters, covering introduction (6 pages), literature review (10 pages) methodology (8 pages), case study overview (14 pages) and conclusion (12 pages). And the suspicion that this immediately raises is justified – there is no way possible in the very limited space available to actually do anything comparative or constructive with all of that material. All the conclusion is able to achieve is to list the pathways, strengths and strategies of each of the cities, and then in *one page* to try and draw some more general lessons for the wider academic and policy debates about urban strategies and policy-making for knowledge based urban development. Likewise, the literature review is an extremely rapid and superficial skim through a fruit salad of concepts that really just sketch out ‘some theoretical ideas about the essential conditions for economic development, in particular in the spheres of knowledge intensive and creative industries’ (p. 14).

In the absence of a particularly strong theoretical framework, the empirical chapters are immediately disadvantaged regarding what they can offer. These seven chapters do at least provide interesting insights into what is underway in the seven European cities. For someone researching one or more of those cities, there might be empirical nuggets that can be extracted and used to build bigger and more theoretically satisfying stories of urban change. These empirical chapters paint a highly recognizable picture of the cities for those that know something of them, and this means that these chapters in themselves have some kind of research value. But at the same time, they read as the first drafts of research reports, the kinds of things that can typically be downloaded freely from project websites, rather than the polished contents of a volume that makes a contribution that justifies its rather high price.

There is a way to write a book like this on the basis of a fissiparous research project, and that is exemplified by Martinelli *et al.* (2012). The key to success is dialectic

integration – developing a theoretically rich framework which guides the case study development, and a case study analysis that, in turn, generates further theoretical insights. Even Martinelli *et al.* are not beyond reproach, but they at least set a standard for what such a volume from a research project has to achieve before it can ‘become essential reading’, as claimed on the cover endorsements.

The various elements are not themselves weak, and indeed, the empirical evidence is interesting and could contribute to others’ research on these cities. But that alone is not enough to justify its assembly and publication as a high-priced book: the conceptual and concluding material also falls well short of making that justification. The publishers, Ashgate, must take a considerable element of the blame in not pushing the authors beyond their comfort zone, and they should ensure that this does not become a regular occurrence or their imprint will certainly suffer. In conclusion, the best that can be said about this book is that it seems a staging point on an interesting intellectual journey concerning debates about knowledge-based urban development, and I hope eventually to read elsewhere what the authors make of it all.

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**Alessandro SORRENTINO, Roberto HENKE, Simone SEVERINI (eds.),**  
***The Common Agricultural Policy after the Fischler Reform: National***  
***Implementations, Impact Assessment and the Agenda for Future Reforms,***  
**Ashgate, Farnham 2011, 522 pp.**

In the foreword of this volume, the former EU Commissioner in charge of the CAP, Franz Fischler, warns that food, rural and environmental security are at risk of becoming a market failure, not only in poor countries but also in many parts of Europe. The adjustment of the post-war CAP to the 21st century circumstances must proceed with no hesitation; however, such a transition requires a better understanding of post-2003 CAP and of its possible reform paths. Avoiding fruitless reflections about the European Model Agriculture, this book invites scholars to focus on the reality checks of the multi-functionality concept. In doing so, it insightfully looks at the multi-faceted impacts of the Fischler Reform as well as at possible future developments, whose discussion is symbolically situated both at the very beginning and at the very end of the book.

In chapter 1, the editors set the background of the volume, briefly addressing both the achievements and the shortcomings of the 2003 reform and then discussing the new conditions in which further reforms might occur. In short, their view is that the Fischler Reform represented a turning point for the CAP, but also that its widely acknowledged merits should not prevent us from seeing the serious perils that it might imply. On the one hand, in fact, the reform has offered a chance to redesign an agricultural support consistent with the new demands expressed by the society. On the other hand, however, the paradoxical result is that the more European agricultural policies have become transparent, the more it becomes difficult to properly legitimize them. By dismissing the traditional model of coupled support once and for all, Fischler has thus opened a new transition period whose outcomes are difficult to foresee, as CAP budget is entering into the 'stormy ocean' of political and financial bargaining, in which the risk to throw out the baby with the bath water is more concrete than ever.

After this introduction, a selection of twenty-nine papers – presented at the 2008 European Association of Agricultural Economists (EAAE) seminar concerning the future developments of the Fischler Reform – is articulated into nine parts, which provide a vast, albeit not systematic, information on national implementation strategies, methodologies to assess CAP impacts and prospects for future reforms. Parts I, VIII and IX represent the core effort of the book, namely the analysis of the future scenarios for the never-ending reform of European agriculture. The specific goals of these sections are, however, rather different. In Part I, Esposti suggests some policy developments that might address the concerns of the Sapir Report – i.e. that CAP contribution to EU growth is lower than what targeted for other policies within the Lisbon strategy – while Haniotis observes the multiple issues emerged in the post-2013 debate and reasserts that a broad range of instruments will be necessary to ensure the joint delivery of private and public goods. Parts VIII and IX are instead more limited in scope and focus on the future of specific instruments, respectively market measures and direct payments, with regard to different sectors of EU agriculture. In between these prospective sections, the remaining papers are dedicated to the analysis of the Fischler Reform impacts on EU agriculture. More specifically, Part II examines the political economy of the reform, with special reference to its roots, its financial implications and the reformed policy-making processes upon which it rests. Parts III and Part IV then discuss the impact of CAP reform on EU agriculture and on its different branches, while Parts V and VI look at crucial and innovative aspects of the Fischler Reform, like the greening of farming and the implementation of cross-compliance and of agro-environmental measures. Finally, Part VII deals with another key features of the new CAP, that is the restructuring of the second pillar and the multiple and even contradictory meanings attached to the notion of rural development.

To what extent does this volume really contribute to the ongoing debates on CAP reform? The recurring attention paid to methodological issues is, in my opinion, by far the most interesting aspect emerging from the book. Despite my education as a political scientist and my lack of confidence with quantitative analysis, I nonetheless fully agree on that new analytical tools are needed to cope properly with the broadened objectives of the CAP and the increased number of instruments at its disposal. Improving existing indicators, assessment procedures and modelling approaches is, indeed, a crucial condition to have a sound and evidence-based CAP debate. A second remarkable aspect of the book,

in addition, is the wide range of issues and case-studies covered in detail by the papers. Even if most of them have a rather specific focus and do not aim at making generalizations, they nevertheless convey a clear message: CAP complexity is growing together with the reform process, and scholars must avoid simplifications and pay due attention to the different implementation strategies pursued by Member States as well as to the regional peculiarities that strongly affect the results of the 2003 reform.

Conversely, however, I feel that the book failed to address the key point raised in the introductory chapter, i.e. the need to find new and empirically grounded justifications for the high rate of expenditure of the CAP in the total EU budget. On the one hand, its very nature – a collection of papers dealing with varied issues – prevents this volume from providing useful inputs for policy-makers engaged in CAP reform. Although I have indicated this variety as one of the main strengths of the book, most of the presented results are explicitly context-bound, and thus, they do not offer European-wide reality checks. On the other hand, in spite of the remarks made in chapter 1 by the editors themselves about the saliency of political and financial settings, these aspects have not been satisfactorily examined in the volume. Even the four papers composing the political economy section pay indeed little attention to many of the post-2003 developments, missing to take into serious consideration the implications of the rise into the policy-making arena of new actors – such as the EP and the civil society – whose role is mentioned, but not adequately investigated. This flaw is relevant not only in that, as recent events show, the Parliament will sharply influence the decision-making processes (see Crombez and Swinnen, 2011), but also because a stable CAP must be supported and legitimized by European public opinion (see Cooper *et al.*, 2009).

To conclude, this fine book is recommended to anyone interested in agricultural economics. Above all, most of its papers are methodologically innovative and the volume might thus be an extremely valuable resource for scholars seeking inspiration for quantitative research. In expanding the geographical focus of the analysis presented in this book, they would find an excellent subject for their study and simultaneously contribute to the CAP reform debate by extending the existing body of knowledge. At the same time, however, in two aspects I would hesitate to suggest this book to academic students lacking solid skills in quantitative analysis or modelling approaches as well as to those who are primarily interested in the political aspects of the CAP. First of all, they might have some problems in fully understanding methodological discussions, as it was in my case, and would thus fail to appreciate the most remarkable side of the book. Second, even if they may enjoy the political economy section and the convincing analysis proposed in chapter 1 by the authors, they could nonetheless find elsewhere more detailed and up-to-date accounts of the Fischler Reform and of the prospects for its further evolution (see Bureau and Mahé, 2008; Cunha and Swinbank, 2011; Zahrnt, 2011).

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**Thōmas MALOUTAS, Kuniko FUJITA, *Residential Segregation in Comparative Perspective: Making Sense of Contextual Diversity*, Ashgate, Farnham 2012, 329 pp.**

The attempts to explain the drivers and describe the changing patterns of residential segregation, made by different researchers, are mainly based on the Anglo-Saxon concepts. Thōmas Maloutas and Kuniko Fujita highlight important limitations and misunderstandings derived from Anglophone visions and interpretations of socio-economic structures adopted to provide the knowledge about segregation in different cities around the world. Hence, they argue that the existing discrepancies between the processes of segregation in the North American and European cities are undeniable (e.g. in US metropolises, residential segregation concerns mainly racial and ethnic groups, whereas social class is treated as the prime identifier for residential segregation in Europe; suburbanization is the main driver for residential segregation in the US, while this process is less influential in European cases).

One of the authors' central arguments is that segregation is considered as context-bound concept, having few different spheres (p. 3): economic (mainly labour market conditions and market access to housing), state (local regulations and housing and public services allocation), social (social and family networks, churches, local voluntary organizations) as well as specific and durable shape of local socio-spatial realities (built environment, social relations, urban histories and ideologies). Simultaneously, the authors claimed that varied urban settings produce multiple versions of segregation in terms of processes, patterns and impact. They put special emphasis on divergent residential segregation patterns that are sustained by the aforementioned contextual differences. Considering this assumption, a question is raised whether those divergent patterns are linked to one of the major factors leading to class inequality in the same way as the American patterns do.



The main aim of the book edited by Maloutas and Fujita is to explain the patterns and trends of social and ethnic segregation in metropolitan areas adopting the eleven examples of cities from around the world, gathered in eleven separate chapters elaborated by different authors. The patterns and trends of segregation are presented at city-wide scale rather than adopting studies at neighbourhood level. The book is focused on quantitative research and encompasses a set of different measures adopted in order to calculate the level of segregation (e.g. classic indices and multivariate statistical techniques, including factors and clustering techniques).

The book is divided in thirteen chapters, including eleven case study chapters which constitute the core of the book. As the comparative approach to residential segregation is the cornerstone of this book, I focus my attention in this review on the elements that contributed to elaboration of this comparative perspective.

The theoretical context is set in chapter 1 (written by Maloutas), presenting the definition, methodological issues as well as contextual differences. Despite the common fact that the global factors are the drivers for increasing inequality and segregation, it is claimed that they may often bring alternative outcomes which are in turn affected by national and local policies. The level of state intervention from *laissez-faire* to explicit social and political objective can influence the reproduction of residential segregation. Hence, institutional intervention may mitigate or exacerbate residential segregation. Maloutas demonstrates that the process of reproduction of residential segregation is driven by three casual mechanisms derived from labour market, unequal distribution of wealth and consolidated ethno-racial hierarchies (cf. the scheme, p. 12). In addition, the patterns of segregation are impacted by several filters occurring within the process of housing allocation (such as: household needs and preferences, diversity and spatial distribution of housing quality, accessibility restrictions, spatial pattern of social networks and tenure options together with property rights).

Chapter 1 concludes with the statement that segregation in the eleven cities investigated usually contradicts the vision of dual/divided city. What is more, as socio-spatial separation is often more intricate as well as social distances are more complex, adopting the traditional definition of segregation (based on ethno-racial segregation in the US metropolises in the 1920s) often produces more complex structures than assumed. Chapter 1 also summarizes the most crucial points, concerning the eleven city studies in terms of the main drivers for segregation, relations between the level of inequality and segregation, influence of state policies on segregation, primacy axis of segregation etc. By providing the basic assumptions and general results derived from case study chapters, this introduction is very useful for the reader and makes the whole book more coherent, despite the fact that each chapter has been written by a different author.

The consecutive eleven chapters dedicated to the case studies include an introduction, situating the analysis mainly in national context and offering background information on previous research in this domain. In some cases, this structure of chapter is blurred and theoretical implications appear more or less in the following sections, which is sometimes confusing. Considering the geographical location of the selected case studies, there are four Asian cities (Tokyo, Beijing, Hong Kong and Taipei), one from South America (São Paulo) and a set of European examples (Paris, Copenhagen, Budapest, Madrid, Istanbul, Athens). On the one hand, this diversity of case studies should be seen as an advantage of the book, because it does not limit the comparison only to European cases, but on the other hand, the

selection of cities is sometimes not clearly justified (especially in the case of São Paulo). The eleven chapters refer to different: contextual features, combination of inequality and discriminations, strong or weak public intervention as well as to strong or weak social networks. These issues might have been developed in a more detailed manner in certain chapters, to enrich the knowledge of the reader. The weakness of these chapters concerns mainly technical aspects. Sometimes the illustrations (maps) are not clearly understandable due to black and white colour scale – in some cases the shades are poorly differentiated to distinguish properly each category on the map.

The concluding chapter 13 (prepared by Fujita) merged the results of the case study chapters using a comparative approach. In addition, it is highlighted that residential segregation has a profound meaning only in some cities as well as residential segregation and class inequality are highly correlated only in selected cases.

The author raised a question whether the existing strategies of the welfare state, social inclusion and multiculturalism are adequate today. Fujita states that welfare state approach to residential segregation needs more discriminatory approach to welfare state institutions that may intensify or counteract residential segregation than the general approach so far adopted.

Perhaps the most important comparative aspect of the book is the framework for comparison of the American separate and unequal pattern of segregation to the divergent residential segregation patterns of the eleven cities and among themselves. To this end, several theoretical concepts were adopted, namely the concept of various forms of capitalism (Hall and Soskice, 2001), the notion of social systems of production (Hollingsworth and Boyer, 1997) and regionalism. The objective was to address the three following questions (p. 289): How institutions shape or dampen residential segregation? How residential segregation is one of the major factors that produce class inequality? How institutions intensify and counteract the effects of residential segregation?

Comparative institutional perspective focused on forces and institutions that intensify or counteract residential segregation and class inequality. Although the author claims that the contextual focus is not new in cross-national residential segregation studies, he emphasises that institutional differences are rarely analyzed as context is usually linked to national or regional differences. According to the author, this comparative institutional perspective is particularly important in understanding the eleven city cases. The comparison of forces, institutions and the level of American separate and unequal pattern was presented in a table with cities grouped by the levels of residential segregation and class inequality (pp. 292–293). These references for contextual difference allowed grouping the eleven cities into five categories: highly separate and unequal (Beijing, Istanbul, São Paulo), moderately separate and unequal (Budapest, Paris), separate but equal (Copenhagen), together but unequal (Athens, Hong Kong, Madrid), together and equal (Taipei, Tokyo). This typology attempts to indicate which cities are close to American separate and unequal model. Then, the author analyzes each type and provides additional information derived from the case study chapters. Fujita concludes that ‘the forces and counteracting forces that shape or dampen residential segregation are embedded in particular institutions – household registration policy, communist legacy, the historical legacy of religious divide, the emerging capitalist economy, the combination of the colonial legacy and the state policy of metropolitan development, the historical legacy of class divide, the combination of the welfare

state and coordinated capitalism, Mediterranean familism, urban planning and state housing policies, and the developmental state' (p. 303).

The authors describe the institutional changes as slow, evolutionary and path dependent. An interesting point was made also in the conclusion, as in Fujita's opinion, the eleven case studies showed that the patterns of residential segregation did not change dramatically over the last three decades, which threw into question the urban convergence and metropolitan polarization theories.

On the whole, the book provides an interesting insight into the explanation of residential segregation in various institutional contexts and is highly recommended for both students and scholars of urban studies, and particularly for those specializing in residential segregation.

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