



Housing Studies >

Volume 20, 2005 - [Issue 2: GATED COMMUNITIES](#)

2,413 Views | 222 CrossRef citations to date | 0 Altmetric

Original Articles

Rediscovering the 'Gate' Under Market Transition: From Work-unit Compounds to Commodity Housing Enclaves

Fulong Wu

Pages 235-254 | Received 01 Oct 2003, Published online: 22 Aug 2006

Cite this article <https://doi.org/10.1080/026730303042000331754>

Sample our
Urban Studies
Journals

>> [Sign in here](#) to start your access
to the latest two volumes for 14 days

Full Article Figures & data References Citations Metrics

Reprints & Permissions

[Read this article](#)

Share

Abstract

This paper applies two major explanations in gated community studies, namely the club realm of consumption and the discourse of fear, to examine the changing forms of urban 'gated communities', i.e. the transition from work-unit compounds to gated commodity housing enclaves, in urban China. While the gate has existed in China for a long time as a physical form, it has now been rediscovered as an instrument for the partitioning of derelict socialist landscapes produced by 'economising urbanisation' and a post-socialist imagined 'good life'. The study highlights that the function of gating is dependent upon social and economic contexts: under socialism, gating reinforces political control and collective consumption organised by the state; in the post-reform era, the gate demarcates emerging consumer clubs in response to the retreat of the state from the provision of public goods. While the discourse of fear seems less

applicable to the Chinese city, urban fragmentation is paving the way to a new urban experience of insecurity, which has begun to appear in the discourse of 'community building' in urban China.

Keywords:

Gated community

urban China

social inequalities

urban governance

commodity housing

Acknowledgements

This research is supported by the project under the British Academy Larger Grant scheme (LRG-37484). I would like to thank anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments. Special thanks are given to Chris Webster who enlightened me during further fieldwork on gated communities in Beijing in March 2004.

Related Research Data

[Spaces of Neoliberalism](#)

Source: Unknown Repository

[Market Transition and the Commodification of Housing in Urban China*](#)

Source: International Journal of Urban and Regional Research

[Governance Restructuring in Los Angeles and Toronto: Amalgamation or Secession?](#)

Source: International Journal of Urban and Regional Research

[Gated communities in Indonesia](#)

Source: Cities

[THE EMERGENCE OF AFFLUENCE IN BEIJING: RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN CHINA'S CAPITAL CITY](#)

Source: Urban Geography

[Housing inequality in urban China in the 1990s](#)

Source: International Journal of Urban and Regional Research

[The Edge and the Center: Gated Communities and the Discourse of Urban Fear](#)

Source: American Anthropologist

Ending gated communities: the rationales for resistance in China >

Colleen Chiu-Shee et al.
Housing Studies
Published online: 30 Jul 2021



Information for

Authors
R&D professionals
Editors
Librarians
Societies

Opportunities

Reprints and e-prints
Advertising solutions
Accelerated publication
Corporate access solutions

Open access

Overview
Open journals
Open Select
Dove Medical Press
F1000Research

Help and information

Help and contact
Newsroom
All journals
Books

Keep up to date

Register to receive personalised research and resources by email



Sign me up

