EDUCATIONAL THEORY

SEGREGATION AND CIVIC VIRTUE

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Abstract. In this essay Michael Merry defends the following prima facie argument: that civic virtue is not dependent on integration and in fact may be best fostered under conditions of segregation. He demonstrates that civic virtue can and does take place under conditions of involuntary segregation, but that voluntary separation — as a response to segregation — is a more effective way to facilitate it. While segregation and disadvantage commonly coexist, spatial concentrations, particularly when there is a strong voluntary aspect present, often aid in fostering civic virtue. Accordingly, so long as separation provides the conditions necessary for the promotion of civic virtue, integration is not an irreducible good.

Political theorists defend the importance of citizenship in order to stress what fellow citizens have, or should have, in common. Citizenship entails mutual rights and responsibilities, social cooperation, and the necessity of fostering shared interests, concerns, and values. Yet the strength and persistence of other attachments — not to mention cultural and political divisions — present recurring challenges, in part because the scope and demands of citizenship remain contested. In order to give this essay more focus I will home in on the more modest claims of civic virtue. In particular I want to examine the relation between civic virtue and segregation because segregation is thought by many to obstruct the realization of democratic ideals. I will argue that many types of segregation, far from diminishing possibilities for the cultivation and expression of civic virtue, may in fact strengthen it.

Most scholars who traffic in segregation studies offer up a dim prognosis for civic virtue, and with good reason. When segregation coincides with poverty concentration, high unemployment, limited health care, low school quality, environmental hazards, poor housing infrastructure, and restricted social networks, the effects of segregation can be dire indeed.[1] The negative features

1. Joep Bakker, Eddie Denessen, Dorothee Peters, and Guido Walraven, eds., *International Perspectives on Countering School Segregation* (Antwerp, Belgium: Garant, 2010); Geert Driessen and Michael S. Merry, ''The Effects of Integration and Generation of Immigrants on Language and Numeracy Achievement,'' *Educational Studies* 37, no. 5 (2011): 581–592; Reynolds Farley, Charlotte Steeh, and Maria Krysan, ''Stereotypes and Segregation: Neighborhoods in the Detroit Area,'' *American Journal of Sociology* 100, no. 3 (1994): 750–780; Lauren J. Krivo, Ruth D. Peterson, and Danielle C. Kuhl, ''Segregation, Racial Structure and Neighborhood Violent Crime,'' *American Journal of Sociology* 114, no. 6 (2009): 1765–1802; Maria Krysan, ''Whites Who Say They'd Flee: Who They Are, and Why Would They Leave?'' *Demography* 39, no. 4 (2002): 675–696; Michael S. Merry, ''Social Exclusion of Muslim Minority Youth in Flemish- and French-Speaking Belgian Schools,'' *Comparative Education Review* 49, no. 1 (2005): 1–22; William S. New and Michael S. Merry, ''Solving the 'Gypsy Problem': D.H. and Others v. Czech Republic,'' *Comparative Education Review* 54, no. 3 (2010): 393–414; Gary Orfield and Chungmei Lee, *Why Segregation Matters: Poverty and Educational Inequality* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, 2005); Deborah Phillips, ''Minority Ethnic Segregation, Integration and Citizenship: A European Perspective,'' *Journal of Ethnic and*

of segregation can and often do outweigh many of the positive aspects I later consider, such as those that coincide with and result from our preferences: to be near family and friends, to select a local school for one's child, as well as other culturally useful facilities, services, and products that may be in limited supply if not absent in other neighborhoods. But if segregation is causally linked to an absence of critical resources and social capital, and if possibilities for civic virtue are drowned out by despair, then it is indeed an affront to basic moral principles to suggest that civic virtue thrives in the ghetto or that all is well.

Be that as it may, most scholarly accounts that examine segregation remain notably one-sided, attributing the structural causes of inequality to segregation. After providing detailed and lurid — but also highly selective — accounts of the harms of segregation, most scholars implicitly or explicitly embrace the following non sequitur: in order to remedy problems associated with social inequality, stigma, and discrimination, society must become more integrated.[2] Curiously absent in some of these accounts are any of the following: attention to the cultural, ethnic, and social class differences between and within minority groups; serious consideration for the preferences of the groups and individuals themselves; a sober account of the terrific harms incurred under the banner of integration; an acknowledgment of the positive features that often coincide with spatial concentrations; and, finally, the recognition that other modes of empowerment not dependent upon integration can and should be pursued. This essay represents a modest attempt to gainsay the bevy of one-sided accounts. In particular I aim to show that for many minorities the demand for integration amounts to little more than vacuous rhetoric if not merely another paternalistic gesture whose benefits remain hypothetical.[3]

I defend the following prima facie argument: civic virtue is not dependent on integration, it does not reduce to political virtue, nor must it conform to

Migration Studies 36, no. 2 (2010): 209–225; Robert J. Sampson, "Moving to Inequality: Neighborhood Effects and Experiments Meet Social Structure," *American Journal of Sociology* 114, no. 1 (2008): 191–233; Patrick Sharkey, "The Intergenerational Transmission of Context," *American Journal of Sociology* 113, no. 4 (2008): 931–969; and William Julius Wilson, *More Than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

2. For two recent philosophical accounts, see Elizabeth Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010); and Lawrence Blum, "The Promise of Racial Integration in a Multicultural Age," in *Moral and Political Education: Nomos XLIII*, ed. Stephen Macedo and Yael Tamir (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 383–424.

3. Integration is a complex term often misleadingly associated with desegregation. Others use the term in relation to immigration policy, indicating linguistic, cultural, and economic behaviors. In this article I use the term to refer both to spatial as well as to formal and informal social mixing of groups without specifying the degree or quality of interaction between them.

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liberal models of public deliberation that ignore the presence of counterpublics. I demonstrate that civic virtue can and does take place under conditions of involuntary segregation, but that voluntary forms of separation are a more effective way to facilitate it. Even if integration remains an attractive and important ideal, consideration must also be given both to the voluntary and involuntary conditions in which we live, irrespective of how nonideal those conditions may be. Contrary to certain liberal ideals, I will show that integrated settings are not the only fertile ground on which the harvest of civic virtue depends.

I am aware that integration means different things to different people. One may speak of *spatial, civic, sociocultural, socioeconomic*, and *psychological* aspects. Though each may overlap with the others, I oversimplify them here as follows: type A integration will denote broad civic aims; type B integration will denote its purported socioeconomic benefits. Each of these will reappear in the second half of the article. In the main, however, I use *integration* to refer both to spatial as well as to formal and informal social mixing of groups without specifying the degree or quality of interaction between them.

I proceed as follows: I first examine the notion of civic virtue before turning my attention to the features of segregation. I will argue that while segregation and disadvantage commonly coexist, many forms of segregation actually facilitate the occurrence of civic virtue. In other words, it may not be in spite of but rather *because* there are spatial concentrations that civic virtue can be more effectively pursued. Accordingly, so long as segregation provides facilitative conditions for the promotion of civic virtue, integration is not an irreducible good. To that end, I explicate and defend voluntary forms of separation consistent with civic virtue. I further argue that while civic virtue typically begins with the local, this need not limit one's capacity to think *beyond* the local. Local attachments need not foreclose fostering other modes of belonging or restrict the scope of moral concern. In the second half of the essay I respond to specific challenges to my argument. These are ethnocentrism, deliberation, and stratification. The first two challenges engage with type A integration; the third engages more directly with type B integration. Yet each in its own way holds that segregation of any sort is undesirable and that voluntary forms of separation in particular are wrongheaded.

Civic Virtue

Virtue refers to dispositions, habits, and actions whose excellence promotes individual and collective well-being. These may include things such as kindness, truth-telling, mutual respect, self-discipline, compassion, loyalty, toleration, and generosity. Virtues are civic to the extent that they contribute to, and strengthen, the communal good. Civic virtues are rooted in the character of individuals and have a positive impact on society; they do not merely indicate social cooperation for self-interest.[4] Obvious examples might include the building and maintenance of parks, schools, community centers, and libraries. Literacy campaigns, job services,

4. Robert Audi, *Democratic Authority and the Separation of Church and State (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 134ff.

and drug rehabilitation centers produce similarly positive civic outcomes. The cultivation of civic virtue is often facilitated by local and fairly homogeneous networks where social trust is strongest.[5]

Yet robust civic virtues are not contained within or restricted to specific locations; they have what economists call powerful externalities. To paraphrase Robert Putnam, inward-looking bonding forms of virtue do not exclude outward-looking virtues. So the benefits of a neighborhood watch program that shares the responsibility for safe and congenial relations among community members may very well move outward to adjoining neighborhoods, where the relevant virtues can be emulated by others. Accordingly, the local and communal may significantly overlap with the national or global. How ''civic'' the relevant virtues are will depend, in part, on their efficacy and reach; how broad the scope of ''common'' good is will arguably depend on the good being promoted. Whatever the case, the effects of civic virtue will be felt first and foremost near their source: the family, neighborhood, region, or nation-state in which the relevant virtues and activities are cultivated and flourish.

Meanwhile, the correspondence between civic and political virtues is less obvious.[6] Civic virtue *may* include political acts such as lobbying, town meetings, and voting, but it need not. Instead, it might include coaching little league baseball, good parenting, volunteering one's time at a homeless shelter, or planting trees. What gives these activities civic significance is their impact on the lives of others. If and when conditions change, persons may choose to participate in overtly political acts: witness the stunning events of 2011 across North Africa and the Middle East. But civic virtues need not be overtly political; indeed, nonpolitical actions often contribute more to the common good within a particular community.

Nor should civic virtue be conflated with republican notions of citizenship that accentuate national over communal attachments and their attendant expressions of common good. Civic virtue does not reduce to a political conception that subsumes all that persons think and do. Certain political obligations — basic rights and responsibilities — may obtain, and the way we identify ourselves may include membership in a polity, but for most of us attachments to a particular family, ethnic group, religion, or neighborhood assume greater importance and priority. It is within these communities that the possibility of civic virtue arises. Indeed, particular interests, concerns, and values usually guide the practices and concerns specific to one's group. In their particularity our attachments express what matters most to us; they are capable of describing our deepest concerns and passions, as well as capturing our imagination about what is most meaningful. They even may most effectively galvanize our efforts in responding to others in need. Indeed, attachments to specific groups often supply persons with the

5. Robert D. Putnam, ''*E Pluribus Unum:* Diversity and Community in the Twenty-First Century,'' *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30, no. 2 (2007): 137–174.

6. Jason Brennan, *The Ethics of Voting* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011); and Ian Shapiro, *Democratic Justice (*New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1999).

substance of belonging that make more expansive notions of cooperation both possible and meaningful.

Hence long before we are able to reflect upon its significance, the very possibility of civic virtue begins with attachments nourished by those with whom we have daily interaction, that is, those we already know. Its elements likely will include a history, language, and a broader cultural context, its expression may or may not be political, but these strong attachments to one's community of choice or inheritance need not be in conflict with the obligations of a shared political membership. The point is simply this: all of us rank our attachments according to both proximity of interest and obligation, and, where these conflict, we must sort out our priorities.

Of course, community-centered civic virtues facilitated by local attachments need not eclipse more remote concerns. Indeed, our links to strangers are rarely as remote as we may think. Local communities also function within broader polities, and even nations operate within broader alliances. Nor are markets delineated by strict regional or national boundaries; migration and immigration, too, occur across increasingly porous borders; natural and man-made disasters have very real human and environmental effects on all of us. In moments of crisis it is our humanity that is paramount. Suffering and deprivation expose our frailty and helplessness in the face of forces beyond our control; the best moments of civic virtue are those that make possible the bonding necessary for mutual assistance and good will.

No doubt when there is familiarity with one's community members, we feel those bonds even more. But morally speaking, a tragedy that befalls one group is no less devastating because they speak a different language, possess a different skin color, or adhere to a different religion. One's local communal attachments do not foreclose moral concern and responsiveness to others unlike ourselves.[7] Again, ''bonding'' does not preclude ''bridging.'' Should our specific group memberships inhibit us from responding to the needs of others, or from acting in concert with others irrespective of shared beliefs and habits, the value of our civic virtue is rendered inept. But we need not wait for corrosive forms of ethnocentrism to have this effect; many believe that segregation itself is both a principal cause of injustice and a major deterrent to civic virtue. In particular, many believe that the concentration of certain minority groups in neighborhoods and schools is deeply worrying. Accordingly, politicians and policymakers alike issue renewed pleas for integration. But as I aim to show, even if we grant that harms often coincide with spatial concentrations, it does not follow that integration — if by this we mean compelling persons of different backgrounds to mix — will solve the problems allegedly caused by segregation.

Segregation

Segregation typically summons negative connotations. For many, it explicitly refers to social inequalities that result from the isolation of certain groups

7. Michael S. Merry and Doret J. de Ruyter, ''The Relevance of Cosmopolitanism for Moral Education,'' *Journal of Moral Education* 40, no. 1 (2011): 1–18.

from society's basic resources. Yet segregation more broadly refers to spatial concentrations by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, political ideology, gender, religion, employment status, and language.[8] As a number of researchers observe, "social divisions based on religiosity, political ideology, family behaviors, and socioeconomic standing [in] some cases rival racial segregation in their intensity."[9] Moreover, not all societies frame segregation in the same way.[10] In the United States, for example, the word continues to conjure a binary between whites and blacks, despite considerable variation within both communities, and despite the presence of hundreds of different minority groups and ethnic and class stratification within and among them. Because school segregation generally has followed neighborhood segregation, various initiatives, whether by incentive or court order, have been implemented in neighborhoods and schools over the past forty-five years to try and reverse the effects of institutionalized racism. Elsewhere (for example, Great Britain, the Netherlands) neighborhood segregation is also clearly visible and has long been facilitated by the school system itself, often on the basis of admissions criteria that give priority to a particular religion or pedagogical preference. Many in these countries continue to defend some version of segregation for its ability to facilitate the pursuit of shared interests; others decry segregation in any form as a travesty of constitutional freedom that both exacerbates social inequality and undermines national solidarity.

Whatever the arguable benefits of segregation may be, few seriously dispute that harms frequently coincide with segregation. These harms may include inferior educational and employment opportunities, less access to public goods and services, and systematic forms of stigma and discrimination. Seen from another angle, some critics who focus on school segregation based on culture and religion also express anxiety about social cohesion or the fostering of intolerance in children toward others with whom they have little contact.[11] In short, worries about segregation have long animated discussions and policy initiatives to counter its negative effects.

8. Researchers also use different measurements to indicate segregation indices, the most well known being the index of uneven distribution and the index of isolation. Neither is relevant for the purposes of my argument.

9. Thomas A. DiPrete, Andrew Gelman, Tyler McCormick, Julien Teitler, and Tian Zheng, "Segregation in Social Networks Based on Acquaintanceship and Trust," *American Journal of Sociology* 116, no. 4 (2011): 1236.

10. For two recent reports from the UK, see Nissa Finney and Ludi Simpson, "*Sleepwalking to Segregation*"*? Challenging Myths About Race and Migration* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2009); and Debbie Weekes-Bernard, *School Choice and Ethnic Segregation: Educational Decision-Making Among Black and Minority Ethnic Parents* (London: Runnymeade Trust, 2007).

11. See, for example, Bruce Maxwell, David I. Waddington, Kevin McDonough, Andrée-Anne Cormier, and Marina Schwimmer, "Interculturalism, Multiculturalism, and the Political Dilemma of Conservative Religious Schooling," in this issue. Positions against segregation typically are associated with the political left to the extent that critics focus on improving opportunities for the poor. However, in some European countries critics of segregation also can be found on the political right but for reasons either having to do with negative feelings toward religion in general or toward Muslim immigrants in particular.

While segregation index levels are likely highest in parts of Asia and South America, the issue has been most extensively examined in North America and increasingly studies are appearing across Europe, as countries wrestle with the challenges posed by immigration, migration, and asylum. Efforts to combat segregation have assumed different forms, ranging from mixed-income housing policy, weighted student funding, and restricted parental choice. Nevertheless, neighborhoods and schools in many cities remain deeply segregated for a complex set of reasons, not the least of which are time-honored freedoms to choose one's place of residence as well as the school one's child attends.

Notwithstanding the many valid worries, there are two philosophical flaws that routinely occur in the social science literature on segregation. One is to equate segregation with disadvantage or harm. No doubt much harm coincides with some forms of segregation, and certainly some types of segregation are unable to produce virtue, civic or otherwise. But this is clearly not always the case, even when considering members of the same group. A neighborhood or school comprised of one ethnic or religious group may produce hope or despair; much will depend on the background conditions — opportunity structures, choice sets, social networks — attending the segregation. Some spatial concentrations are doubtless marked by poverty and disadvantage, but many supply resources of solidarity unavailable in more integrated settings. The second and closely related flaw is to argue after the fact from worst cases. To be sure, where segregation takes the form of concentrated poverty, or violent and hopeless ghettos, shantytowns, and barrios, we should not be complacent. But to argue that segregation in itself is harmful is a red herring.

Taken together, these flaws inexorably lead to a faulty conclusion, namely, in order to counter discrimination and disadvantage, neighborhoods and schools must be fully integrated. Indeed, liberals routinely genuflect before the ideal of an integrated public school while conveniently ignoring many of its well-documented structural realities. (I shall have more to say about this later.) Yet no matter what terrific harms integration may have caused, the belief persists that things will go better if we just keep trying. But the idea that integration is good for everyone needs much closer inspection.

First, irrespective of whether the emphasis is on reducing social inequity or promoting social cohesion, integration usually occasions assimilation.[12] That is, ''integration'' often entails bracketing of differences in social status and preemptively determining acceptable forms of civic virtue. Rarely is anything said about the cultural, economic, and political integration that occurs *within one's own community*. Further, while non-agent related factors cannot be overlooked, structural barriers to opportunity are not the only relevant features to consider with regard to segregation; there are also cultural and individual processes at work. Members of particular groups also gravitate toward neighborhoods where they feel more comfortable, where they are with others like themselves, where

12. See Michael S. Merry, ''Plural Societies and the Possibility of Shared Citizenship,'' in this issue.

communication and cultural norms are understood, and where they may profit from living with others who share similar lifestyles, social networks, and cultural needs. To suggest that segregation mainly transpires, say, as a reaction to racism is to willfully ignore these other elements.

Many spatial concentrations open up opportunities for entrepreneurship and other forms of service provision such as clothing and grocery stores, newspapers, community centers, and job networks. These lead to an institutionalization of networks and services that not only increases the attractiveness of the neighborhood in question (whatever its drawbacks and liabilities), but that also contributes to the maintenance of a subculture many find attractive. Moreover, not only its members find these features attractive; others outside said communities seek out these separate enclaves for their own purposes.[13] Hence while it is certainly true that some types of segregation are irredeemably harmful, this is not always the case. Indeed, many positive features of segregation have been observed.[14]

In many neighborhoods segregation can have a direct and positive impact both on community solidarity and on local politics; associational membership often is an antecedent if not the impetus to other forms of civic virtue.[15] Cities and neighborhoods with spatial concentrations also have better facilitated political inroads for aspiring politicians, who in turn can be more responsive to the concerns of the local citizenry.[16] The denser the associational network is, the more civic virtue and political trust one often can expect.[17] This trend cuts

13. See Volkan Aytar and Jan Rath, eds., *Selling Ethnic Neighborhoods: The Rise of Neighborhoods as Places of Leisure and Consumption* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

14. Gideon Bolt, Jack Burgers, and Ronald van Kempen, ''On the Social Significance of Spatial Location: Special Segregation and Social Inclusion,'' *Netherlands Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 13, no. 1 (1998): 83–95; Gideon Bolt and Ronald van Kempen, ''Escaping Poverty Neighbourhoods in the Netherlands,'' *Housing, Theory and Society* 20, no. 4 (2003): 209–222; Michael S. Merry, ''Does Segregation Matter?'' in *International Perspectives on Countering School Segregation*, ed. Bakker et al., 253–265; Robert Murdie and Sutama Ghosh, ''Does Spatial Concentration Always Mean a Lack of Integration? Exploring Ethnic Concentration and Integration in Toronto,'' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36, no. 2 (2010): 293–311; Matthieu Permentier, Maarten van Ham, and Gideon Bolt, ''Behavioural Responses to Neighbourhood Reputations,'' *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 22, no. 2 (2007): 199–213; Deborah Phillips, ''Parallel Lives? Challenging Discourses of British Muslim Self-Segregation,'' *Environment and Planning: Society and Space* 24, no. 1 (2006): 25–40; and Deborah Phillips, ''Minority Ethnic Segregation, Integration and Citizenship: A European Perspective,'' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36, no. 2 (2010): 209–225.

15. Of course not all associational memberships are ''spatialized.''

16. In some societies, the self-organization of minority groups is even encouraged and supported through institutional structures. But, as with all things political, the ability to effect political change will vary according to the size of demographic concentration, the issues on the political agenda, the dominant language used, and the way that electorate boundaries are drawn.

17. Gideon Bolt, Ronald van Kempen, and Jan van Weesep, ''After Urban Restructuring: Relocations and Segregation in Dutch Cities,'' *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 100, no. 4 (2009): 502–518; Raymond Breton, ''Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities and the Personal Relations of Immigrants,'' *American Journal of Sociology* 70, no. 2 (1964): 193–205; Meindert Fennema and Jean Tillie, ''Political Participation and Political Trust in Amsterdam: Civic Communities and

across demographic lines and obtains in neighborhoods across many societies.[18] None of this romanticizes poverty or discounts the role of structural barriers and discrimination that persist even for relatively successful minority groups. But contrary to much moral and political rhetoric, segregation need not cause alarm; much depends on the specific features — voluntary or involuntary — of a segregated neighborhood.

Voluntary Separation

Many of the positive features of segregation and voluntary separation coincide. Elsewhere I have differentiated between an education that occurs under involuntary conditions and one that takes place under a separate yet voluntary mandate.[19] There I defended a prima facie case for voluntary separation on the grounds that the absence of self-respect for stigmatized minorities represents a failure to achieve basic equality. By separation I referred to the *voluntary* act of remaining separate by particular groups or their members for the purpose of cultivating self-respect. So long as certain conditions prevail in society that diminish or undermine self-respect, voluntary separation, I argued, is warranted.

Two caveats are in order. First, self-respect does not stand alone; it is a necessary but insufficient condition for separation. No credible portrait of self-respect can be sketched in the absence of other important conditions — for example, decent health, safety, reasonable work opportunities — favorable to well-being. But just as the promotion of self-respect need not wait for conditions of equality under integration to arrive, neither should persons expect civic virtue only to be pursued (or possible) under conditions of integration. So while the cultivation of self-respect certainly is one way to defend voluntary separation, it is not the only way.

Second, by describing these actions as ''voluntary,'' I do not ignore the structural background against which choice sets operate. All of our choices occur against a background of institutionalized realities. Citizens must adapt to less-than-ideal personal attitudes and behaviors as well as nonpersonal social, technological, and economic forces already at work.[20] Persons are positioned differently; many are saddled with significant disadvantage. In other words, the voluntary choices of individuals or benign forms of ethnocentrism alone cannot

Ethnic Networks,'' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 25, no. 4 (1999): 703–726; Claude S. Fischer, ''Toward a Subcultural Theory of Urbanism,'' *American Journal of Sociology* 80, no. 6 (1975): 1319–1341; and Dirk Jacobs, Karen Phalet, and Marc Swyngedouw, ''Associational Membership and Political Involvement Among Ethnic Minority Groups in Brussels,'' *Journal for Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30, no. 3 (2004): 543–559.

18. Of course this outcome is not automatic; much will depend on the available social networks, political structures, the personalities engaged in politics, and current levels of corruption — not to mention the fiscal challenges.

19. Michael S. Merry, ''Equality, Self-Respect and Voluntary Separation,'' *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 15, no. 1 (2012): 79–100.

20. See Wilson, *More Than Just Race.*

explain segregation. Then again, neither can structural elements alone explain it. Spatial concentrations occur for a host of complex reasons.

Even allowing for widespread institutionalized xenophobia, racism, sexism, and the like, imposed or inherited external restraints may occur simultaneously with organized responses to *resist, rearrange, and reclaim* the terms of one's separation. Indeed, this best captures the fundamental difference between *segregation* and *separation*. Voluntary separation is not an argument *against* integration so much as one supporting constructive *alternatives* to the entrenched patterns of involuntary segregation. But voluntary separation is not cynical resignation; it accepts that many worthwhile and positive features attend spatial concentrations, and to deny their importance or seek to disrupt them is potentially to engage in harmful and unwelcome forms of social engineering.

Combining the expressive liberty of community members with the cohesion their particular attachments provide, voluntary separation plays a protective role partly by rectifying a situation of alienation and failure its (often stigmatized) members routinely experience. But protection is not the only way to describe the benefits of voluntary separation. Another is the promotion and maintenance of social networks of caring and attachment that give meaning to persons' lives. In view of these benefits, voluntary separation represents a response to particular circumstances enabling persons to resist the assimilating pressures of majority environments in favor of celebrating and consciously reproducing the culture, history, and experience of a group's members.

Now, separation comes in a variety of forms, many of them benign. It broadly describes the habit of preferring to be with others like ourselves. Though we may cross borders throughout our lives, the need may not be pressing and its absence does not portend moral apathy or prejudice. Owing to a bewilderingly complex and diverse world in which each of us must adapt and find our place, the quest for meaning and purpose inclines us toward coherence. Secular academics do not typically socialize with the religiously devout and vice versa. Urdu speakers seek out other Urdu speakers. Vegans find other vegans. Muslims, architects, and wine connoisseurs do the same. Our need for coherence and belonging go together.

Of course we need not limit our interactions to specific groups; in reality, few of us do. Neither does coherence mean that identities are fixed or noncomplex. Nor does a need for belonging mean that voluntary separation is always innocent. Separation according to shared tastes and preferences in music, for instance, does not carry the same moral force as deliberate separation by, say, race or social class (though it must be said that these all too frequently overlap). Moreover, separation that demonizes outsiders is without defense. We can all think of harmful forms of separation — gangs, militant nationalists, and cults, for instance — and, as we have seen, much harm coincides with involuntary segregation. The point here is simply that separation along many fault lines appears to naturally occur.

So the desire to remain separate, while perhaps necessary, is never a sufficient condition of its value; other enabling conditions must obtain. At a minimum we would expect the honoring of basic rights and responsibilities, but we can

also include factors such as safety, decent health, and emotional support. Here we see plainly that a defense of voluntary separation is always a prima facie defense, for as I argue in the next section, separation that militates against civic virtue is untenable. But this point must be stressed: *separateness* in itself does not weaken civic virtue. To the contrary, a number of resources made possible by spatial concentrations may actually strengthen it. Particular concentrations may be initiated by external forces but voluntary responses often coincide. For example, both discriminatory housing policy and a desire to live among others like oneself commonly occur at the same time. Exceptions to the rule do not change the general pattern. So while voluntary separation may begin with the fact of segregation, it need not be defined simply by de facto realities. Rather, the aim is to *(re)define the experience of separateness on one's own terms.*[21]

But the foregoing does not remove all worries. For the remainder of this essay, then, I turn my attention to specific concerns that challenge my argument. If my conception of civic virtue is to hold water, it must respond to at least three challenges. These are *ethnocentrism*, *deliberation,* and *stratification*. Both ethnocentrism and deliberation engage with type A integration, while stratification engages with type B.

Ethnocentrism

As we have seen, the civic virtue of voluntary separation lies in promoting the good of a community through the shared interests, concerns, and values of its members. Yet while belonging to a particular community can make more expansive notions of cooperation both possible and meaningful, some worry that ''belonging'' will be too narrowly circumscribed, or that some group memberships will foment hatred. These are not idle concerns. Research from Europe, for example, suggests that voluntary separation may serve to reinforce stereotypes of outsiders.[22] Smoldering ethnic and religious tensions in Northern Ireland, Nigeria, and Kashmir, or the 2011 riots across the United Kingdom, at least partly rooted in segregated patterns of social exclusion, may also elicit disbelief that any good can come from voluntary separation.[23] If persons remain exclusively focused on the interests of their own community or group, the argument runs, any gains

21. Merry, ''Does Segregation Matter?''; Merry, ''Equality, Self-Respect and Voluntary Separation,''; Michael S. Merry and Geert Driessen, ''Equality on Different Terms: The Case of Dutch Hindu Schools,'' *Education and Urban Society* (April 27, 2011): 1–17, http://eus.sagepub.com/content/early/2011/04/19/0013124511404887; and Michael S. Merry and William New, ''Constructing an Authentic Self: The Challenges and Promise of African-Centered Pedagogy,'' *American Journal of Education* 115, no. 1 (2008): 35–64.

22. Maria Golubeva and Ivars Austers, ''Alternative Civil Enculturation: Political Disenchantment and Civic Attitudes in Minority Schools in Estonia, Latvia, and Slovakia,'' *European Education* 42, no. 4 (2010/2011): 49–68; Will Kymlicka and Magda Opalski, eds., *Can Liberal Pluralism Be Exported? Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Anca Nedelcu, Romita Iucu, and Lucian Ciolan, ''Students' Perceptions of the 'Others' in Ethnic Separated School Systems,'' *European Education* 42, no. 4 (2010): 69–86.

23. The examples could easily be multiplied across continents, in virtually every society. Of course, most examples of ethnic or religious strife are deeply complex and cannot simply be reduced to some

occasioned by group membership will be canceled out by a failure to imaginatively engage with others whose lives are different from our own.

But it is important to remember that the justification of voluntary separation will depend on the strength and expression of its civic virtues. As I argued earlier, there are principled limits to what can be tolerated. The associational rights of gangs, cults, and militia groups (where they are permitted) are provisional precisely because they are highly prone to violate basic societal norms of decency and respect even when their freedoms of speech and association are begrudgingly protected. Left unchecked, these groups may spawn violence. As such, memberships that promote hatred and intolerance may be forbidden when they violate the freedoms of others. Of course, even in the absence of hatred or violence, an inordinate focus on one's own cultural, religious, or political group (sometimes rolled into one) will create an inability to listen to or understand experiences and perspectives that one does not share. In any case, memberships that intentionally or unintentionally aim to *undermine* the possibility of cooperation across difference are undesirable given the threat they pose both to liberty in general and to other forms of belonging in particular.

But it is unwise to argue from worst cases. Pride in one's community is not tantamount to intolerance or hatred, any more than liberalism is synonymous with colonial occupation or police brutality. Further, an *expectation* of abuse is not sufficient warrant for associational restrictions. Remember that voluntary separation as I defend it must adhere to basic moral principles, and these must be consistent with civic virtue. In order for voluntary separation to promote civic virtue, it cannot consist of core features that effectively discredit it, that is, promoting idiosyncratic notions of communal good *at the expense of others.* Hence groups that subordinate their weaker members do not meet the requirement. Nor do groups that vilify, threaten, or condone violence toward others.

Nothing in what I have said will prevent majorities from questioning the loyalty of their minorities or exaggerating the threat of "otherness." Indeed, when loyalty becomes the standard, Melissa Williams writes, "there is a natural tendency to be suspicious of those whose outward forms and inward habits of mind are different from those of commonly recognized paragons of citizenship."[24] But critics who raise the specter of ethnocentrism are wont to downplay its common occurrence — and not infrequently more virulent forms, xenophobia and racism — among "silent majorities." "Integration" often entails an ethnically bound and politically restrictive understanding of civic virtue. There is a heavy price to be paid for the forced incorporation into so-called mixed environments in which many are not made to feel welcome in the first place; where, in schools,

version of "ethnocentrism." Most involve power struggles over resources and both media and appointed officials often stoke rather than quell interethnic tensions.

24. Melissa Williams, "Non-territorial Boundaries of Citizenship: The Functions of Self-Rule and Self-Protection," in *Constitutional Processes in Canada and the EU Compared*, ed. John Erik Fossum (Oslo, Norway: ARENA, 2005), 84.

children are labeled and sorted, adverse effects on self-image are widespread, and cultural histories are misshapen or left untold.[25] And of course the cruel irony of integration is not lost on stigmatized minorities who are publicly chastised for remaining separate yet whose neighborhoods ''turned'' shortly after they moved in.

Certainly, under the right conditions, mixed environments can produce greater levels of tolerance and social trust. Be that as it may, without shared activities and institutions to facilitate them, spatial integration generally does not bring about social interaction.[26] Further, very little evidence demonstrates that generalization of social trust in integrated environments occurs beyond the immediate setting.[27] Conversely, a fairly homogeneous environment that is appropriately structured, facilitating a sense of belonging associated with attachments to a particular group, is a powerful stimulant both for a sense of belonging and for the expression of social trust. In short, *civic virtue does not turn on the environment being integrated.* Indeed, it turns out that under conditions of voluntary separation, persons often are freer to discuss, imagine, and pursue what civic virtue means when there are possibilities for parity of participation.

Deliberation

Citizenship as ''shared fate,'' as Melissa Williams has named it, entails a capacity for enlarged thought, the ability to see oneself bound up in relations of interdependence with others, and the capacity to reshape the practices and institutions of one's environment.[28] Citizenship requires the capacity for both

25. Merry, ''Equality, Self Respect and Voluntary Separation''; Merry and Driessen, ''Equality on Different Terms''; and Merry and New, ''Constructing an Authentic Self.''

26. Consider the case of neighborhood schools. Even in consciously mixed neighborhoods, many whites are either empty nesters, attend local private schools, avail themselves of magnets or ''alternative'' schools offering a selective curriculum, or simply choose a school outside of the neighborhood. See Tim Butler, ''Living in the Bubble: Gentrification and Its 'Others' in North London,'' *Urban Studies* 40, no. 12 (2003): 2469–2486; and Paul Vedder, ''Black and White Schools in the Netherlands,'' *European Education* 38, no. 2 (2006): 36–49. More generally, see John Flint, ''Faith and Housing in England: Promoting Community Cohesion or Contributing to Urban Segregation?'' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36, no. 2 (2010): 257–274; Mary R. Jackman and Michael J. Muha, ''Education and Intergroup Attitudes: Moral Enlightenment, Superficial Democratic Commitment, or Ideological Refinement?'' *American Sociological Review* 49, no. 6 (1984): 751–769; Geoffrey Short, ''Faith-Based Schools: A Threat to Social Cohesion?'' *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 36, no. 4 (2002): 559–572; Walter G. Stephan, *Reducing Prejudice and Stereotyping in Schools* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997); and Brooke Sykes, *Spatial Order and Social Position: Neighbourhoods, Schools and Educational Inequality* (PhD diss., University of Amsterdam, 2011).

27. Christopher J. Anderson and Aida Paskeviciute, ''How Ethnic and Linguistic Heterogeneity Influence Prospects for Civil Society: A Comparative Study of Citizenship Behavior,'' *Journal of Politics* 68, no. 4 (2006): 783–802; Philip Nyden, John Lukehart, and Michael Maly, ''The Emergence of Stable Racially and Ethnically Diverse Urban Communities: A Case Study of Nine US Cities,'' *Housing Policy Debate* 8, no. 2 (1997): 491–534; Thomas F. Pettigrew and Linda R. Tropp, ''A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory,'' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90, no. 5 (2006): 751–783; and Eric Uslaner, ''Segregation, Mistrust and Minorities,'' *Ethnicities* 10, no. 4 (2010): 415–434.

28. See Melissa Williams, ''Citizenship as Identity, Citizenship as Shared Fate, and the Functions of Multicultural Education,'' in *Citizenship and Education in Liberal-Democratic Societies: Teaching for Cosmopolitan Values and Collective Identities*, ed. Kevin McDonough and Walter Feinberg (Oxford:

communicating with others, under conditions of social equality, and forging paths of social cooperation, even when there is limited contact. Notwithstanding the importance of local attachments, a citizenship of ''shared fate'' requires that persons engage one another from time to time in order to address and find acceptable solutions for the challenges facing fellow citizens. Segregation, the argument runs, undermines this possibility to the extent that persons remain disengaged and political elites remain unaware of their constituents' concerns. Accordingly, most theorists of citizenship stress the importance of integration so that deliberations necessary for promoting justice can occur.

A capacity for deliberation roughly describes the ability to engage with others on matters of social and political relevance in a respectful manner, exhibiting a give-and-take that recognizes both the significance and seriousness of other points of view. Deliberative democracy, its advocates insist, welcomes debate on matters of substantive disagreement. Where principled differences thwart consensus, a deliberative approach stresses the importance of finding a common ground. Indeed, it is the common ground of shared belief and practice in the public sphere that establishes both the rule of law and the legitimate exercise thereof. Deliberation seems imperative precisely because many beliefs and practices are *not* shared, and without a consensus there is no shared basis of citizenship.

That is the ideal. But context also matters. Remember that voluntary separation is a response to very particular social and political conditions minority groups face. Indeed, the context in which majority-minority relations occur cannot be divorced from a specific history, as Daniel Weinstock explains:

> Beyond the assimilative pressures endemic to any majority/minority relation, minorities often find themselves in a cultural context that they perceive as at best indifferent, and at worst hostile, to their practices and beliefs. . . . Muslims in France and Britain are not simply people who happen to practice a different faith from that of the majority. They are also erstwhile colonial subjects. . . . Majorities and minorities are therefore rarely unrelated groups that happen to have been juxtaposed on the same territory. Minorities have often suffered at the hands of the majority, and what's more, culture and religion have often been invoked by the majority as justifying different forms of unjust treatment.[29]

Here we plainly see the involuntary context in which individual and group responses occur. We should not be surprised that many groups maintain a skeptical posture toward states whose rhetoric of freedom and equality has gone hand in hand with exclusion and violence. Too often we fail to understand how concepts such as ''integration'' or ''citizenship'' look an awful lot like coercive pressure to conform.

Nancy Fraser has argued that deliberation as defined by majorities often serves as a mask for domination, that it in fact presumes a bourgeois conception of the

Oxford University Press, 2003): 208–246; and discussions in Merry, ''Plural Societies and the Possibility of Shared Citizenship,'' and Sigal Ben-Porath, ''Citizenship as Shared Fate: Education for Membership in a Diverse Democracy,'' both in this issue.

29. Daniel Weinstock, ''Beyond Exit Rights: Reframing the Debate,'' in *Minorities Within Minorities: Equality, Rights and Diversity*, ed. Avigail Eisenberg and Jeff Spinner-Halev (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 239.

public sphere that requires the bracketing of inequalities of social status.[30] The "public sphere" takes place on unlevel ground rather than in "counterpublics" where, she argues, members can control how they are represented. In these counterpublics members are better positioned to actually reshape the practices and institutions of their environment. To the extent that there is voluntary separation, resisting, redefining, or reclaiming the terms of one's experience also improves the possibilities for self-determination.

Many assume that integrated environments are the only ones capable of supplying the conditions under which authentic democratic deliberation among equals can occur. Only through pursuing the ideals of integration can we expect officeholders to be knowledgeable, competent, and responsive to the needs and concerns of their constituents.[31] Insofar as these thoughts express important ideals, they should not be abrogated. Yet notwithstanding our habit of talking as if we were all equals, multiple counterpublics in separate spheres can contribute more to democracy so long as massive social inequality exists. As the need arises, members of these counterpublics can formulate their own interpretations of their interests and needs and advance these for public hearing. But if fair channels of deliberation are not available, and political elites do little or nothing in response to voiced concerns, we should not be surprised if counterpublics manifest themselves in the form of protest and dissent, a rejection of deliberation exclusively defined and delineated by others.

The idea of multiple counterpublics is consistent with civic virtues under conditions of segregation, particularly when these benefits positively impact the entire community. Accordingly, civic virtue does not hinge upon integration. Under the right conditions integration may facilitate certain benefits but it is not an irreducible good. Nor, as I have argued, must civic virtues reduce to political ones. A capacity for enlarged thought can be cultivated without it — say, through education — and the capacity to reshape one's environment begins, and often remains, within the local community. I have no doubt that integrated environments can and do produce desirable effects where there is

30. Nancy Fraser, *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

31. Elizabeth Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010). Anderson's argument focuses exclusively on the United States, and on blacks in particular, but her arguments for an integrated elite tend to downplay sharp cultural, political, and social class divisions among blacks in the United States. It is likely true that *on average* members of marginalized groups exhibit different legislative priorities than members of historically privileged groups. Even so, there is little reason to believe that elites from marginalized groups will be more responsive than others to the concerns of their more vulnerable and politically disenfranchised members. Also see Derrick Darby, "Adequacy, Inequality and Cash for Grades," *Theory and Research in Education* 9, no. 3 (2011): 209–232; and Tommie Shelby, *We Who Are Dark: The Philosophical Foundations of Black Solidarity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 2005). On stratification in the black community, see Kesha S. Moore, "Class Formations: Competing Forms of Black Middle-Class Identity," *Ethnicities* 8, no. 4 (2008): 492–517; Mary Patillo, *Black on the Block: The Politics of Race and Class in the City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); and Eugene Robinson, *Disintegration: The Splintering of Black America* (New York: Anchor Books, 2010).

the possibility for parity of participation. But there is reason to doubt whether integrated environments that meet these conditions occur very frequently; indeed, ''achieving integration'' often entails toil and frustration disproportionate to the expected outcomes. As a political matter, citizenship-as-integration frequently overrides the interests of individuals as well as the communities to which they belong.

Integration may indeed be *instrumentally* valuable. It may supply access to goods and opportunities. But that applies equally to voluntary separation. As an expression of a counterpublic, voluntary separation does not mean that one has no understanding of other points of view, or that its members lack the ability to cross borders. Rather, one of the strengths of voluntary separation lies precisely in its providing an *alternative point of view,* one very useful for agitating against social and economic injustice. In short, the flourishing of civic virtue under conditions of segregation is not only feasible, it may yield outcomes that rival the very benefits ideal integrated environments allegedly offer.

Stratification

A final criticism is this: voluntary separation fails to reckon with what is most damaging about segregation, that is, stratification and poverty concentration. Stratification describes a differential relation among members of particular groups and disparities in their access to society's fundamental resources. Stratification suggests that a lack of access to critical resources effectively undermines the possibility of civic virtue and also for opportunities writ large. Elizabeth Anderson writes, ''segregation ties children to a disadvantaged structure of social capital, thereby perpetuating the effects of historic discrimination in human capital development, even in the presence of effective antidiscrimination law, and even for children with innate potential equal to that of their more advantaged peers.''[32] More than forty years of research on educational stratification seems to bear this out, suggesting that concentrations of school poverty make for a very difficult learning environment because students are likely to be surrounded by peers who are less academically engaged, to have parents who are less active in school affairs, and to have weaker teachers who have lower expectations. Disengagement with one's education in toxic school environments leads to high dropout, unemployment, and incarceration rates. Taken together, we see the seeds of civic virtue ruined before they even have a chance to germinate. Hence, to the extent that segregation coincides with poverty concentration, the issue is not the separateness but the absence of socioeconomic and political resources that dramatically curtails one's ability to mobilize and improve one's circumstances.

In light of these challenges, we hear once again that integration is the solution to educational inequality, dismissing the idea that equality of any sort can be achieved under conditions of segregation. By far the strongest proposal presently

32. Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration,* 35.

being championed is the integration of neighborhoods and schools by social class.[33] The idea is that by mixing students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, one can raise the academic achievement of poorer students without harming middle-class children. The achievement of poor children will be raised, the argument runs, because poor (who incidentally are often minority) children will be exposed to the knowledge and social capital of their middle-class peers. This also has long-term effects because "exposure" to middle-class children (and the social capital their parents and teachers bring to school) will provide access to social networks necessary for accessing career opportunities.

Integration enthusiasts have rallied behind this idea in part because they have been forced to contend with a variety of legal and moral challenges to standard race/ethnicity-based integration approaches, including that school selection on the basis of race/ethnicity covers over important social class differences and also leads to questionable assumptions about minority schools (that is, that they are by definition inferior). Meanwhile, some governments have reversed course, stating that combating segregation is no longer a priority.[34] Further, parental resistance to bussing, redistricting, or to inclusionary zoning policies are well known, and these often prevent most desegregation plans from having a substantial impact. So attempts to mix schools by social class — say, by limiting the number of students eligible for reduced-price meals per school — circumvents parental opposition, and the result is the mixing of schools by race and ethnicity indirectly.

Now while my argument is not, strictly speaking, about educational opportunity but about civic virtue, if the presence of the latter is at least partly tied to the former, then it is worth pausing to consider the argument and the evidence. Take the argument first. There is no point in denying that poverty, hunger, and poor health — all of which conspire to produce failure — work against academic achievement and, correspondingly, the cultivation of civic virtue. Second, it is arguably true that conditions for the underprivileged who live in segregated neighborhoods or who attend segregated schools are worse relative to those born into wealth and convenience. But while material advantage may afford one more access to power, it does not confer more civic virtue. With privilege there is often a sense of entitlement, which is certainly not intuitively conducive to civic virtue. Conversely, being raised in less-than-favorable circumstances, while not ideal, ironically may be more conducive to the cultivation of virtue, provided that other important conditions — safety, nourishment, and health — obtain, and that other vital resources — love, emotional support, and a positive self-image — are also present.

Persons in positions of social disadvantage arguably are more perceptive about questions of justice; many routinely are expected to cross back and forth between

33. Richard Kahlenberg, *All Together Now: Creating Middle-Class Schools Through Public School Choice* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2001); and Orfield and Lee, "Why Segregation Matters."

34. Dutch Minister of Education, Marja van Bijsterveldt, announced this in February 2011, http://www.rnw.nl/english/article/press-review-monday-7-february-2011.

cultural worlds and in so doing are likely to gain a much greater self-awareness, to know what opportunities they have (or don't have), and to understand how systems of privilege are structured to favor those in power. Even when the disadvantaged lack the immediate tools to redress the injustice, we should not forget — as leftist populist movements throughout Latin America, the Arab world, and Southeast Asia recently have shown — that even oppressed individuals can recognize and reflect upon their subjugation as a means of surmounting it.[35]

What about the evidence? There is no doubt that gains in academic achievement have been observed in some integrated schools, and these have been attributed to the presence of positive peer effects, more middle-class parents, and qualified teachers.[36] These ''success stories'' have revived hope for those committed to seeing the dreams of integration realized. Of course wherever success occurs, it should be celebrated. But several items cannot be ignored. First, considering that segregation index levels across Europe and North America are either holding steady or worsening,[37] it is simply unrealistic to expect academic success to hinge upon the elusive benefits mixed settings ostensibly provide. Even if the probability of interacting with children of different backgrounds improves in mixed settings, both voluntary and involuntary clustering of students on the basis of shared background and interests virtually ensures that this will not occur to any significant degree. This is the case in every country where the phenomenon has been studied. More egalitarian societies do no better at preventing segregation from occurring than less egalitarian ones, as the following excerpts make abundantly clear. From Denmark we learn:

35. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1970); and Michael S. Merry, ''How Schools Inhibit the Autonomy of the Middle Class,'' in *Philosophy of Education 2007,* ed. Barbara Stengel (Urbana, Illinois: Philosophy of Education Society, 2007), 517–520.

36. See Kahlenberg, *All Together Now*; and Amy Stuart Wells, *Both Sides Now: The Story of School Desegregation's Graduates* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

37. Bakker et al., eds., *International Perspectives on Countering School Segregation*; Gideon Bolt, Pieter Hooimeijer, and Ronald van Kempen, ''Ethnic Segregation in the Netherlands: New Patterns, New Policies?'' *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 93, no. 2 (2002): 214–220; Charles T. Clotfelder, *After Brown: The Rise and Retreat of School Desegregation* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004); Jack Dougherty et al., ''School Choice in Suburbia: Test Scores, Race and Housing Markets,'' *American Journal of Education* 115, no. 4 (2009): 523–548; Ford Fessenden, ''A Portrait of Segregation in New York City's Schools,'' *New York Times*, May 11, 2012; Richard Harris, ''Segregation by Choice? Social and Ethnic Differences Between English Schools,'' in *International Perspectives on Countering School Segregation,* ed. Bakker et al., 67–82; Stephen P. Jenkins, John Micklewright, and Sylke Viola Schnepf, ''Social Segregation in Secondary Schools: How Does England Compare with Other Countries?'' *Oxford Review of Education* 34, no. 1 (2008): 21–37; Sako Musterd, ''Social and Ethnic Segregation in Europe: Levels, Causes, and Effects,'' *Journal of Urban Affairs* 27, no. 3 (2005): 331–348; Sako Musterd and Ronald van Kempen, ''Segregation and Housing of Minority Ethnic Groups in Western European Cities,'' *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 100, no. 4 (2009): 559–566; Phillips, ''Minority Ethnic Segregation, Integration and Citizenship''; and Chris Taylor, ''Choice, Competition and Segregation in a United Kingdom Urban Education Market,'' *American Journal of Education* 115, no. 4 (2009): 549–568. But for recent evidence that segregation levels in the United States are improving, see Haya El Nasser, ''Blacks' Flight to Suburbia Hastens Desegregation,'' *USA Today,* 1A–2A, December 8, 2011, http://www.usatoday.com/NEWS/usaedition/2011-12-08-1Asegregation-CV_CV_U.htm; for England, see Weekes-Bernard, *School Choice and Ethnic Segregation.*

> Even though we have succeeded in starting up classes in schools with a 50/50 mix, many of them fall apart during the first four years. . . . Many children and parents find that it is difficult and very hard work to make the children get along and develop friendships after school, and quite a few give up after the first three to four years. The difficulties cannot be explained in simple terms, but are a complex field of social, linguistic, cultural, and ethnic differences and the challenges must equally be met with a set of various contributions.[38]

Similar results were reported in Sweden:

> Without active participation from the local community, parents, and students in setting up extracurricular activities . . . and without any serious implementation of urban governance, no long-lasting changes can be imposed and no enduring trust in multicultural urban schools will be fostered among parents and students. Thus, the strongest students will carry on leaving the schools, while the newly arrived refugees will be directed to them. This is how the pattern of social and ethnic segregation is being perpetuated.[39]

Integration arguments operate as if preferences, constitutional liberties, and markets do not define the landscape of school choice. An abundance of research consistently shows that middle-class parents who pride themselves on living in ''diverse'' environments[40] or who talk up the importance of integration nevertheless maintain social networks almost entirely comprised of others exactly like themselves. These same parents tightly control not only the schools their children attend but which teachers they have and the activities in which they participate. There is little evidence to support the claim that the presence of middle-class parents in mixed schools benefits the overall quality of the school.[41] To be sure, a concentration of middle-class parents can vote on a referendum to raise their property or sales taxes to keep their schools functioning well. Yet in daily affairs, middle-class parents are particularly adept at calling attention to the needs of their *own* children.[42]

38. Simon Calmar Andersen et al., ''School Segregation in Danish Public Schools,'' in *International Perspectives on Countering School Segregation*, ed. Bakker et al., 112.

39. Nihad Bunar, ''Segregation, Education and Urban Policy in Sweden,'' in *International Perspectives on Countering School Segregation*, ed. Bakker et al., 95.

40. Members of majority groups often define an environment as ''mixed'' when the presence of minorities approaches 15 to 20 percent, while minority groups are more likely to define ''mixed'' as closer to a 50:50 ratio. See, for example, Maria Krysan, ''Community Undesirability in Black and White: Examining Racial Residential Preferences Through Community Perceptions,'' *Social Problems* 49, no. 4 (2002): 521–543.

41. There are some exceptions. One appears to be the ''back-to-scratch'' movement to improve the quality of school meals. See Kirk Johnson, ''Schools Restore Fresh Cooking to the Cafeteria,'' *New York Times*, A1, 16, August 16, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/17/education/17lunch.html.

42. Kathy Arthurson, ''Social Mix and the Cities,'' *Urban Policy and Research* 23, no. 4 (2005): 519–523; Stephen J. Ball, *Class Strategies and the Education Market: The Middle Classes and Social Advantage* (London: Routledge, 2002); Basil Bernstein, *Towards a Theory of Educational Transmissions,* vol. 3 of *Class Codes and Control* (London: Routledge, 1975); Tim Butler, ''Living in the Bubble: Gentrification and Its 'Others' in North London,'' *Urban Studies* 40, no. 12 (2003): 2469–2486; Michelle Fine, ''(Ap)parent Involvement: Reflections on Parents, Power and Urban Public Schools,'' *Teachers College Record* 94, no. 4 (1993): 682–729; Annette Lareau and Dalton Conley, eds., *Social Class: How Does It Work?* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008); and Sally Power, ''Comments on 'How Not to Be a Hypocrite','' *Theory and Research in Education* 2, no. 1 (2006): 23–29.

Second, even if we find integrated successes here and there, most research demonstrates that the academic effects of mixed classrooms are modest at best. A number of studies across Europe and North America consistently show that mixed classrooms produce only small gains for disadvantaged pupils, in part because the overwhelming majority of schools engage in some form of ability grouping and tracking.[43] Indeed, most schools must offer advanced placement electives, gifted and talented options, and accelerated programs if they are to succeed in placating and retaining their middle-class parents.[44] The result is that most integrated schools remain deeply stratified within. Not only is there overwhelming evidence that many poor minorities face tremendous risks in *mixed* schools (of special education assignment, low track assignment, discipline referrals, expulsion, and so on), but it is an open secret that few teachers have the skills to manage diverse classrooms very effectively. Capturing the challenges facing school districts in numerous countries across Europe and North America, researchers from France report:

> While underprivileged students [in mixed schools] may benefit from their peers' cultural capital, the fact that they face more severe academic competition, and thus are at a higher risk of being among the lowest performing students, tends to limit the positive effect of social integration in a system in which teachers naturally adapt their expectations and teaching methods to the "better" students.[45]

Stratification studies accurately underscore a social problem, namely, an unequal access to critical resources by society's more vulnerable members. To the extent that segregation coincides with poverty concentration, serious challenges remain. But it is a flaw in logic and an absence of imagination to suggest that justice must wait for inclusionary zoning policies or ideal socioeconomic "balances" in neighborhoods and schools to take effect before other alternatives should be made

43. Bakker et al., eds., *International Perspectives on Countering School Segregation;* Eddie Denessen, Geert Driessen, and Joep Bakker, "School and Classroom Diversity Effects on Cognitive and Non-Cognitive Students Outcomes," *Journal of Education Research* 4, no. 2 (2010): 79–92; Geert Driessen, *Peer Group Effects on Educational Achievement: An International Review of Effects, Explanations and Theoretical and Methodological Considerations* (Nijmegen, Netherlands: Institute for Applied Social Sciences, 2007); Jaap Dronkers, "Positive But Also Negative Effects of Ethnic Diversity in Schools on Educational Achievement? An Empirical Test with Cross-National PISA Data" (Inaugural Lecture delivered at Maastricht University, June, 17, 2010); Judith Ireson and Susan Hallam, *Ability Grouping in Education* (London: Paul Chapman, 2001); Janet Ward Schofield, "International Evidence on Ability Grouping with Curriculum Differentiation and the Achievement Gap in Secondary Schools," *Teachers College Record* 112, no. 5 (2010): 8–9; Martin Thrupp, Hugh Lauder, and Tony Robinson, "School Composition and Peer Effects," *International Journal of Educational Research* 37, no. 5 (2002): 483–504; and Reyn Van Ewijk and Peter Sleegers, "Ethnic Minorities and School Achievement" (paper presented at the annual conference of American Educational Research Association, Denver, Colorado, April–May, 2010).

44. Irrespective of how one feels about his privatization scheme, James Tooley is nevertheless correct that even if we were to equalize *schooling* (by whatever means, integrated or not), the educational advantages of individual families simply become more significant. See James Tooley, "From Adam Smith to Adam Swift: How the 'Invisible Hand' Overcomes Middle-Class Hypocrisy," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 41, no. 4 (2007): 727–741.

45. Claire Schiff, Georges Felouzis, and Joëlle Perroton, "Combating School Segregation: The Case of France," in *International Perspectives on Countering School Segregation,* ed. Bakker et al., 202.

available, or before parents can pursue a quality education for their own children on their own terms. To think otherwise is to make a fetish of integration. If segregation undermines the possibility of civic virtue, then something else must be done, but the occurrence of civic virtue does not depend upon integration — in fact, civic virtue often thrives in its absence.

Conclusion

In this essay I have argued that segregation need not undermine civic virtue and may even serve to enhance it. Segregation, particularly when there is a voluntary aspect present, often facilitates meaningful attachments that promote the good of the community and make other forms of social cooperation possible, even when other harms may be present. Provided that particular attachments produce and sustain civic virtues, they do not preclude moral concern for those belonging to other groups. Democratic and pluralist societies need individuals who are both strongly rooted in local communities as well as able to engage productively with those who are different from them. As I have argued, civic virtue may overlap with political virtue, but it does not reduce to politics. Either way, unless debilitating forms of poverty coincide, spatial concentrations do not undermine the importance of Williams's shared fate. But we must be careful not to conflate shared fate with the rhetoric of integration. Type A integration too often militates against the importance of communal belonging and is vastly overrated when it comes to promoting a willingness to engage with others. Type B integration may facilitate upward mobility through access to others' social capital, but, on the other hand, it may not. Much hangs on the specific conditions and organizing principles of spatially integrated environments.

While segregation may occasion, indeed even enable, a number of possibilities for civic virtue, my argument is not a defense of segregation in itself. Rather, I have offered a prima facie defense of many voluntary arrangements under conditions of segregation. Some of these conditions have unquestionably been imposed; many remain structural obstacles. Moreover, in some cases the negative features of segregation can outweigh the positive; still, it is far from obvious that a direct cause and effect exists between segregation and failure or despair.[46] In many contexts the most effective response to involuntary segregation is not to integrate neighborhoods or schools but to *change the conditions under which one's segregated experience occurs.* This is what distinguishes voluntary separation from involuntary segregation. Voluntary separation thus represents an important response to what may be a less than ideal situation, one that nevertheless can improve the conditions necessary for the cultivation of civic virtue whose benefits can have ripple effects beyond one's own community.

46. W.E.B. Du Bois wrote, ''Without [segregation], the American Negro will suffer evils greater than any possible evil of separation: we would suffer the loss of self-respect, the lack of faith in ourselves, the lack of knowledge about ourselves, the lack of ability to make a decent living by our own efforts and not by philanthropy.'' W.E.B. Du Bois, *Writings* (New York: Library of America, 1986), 1263. His argument can be extrapolated to countless minority groups in analogous circumstances.

I have not defended the idea that separation is a sufficient condition for the cultivation of civic virtue. As with any environment, specific features matter. Whether voluntary separation occurs in neighborhoods or schools or both, other conditions necessary for well-being, opportunity, and the pursuit of civic virtue must be present. The motives and need for voluntary separation will vary from one context and group to another, and its duration, too, may fluctuate depending on external conditions. But I have shown that the cultivation of civic virtue begins with local attachments and that these need not prevent us from having the skills and dispositions necessary to understand other points of view or to enter into deliberation with others to resolve disagreements when those occasions arise.

No doubt some will continue to worry that voluntary separation will only magnify the stigma that some vulnerable groups already experience. But stigmatized minorities cannot prevent themselves from being stereotyped and profiled by majority groups or excluded by the available opportunity structures. *To the extent that social exclusion is institutionalized, one can only manage one's response to it.* It is often necessary that minority communities preserve their right to remain separate by galvanizing their virtues in *opposition* to institutionalized oppression. But the manner of opposition will vary. Persons can make efforts to educate the public about institutionalized oppression, even in coalition with others whose lives are not directly affected by it. Civic virtue may also demand outright revolt. But civic virtue does not *require* this response because civic and political virtues are not one and the same. Critics may still worry that the civic virtues cultivated under voluntary separation will be restricted to one's own community, effectively sequestering institutional change without challenging or reforming the macro structures that set the terms for accessing opportunities in the labor market or for leveraging power to level the playing field. But there is nothing in the design of voluntary separation that precludes the development of autonomous and critical choices, the cultivation of political virtues, or even the possibility of accessing and mastering the discourses of power. As I have argued throughout, it may be because of segregation that these can be more effectively pursued.