

# Behind the Gates: The Consequences of Secured Residential Communities in the Urban and Suburban U.S.

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Neeb Hall, Arizona State University, Tempe campus



## SETHA LOW

Across America, gated communities are creating new forms of exclusion and residential segregation, exacerbating existing social cleavages. This retreat to secured enclaves materially and symbolically contradicts aspects of an idealized American ethos and values, threatens democratic spatial practices such as access to open space, and creates another barrier to social interaction and tolerance of diverse cultural, racial, and social groups. Low's ethnographic research queries the dramatic increase in the numbers of Americans moving to secured residential enclaves—16 million people or about 6% of all households—and invites a more complex account of their motives and values.

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Dr. Low is a professor of environmental psychology and anthropology and director of the Public Space Research Group at The Graduate Center, City University of New York. Her work focuses upon the anthropology of space and place, urban anthropology, landscapes of fear, and cultural values in historic preservation. She was awarded a Getty Fellowship, a NEH fellowship, and a Guggenheim for her work on values and the cultural landscape and will be president of the American Anthropological Association for 2007-2009.

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