

## The Difference That Tenure Makes

Peter Somerville and Andrew Knowles

### Abstract

This paper argues that housing tenures cannot be reduced to either production relations or consumption relations. Instead, they need to be understood as modes of housing distribution, and as having complex and dynamic relations with social classes. Building on a critique of both the productionist and the consumptionist literature, as well as of formalist accounts of the relations between tenure and class, the paper attempts to lay the foundations for a new theory of housing tenure. In order to do this, a new theory of class is articulated, which is then used to throw new light on the nature of class-tenure relations.

### Introduction

Everyone seems to agree that housing tenure is important. Where they disagree, however, is on the nature and degree of this importance. On the one hand, there are those writers who argue that tenure does not signify very much in itself, but only acquires significance insofar as it mediates social relations of other kinds, especially production relations and class relations (Gray, 1982; Ball, 1983, 1986; Berry, 1986; Dickens et al, 1985; Barlow and Duncan, 1988). On the other hand, there are those writers who argue that tenure has specific importance of its own, but tend to characterise tenure essentially in terms of social relations of consumption (Saunders, 1979; 1981; 1984; 1989; Saunders and Williams, 1988; Dunleavy, 1980; 1987; Dunleavy and Husbands, 1985; Kemeny, 1981; 1987; Duke and Edgell, 1984; Hamnett, 1989). This paper aims to show that neither approaches based on housing provision nor those based on housing consumption can achieve an adequate analysis of tenure relations.

Not only are relations between tenure and class of a complexity which cannot be grasped by provision-orientated or consumption-orientated approaches, but also tenures constitute specific modes of housing distribution which cannot be reduced to production or consumption relations. Evidence in support of these arguments is provided from research in Britain, but it is anticipated that general features of the arguments will be valid in other countries which, like Britain, have bourgeois welfare states.

The key assumption criticised in this paper is that tenure is essentially a consumption category, and this assumption is shared by both provision- and consumption-orientated approaches. In order then to deal with the issue of the relations between tenure and class, a new theory of class has been used to criticise existing formulations of the relations between class and tenure. Specifically we argue that class and tenure do not stand in formal opposition to each other but pass through a historical process of mutual formation. Class forces help to determine the (changing) character of tenure relations, while at the same time classes are constantly being formed and reproduced through production, distribution and consumption relations.

Finally, the paper analyses the nature of tenures as specific configurations of distributional control relations, exchange relations and state/household relations. It is argued that, within the context of the mutual determination of class and tenure, these specific configurations do make a difference. The paper ends with a clear rejection of the terminology of housing consumption relations in favour

of concepts of domestic relations as well as tenure relations. The aim here is not to develop a new theory of housing consumption but to break decisively with all theories which misrepresent the distinction between waged and domestic labour as a distinction between production and domestic consumption.

#### Housing provision approaches

Ball, probably more than anyone else, has been identified with the emphasis on means of production rather than means of consumption (eg Ball, 1983). In his analysis, however, Ball attached importance to the concept of a 'structure of housing provision' (Ball, 1983, pi 7; Ball, 1986, pi47) which went beyond the house production system to include housing finance systems and agencies of housing distribution (see Kemeny, 1987). The effect of the adoption of this concept was to blur the distinctions between housing production, exchange and consumption rather than, as Ball intended, to theorise the housing system as a whole (Ball, 1986).

The focus on housing provision reflects, as Kemeny (1987) suggests, what may be called a 'supply-side' political economy of housing (in spite of the disclaimer by Ball, 1986, pi 58). This 'supply-side' approach was originally developed as a critique of what Ball and others regarded as 'consumption orientated' approaches (Ball, 1983, pi3; Ball, 1986, pp 147-8). They argued that these latter approaches concentrated entirely on housing tenure and housing policy, and failed to examine the structures and processes which generated changes in tenure and policy. (In fact, this is an old complaint in housing circles - eg see Harloe, 1977, p21.) In Ball's analysis, however, the only coherent structures identified are those which relate to the main housing tenures of owner occupation and council housing: for Ball, although structures of provision are not necessarily defined in relation to specific tenures, in practice they always are so defined (Ball, 1983, p20 - 'the structure of owner-occupied housing provision'; and similarly Ball, 1986, pi59). The paradox here is that Ball criticises housing theorists and researchers for accepting tenure divisions at face value, but then develops his own theory of housing precisely in terms of the existence of structured tenurial differences. For Ball, tenure is supposed to be 'only' politically important (because of the sectoral cleavage in housing consumption resulting from state intervention - see Ball, 1986, pi49), but the way in which his concept of structure of housing provision is articulated suggests that it is economically important as well.

Linked to the emphasis on housing provision is the so-called 'tenure fetishism' thesis.

This thesis is associated not only with Ball but with Gray (1982, p291), Barlow and Duncan (1988) (the 'reification of tenure' - p221) and Sullivan (1989, pi89). All of these writers have argued, in different ways, that although tenure may be important, its importance is substantially derivative from other social forces and social relations, so that it functions as a surrogate, for example, for structure of provision (Ball), social class (Ball and Gray), status coalitions

(Gray, and Barlow and Duncan), neighbourhood effect (Barlow and Duncan, p224), sectoral cleavage (tenures are 'the vehicle by which the state influences the consumption' of housing - Ball, 1986, pi54), or means of access (Sullivan, 1989, pi90). These writers have assumed that tenure is essentially a consumption category, and Ball and Gray in particular have tended to assume that consumption relations must in some sense reflect production relations (the position of the other writers is not clear).

The main problem for the tenure fetishism thesis is the existence of evidence indicating that tenure has specific effects independent of other factors. It appears that the tenure-based character of Ball's structures of housing provision is not accidental, Barlow and Duncan's rejection of the concept of tenure as a 'substantive collective' (Barlow and Duncan, 1988, pp220-2) is premature, and Sullivan's proposal for a deconstruction of housing tenure (Sullivan, 1989, p189) remains on the drawing board. In addition, the relations between tenure and class (let alone the other factors for which tenure is allegedly a surrogate) have not yet been clearly articulated, so the basis on which tenure supposedly becomes fetishised cannot be understood.

#### Housing consumption approaches

In opposition to the emphasis on housing provision, writers such as Castells, Saunders, Dunleavy and Williams have argued that consumption relations have social effects which are independent of production relations and of production-based class relations (see especially Saunders, 1984, and Dunleavy, 1980). In one sense this must be true because in a capitalist society consumption (by individual households) is institutionally separated from production (by waged labour). Saunders and Dunleavy, however, are saying more than this, namely that there are divisions in the sphere of consumption which are materially and politically as important as divisions in the sphere of production. (We shall refer to this as the Consumption Thesis.)

There are different formulations of the Consumption Thesis depending upon the nature of the consumption relations identified (so-called 'consumption locations' - Dunleavy, 1979, p409) and the character of the divisions (or 'cleavages' - Rae and Taylor, 1970) within those consumption locations. The Consumption Thesis is not confined to housing, but covers other consumption locations such as education, health, transport and social security.

And the character of consumption cleavages, while usually identified by reference to housing tenure (eg Saunders, 1979; 1981), is also defined in the much broader terms of (public/private) sector (Dunleavy, 1980; Duke and Edgell, 1984).

The non-housing aspects of the Consumption Thesis do not stand up to serious examination. Inequalities in educational attainment, mortality and health care are largely capable of explanation in terms of social class and labour-market position, without the need to invoke independent consumption-related causes (for a summary of evidence see Hamnett, 1989, pp216-20). Consumption sectoral cleavages in particular are typically class determined. Admittedly, it is possible that some features of health and education consumption cannot be explained by reference to production and class relations - they might be attributable in part to variations in housing conditions (influencing health and access to educational facilities) which are not entirely class based. Even if this is true, however, it does not imply that the concept of consumption sectoral cleavage has any great explanatory value. More recent evidence also indicates that, in spite of arguments to the contrary (Dunleavy, 1979; Duke and Edgell, 1984), consumption sectoral cleavages do not give rise to a separate political consciousness: Marshall et al (1988) have found that political alignment is shaped primarily by class identity, and is little affected by consumption sector; while Taylor-Gooby (1989) has concluded that people do not see themselves in terms of private or public sector, ie as 'either individualised market actors or collectivised welfare state consumers' (p215).

The most famous housing-specific formulations of the Consumption Thesis are associated with Saunders. His earlier versions (which characterised tenure in terms of neoWeberian domestic property classes) have been abandoned (Saunders, 1984, p206), partly in response to criticism, and will therefore not be considered here. Since 1984 at least, Saunders has argued that owner occupation in particular gives rise to specific material interests, which are constituted independently of social class and which have determinate political and ideological expressions. Shorn of the unsatisfactory terminology of 'interest' and of Saunders' earlier confusion of housing tenure with consumption sector, his thesis can be represented as claiming that tenures are formed independently of classes and have corresponding forms of political organisation and culture.

Unfortunately for Saunders available evidence

suggests that, although it is true that tenure cannot simply be read off from class position, the associations between class and tenure are too strong for it to be concluded that they are separately constituted (Harloe, 1984; Hamnett, 1989). The evidence which Saunders adduces in favour of his thesis (eg from his research on Croydon - Saunders, 1979) is probably better explained in terms of surrogate class action (Gray, 1982). Saunders has consistently failed to demonstrate the existence of any class-independent 'tenure effect'.

Similarly, evidence is lacking for Saunders' claims about a link between tenures and forms of politics and ideology. Tenure-based political formation has never been described meaningfully, and Saunders' much-vaunted 'ontological security' (Saunders, 1984; 1989; Saunders and Williams, 1988) is not tenure specific (Barlow and Duncan, 1988, p225).

Saunders' (1989) survey found no specifically tenure differences (ie controlling for income and social class) in social life either in or outside the home (pi85), and the allegedly tenure-based variations which he does identify (ie a neighbourhood effect for council tenants and the 'ontological security' of owner occupiers) can probably be explained by reference to the different class composition of the two main tenures. Poorer households, for example, are more likely to rely on informal neighbourhood networks for shopping and child care arrangements (Saunders, 1989, pi86), and poorer households are also more likely to live on council estates. Similarly, better-off households are more likely to have the personal possessions, 'home comforts', and greater freedom of choice which give rise to greater 'ontological security' (pi87), and better-off households are also more likely to be owner occupiers.

Ironically, housing consumption approaches have much in common with housing provision approaches. They lack a clear conception of the social relations of consumption, they fail to grasp the nature of the relations between consumption and production, and they misrepresent the relationship between housing tenure and social class. They succeed in showing that tenure divisions are not reducible to other forms of social division such as class divisions, but they do not demonstrate that tenure divisions (as well as consumption sectoral cleavages generally) are not caused by other forms of social division (Hamnett, 1989).

Relations between housing tenure and social class in Britain In order to make sense of the evidence on tenure divisions, it is necessary to move away from both housing provision and housing consumption approaches, to clarify the relations between tenure and class, and to show in what ways tenure divisions differ from consumption cleavages. In this section, therefore, we look more

closely at the nature of social class, drawing upon the most recent evidence from the British context (Marshall et al, 1988). We see the relations between class and tenure essentially in dynamic terms, as a process of mutual formation and continuous interpenetration, and we are therefore critical of writers such as Hamnett (1989) who characterise class tenure relations in terms of static categories.

### The nature of social class

We agree with those writers who argue that social classes are produced primarily in and through labour processes (Dahrendorf, 1959; Gorz, 1976; Nichols and Beynon, 1977; Goldthorpe, 1987; Friedman, 1977; Littler, 1982; Braverman, 1974). We also agree with Marshall et al (1988) that class politics and class action outside as well as inside the workplace are determined by 'how classes are organised in pursuit of class objectives' (p!88).

Whereas Marshall et al, however, on the basis of a neo-Weberian definition of class in terms of shared working conditions and labour market position, come to the conclusion that there are three major social classes in Britain, we take the view that their empirical findings can be better explained in terms of a neo-Marxist two-class theory (Somerville, 1990).

The main problem with Marshall et al's class theory is that it fails to explain the relations between social classes, and therefore cannot make sense of the links between demographic class formation (Marx's 'class-in-itself') and socio-political class formation (Marx's 'class-for-itself'). Given the three demographic classes identified by Marshall et al (the service class, the intermediate class, and the working class), it is unclear from their perspective why classes should turn out to be organised predominantly in terms of only two, ie the middle class and the working class.

In contrast to neo-Weberianism, Marxist theory can be developed to explain why there appear to be three 'classes' in Britain when in terms of major class organisation and struggle there are really two, which we call the bourgeoisie and proletariat. The bourgeoisie, for example, consists not only of capitalists but also of those professional and managerial workers who have become incorporated through the bourgeois nation state (Johnson, 1982; de Vroey, 1980). The existence of such a nationally organised class has been established not only in Britain but in France, Italy, Canada and the USA (Bottomore and Brym, 1989). Membership of such a class would appear to overlap to a substantial extent with that of Marshall et al's 'service class'. For Marxists, however, the term 'service class' seems singularly inappropriate, since the stability and collective identity of the bourgeoisie is explained by its organisational coherence as a controlling and oppressing class, which rules the proletariat through its monopoly of armed force and through its predominance in the national legislature, executive and judiciary.

Similarly, the stability and collective identity of the neo-Weberian 'working class' (which consists basically of manual workers) can be explained by reference to the nature of the organisation of class resistance to the bourgeoisie, which in England has been nationally based since the late 19th century (Stedman Jones, 1974). The 'intermediate class', however, is entirely lacking in specific forms of organisation, even though, according to Marshall et al, it is clearly differentiated both from the 'service class' (because of 'blocked mobility' - p!00) and from the 'working class' (because of distinct working conditions and socio-political formation - Marshall et al, 1988, p!36; see also Savage et al, 1988, on the closed nature of the 'new' service class). This lack of 'intermediate class'

organisation, together with its distinctness from the other two classes, can be explained by reference to the class strategies of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The secret lies in the male-dominated character of the two major classes, which gives rise to specific types of class strategy resulting in female-dominated 'intermediate' occupations.

Marshall et al identify three occupational groups in the 'intermediate class': semi-professionals, clerical and secretarial workers, and personal service workers. Each of these groups consists predominantly of women. The 'semi-professions' such as nursing, teaching, social work, and ancillary health service occupations, have been excluded from the bourgeoisie as a result of specific strategies of social control and closure deployed historically by the established male-dominated professions (Ehrenreich and English, 1979; Gamamikow, 1977; Carpenter, 1976; Parry and Parry, 1974; 1979). At the same time, the semi-professions have adopted professionalization strategies which have differentiated them from the proletariat (Cousins, 1987, pi 12). The 'intermediate' status of semi-professionals is therefore to be explained in terms of the male-dominated character of the bourgeoisie in combination with organised female resistance to male exclusivist strategies.

Similarly, with regard to clerical and secretarial occupations, management generally operate a class/gender strategy of social closure by excluding women in such occupations from promotion to managerial positions (Gordon et al, 1982; Cockbum, 1985; Pringle, 1989). In addition, these 'routine non-manual' workers maintain their distinctness from the proletariat through the nature of their service relation to their employer (Pringle, 1989) and through their use of unions to link their pay and career structures with those of managers, especially in the state sector (Batstone et al, 1984). Here again, therefore, 'intermediate' status is explained by the character of gender relations and gender-based strategies. Personal services workers, eg in retailing, distribution and 'caring' occupations, are a highly heterogeneous group, ranging from semi-professional occupations at one end (eg sheltered housing wardens - Cunnison, 1986) to proletarianised occupations at the other (eg supermarket checkout operatives). It seems likely, therefore, that these occupations can be reclassified either within one or other of the two 'intermediate' groups or else as manual occupations. The distinctness of 'intermediate' groups can therefore be explained primarily by reference to the genderedness of the class structure, the gendered class strategies of the bourgeoisie, and the organised resistance to those strategies on the part of 'intermediate' groups themselves. The question remains, however, as to why this gender-based organised resistance does not give rise to specific forms of class organisation and class consciousness, especially since there is a high degree of mobility among the different 'intermediate' groups (Marshall et al, 1988, pi25).

The answer probably has to do with the ways in which social classes are formed and reproduced outside the workplace, through kinship networks and domestic relations. These relations contribute in important ways to the stability and collective identities of both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, but at the same time they tend to undermine any basis for separate intermediate class organisation. The nature of male dominance, expressed through familial relations as well as through workplace relations, means that women are set apart from men in class terms and yet simultaneously deprived of an independent basis for class organisation. Workplace strategies set them apart, but marriage and the family tie them to the home and to men of other classes.

As a result, for women in 'intermediate' groups, class organisation and consciousness are derived almost entirely from the two male dominated classes.

In the main, therefore, the class structure in Britain consists of a nationally organised bourgeoisie and proletariat. The ownership and control of capital lies at the core of bourgeois power, but other groups such as the so called 'higher' professions (lawyers, doctors, accountants) form an integral part of the bourgeoisie insofar as they enjoy special powers and privileges conferred through the bourgeois nation state. In contrast, the proletariat is formed through its subjection to bourgeois rule, through state regulation or both. Insofar as resistance to that rule is marshalled through the same proletarian organisations, divisions between waged and unwaged can be overcome (Meegan, 1989), ie the proletariat includes the 'non-working population'.

On the basis of this analysis, we argue that all members of the so-called 'intermediate class' actually belong to either the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. All those who exercise managerial power (eg powers of 'hire and fire') in capitalist organisations and bourgeois state bureaucracies are, by virtue of their position, members of the bourgeoisie. This includes those who enjoy state-conferred power over proletarian clientele as well as those who are directly employers or controllers of waged labour. On the other hand, all those who are supervised or controlled by members of the bourgeoisie, either through their position as wage labourers or as captive clients of the bourgeois state (eg through the social security system), are members of the proletariat.

The bulk of so-called 'semi-professionals' are therefore members of the bourgeoisie, although for any individual this will depend on the power relations which s/he has with members of the bourgeoisie (especially employers and state managers) and members of the proletariat (especially clients or customers).

We reject Wright's (1978) concept of contradictory class location, but we accept that, due to the gendered character of class relations, many 'semi-professionals' may appear to be in but not of the bourgeoisie.

A distinction exists between those elements of the bourgeoisie which are constituted as a specifically ruling class (ie the capitalist and political/managerial elites) and those which merely participate in bourgeois rule, through their position as capitalists (ie the petty bourgeoisie) or as managers of bourgeois state apparatuses and policies (ie state professionals and administrators).

As for the much larger 'intermediate' group of clerical and secretarial workers, we would argue that, notwithstanding Marshall et al's (1988) conclusion to the contrary, the vast majority of them belong to the proletariat (Crompton and Jones, 1984). This is because such workers are generally subject to bourgeois administrative supervision (which is broadly similar in both private and public sector employing organisations - Cousins, 1987), and have no special powers of control over the people with whom they deal. Their apparent differentiation from the proletariat is due to historically successful bourgeois strategies of 'divide and rule', which have included systematic job segregation along lines of gender (Bradley, 1989).

Essentially, therefore, the so-called 'intermediate class' splits into bourgeois and proletarian camps. The high degree of mobility among the 'intermediate' groups, however, means that the membership of these camps has a certain fluidity at the margins - there are continuing processes of embourgeoisement and proletarianisation which are particularly important for people in 'intermediate' occupations.

The effects of cross-class kinship relations and domestic relations could be of special significance in determining patterns of changes in class membership, as well as in causing socio-political class formation (Marshall et al, 1988, pp 130-6).

The contribution of tenure relations to class formation Bourgeoisie and proletariat in Britain have therefore been formed and constituted at national level for at least 100 years, and this class organisation is reflected in our everyday awareness of the differences between the 'middle class' and the 'working class' (the 'upper class' refers to a residual, but important, element of the old landed ruling class).

The formation of specifically national classes, however, involves relations in addition to those existing in the labour process, for example relations between employers' organisations and trade unions, relations between the nation state and its subjects, relations within families, and relations among different housing tenures. All of these (and more) contribute to national class formation in different, though overlapping, ways, and it is certainly not the case that 'class relations are constituted only through the social organisation of production' (Saunders, 1984, p206). In this section, we look at the specific contribution of tenure relations to class formation in Britain.

(1) Owner occupation and the accumulation of wealth. It has been argued that owner occupation contributes to the formation of the capitalist class through the facility which it provides for the realisation of capital gains and the inheritance of propertied wealth (Saunders, 1979; 1981; 1984, p204; 1986). This argument has been criticised by Ball on the grounds that owner occupiers are not capitalists they are not, qua owner occupiers, involved in the social relations implied by the existence of capital (Ball, 1983, pp280-1). Ball's criticism, however, rests on a misunderstanding: the point is not whether individual owner occupiers are capitalists or not (and owner occupation can be a source of capital accumulation, anyway, eg through D-I-Y gentrification), but whether the social relations of owner occupation as a tenure contribute to the formation of capitalists (and hence of the bourgeoisie) as a class.

The argument has been considered more recently by Forrest and Murie (1989), with a view to testing its empirical adequacy. They reviewed the evidence on wealth ownership generally, and focused in particular on the issue of intergenerational transfers of housing wealth arising from outright owner occupation.

They found significant, and growing, differences in the wealth benefits of home ownership for the different classes, with elderly working-class owner occupiers gaining little advantage and risking entrapment in the tenure (Forrest and Murie, 1989, p34). Their analysis of Inland Revenue Statistics revealed a widening gap between the top wealth holders, whose wealth is mainly in the form of stocks and shares, and the bottom wealth holders, whose assets are in the form of cash, insurance and housing (pp28-29). They concluded, therefore, that the expansion of housing wealth arising from owner occupation will be disproportionately passed on by the 'privileged minority' (p37) whose corporate wealth already gives them 'real social and economic power' (p37).

What this analysis shows is that owner occupation in Britain tends to reinforce existing class relations. The bourgeoisie strengthens its position by broadening the base of its capital ownership to include substantial holdings of domestic property. In contrast, the capital gains for the proletariat are relatively small or non-existent: those of them who are mortgagors are subject to additional



bourgeois regulation through building societies, banks and insurance companies, while those who own outright are likely to see their equity eroded in order to pay for essential repairs and maintenance and other services (Forrest and Murie, 1989, p35).

The effects of housing capital accumulation and transfer through owner occupation, then, are generally to be found in the reproduction and exacerbation of class inequalities. Proletarian owner occupation offers the potential for new petty-bourgeois class formation, through the capital gains of outright owner occupiers (Pratt, 1982; Thorns, 1981b), but in Britain, this potential remains largely unrealised. In contrast, bourgeois owner occupation opens up real opportunities for the advancement of the bourgeoisie as a class, and not just in Britain (Edel, 1982; Thorns 1981a). What Forrest and Murie (1986) have described as the increasing 'social differentiation' (p48) within owner occupation is therefore a differentiation along essentially class lines.

(2) Other effects of owner occupation on class relations. Owner occupation therefore makes a significant contribution to the consolidation of bourgeois power in relation to the proletariat, by increasing the economic strength of the bourgeoisie and securing the dependence of the proletariat upon the bourgeoisie, either financially or in other ways. It also contributes to the formation and growth of the bourgeoisie through the sustenance which it provides to financiers and exchange professionals: increasing the scope for capital-labour relations, opening up new opportunities for finance capital, and promoting the development and strengthening of professional groups (such as estate agents, surveyors, solicitors and building society managers) which actively maintain the social and political status quo (Gray, 1982, ch13). At the same time, it contributes to the formation of the proletariat either as relatively powerless 'clients' of the owner occupation professionals or as outright owners of a relatively small and possibly unsellable equity (Kam et al, 1986).

(3) The dynamic character of class-tenure relations.

Both classes and tenures are sets of social relations. These social relations, however, are not given, but are continually being formed and remade through dynamic interactions. When we speak of owner occupation, therefore, as contributing to class formation, what we mean is that there are types of social relation characteristic of owner occupation in Britain, and that to enter into social relations of these types is to enter, at the same time, into class relations of specific kinds. It is not a matter of identifying 'class' and 'tenure' as two fixed and separate social categories, which may or may not be causally related. Rather it is a matter of seeing that tenure relations involve class relations and vice versa, so that 'causal' relations between class and tenure are necessary rather than contingent.

This-point can be illustrated in relation to Hamnett (1989). Hamnett accepts that the relationship between an individuals class position and her/his 'consumption location' (housing tenure, education sector, health care sector) is probabilistic rather than deterministic (Hamnett, 1989, p226), but at an aggregate level he argues that 'class appears to be the primary determinant of consumption' (p228).

There are important difficulties with this argument. First, it follows Saunders (1984) in confusing housing tenure with housing consumption sectoral location and in restricting class relations to production relations and their income effects. As a result, class-tenure relations are reduced to relations between (aggregate) labour-market position and (aggregate) housing consumption

position. Second, the aggregates on which Hamnett focuses are not 'substantive collectives' (Barlow and Duncan, 1988, p221), so the statistical associations between them cannot be causal relations - not even probabilistic ones. Third, any valid attempt to find causal relations between class and housing consumption must take account of social relations in the home, especially the effects of cross-class families. Finally, the mutual formation of class and tenure means that the question of whether, and to what extent, class and tenure determine each other in terms of respective structural positions, is wrongly posed. There is no causal relationship between class position and tenure position, either for individuals or for aggregates, because classes are constituted at least partly in relation to each other, and so too are tenures. Moreover, the manner of their constitution covers a range of production, distribution and consumption relations. Class relations do affect tenure relations, but the patterns of causation are complex and cannot be reduced to a purely external relationship between structural positions of different types. It can be admitted, pace Berry (1986, pi 13) that factors such as household income mediate effects of class position on tenure position, but this actually tells us very little about real causal relations between class and tenure.

#### (4) Effects of council housing on class relations.

Council housing contributes primarily to the formation of the proletariat by constituting people as tenants subject to the control of a local state landlord. Even though some local authorities are nominally under proletarian control (eg Labour Party majority on the council), all local authorities are constituted by a bourgeois nation state (the British state). As a result, council housing has represented, and continues to represent, an important source of proletarian solidarity and resistance to class oppression. Council housing also contributes, however, to the formation and growth of professional and managerial occupations such as housing managers, direct works managers, building contract managers, and other local state professionals. As a group, these people belong to the bourgeoisie, either because of their position as employers or managers of staff, or because of their characteristic relationship with the consumers of the housing service which they provide - due to their state-conferred powers of social control (eg in council house allocation and estate management).

Like owner occupation, therefore, council housing contributes to the formation of both bourgeoisie and proletariat. Whereas owner occupation tends to strengthen the hand of the bourgeoisie in relation to the proletariat, council housing tends to have the opposite effect. Its contribution to proletarian organisation has been historically far more significant than its contribution to professionalisation.

(5) National and local class formation. In Britain classes were organised at national level by the end of the 19th century. The effect of tenure relations, however, is more obviously localised in character, in the spatial organisation of owner occupation and council housing.

Nevertheless, just as local and regional class activity have become orchestrated in national class organisations, the local (and regional?) organisation of tenures is largely determined at national level, through the constitution of the different institutional actors involved and of the various legislative and financial arrangements associated with tenures. In spite of appearances to the contrary, therefore, the primary effect of tenure relations on class formation must be at the level of the nation state. Owner occupation and council housing (and other tenures such as private renting)

have to be seen in terms of nationally typical sets of social relations, with typically different contributions to national class formation.

Numerous writers have added to our understanding of the ways in which housing tenures relate to class relations at local level, eg Saunders (1979), Byrne (1982; 1984; 1986; 1989), Dickens et al (1985). In spite of powerful critiques of the concept of locality (Duncan and Savage, 1989), locality studies have further expanded our knowledge of the spatial variation of class organisation within Britain (eg Cooke, 1982; 1989; Pahl, 1984; Meegan, 1989; Urry and Murgatroyd, 1985).

Generally, however, what counts as local class relations remains unacceptably vague and confused: is a locality to be identified with a local labour market area (Bagguley et al, 1989; Bassett et al, 1989), a sub-region (Buck et al, 1989; Beynon et al, 1989) or even a region ('regional boundaries are largely coterminous with class practices' - Cooke, 1985, p213)? And the local significance of national class organisation and struggle often receives insufficient emphasis. In addition, the specific contribution of tenure to these local class relations remains unclear: is it, for example, more to do with a possible local housing system (ie a locally ordered set of relations among housing tenures), or is it a matter of the contributions of nationally based housing organisations, market forces and state policies?

We accept Byrne's (1989) view that 'if the debate about locality has any value, it is that it identifies some sort of spatial specificity for the working out of history in the way in which base and social being add up to produce the potential for action' (p38). So far as class action is concerned, however, this 'spatial specificity' exists primarily at national, and increasingly at continental, level (Somerville, 1990). The scope for sub-national class action is, in contrast, extremely limited. As for tenure, the existence of a system of relations at local level has generally been attributed to the influence of 'urban managers' (Harloe et al, 1974; Murie et al, 1976; Lambert et al, 1978), and the discussion has not been linked to an analysis of class relations, either at local or national level. Moreover, the existence of a local housing system has tended to be assumed rather than proved - a recent example of this is Bramley's (1989) concept of an equilibrium waiting list, which assumes systematic relations between council housing and other tenures at local level.

The contribution of class relations to tenure formation As with classes, tenures have to be seen, not as reified categories, but as historically changing social forms. Owner occupation and council housing have become the two main forms of tenure in Britain at least partly as a result of struggles between the bourgeoisie and proletariat, and partly due to changes within these classes. The provision of council housing on a large scale, for the 'working classes', began after the First World War, in part as a response to the unprofitability of private landlordism (a change within the bourgeoisie), and in part as a response to working-class militancy (struggle between the bourgeoisie and proletariat) (Paunton, 1987). Class was therefore the main factor responsible for the creation of council housing in the first place. Similarly, owner occupation really took off in the inter-war period as the tenure for the new 'middle classes', mainly because of its financial and material advantages in relation to private renting.

The growth of owner occupation therefore reflected the changing character of the class structure (with the expansion of more highly paid professional and managerial groups), and changes in the relations among the tenures themselves.

The two main tenures were therefore born and grew out of class changes and class struggles, and tenure changes since those days have continued to be determined by class factors. True, since the Second World War the original class-explicit character of both tenures has faded. In the early years after the war, for instance, significant numbers of the bourgeoisie became council tenants, and since the 1950s much larger numbers of the proletariat have become owner occupiers. These developments, however, do not indicate that any significant change has taken place in the balance of class forces in housing, for two related reasons:

1 Firstly, the post-war expansion of council housing up to the late 1970s was certainly an achievement by the labour movement, but not for the working class as a whole. Initially the main beneficiaries were skilled manual married men (Stubbs, 1988), and their progress was partly at the expense of other proletarian groups, especially the unwaged. The poorest and least powerful sections of the proletariat did not gain access to council housing until the slum clearance programmes of the mid-to-late 1960s. Up until then, council housing was not available to those on the lowest incomes because council rents were higher than private rents (which were controlled) and rent rebates were generally not available (Malpass, 1990). Bentham (1986) shows that council tenants were generally much better off than private tenants up to the 1960s. Historically, therefore, there has never been a simple correlation between working-class membership in the aggregate and living in council housing, and the post-war changes did not represent a break with the past.

2. Secondly, even if it is admitted that the postwar growth of council housing helped to raise the standard of living of the proletariat as a whole, it does not follow that these gains were made to the detriment of the bourgeoisie. On the contrary: through the 1950s and 1960s, while proletarians were moving into better-quality council accommodation (and later into similar-quality owner-occupied accommodation), members of the bourgeoisie were moving into progressively higher-standard owneroccupied housing. There is no evidence that the relative positions of bourgeoisie and proletariat in housing have significantly changed at any stage since about 1949.

Two factors are crucial for explaining the lack of radical change in the balance of class forces. One is the continuing pre-eminence of market relations in housing provision, which is a clear expression of bourgeois dominance in housing activity generally. The other relates to the character of the state which has been responsible for mass council housing provision (Somerville, 1990). The former ensures that labour-market inequalities are broadly reflected in housing-market inequalities, and the latter determines the limited and unstable nature of proletarian advances within a bourgeois political system. It should also be noted that there is nothing unique about Britain in this respect: Harloe (1981) has pointed out how in most capitalist countries social housing has been less available to marginal groups (p41), with preference generally being given to the so-called 'respectable' working class. In Europe in particular, the expansion of social housing has been closely associated with the state policies of proletarian (social democratic) parties, but the leaderships of these parties have been effectively co-opted into bourgeois nation-state apparatuses, resulting in the neutralisation of proletarian struggles and the demoralisation of proletarian resistance.

Since the 1960s, although owner occupation has grown beyond being the tenure of the bourgeoisie, the gap between owner occupation and council housing in terms of household income, educational credentials,, type of accommodation, dependency on state benefits and other variables has increased considerably, and continues to widen at an accelerating rate (Hamnett, 1984; Robinson

and O'Sullivan, 1983; Somerville, 1985; 1986; 1989a; Wiltaiott and Murie, 1988). While owner occupation has become steadily broader in scope, the household composition of council housing has been transformed, from a tenure for middle-income groups (Report of Enquiry into Household Expenditure 1953-4, Tables 40-44) to a tenure for the residuum, ie for those who, by reason of low income, age, or household type, are excluded from owner occupation (Malpass, 1983). Owner occupation has therefore emerged as the dominant tenure, which is consistent with its strong historical association with the bourgeoisie, whereas council housing has been relegated to the tenure of last resort, which is consistent with its historical links with the proletariat. Twentieth-century tenure changes have been summarised by Harloe (1981) in terms of a dialectic of commodification-decommodification-recommodification, which is in effect, though not in intent, a quasi-Hegelian triad.

The argument is that in capitalist societies housing was originally provided predominantly through the market (ie in a commodified form, or as a commodity), then the state made a substantial amount of housing available through non-market mechanisms (ie in a decommodified form), and finally, the 'rolling back' of the state has been associated with the privatisation or recommodification of state housing. A similar argument has been expressed by Murie (1982), who has described the provision of council housing as occupying a transitional historical stage which has enabled the working class to move from private rented housing into owner occupation. And again Saunders has talked, in very much the same terms, of marketed, socialised, and privatised phases in the mode of consumption (Saunders, 1984, p209).

Saunders (1984) and Forrest and Murie (1986) have noted that the recommodifying or privatising phase is not a return to the commodified or marketed phase because the state continues to be heavily involved in the privatised forms of housing provision - what Forrest and Murie (1986) have called 'subsidised individualism' (pp60-3) - see also Forrest and Murie (1988a; 1988b). Harloe and Saunders are both mistaken, however, to view the issue purely in terms of dichotomies between marketed and non-marketed, or individualised and collectivised, modes of consumption. Such formalistic thinking not only fails to grasp the dynamics of historical change, but also misses the crucial fact of the decline of the private rented sector, to which Murie (1982), among others, has drawn attention. The change from a predominance of the private rented sector to that of owner occupation cannot be reduced to changes in a so-called 'mode of consumption'.

The causation of tenure change has to be sought, not in the relations between consumers and the state (as suggested by the three-phase model), but in changes in the class structure and in the processes of class struggle. Probably the most important factors have been rising household incomes (enabling people to move from renting to buying) and state policies produced by the conflict between class-based political parties (eg the post-war Labour government's policy of mass council housing provision in combination with restrictions on the expansion of owner occupation; or the Thatcher government's policy of mass transfer of council housing to owner occupation through the Right to Buy). The increase in household incomes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, not only in real terms but relative to house prices, together with the association of owner occupation with the bourgeoisie, has been largely responsible for owner occupation becoming the mainstream, quasi-natural ('for most people owning one's own home is a basic and natural desire' - DoE, 1977, p50) form of tenure in Britain. And it has been the class-based 'politics of tenure' (Ball, 1986, p163) which has played the major part in bringing about the uniquely British rise and fall of council housing since World War n.

Tenure changes in recent years (especially since 1980) have been described by Forrest and Murie as 'tenure restructuring' (Forrest and Murie, 1983, p466; Forrest and Murie, p986, p50), and the implications of this restructuring have been further explored in Forrest and Murie (1987). The gist of their argument is that the old structuring of tenure along lines of class (ie middle-class owner occupiers and working-class council tenants) has been replaced by a new structuring along lines of labour-market participation and segmentation (ie waged or salaried owner occupiers and unwaged or low-waged council tenants).

Forrest and Murie choose the term 'restructuring' deliberately in order to make connections with what they call 'class restructuring' (Forrest and Murie, 1986, p49), and they see tenure restructuring as at least in part caused by class restructuring. For example, in Forrest and Murie (1983) they identify processes of economic, political and spatial marginalisation (located in the increasing dominance of market provision, the emergence of a 'surplus labour force', and the geographically uneven impact of economic recession), and relate these to the economic, political and spatial residualisation of council housing. And in Forrest and Murie (1986) they argue that class restructuring, relating to divisions within the working class between waged and unwaged/low waged, helps to produce the growing social polarisation between owner occupiers and council tenants (p49), as well as determining the increasing social differentiation within owner occupation itself (p48).

We share Forrest and Murie's objectives in identifying dynamic links between processes of class and tenure restructuring, as well as their assumption that the core of class restructuring is to be found in changes in the labour market, in state policies, and in the spatial organisation of social relations. There is much more which needs to be done, however, before the historical pattern of relations between class and tenure in Britain can be outlined satisfactorily. Most importantly, Forrest and Murie's empirical findings about class restructuring have to be explained in terms of a theory of class relations and class struggle, so that the effects of such class restructuring upon tenure relations can be deduced from the theory rather than taking the form of post hoc empirical generalisations.

First, the formation of owner occupation and council housing as tenures on a national scale followed the formation of the bourgeoisie and proletariat as predominantly national classes. The expansion of both of these tenures was secured through national political action (eg mortgage interest tax relief for owner occupiers, subsidies for council tenants), replacing forms of private renting which were predominantly localised in character. Following the second world war bourgeois-proletarian relations were less antagonistic, and up to the 1960s the class divide was not so clearly reflected in an owner occupation/council housing divide. Since the 1960s, however, the growing internationalisation of the British and the other national bourgeoisies (Coates, 1989) has outflanked national proletarian resistance and led to a more disordered interstate system (Thrift, 1989) in which bourgeoisies have been able to deploy more explicitly class strategies. This explains the increased emphasis on market forces and privatisation, the deliberate creation of mass unemployment, the eclipse of manufacturing industry and the increasing dominance of financial services (Somerville, 1990). In such a context, the attenuation and residualisation of council housing is only to be expected.

Second, the increased participation of married women in the labour market has had a profound effect on class relations since the 1950s. This has made bourgeois-proletarian relations more

complicated and appears to have been a crucial factor in fuelling the increase in owner occupation among lower income households (Munro and Smith, 1989, p11; Byrne, 1986, p163). The complicating of class-tenure relationships has been partly due to this complicating of class relations. Perhaps its chief significance here lies in its effect of concealing or distorting the true extent of class differentiation within owner occupation, or of exaggerating the class polarisation between down-market owner occupation and council housing. Given the material advantages of home ownership in Britain, more dual-income households mean more owner occupation and less council housing, especially if the incomes of potential first-time buyers hold up in relation to house prices.

Finally, there are ruling class strategies which aim to break down organised proletarian resistance. Essentially, these involve what Byrne (1989) calls 'de-democratisation' (p34) - the exclusion of proletarians from effective political power. This applies not only to the legislative and financial weakening and undermining of local authorities, and to the transfer of their powers to non-democratic bodies such as urban development corporations, housing action trusts, and housing associations, but also to privatisation strategies generally, which all have the effect of removing assets from democratic control. In this context, the transfer of over a million council dwellings to owner occupation under the Right to Buy must represent a defeat for the proletariat as a whole, even though many of those who bought will have benefited as individual households. The gains of these council tenant purchasers are generally not at the expense of the bourgeoisie (although of course the effects of house price inflation and statutory Right to Buy discounts are highly uneven), but their transfer to owner occupation has clear detrimental effects for those proletarians in poor-quality council housing and for those who cannot afford to buy their own home yet have not managed to become council tenants. Furthermore, the resulting residualisation of council housing means a serious weakening of an important base for proletarian organisation, and therefore a corresponding strengthening of bourgeois class forces.

Tenures as modes of housing distribution The concept of tenure used in this paper has not yet been properly analysed, and is open to the criticisms levelled by Barlow and Duncan (1988) and Sullivan (1989). Analysis of the historical formation of specific tenures avoids the charge of 'reification' (Barlow and Duncan, 1988, p22), but the nature of tenure itself remains 'oversimplified and underanalysed' (Sullivan, 1989, p189). The thrust of the argument, however, has been that tenure relations are distinct from both production and consumption relations.

The basic contention of this section is that tenures are best understood as relatively stable and historically enduring ways of distributing housing products to housing consumers. Although very much determined by class relations and class struggle, tenure relations cannot be reduced to class relations; and similarly, although closely associated with consumption relations (eg gender, generational, and socio-spatial relations within the home), tenure relations are analytically distinct from consumption relations. In particular we argue that the form of a tenure as a mode of housing distribution comprises characteristic forms of control relations, exchange relations, and state/household relations. Owner occupation, for example, could be said to consist of specific control relations between mortgagor and mortgagee, exchange relations based typically on market pricing and the activities of exchange professionals (in relation to providers, consumers, and one another), and state/household relations based on fiscal, legal, and other means of state support for home ownership. In contrast, council housing could be argued to comprise specific control relations

between landlord and tenant, exchange relations based on nonmarketed pricing and bureaucratic allocation, and state/household relations based on local and national representative politics.

There is a risk of this analysis becoming too formalist - exchange relations for owner occupiers are not necessarily based on market values (eg this has not been the case in Eastn Europe - Donnison and Ungerson, 1982; (TJURR, 1987; Knowles, 1989); owner occupation does not have to be the economically, socially and politically preferred tenure; council housing could be managed on a more democratic basis; and there exist alternative tenures such as housing associations and cooperative ownership, which are more prevalent in many other European countries (Donnison and Ungerson, 1982). Such comments serve to remind us of the geographically and historically specific nature of housing tenures. Nevertheless, conceptualising owner occupation and council housing as specific combinations of distributional control relations, exchange relations, and state/household relations makes it possible to draw analytical comparisons between the different tenures (eg in order to compare the different effects of class forces within different tenures). By no means all owner occupiers, for example, depend upon a lending institution for the purchase of their home, but this does not alter the fact that building societies have been, for a very long time (at least up until the passing of the Building Societies Act 1986), essentially owner-occupation-based financiers and distributors.

Similarly, even though owner-occupied housing does not always exchange at its market value, owner occupation does appear to have characteristic exchange relations, ie those of purchase/sale and corresponding rights of possession. And finally, whether or not owner occupation is supported by the state, and whether council housing is paternalist or participatory, the relations between state and household are characteristically different in the different tenures: to put it crudely, the council tenant's home is owned by the state in a way which it is not for the owner occupier.

It may be that attempts to define specific control, exchange and state/household relations which are characteristic of a tenure are doomed to failure. Perhaps one can do no more than note that tenures are financed, through control relations, in characteristically different ways (eg for owner occupation, through provision of mortgages to individual households; and for council housing, through collective financing of housing revenue accounts); they give rise, through exchange relations, to characteristically different possession rights and responsibilities (eg for owner occupiers, rights of disposal and responsibilities for repair and maintenance; and for council tenants, rights to quiet enjoyment and a reasonable repairs service and responsibilities for rent payment and reasonable behaviour); and these different modes of financing, and different patterns of rights and responsibilities, involve characteristically different sets of relations between household and state.

The above analysis, highly tentative as it is, is probably sufficient to indicate that the concept of tenure should not be denigrated in favour of notions of access mechanisms and conditions (as implied by Barlow and Duncan, 1988, p229, and supported more forcefully by Sullivan, 1989). The concept of access is important for understanding the reproduction of what Sullivan (p190) calls 'consumption-sector locations' (ie positions of consumers within different tenures) and also for understanding the reproduction of the tenures themselves.

Access, however, is only a generalised way of referring to certain aspects of distributional control and exchange relations: it is merely the inverse of distribution, and signifies entry into exchange relations of an unspecified form. Access mechanisms and conditions are different in different



tenures, but these differences reflect tenurial differences in control and exchange relations - access to owner occupation depends on the realities of marketed housing supply and demand, and the policies of credit institutions, while access to council housing depends upon a politically determined level of housing supply and upon housing need as defined and measured by professionalised bureaucracies. Tenure relations cannot be reduced to access conditions and mechanisms: on the contrary, the crucial features of access can be explained only by seeing them in the context of specific tenures functioning as modes of housing distribution. The arguments about access could be taken on board by conceptualising tenures as modes of housing distribution and access structuring, because the modes of access structuring which characterise tenures are simply corollaries of their modes of housing distribution. Both the distribution of housing and access to housing are affected operationally not only by class relations but also by relations of gender, 'race', age and ability. Tenures, as modes of housing distribution, act as institutional filters of all forms of inequality deriving from production relations and class relations. Consequently, institutional classism, sexism, racism, ageism and disabilism take characteristically different forms in different tenures. Tenures distribute (and typically reinforce) social inequalities in characteristically different ways (Murie, 1983; Morris and Winn, 1990). Space, however, precludes us from examining the details of such inequalities in this paper. Class relations affect the general distribution of housing through the structuring of distributional control relations (eg as expressed in the dominance of finance capital over housing provision in Britain), the dominance of marketed exchange relations in housing (reflecting the dominance of capitalistic social relations in Britain), and bourgeois dominance in the politics of housing (as in politics and the British state generally). In fact, distributional control relations, exchange relations and state/household relations all involve class relations of specific forms, which vary according to tenure. In addition, the predominantly national organisation of bourgeois-proletarian relations may have given rise to a national system of housing distribution (Harloe et al, 1974; Murie et al, 1976; Munro and Smith, 1989, p5), which has characteristically biased effects related to class, gender, 'race', and disability. If a national housing (distribution) system exists at all, it must be an ordered set of relations among tenures. The specific effects of class relations on housing distribution and consumption, however, have to be understood through specific tenures, and that means identifying the specific class relations associated with specific tenurial control, exchange, and state/household relations. These class relations are found in the typical distributional control relations of owner occupation and council housing. Mortgagee/mortgagor relations and local state landlord/tenant relations are tenure typical aspects of class relations, involving characteristically different sections of the bourgeoisie and proletariat.

Exchange relations are not themselves class relations, but the form of exchange, as either marketed or non marketed, reflects the characteristic bias of bourgeois or proletarian class organisation. Owner occupation reinforces bourgeois dominance through marketed exchange relations, while council housing, through non-marketed exchange relations, offers a potential for socialist alternatives to rule by 'market forces'. The decommodified character of council housing therefore represents an implicit challenge to the status quo. Since the exchange relations of owner occupation merely reinforce existing class relations, it can be seen that the two tenures diverge markedly in this respect. State/household relations can be seen as closely linked to distributional control relations, through conceptualising the British state as a bourgeois nation state. The corporate capital which finances house purchase is intimately connected, via the Bank of England-Treasury nexus, to the system of subsidy through mortgage interest tax relief, and local states which allocate housing to

and manage their proletarian consumers are tied to the British state through forms of statutory, financial and administrative control, as well' as through political/ideological spheres of influence. In the case of owner occupation, then, the character of state/household relations appears in the legally and financially favoured position of this particular tenure, reflecting a typically bourgeois bias towards marketed forms of exchange relations. In the case of council housing, state/household relations are expressed through local states which are nominally controlled in most cases by local bourgeois or proletarian political parties (ie Conservative or Labour), but which relate to their actual and potential tenants primarily as local managers or controllers whose power derives from national legislation. Our argument implies that the question of whether tenures might have distributional effects which are in some sense independent, ie not determined by class relations, becomes meaningless. Much of the discussion about the relationship between tenure and political alignment, for example, is therefore misguided. In short, we agree with Gray (1982) and Marshall et al (1988, pp250-2) that, with respect to socio-political attitudes and alignment, tenure can be understood as a surrogate for class.

A further implication of our argument concerns the relations between tenure and the home. We reject the terminology of 'social relations of housing consumption' (Saunders and Williams, 1988; Somerville, 1989b; Saunders, 1989), on the grounds that domestic relations involve production (Pugh, 1990) and distribution (Pahl, 1980; 1983) as well as consumption. Furthermore, we would argue that domestic relations commonly involve an element of class formation, and therefore the effects of domestic relations cannot be separated from the effects of class and gender. Up to now, investigations into the social meaning of the home have not entertained such arguments (Marshall et al, 1988, p214; Saunders, 1989; Dickens, 1989).

## Conclusion

Provisionist and consumptionist approaches have been criticised mainly for their characterisation of tenure as a consumption category and for their failure to deal adequately with the significance of tenures as forms of specific class relations, exchange relations and state/ household relations. It was necessary to remove these theoretical obstacles in order to show the need for class theory in explaining the effectivity of tenures in British society. Relying on the extensive empirical evidence provided by Marshall et al's (1988) research, we have criticised their neo-Weberian assumptions and argued that there are really only two major classes in modern Britain. An important feature of the argument is that class belonging covers domestic relations as well as workplace relations, and that the class structure has an inherently gendered character - indeed the genderedness of the class structure is used precisely to explain why the reality of bourgeois/proletarian relations is so often obscured in contemporary Britain. All this analysis is essential if the difference which tenure makes to the picture is to be correctly grasped.

On the basis of a more adequate theory of class, it is possible to make better sense of the restructuring of class in Britain in recent years (involving the growing internationalisation of the bourgeoisie, the deepening genderedness of class relations, changes in bourgeois nationalist strategies, and shifts in inter-regional power relations), and therefore of the effects of this restructuring on tenure relations. We have emphasised in this paper that relations between class and tenure have to be seen in dynamic terms, and that means seeing class restructuring as intrinsically involving tenure restructuring and vice versa. The approach we have followed starts with

an examination of both the contribution of tenure to class formation, and the contribution of class to tenure formation. In this way, the problem of class-tenure relations is approached initially from each end, so that the strands of interconnection can be analytically unravelled. The analysis itself highlights a number of important points, for example:

1. The potential for wealth accumulation arising from owner occupation has been taken up in such a way as generally to reinforce existing class divisions and not to result in any significant process of embourgeoisement.
2. Council housing has been, and continues to be, an important basis for proletarian solidarity and collective action.
3. Both classes and tenures are organised primarily at national level, although relations between classes and tenures vary locally.
4. Class restructuring can be explained by reference to changes in capital-labour relations (eg giving rise to higher female participation in the labour market) and the changing fortunes of the struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat more generally - eg the gradual post-war decline of bourgeois 'one-nation' strategies associated with nationalisation and an interventionist state, and the rise of more explicitly bourgeois class strategies associated with privatisation and a minimalist state; the success of these latter strategies being due largely to the weakening of proletarian organisation in the face of the internationalisation of the British economy.
5. Class restructuring has fuelled the continuing increase in owner occupation via rising household incomes and increasingly favourable state policies; at the same time, it is the post-war shift in state policies from nationalisation to privatisation which has been most clearly associated with the rise and fall of council housing.

Approaching the question of class-tenure relations from either end is therefore useful, and perhaps indispensable, for clarifying the issues involved. The problem with this approach, however, is that we are not dealing only with a matter of class formation/restructuring or tenure formation/restructuring (if we were, we could conclude quite simply that class restructuring has been primarily responsible for tenure restructuring, while tenure restructuring appears to have had little reciprocal effect on class restructuring). It is also a matter of the dialectical interpenetration of class and tenure such that the analysis of tenure forms (for example) reveals the existence of specific class relations (among other things). In the final section of the paper, therefore, we have addressed the issue of the class character of housing tenures as sets of distributional control relations, and we have attempted to identify the specific form of this character for owner occupation and council housing. We have tried to outline the different ways in which these different tenures distribute housing products to housing consumers, or, to put it the other way round, how they structure the access of housing consumers to housing products along different lines. According to our argument, class relations must be seen as one element in a mode of housing distribution, the other elements being exchange relations and state/household relations. Consequently, the question of the difference which tenure makes cannot be adequately answered in terms of external relations between class restructuring and tenure restructuring, because it also requires an analysis of the extent to which tenure restructuring already itself includes class restructuring. (For example, the democratisation of council housing - devolving real power to council tenants - would be a form of

tenure-based class restructuring which would also involve substantial changes in the exchange relations of council housing and in the relations between council tenants and the local and national states.) These arguments have led us to agree with Gray (1982) and Marshall et al (1988) that there is a real sense in which tenure is a surrogate for class, because of the predominance of class relations within tenures as modes of housing distribution. However, we would also argue that tenures have specific effects in the distribution of social inequality which have not been satisfactorily explained in terms of class relations (in particular, inequalities of gender, age and 'race'). Class relations are not only inherently gendered, but also systematically incorporate differences of age and 'race', and these differences are established within housing distributional control relations. There are problems with this argument, in that the causation of such combined class/gender/age/ 'race' differences within housing tenures has not been adequately explored - managerialist perspectives such as Henderson and Kam (1987) or Sullivan (1989) fail to theorise the links between class/gender and 'race', for example. Nevertheless, we feel that the way forward lies in seeing the distribution of housing inequality as determined primarily through class relations and struggle on the one hand (with bourgeoisie and proletariat characterised as dominated by white, 'middle-aged' males) and domestic relations on the other (especially relations of gender and generation). Domestic relations contribute to class formation, eg through the effects of the domestic division of labour (causing gender differences in labour market participation), and this contribution is significantly affected by tenure relations. The relations between tenure relations and domestic relations need to be further explored, but clearly each element of a mode of housing distribution has important implications for relations of control and exchange within a household, and these relations are typically grossly unequal. The specific effects of tenures, therefore, lie precisely in specific processes of articulation of class/gender/age/ 'race' relations, through specific exchange and state/household relations, to domestic relations generally.

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Peter Somerville and Andrew Knowles: Department of Construction and Surveying, Salford College of Technology, Adelphi, Peru Street, Salford M3 6EQ