

Christina Culwick ~ Why Gated Communities Threaten Democratic Cities



Photo: futurecapetown.com

Recently I tried to drive through a gated section of Westcliff , an affluent suburb in Johannesburg, to avoid traffic, only to be stopped by the guard at the boom and informed that I was not permitted to go through. I insisted that I had every right to enter, since it was a public road so I couldn't legally be prevented from entering. The guard was not convinced. I went on to claim my right to freedom of movement and he maintained his position to restrict it. Our back and forth continued - neither party budging, and both getting more indignant. Eventually I stormed out of my car, lifted the boom myself and was instructed by another guard to "Just go".

Reflecting on this incident, I feel I should declare that I am a white, middle class South African who benefited from apartheid, and live adjacent to Westcliff. I acknowledge that the private security guard with whom I argued has likely experienced restriction of movement to a degree I cannot comprehend, and his experience of exclusion in Westcliff is likely far greater than mine. His job is to implement a system. My issue lies not with him but with that system.

Read more: <http://futurecapetown.com/gated-communities>