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Division in Cities and Health Promotion: The Importance of New Data and Subcategory Levels

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Objectives: The purposes of this article are to examine the complex relationships between the sociological concept of socio-spatial segregation, urban poverty and health promotion, and to look for new ideas and knowledge to support health policy and program development.

Methodology: Analytic, descriptive.

Results: The authors suggest some lines of research that could contribute to a more detailed analysis of the social reality of Brazil, especially in the context of public health, and which may in turn support health decision-making in the national health system (SUS). They begin by pointing out the main aspects of the problem of social division in large cities from a historical-sociological point of view. They then present an analytical discussion of the impressions and problems included in the concept of segregation in reference to urban sociology. The authors emphasize the importance of new data and categories for detailed analysis at different social levels in the problem of encouraging health promotion. The authors suggest the following research strategies, which may contribute to a more profound analysis of socio-spatial segregation structures: comparison of social structures and socialization in poor neighborhoods; studying middle classes and their geographic distribution; studying government policies, social practices involved in politics, and regulation of segregation and urban inequality.

Conclusions: The authors state that researchers should contribute to a thorough analysis of social structures and practices for the design and implementation of public policies for health promotion in the Brazilian and Latin American contexts.