



CHAPTER 7

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY

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ANOTHER LOOK

Kathy Richland

All those lonely people...strangers everywhere, going who knows where. Nowhere people. Lonely crowds, hearing only the sounds of silence. People who don't care about other people...

That is a popular image of life in the big city. As a friend from a small town in Texas asked when she moved to a major metropolis, "Don't people here know we're all in the same cotton field together?"

Many popular images have some grounding in everyday experience. Yet this view of urbanites as

isolated and unfeeling needs to be qualified. City dwellers aren't as disconnected from one another as many images would lead us to believe.

Also, the image of the rural, small-town past—where like-minded people cared deeply for one another in a well-ordered, stable community—is rather idyllic, existing more in theory than in reality. Still, that cozy, imagined world is compelling, especially for those of us who have lived in lonely crowds. How humane the ideal of traditional community seems: a way of life built on close social

bonds, friendship, mutual caring, and personal security.

But recall, too, the other face of traditional life. How many of us today would choose to submit to authority in the form of a mother-in-law or a hereditary ruler? How many of us would want to spend our whole lives interacting mainly with blood relatives? As Margaret Mead implies (*The House of Murphy*, n.d.), there is another and *less attractive face of community*: distrust of outsiders, lack of privacy, conformity to convention and authority, and adherence to tradition. In addition, both social and geographic mobility are very limited in a traditional community. This feature seems especially unattractive for most of us who would have been unfortunate enough to be born serfs, slaves, and underlings, not princesses or rulers.

Many contemporary voices bemoan the loss of community and seek to reestablish it. Some advocate a rejection of Western individualism and democratic tradition, substituting a religious way of life for modernism or postmodernism. The Taliban in Afghanistan and Osama bin Laden exemplify this approach. Others want to establish a sense of we-ness within advanced technological societies, looking to support groups, cohousing settlements, or worker cooperatives as vehicles for creating community.

Is it only in fictional towns, like Cicely, Alaska (the site of TV series *Northern Exposure*, CBS, 1990–1995), where people can have both personal freedom and close social ties? Does *Northern Exposure's* Cicely reflect a new American dream—the enjoyment of a sense of community and individuality simultaneously?

Some think that the Internet can promote both personal freedom and social ties. For example, members of Internet support groups for cancer survivors or crime victims share personal information and stories without ever meeting in person.

There seem to be many avenues within modern or postmodern society that aim to find a sense of community. One of the rather unusual ways depends on trying to find others with your name. Typically, people Google others with their name and then try to connect. This kind of connection among name-sharers is called “Google twins” or *Googlegängers* (in Rosenbloom, 2008). (The world record as of April 2008 was held by over 1,220 people named Mohammed Hassan.)

Do some name-sharers seek a newfound sense of community? And what about lost communities—or at least neighborliness? Not long ago, as sociologist Douglas Harper (2001) points out, farmers in the United States routinely helped neighbors, but this practice died out mainly when new farm technologies entered the picture around the mid-twentieth century. Will the end of cheap fossil fuel in the United States signal a return of sharing trips and chores, neighborliness, and community, as some think or hope (see McKibben, 2008)? We will return to various types of community seekers after examining what is called, rightly or wrongly, “metropolitan community.”

SOCIAL CEMENT IN THE METROPOLIS

V. S. Naipaul, whose novels deal with poor countries emerging from a tribal or caste tradition into an uncertain modernity, once said that he felt no nostalgia for the miserable security of old customs. For most people in modern society, the miserable security of old customs is not even an option. Urbanism may not be a single way of life, as Wirth theorized; but it certainly does entail constant change, not the continuity of traditional community. Institutions and traditions that once promoted a sense of personal security, however miserable, no longer fulfill that function for many urbanites or suburbanites.

What, then, helps to bind contemporary people in the modern metropolis? Not much, warned economist and one-time Clinton cabinet member Robert Reich (1991a, 1991b). In the early 1990s, Reich wrote that the top one-fifth of U.S. income earners were disengaging from (and losing interest in) the fate of the bottom four-fifths. The elite 20 percent may be charitable, Reich noted, but their generosity typically supports institutions that serve or educate people like themselves—symphonies, private hospitals, museums, elite universities, and so on—not social services for the poor.

By the early 2000s, the rich and even less-than-rich were privatizing their residential space, often living in guarded or gated economic enclaves. According to Ed Blakely, author of *Fortress America: Gated Communities in the United States* (1999), this is increasingly the case worldwide, from Great Britain and China as well as the United States. The Census Bureau's 2001 American Housing Survey, based on a sample representative

of the nation's then 119 million households, showed that more than 7 million households in the United States lived in developments behind walls and fences. A decade earlier, as many as 300,000 Californians were "forting up"—one critic's term for living in walled, private neighborhoods (Blakely in Schreiner, 1992:A1).

There are differences among racial/ethnic groups regarding "forting up." For example, in the United States, Hispanics—whether they own or rent—are more likely to live in gated communities than non-Hispanic whites or African Americans. Affluent African American homeowners are less likely to live in gated communities than affluent non-Hispanic whites and Hispanics.

Whatever the ethnicity of those behind gates, the result is often an "us" versus "them" mentality. Physically and psychologically separate, the top 20 percent feels little sense of community with or responsibility for "them"—the bottom 80 percent.

As noted earlier, gated communities are becoming popular globally, from Shanghai and Great Britain to Los Angeles and beyond. One Dominican, Vanela Arias, a housekeeper in Boston and Cambridge, Massachusetts, prepared to return to her native country in style; she and her boyfriend put a bid on a large colonial home in an elite gated community in Santo Domingo (Sacchetti, 2008).

Some gated enclaves seem to have containment as their sole purpose. For example, a gated community built in 2007, constructed by the U.S. military in a lower middle-class Baghdad neighborhood, separates Shi'a and Sunni inhabitants: The U.S. military tried to contain Iraq's "civil war" by building huge, concrete barriers between the factions. One U.S. army colonel envisions small, homogeneous, gated communities, each built around a market, a mosque, and a generator (Jaffe, 2007:A1+).

In terms of the United States, Robert Reich (1991a) concluded in the early 1990s that successful people were gradually seceding from the union. This secession, he noted, was speeded by the federal government's shift of responsibility for many public services to state and local governments, which were already financially strapped and often unable to provide good services. Public services (e.g., public parks, playgrounds, police) deteriorated even more as the

rich withdrew their funds, switching to private services such as health clubs, golf clubs, spas, and hired security guards. (No data since the early 1990s seem to upend Reich's earlier conclusions. For example, the number of private security guards in the United States now exceeds the number of public police officers by about 2 to 1.)

Reich thought that even more than a ZIP code and private tennis clubs separate the successful elite: They "inhabit a different economy from other Americans." Typically, this elite of "symbolic analysts" (who analyze or manipulate words, numbers, or visual images in their work as ad executives, research scientists, corporate executives, lawyers, software engineers, etc.) is linked by jet, modem, BlackBerry, and other electronic media to people in world headquarters' cities and resort centers but retains few ties to the activities of the other 80 percent. Following this logic, a corporate executive in New York City is more involved with and at home with the world marketplace and acquaintances in Tokyo and the European Union than with the local public school or homeless people in the next county. In other words, the notion of "hometown" is losing both its emotional and its economic clout.

To conclude: Reich echoes a familiar theme: the breakdown of communal feeling in cosmopolitan, highly-specialized society. As we saw earlier (Chapter 6), cosmopolitanism, the privatization of formerly public services (e.g., education), and increasing specialization were associated with the fall of the Greek polis centuries ago. And, as Chapter 6 details, a host of thinkers theorize that both urbanites and suburbanites in *Gesellschaft* tend to relate to one another on the basis of the cash nexus, not community ties.

Reich added more factors—income level and global work role—that separate people in the contemporary metropolis. The result, he posited, was the short-circuiting of local emotional and economic interdependence.

So, once again, we ask, "What, if anything, helps to bind contemporary urbanites together?" We get a few clues from popular culture. Many films set in global cities—Martin Scorsese's *Goodfellas* (1990) and *Taxi Driver* (1976), Oliver Stone's *Wall Street* (1987), Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* (1989), Curtis Hanson's *L.A. Confidential* (1997), Sofia Coppola's *Lost in Translation*

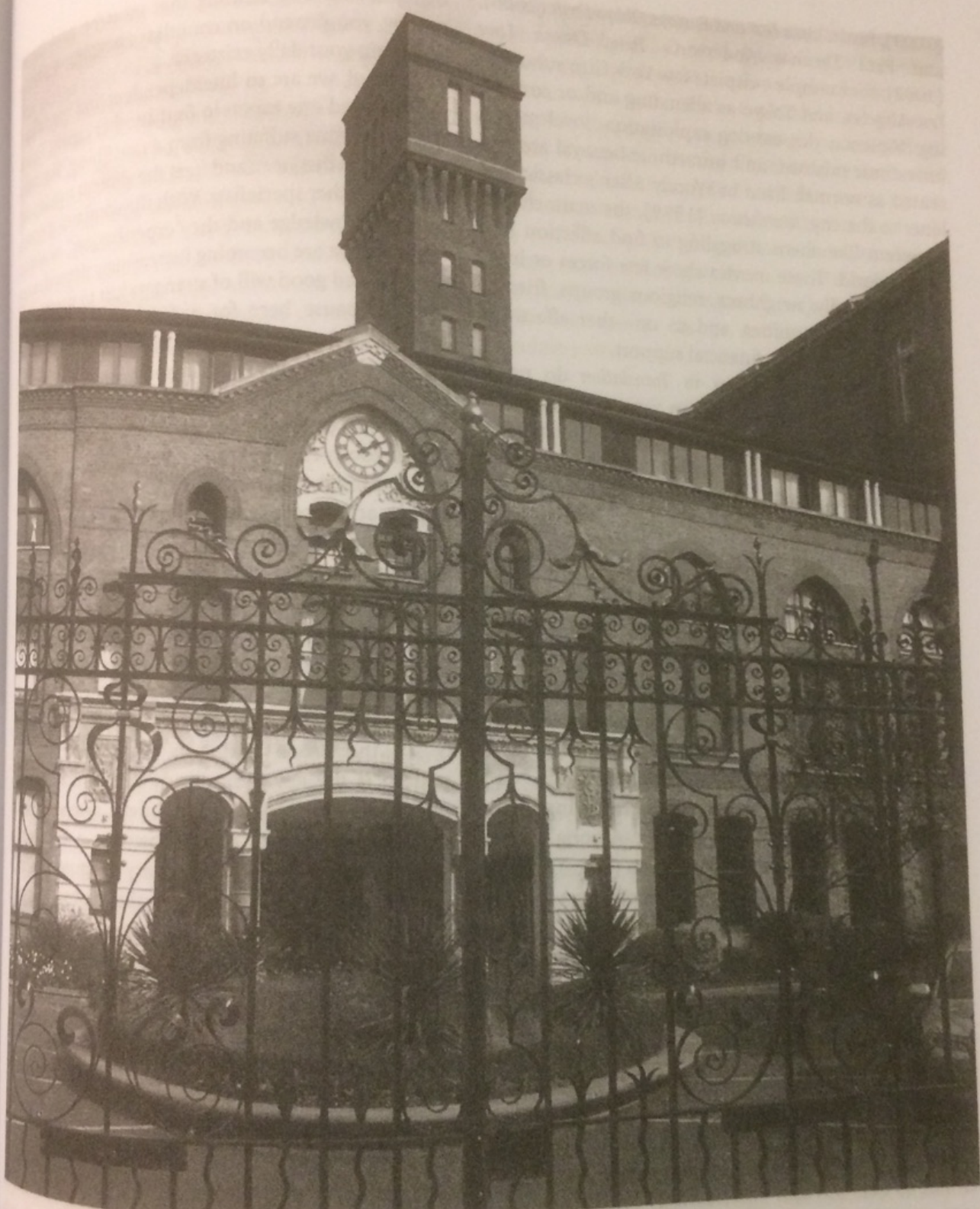


Fig.7.2 GATED COMMUNITIES GO GLOBAL. In recent years—from London to Shanghai and beyond—urbanites and suburbanites are flocking to gated communities. This one, located in London's Bow Quarter, houses educated cosmopolitans, many of whom work in London's financial district. (Critics accuse those in gated communities of "forting up" against "them.") Note that in some cities, including Quito, Ecuador, middle-income people often erect their own, private version of a gated community: They ring their homes with barbed wire. (Gesche Würfel)

(2003), Justin Lin's *Fast and Furious: Tokyo Drift* (2006), and Paul Thomas Anderson's *Punch-Drunk Love* (2002), for example—depict New York City, suburban Los Angeles, and Tokyo as alienating and/or corrupting. Violence, dog-eat-dog exploitation, lovelessness, interethnic mistrust, and intraethnic betrayal are presented as normal. Even in Woody Allen's classic love letter to the city, *Manhattan* (1979), the main characters seem like aliens struggling to find affection in a lonely world. These movies show few forces or institutions—family, neighbors, religious groups, friends, ethnic subcommunities, and so on—that effectively provide emotional or financial support.

What movies like *Lost in Translation* do not—perhaps cannot—portray is an unseeable, abstract force that ties people together economically (not emotionally): functional interdependence. *How* and *at what level* this works are matters of current debate.

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY: ALIVE OR EXTINCT?

ONE VIEW: METROPOLITAN DIVISION OF LABOR

Some theorists stress the functional interdependence that stems from the complex division of labor. This perspective, rooted in Emile Durkheim's ideas about organically solid society (Chapter 6), focuses on population density, interpersonal communication, and functional differentiation as factors cementing members of a metropolitan community. Among others, Robert Park (1916) and Ernest Burgess ([1923] 1925), creator of the concentric zone model of urban growth; Roderick D. McKenzie (1933); Amos Hawley (1950); and geographer Brian Berry and sociologist John Kasarda (1977) are associated with this perspective. All are urban ecologists who, like biological ecologists, focus on a population's adaptation to its environment. (Chapter 16 contains a more detailed discussion of urban ecology.)

We who live in the urban world may not realize it, but we depend on absolute strangers for a wide range of goods and services. For example, unless you grow your own food, limit travel to places where your feet can take you, entertain yourself without mass media, fix your own broken toilet (without calling a plumber from the Yellow Pages), receive no government

benefits, and buy nothing that must be paid for in money, you depend on countless anonymous people to sustain your daily existence.

Indeed, we are so interdependent and specialized that we need one expert to find another expert! This is clear to anyone suffering from a rare illness. Finding a specialist to diagnose and treat the ailment requires the advice of other specialists. With the continuing expansion of knowledge and the "expertization" of almost everyone, we are becoming increasingly dependent on the skill and good will of strangers just to survive.

Let's pause here for a few notes on terminology. *Population core* is synonymous with *central city*. However, *central city* is not synonymous with *inner city* or *center city*. The central city is—or was, due to recent changes, as we shall soon see—seen as central because (1) all goods coming into and going out of the region come through this city and (2) it organizes the economic activities of its surrounding hinterland. The term *suburb* is synonymous with *hinterland* and *outside central city*.

The central city and its suburbs are the two basic components of a metropolitan area or metropolitan community. At the local level, a complex network of mutually sustaining activities links (or once linked) people in the population core and its suburbs.

In the urban ecologists' view, the commuting pattern is the key indicator of metropolitan interdependence. The U.S. Census Bureau agrees; it makes the journey-to-work pattern between a city and its surrounding suburbs the primary measure of metropolitan community. Thus, from this viewpoint, a metropolitan area is essentially an *integrated labor market*, measured by the number of people who live in the suburbs and commute to the central city for work.

How, then, do urban ecologists explain the massive exodus from U.S. central cities to suburbs, starting after World War II, that has transformed many metropolitan areas? They begin by looking at the interplay of ecological factors, known by their acronym POET: *population, social organization, environment, and technology* (see Chapter 4). Their explanation for individuals and corporations relocating to U.S. suburbs centers on changes in transportation and communication technology. In particular, they point to the mass production and affordability of the private

automobile as the key factor in suburban growth (e.g., Berry and Kasarda, 1977). As we shall discuss shortly, their explanation does not go unchallenged by the "new" urban theorists.

To conclude: Following Durkheim, urban ecologists stress functional interdependence in modern society based on the complex division of labor. They see society naturally tending toward equilibrium or balance. Parts of a social system, like the organs of a human body, fit together and run smoothly until some external disruption occurs; then societies, like bodies, adapt to the change. In their analysis of metropolitan life, urban ecologists focus on ecological factors and ignore or underplay social psychological factors (e.g., attitudes) and political factors, including the role of the state.

ALTERNATIVE VIEW: NEW INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF LABOR ("NEEDLE")

Dissenters don't deny that functional interdependence is important, but they put it in a very different context: the new international division of labor (Chapter 5). This view is associated with the so-called new urban theorists, a group of interdisciplinary social scientists including David Harvey (1985), Manuel Castells (1983), and Joe R. Feagin (1988). New urban theorists draw insights from diverse disciplines (geography, sociology, economics, planning, political science, cultural studies) and theoretical traditions (e.g., world systems theory and neo-Marxism to postmodernism).

"New" urban theorists (no longer so new but still referred to as such) think that the global capitalist economy is the abstract glue that cements people worldwide, albeit very unequally. Indeed, they theorize that "every major dimension of city life today is related to the shifts produced by changes in investment deriving from a hegemonic, global system of capital" (Gottdiener, 1987:77). One event serves to illustrate their view of borderless interdependence: In 2007 and beyond, the so-called subprime mortgage market meltdown in the United States brought some Wall Street securities firms and banks to their knees. It reverberated throughout Europe and elsewhere; banks, notably Switzerland's UBS, suffered huge losses as a result of the "mortgage meltdown" in the United States.

Unlike urban ecologists, new urban theorists tend to incorporate political and cultural factors into their analyses, paying special attention to the influence of political individuals and organizations—citizens' groups, multinational managers, real estate developers, and so on—on metropolitan outcomes. In this view, the impact of the global capitalist economy on local development, federal and local government policies, and local political coalitions—not population increase, new technologies, and other ecological variables (as the urban ecologists think)—best explains spatial and social change in metropolitan areas (Gottdeiner and Feagin, 1988).

URBAN ECOLOGISTS VERSUS "NEW" URBAN THEORISTS: A CASE STUDY

The case of U.S. suburbanization illustrates some major differences between urban ecologists and new urban theorists. Very briefly, urban ecologists claim that the automobile was the key factor in suburban development. New urban theorists disagree. They argue that technology played only one part, for decentralization to the hinterland started before the introduction of the automobile. Instead of technology, they focus on the *political decision-making context* that resulted in the dominance of the auto over alternative transit forms (e.g., rail mass transit) as well as the particular actors that shaped the auto-centered transport system in the United States.

Finally, urban ecologists think that the *highly specialized division of labor, new technologies, and increased population density* spurred suburban growth. New urban theorists point to a different set of incentives and forces, including the following: *labor force considerations* (e.g., corporate owners and managers chose to relocate in the suburbs to control labor militancy in central cities); *national and local government intervention* (e.g., post-World War II programs to build suburban freeways, provide low-interest loans to suburban home builders, and subsidize defense-related industries that located in the suburbs); and the *role of political-economic players* (e.g., real estate speculators and developers) in the promotion of growth. In this view, the automobile and other technological innovations are important but only as a means, not a cause, of suburbanization (Gottdiener, 1985, 1994).

To conclude: So-called new urban theorists see metropolitan shifts as part of larger processes with local repercussions—global capitalism and government intervention. In their view, these are the major forces shaping metropolitan areas, and they are neither natural nor neutral (i.e., they do not serve everyone's interests equally). However, local outcomes are not entirely determined by these macro-level processes; individuals and organizations (grassroots citizens' groups, real estate developers, etc.) can have important local impacts. Urban ecologists, by contrast, see metropolitan shifts as results of technological change (e.g., new communications technologies) and shifts in social organization (e.g., mass production, consumers' ability to pay for cars).

Now we turn from this theoretical debate to a related practical issue: how to measure a metropolitan area. This sounds rather unimportant and exceedingly boring. It is not unimportant.

MEASURING FUNCTIONAL INTERDEPENDENCE

At present, measurement is based on the urban ecologists' concept of functional interdependence. The journey-to-work pattern between a central city and its surrounding suburbs is probably the most common measure of metropolitan interdependence. Yet, using this measure, we conclude that many areas now called "metropolitan" are far from functionally interdependent: *By 1990, twice as many people in the U.S. commuted from suburban residence to suburban job as commuted from suburb to central city.* This decentralization has reached the point where most urbanists now believe that "the central city is no longer essential to the economic functioning of a metropolitan area" (Frey and Speare, 1988:19).

(*A note about U.S. census data:* In development since 1996, the annual American Community Survey was first used by the U.S. Census in 2003. It is sent to a sample of U.S. households. As of 2010, it replaces the long-form census. Questions and categories for decennial censuses are decided 2 years prior to a census. Thus, questions for the 2010 Census were decided by 2008.)

During the past several decades, people all over the world have become more aware of some effects of car travel, including congestion, air pollution, and greenhouse gases that many scientists say contribute to global warming. In 2001, a small but growing number in the

United States (about 6 percent, just over 5 percent a decade earlier) avoided a commute by working at home (Gordon et al., 2004). Nonetheless, commuting behavior in the United States can best be described like this: more people in more cars traveling to more places.

By 1996, the suburb-to-suburb commute had become the dominant commuting pattern in the United States (University of South Florida, 2008). Yet, people in the United States still commute from suburb to city. In the nation's largest city, New York, city for example, the number of people commuting into all five boroughs increased from 655,000 to 775,000 between 1980 and 2000. The number of people who "reverse commuted" out of the city into suburbs also increased— from 171,000 to 242,000. Thus, at least in one global city and its environs, "reverse commuters showed a much larger percentage increase—42 percent compared with 18 percent" but "the inbound commuters outnumbered them three to one" (Bram and McKay, 2005).

THE NEED FOR NEW CONCEPTS

What is an important implication of reverse commuting and suburb-to-suburb commuting? That *the very concept of a metropolitan area as an urban core with dependent suburbs is outdated in many cases.* In other words, many U.S. suburbs have become independent of their mother cities.

Official record keepers have not yet fully come to grips with this spatial shift. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB), originator of the metropolitan area concept, did review present concepts for the 2000 census (Forstall, 1991); and the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics did sponsor a seminar that asked "Should the metropolitan concept be eliminated?" (Fitzsimmons, 1995). Meanwhile, the OMB and the U.S. Census Bureau retain the metropolitan area as a core concept. In part, this may reflect data-collection problems; the metro area concept offers a standardized measure and the promise of comparable data to scholars, planners, and so on.

Predictably, both theoretical and political disputes will accompany any process to reconceptualize the nature of metropolitan community. So will policy disputes. We can expect groups representing the interests of cities to resist the notion of independence between cities and "their" suburbs. For example, the

National League of Cities (NLC), an advocate for more than 18,000 cities, villages, and towns, argues that cities and suburbs are *interdependent*. The NLC has long held that "metropolitan areas are a single regional economy" (Ledebur and Barnes, 1992:12). Further, the NLC claims that "cities and suburbs have a common and essential stake in their shared economies. Growing disparities between these jurisdictions erode and eventually undermine the vitality of the regional economy and, hence, the welfare of both cities and suburbs."

Is there any evidence that, as the NLC puts it, "the economic fate and fortunes of cities and suburbs are inextricably intertwined" (Ledebur and Barnes, 1993:4)? That depends on how interdependence is measured: The NLC abandons the more common measure of city-suburban interdependence—commuting patterns—in favor of changes in per capita incomes of cities and suburbs, reasoning that city-suburban incomes "tend to rise and fall together" (Ledebur and Barnes, 1992:15).

METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA (MSA) AND MICROPOLITAN AREA IN THE UNITED STATES

To standardize the measurement of a metropolitan area, the OMB developed the concept of a **Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)**. As its name implies, the MSA is not a political unit; like many entities, it is only a geostatistical creation. It is used as a uniform area for data gathering and analysis.

Introduced in the 1950 census (in a slightly different form) and modified several times (e.g., in 1983 from Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area [SMSA] to MSA), the general concept of a metropolitan area has remained constant: a large population center or "nucleus" (central city) together with its adjacent, socially and economically integrated communities (outside central city or suburban area). In other words, the concept is based on a parent-child relationship: The "mother" (the Greek root of *metropolis*) dominates her dependents (hinterland, sphere of economic influence, or suburbs), which could not exist on their own.

Micropolitan Statistical Area is a rather recent U.S. Census designation. Created in 2003, a U.S. micro area is defined as an urban area containing an urban core city or town of at least 10,000 but less than

50,000 population. Like the MSA, it is a geostatistical measure. The Census Bureau identified 577 U.S. micro areas in 2005. (Most credit G. Scott Thomas and his 1990 book, *The Rating Guide to Life in America's Small Cities*, with the term "micropolitan.")

Now, back to big. An MSA more accurately reflects the number of people in an area than looking just at a city's population. For instance, Boston ranks only twentieth in terms of size but, counting its metropolitan area residents, it is ranked as the nation's seventh largest metropolitan area, according to the 2000 Census. On the contrary, the population of the city of San Diego—more than 1.2 million in 2000—meant that it ranked seventh largest in the nation in terms of population. But it ranked as the seventeenth largest metro area.

Figure 7.3 displays the component parts of an MSA for which census data are readily available: MSA, county, central city, urbanized area, place, minor civil division, census tract, block group, and block. (Not illustrated but available are data for user-defined units, such as neighborhoods, school attendance areas, business zones from the U.S. Census Bureau's User-Defined Areas Program.) The Census Bureau's Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing database (TIGER) is also a handy resource for researchers; the database contains information about such features as railroads, streets, and the geographic relationship to other features.

Before describing the criteria used to define an MSA, we should note how the U.S. Census Bureau defines and operationalizes some rather ambiguous terms, such as *urban* and *rural*. (Note that U.S. Census definitions are often long and complex.) Here are just a few definitions used in the 2000 Census:

Urban All territory, population, and housing units located within an urbanized area (UA) or an urban cluster (UC). It delineates UA and UC boundaries to encompass densely settled territory, which consists of

- core census block groups or blocks that have a population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile and
- surrounding block groups and census blocks, each with an overall population density of at least 500 people per square mile

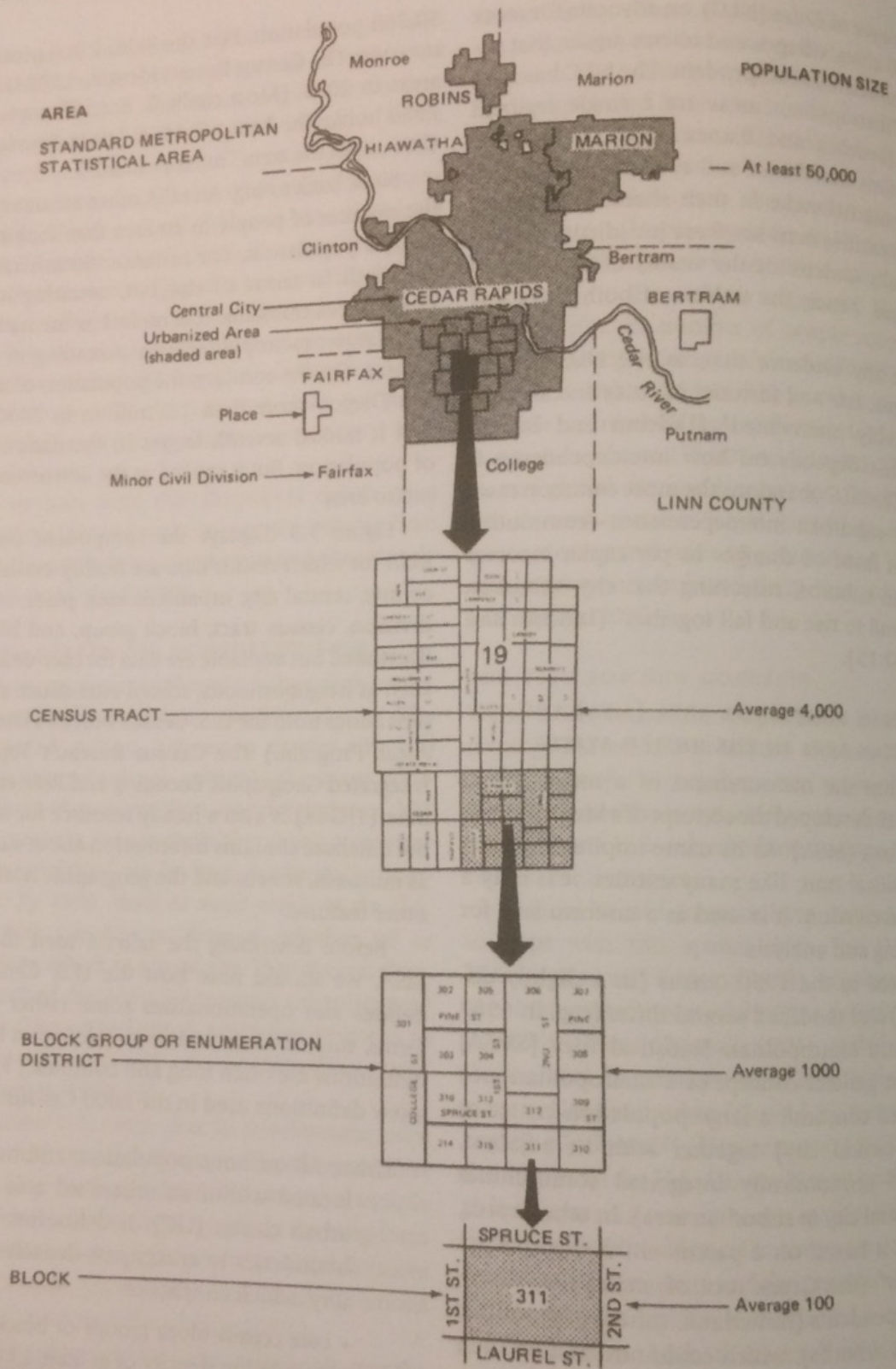


Fig.7.3 COMPONENTS OF A U.S. METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA. An MSA is an integrated economic and social unit with a large population center, the central city. This chart illustrates the hierarchical relationship among units within the MSA. Since 1992, U.S. Census data have been available for each of these components, plus many user-defined components such as ZIP codes and neighborhoods. (Source: Adapted from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census Geography* [October 1978])

(In addition, under certain conditions, less densely settled territory may be part of each UA or UC.)

Urban cluster (UC) Consists of densely-settled territory with at least 2,500 people but fewer than 50,000 people. Introduced in Census 2000 to provide a more consistent and accurate measure of population concentration in and around places. (UCs replace earlier census categories that defined as urban only those places with 2,500 or more people located outside of urbanized areas.)

Urbanized area (UA) Consists of densely-settled territory with 50,000 or more people. This designation aims to provide a better separation of urban and rural territory, population, and housing around large places. Because of different density requirements in the 1990 Census, some territory then classified as urbanized has been reclassified as rural.

Rural All territory, population, and housing units located outside of UAs and UCs. The rural component contains both place and nonplace territory.

Extended place Any place that is split by a UA or UC boundary; that is, it is partly urban and partly rural. Used first in Census 2000.

Census tract Small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county or statistically equivalent entity. As of Census 2000, the entire United States is covered by census tracts. Generally, census tracts have 1,500–8,000 people. Optimum size is 4,000 people. (Census tracts in U.S. Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Marianas are smaller, population-wise.) They are designed to be homogeneous with respect to population characteristics such as living conditions and economic standing.

Block group (BG) A cluster of census blocks having the same first digit of their four-digit identifying numbers within a census tract. For instance, block group 3 (BG 3) within a census tract includes all blocks numbered from 3000 to 3999. Optimum size is 1,500 people.

Central city The MSA's core—the city (or cities) around which an MSA is formed. It must meet minimum population standards.

Outside central city Every place in the MSA minus the central city.

Counties (or equivalent entities) Counties form the geographic “building blocks” for metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

Core-Based Statistical Area (CBSA) Created by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2000, the term refers collectively to metro and micro statistical areas.

New England City and Town Area (NECTA) Defined using the same criteria as Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas. Identified as either metropolitan or micropolitan, based, respectively, on the presence of either a UA of 50,000 or more population or a UC of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population. If the specified criteria are met, a NECTA containing a single core with a population of at least 2.5 million may be subdivided to form smaller groupings of cities and towns referred to as New England City and Town Area divisions.

These census designations do not solve all the problems of classification. But at least the categories are standard so that uniform data can be collected.

As noted, census definitions can change over time. For example, in 2000, a new term—“core-based statistical area” (CBSA)—was added, referring collectively to Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas. Each CBSA must contain at least one urban area of 10,000 or more population. However, the general concept of an MSA remains the same: a core area containing a substantial population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with that core.

Now, back to the MSA. Except in the six New England states (where cities and towns are used rather than counties), Alaska (which uses county equivalents), and a few other areas (which use county equivalents), an MSA consists of an entire county or a group of contiguous counties that contain (1) at least one central city with at least 50,000 inhabitants (or “twin cities” with a combined population of at least 50,000) or (2) an urbanized area surrounding the central city with a population of at least 50,000 and a total metropolitan population of at least 100,000 (or 75,000 in New England). *Counties surrounding the central city are*

included in an MSA if they meet certain criteria of "metropolitan character" and socioeconomic integration with the central city. These criteria are based on high population density or high level of commuting to the core. These criteria also show that the U.S. Census Bureau defines the metropolitan area as an integrated labor market, the smallest area containing most of the workplaces and residences of those who work there.

A county contiguous to the central city's county must meet criteria of metropolitan character and integration to be included in the MSA. The criteria have changed over the years, but commute patterns and population density remain key indicators of a metropolitan system. Using Figure 7.3, for example, here is how to determine the extent of the metropolitan area: If a county surrounding Linn County, home county of the central city of Cedar Rapids, has either (1) 50 percent of its workers commuting to the urban core and a density as low as 25 persons per square mile or (2) 15 percent commuters with a density of 50 persons per square mile and other evidence of "metropolitan character," it would be included in the MSA.

Before proceeding, a few words about the U.S. county and its equivalents are in order. *The entire county is the basic political unit of an MSA, except in the six New England states, Louisiana, Alaska, four other states, D.C., and Puerto Rico.* Why the exceptions? A variety of reasons. First, New England. Historically, cities and towns have more political significance than counties in New England; thus, New England's MSAs are composed of cities and towns. In addition, based on its French heritage, Louisiana has a history of "parishes," which are like counties. Alaska does not have counties but, since 1980, uses county equivalents: boroughs or "census areas." The District of Columbia is considered to be the equivalent of a county. Four states (Maryland, Missouri, Nevada, and Virginia) have independent cities, which constitute primary divisions in their state. But most states use the county as the basic political unit. Finally, in Puerto Rico the primary divisions are *municipios*; they are treated as county equivalents.

Two more notes on New England's MSAs: (1) In the 1990 Census, metro areas in New England used minor civil divisions, not counties, as the basic unit. This changed in the 2000 Census. As of 2000, metro and micro statistical areas are defined using counties

or county equivalents nationwide. (2) The minimum population standard for New England's central cities is 75,000, not 50,000. There are also alternative county-based metropolitan areas defined since the 1970s called "New England County Metropolitan Areas" (NECMAs), which are more similar to MSAs in the rest of the United States.

Because metropolitan areas are defined on the basis of (presumed) economic and social interdependence—not political ties—MSAs can and do cross state lines. Interstate MSAs are common in the Northeast and Midwest but rare in the far West. A couple of examples from the 2000 Census: Huntington-Ashland, West Virginia-Kentucky-Ohio and Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, Minnesota-Wisconsin.

Also, metropolitan systems change over time. MSA boundaries shift with economic growth or restructuring. For example, before 1963, Solano County, California, was included in the San Francisco-Oakland metropolitan area; in 1963 it became part of a new two-county metropolitan area as movers, working at newly-created jobs or retiring there, stopped commuting to the Bay Area in large numbers.

Over time, the number of MSAs has changed. In the 1970 Census, there were 243 metropolitan areas (then called SMSAs) in the United States and four in Puerto Rico, for a total of 247. By 2005, there were 361 MSAs in the United States plus eight in Puerto Rico.

CONSOLIDATED METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA (CMSA) OR MEGALOPOLIS

Popularly, a supermetropolitan area—a large metropolitan complex with at least 1 million in population—is often called a *megalopolis*. The U.S. Census Bureau calls it a **Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA)**. A CMSA is defined as an MSA with a population of 1 million or more that also contains separate, component areas. A CMSA's component areas are called **Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSAs)**. Solano County, California (mentioned in the previous section), was part of the Vallejo-Fairfield-Napa PMSA, one of six PMSAs that made up the nation's fifth largest CMSA in 2000, San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose. (Planners predict that formerly-rural Solano County will soon be the link connecting the Sacramento Valley to the Bay Area, resulting in a new megalopolis of over

METROPOLITAN AREAS (CSMAs, PMSAs, and MSAs)
 June 30, 1990
 (Shaded areas represent counties)

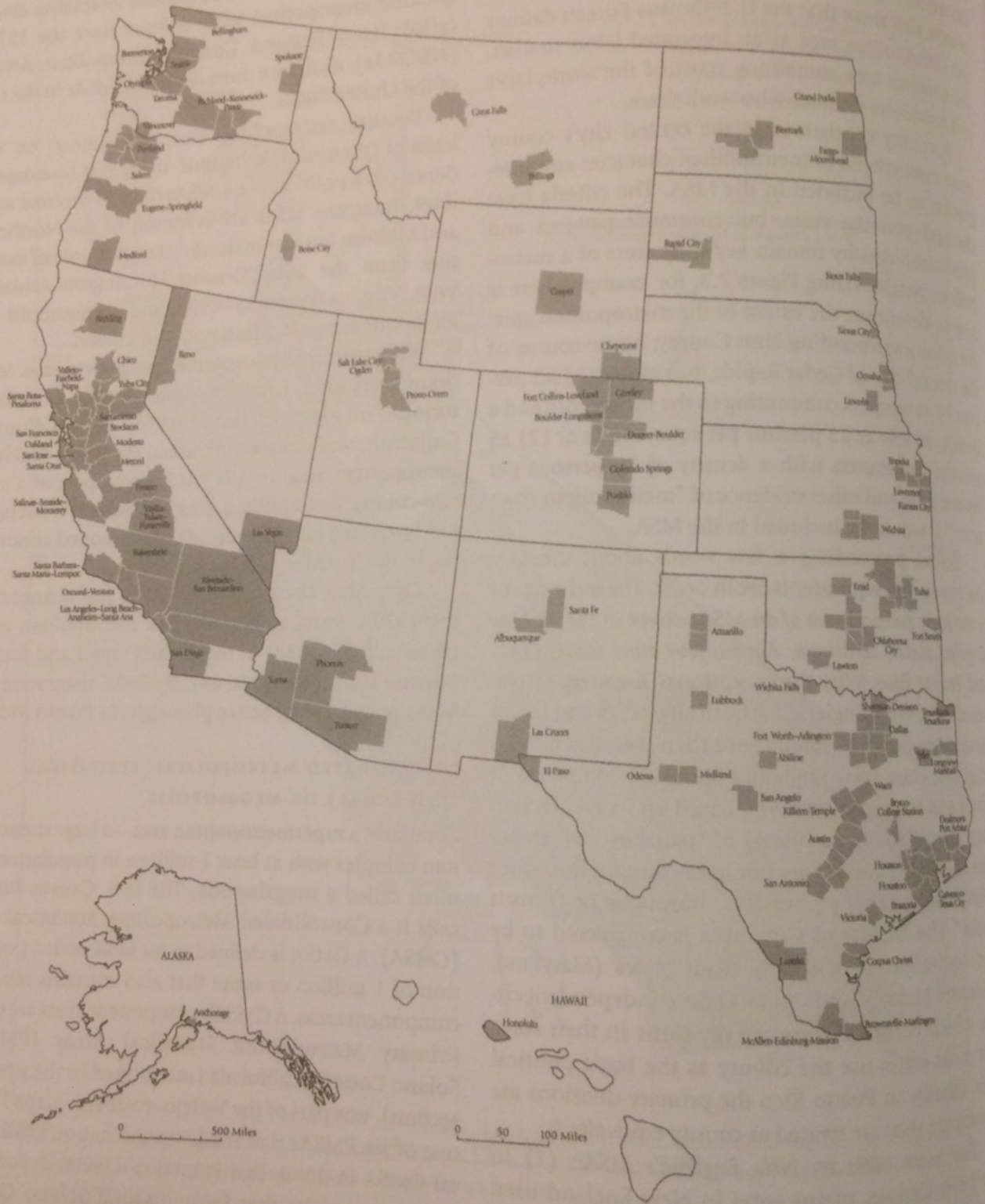
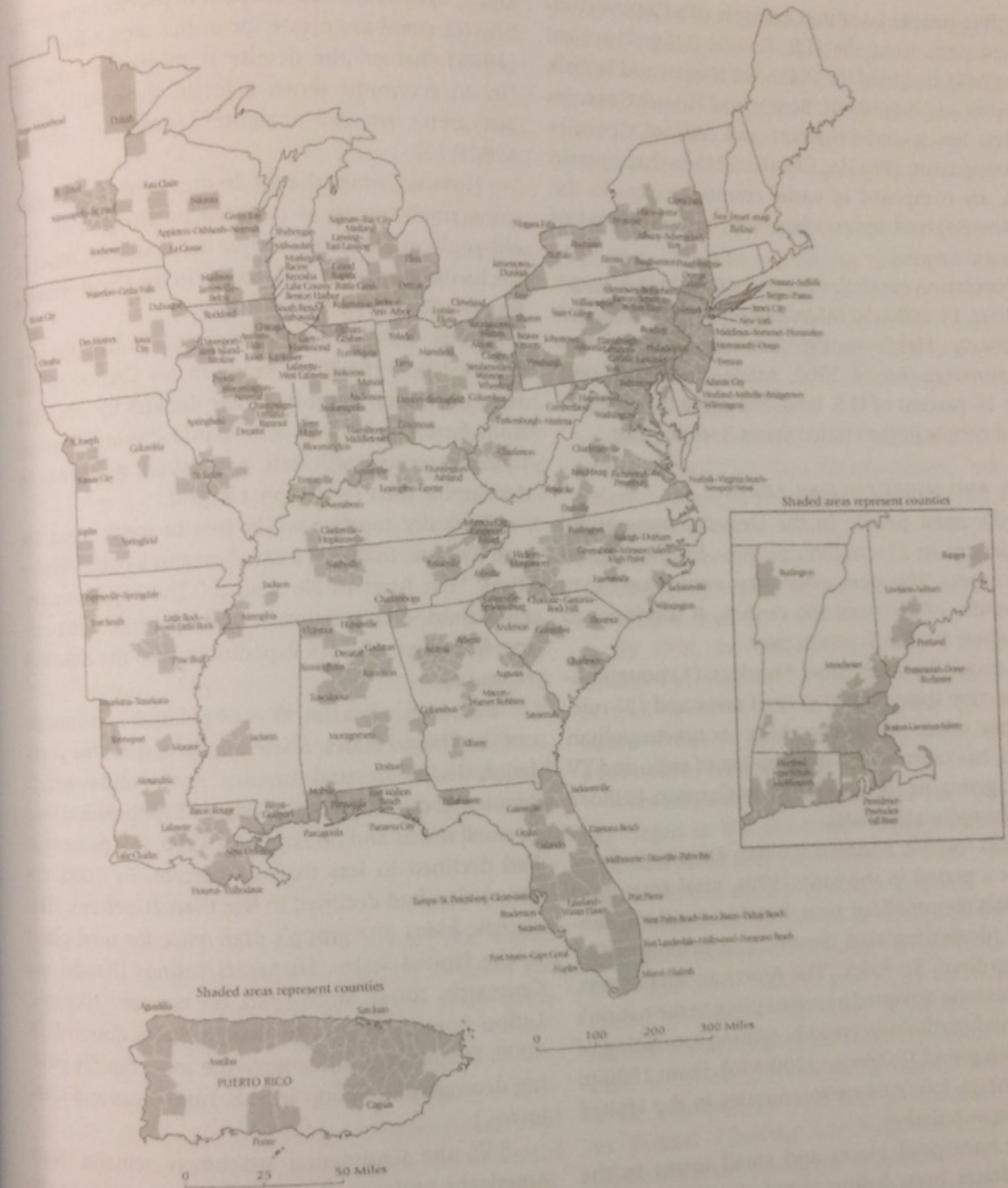


Fig. 7.5 METROPOLITAN AND MICROPOLITAN AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES AND PUERTO RICO, 2005. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 2007, p. 897 http://www.census.gov/geo/www/maps/msa_maps2005/msa2005_previews_html/cbsa_csa_us_wall_1205.html)



9 million people.) Another example of a CMSA's component parts from the U.S. Census 2000: The New York CMSA included the PMSAs of Nassau and Suffolk Counties on Long Island, Bergen and Passaic Counties in New Jersey, and Bridgeport and Milford Counties in Connecticut. (PMSAs, like the CMSAs that contain them, are composed of entire counties except in the six New England states, where they are composed of cities and towns.)

Population continues to concentrate in U.S. megalopolises. By 2000, 50 MSAs had more than 1 million inhabitants. Here's another measure of population concentration: As of 2000, MSAs comprised only about 16 percent of U.S. land, but more than 80 percent of people in the United States lived in them.

RURAL AND MICROPOLITAN AREAS

In 2000, most people in the United States—about 80.3 percent or 226 million people—lived in metropolitan areas. This percentage grew enormously over the decades of the twentieth century. It continues to grow, albeit at a much slower pace.

There are, however, other Americas: (1) nonmetropolitan, very sparsely settled rural areas and (2) micropolitan areas. In recent years, nonmetropolitan America has captured the imagination of radio and TV writers, giving us such creations as Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegon, Minnesota.

But in real life, nonmetropolitan America is dying out. For a period in the early 1970s, rural areas grew faster than metropolitan areas, but this *counterurbanization* (decreasing size, density, and heterogeneity) was short-lived. By 1990, "The American small town, which has long occupied a revered place in the nation's history and mythology, [was] becoming something of a museum piece" (Johnson, 1990:A10). From 1990 to 2000, one in four nonmetro counties in the United States lost population.

Why have rural places and small towns in the United States been losing population? The reason is not cultural: Norman Rockwell's sentimental picture of small-town America still seems to dominate the popular imagination, crowding out darker counterimages, such as Sherwood Anderson's grotesques of *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919); Sinclair Lewis's provincial, drab, small Midwestern *Main Street* (1920); and

David Lynch's hidden world of depravity beneath the blissful small-town exterior in the movie *Blue Velvet* (1986). Rather, the demise is primarily economic: "In an economic sense, a lot of these little places just aren't needed anymore" (Beale in Johnson, 1990:A10).

However, times change. In the twenty-first century, some small towns, as depicted by Hollywood, were either places to escape from, as in *Swing Vote* (2008), or the locus of extreme violence, as in the Oscar-winning film *No Country for Old Men* (2007).

Some U.S. rural communities, unlike the one depicted near the Rio Grande in *No Country for Old Men*, have been beset in recent decades by job losses from farming, mining, and manufacturing. They are trying to retain residents and attract new ones by developing their recreational appeal.

Typically, tourism works best in scenic areas. For one, Salmon, Idaho, is located on a fork of the Salmon River, "The River of No Return." The larger area features outdoor recreation including white-water rafting, hunting, and pack expeditions into the Bitterroot Mountains.

But tourism has not offset population loss throughout the United States. A few numbers show the population decline in rural America. At the mid-twentieth century, about 44 percent of the U.S. population lived in small towns and on farms. By 1990, this proportion had declined to less than 23 percent. By 2000, this proportion had declined to less than 21 percent. (This statistic hides one group's preference for rural places in the United States: Hispanics/Latinos [Kandel and Cromartie, 2004]. Since 1980, the *nonmetro* Hispanic/Latino population in the United States doubled. By 2000, Hispanics/Latinos were the most rapidly growing demographic group in U.S. rural areas and small towns.)

Still, the sentimental attachment remains. More Americans prefer to live in small towns than in any other place. The vast majority of people—over 80 percent by 2000—in the United States live in metro areas, but polls confirm the long-standing American antimetropolitan bias. For example, one poll asked respondents if they would rather live in a city, suburb, small town, or farm: Small towns were the top choice (See Appalachian Resource Center, n.d.).

As noted, the U.S. Census Bureau adopted Metropolitan Statistical Area as a category, designating 577 micro areas (as of December 2005); these included Brownsville, Texas; Bishop, California; and North Platte, Nebraska. Just as there is no "typical" metro area, there is no "typical" micro area. But residents of micropolitan and metropolitan areas do differ in significant ways. In general, metropolitan dwellers go to school longer and earn more money. Micro areas tend to be less racially and ethnically diverse.

WHERE ARE WE HEADED IN THE UNITED STATES?

Will new communications and transport technologies reverse the population decline in rural America, allowing people to telecommute or to commute via high-speed trains? Or, with seemingly ever-increasing energy prices, will most people in the United States soon be living in a handful of giant CMSAs with 10–50 million inhabitants? Which future is it—or are we headed in both directions?

We can't forecast the future with certainty. Even so, we have no rational choice but to try to anticipate it. Before looking ahead to alternative futures—ranging from a high-tech rural society and supercities to sky-bound cities—let us reexamine where we have been. This time we'll focus on major population shifts and the transformation of community life in the United States.

U.S. POPULATION SHIFTS

Looking backward, we see how rapidly the United States was transformed from a collection of farms and small towns into a metropolitan nation. A few numbers illustrate this shift.

FROM RURAL TO URBAN

In 1790, only 5.1 percent of the U.S. population lived in urban places. By 1850, this number had increased to only 15 percent. The year 1920 was a landmark. For the first time in U.S. history, more people lived in urban centers than in rural areas.

But urban growth in the United States was uneven—and remains so. Very large cities grew faster than smaller ones due to the centralization of industry and postindustrial services there. This pattern of centralization of people and industry meant that in 1970

45 percent of the nation's population lived on 15 percent of the land area in the continental 48 states. (This small core produced much more than its share of economic wealth and power: They generated 55 percent of the national income.) By 2000, over 80 percent of the population lived on 16 percent of the land.

FROM URBAN TO SUBURBAN AND POSTSUBURBAN

The year 1920 also marked the start of another long-standing trend: the movement away from central cities. Just as the United States became an urban nation in 1920, suburbs started growing at a faster rate than central cities. By 1970, more people lived around U.S. cities than within them.

This major population shift—from central city to outside central city—has various names: "suburbanization," "metropolitanization," and "urban sprawl." Whatever it is called, it happened quickly. In fact, the transformation of America from an urban to a suburban nation took place in only 50 years (1920–1970), much faster than the rural–urban shift.

By 1970, the United States was a metropolitan nation. The majority of people—140 million, or 70 percent—lived in metropolitan areas. More importantly, of this 140 million, the majority (76 million) lived outside central cities.

Out-migration from central city to outside central city began in the nineteenth century. Streetcars and railroads made suburban areas more accessible to the well-to-do and socially-prestigious groups.

Suburban development in the United States did not boom, however, until after World War II. Between 1950 and 1970, suburbs grew from 30 million to 76 million residents. As the "new" urban theorists remind us, this massive population shift was encouraged by a host of federal government programs, ranging from a \$2 billion-a-year highway construction program to Federal Housing Administration and Veterans Administration mortgage guarantees. Such federal support led to a suburban housing boom, permitting a mass exodus from central cities by white, middle-class, and some working-class, Americans.

Starting in the late 1960s, people in the United States moved to a new kind of outside central city location: "technoburb," "edge city," or "postsuburbia." Whatever it's called, it is neither a traditional

city nor a suburb. As detailed in Chapter 8, this form is a culturally diverse, economically viable, multi-centered region (such as Orange County, California) that reflects various societal trends in production and consumption.

BACK TO THE LAND?

For a brief moment over a generation ago, many rural places in the United States once regarded as "nowhere" became "somewhere." Entirely rural counties (not adjacent to metropolitan areas and having no urban places) were the fastest-growing areas. But this reversal of the long-term trend toward metropolitanization was short-lived.

Why did this U.S. "rural renaissance" happen? Theorists disagree, but among the factors often mentioned are deconcentration (due particularly to improvements in communications technologies) and the spread of retirement communities.

In the near future, another rural renaissance—based primarily on high-speed communications—might take hold, bringing numerous people, particularly professionals in hi-tech fields and people who wish to grow their own food. Some urban refugees—called "location-neutrals"—have already made the transition, including a former Chicago lawyer who runs his business from a small, bucolic town in the Rockies. Indeed, small, recreational towns (e.g., Jackson, Wyoming; Steamboat Springs, Colorado) may experience "virtual suburbanization" (Schechter, in Leland, 2007).

In many places, technology is enabling people to live and work wherever they want. Some in the U.S. are clustering in "resort playgrounds" like Steamboat Springs, Colorado (pop. 9,315) that have natural amenities, good weather—and, now, lots of people like themselves (Leland, 2007). Indeed, from 2000 to 2006, those 297 counties that ranked highest in natural amenities (e.g., beautiful scenery) by the U.S. Department of Agriculture grew at 10 times the rate for the 1,090 rural counties with below-average amenities (in Leland, 2007).

FROM FROSTBELT TO SUNBELT

Another important population shift in the United States, starting about 1950, concerns interregional

migration. Popularly, this is called the move from Frostbelt to Sunbelt. Some call it the shift from *Rustbelt* (symbolizing the deindustrialization that transformed many northern factories into rusted-out plants) to *Gunbelt* (symbolizing the postwar growth of defense-related centers in the South and West).

Before 1950, people moved from economically-depressed southern states to northern industrial cities. In the 1950s, this pattern was reversed; population began flowing to the South and the West. By 1990, the majority of people in the United States lived in the South and West.

The Sunbelt (the broad band of southern states from Florida to southern California) led U.S. population growth between 1950 and 1970. A sunnier climate had some impact, but more important were jobs and economic expansion. Gigantic post-World War II industries spread throughout the Sunbelt. Leading the list of new or expanded Sunbelt industries were oil and gas extraction, electronics, agribusiness, aerospace, and defense-related production. (After World War II, the federal government spent billions of dollars to provide infrastructure to the Sunbelt and to support the newly established defense-related industries there.)

Note, however, that the Snowbelt-Frostbelt distinction may not be as useful as once thought. Indeed, over a generation ago, Noyelle and Stanback (1984:222) indicated that the economic transformation of most U.S. cities is a complicated process in which many Snowbelt cities held their own. Further, they noted, many key economic resources (e.g., finance) didn't flow to the Sunbelt. They were right: A generation later, New York City—a Snowbelt city—remains a headquarters city, and Los Angeles is the only Sunbelt city with that distinction in the United States.

Still, it is noteworthy that people in the United States keep moving to the Sunbelt. From summer 2006 to summer 2007, the Sunbelt was home to the fastest-growing areas in the United States. However, a year later, some Sunbelt states led the nation in terms of percentage of homes foreclosed. Will those foreclosed-upon stay put or move to less sunny climes where housing may be more affordable? Again, stay tuned!

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INTERPRETING THE POPULATION TRENDS

What do all these U.S. internal migrations—from Frostbelt to Sunbelt, urban to suburban to postsuburban, metropolitan, and supermetropolitan—add up to? The picture is muddy. In the decade 1990–2000, nine of the 10 fastest-growing metro areas were located in the Sunbelt. But, as a former director of the U.S. Bureau of the Census said decades ago, “Population shifts can be shifty... Not all the sunshine is in the sunbelt” (Keane, 1985:6).

Indeed, one state whose population grew enormously in the 1990–2000 decade was not in the Sunbelt: Alaska (up 14 percent). However, Nevada, often considered part of the Sunbelt, topped the nation’s growth with a 66 percent population increase. (What a difference a near-decade can make: With job losses and unemployment, by 2008, the state of Nevada—for the twenty-third straight month—had the highest rate in the United States of home foreclosures: one in 76 households, more than six times the national average. How this will translate to population loss remains murky.)

Several other population trends are noteworthy:

1. *More footloose Americans.* Mainly elderly and extremely elderly retirees (age 85 and up, whose numbers have nearly tripled in recent decades), the footloose can take their pensions, Social Security, and other nonwage income to the Florida sun, the Oregon seaside, a Mexican village, or the daughter’s spare room; they don’t need to consider job opportunities when moving.
2. *More immigrants.* In past decades, millions of immigrants from Mexico, the Caribbean, and Asia settled in southwestern MSAs and in non-metro areas. This trend signals a shift with vast political, social, and economic implications. For one, the U.S. Census Bureau predicts that by 2020 people of Latino/Hispanic descent will remain the largest U.S. “minority” (guesstimated at 15.7 percent in 2020).
3. *More supermetropolitanization.* By 1990, for the first time in U.S. history, a majority of people (50.2 percent) lived in CMSAs. In 2000, the New York metropolitan area remained the

nation’s biggest (over 21 million people) and the Los Angeles CMSA, with a population over 16.3 million, held the “second city” title.

4. *Coastalism.* During the 1990–2000 decade, California grew 13.8 percent to nearly 34 million. By 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau expects California to be the biggest population gainer, increasing to 47.9 million people.
5. *Continued suburbanization (perhaps).* Although the trend toward suburbanization has remained constant since 1920, it may be slowed or even reversed. The near future may depend on the price of gas (and thus commuting-by-car costs) and other economic factors. There has been another recent twist: increased poverty in the suburbs. Indeed, in 2005, for the first time in U.S. history, the number of poor was higher in many suburbs than in the large central cities which they ringed.

One prediction that outdid itself: By 2005, the number of telecommuters in the United States had been expected to triple, to about 15 million people. It did that—and more: By 2006, the number reached 28.7 million (Management-Issues Ltd., 2007).

In the future, more are expected to work at home or in small neighborhood satellite offices. Since the first telecommute center was set up near Honolulu in 1989, the concept has spread to many metro areas, including Vienna, Austria. Globally, this trend will probably spur further deconcentration of population, particularly around edge cities in rich nations. Yet, this may depend in large measure on the availability of public transport and the price of gas.

ANOTHER LOOK

Industrialization, urbanization, and capitalism transformed western European and U.S. cities, changing the nature of urban space, work, and human relationships. Decades later, new communications technologies and the restructuring of the world economy once again are transforming metropolitan life. Bigness (supermetropolitanization) and sprawl (continuing population deconcentration out from the urban core) reflect these technological and organizational innovations.

Growth patterns such as bigness and deconcentration may be neither inevitable nor desirable. Land-use patterns reflect human decisions and cultural values. For instance, whether or not they can afford it, people in the United States tend to see the single-family home in a low-density suburb as ideal for children's growth. (To the contrary, the French tend to idealize big-city apartment life as healthy for their children's development.) Further, suburbanites tend to see an expansive green lawn as a symbol of healthy living, while urban critics see it as an ecological outrage as well as a waste of time and energy.

Most people in the United States now live in metropolitan areas but outside central cities. Did they move to the suburbs in a vain quest for community? Do particular neighborhoods (or ZIP-code clusters) in cities and suburbs represent *Gemeinschaft*-like communities? Are so-called edge cities, technoburbs, or postsuburbs new types of communities, typical of *Techno\$chaft*? We turn to such questions in Chapter 8.

KEY TERMS

- Census tract** A small subdivision of a U.S. city within an MSA, devised by the U.S. Census Bureau to help tabulate and analyze census data. Generally, census tracts have 1,500–8,000 people. Optimum size is 4,000 people.
- Central city** In the United States, the population center of an MSA, containing at least 50,000 people (or twin cities with a combined population of at least 50,000). This is not to be confused with the popular terms *center city* or *inner city*.
- Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA)** U.S. Census Bureau term used to refer to regions comprising more than one MSA that are closely related socially and economically. A CMSA always includes two or more contiguous MSAs that meet specific criteria of size, urban character, integration, and contiguity of urbanized areas. One of the constituent MSAs must have a population of at least 1 million people, and at least 75 percent of the population of each MSA must be classified as urban.
- Core-Based Statistical Area (CBSA)** A U.S. Census Bureau term, as of 2000, referring collectively to metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas.
- Each CBSA must contain at least one urban area of 10,000 or more population.
- Counterurbanization** In an urbanized society, the process whereby the proportion of nonmetropolitan residents increases relative to the proportion of metropolitan residents and cities become less dense, less heterogeneous, and smaller.
- Deindustrialization** The process of job shifting in the economy from manufacturing to services/information and the accompanying "outsourcing" of manufacturing jobs to other, lower-wage countries. In the United States, the general process has resulted in the demise of high-wage manufacturing jobs in older industrial cities like Detroit, Michigan, and Youngstown, Ohio, and the creation of lower-wage service jobs.
- Megalopolis** Term for a supermetropolitan area (Greek: *mega* = big) or CMSA, an urban complex with at least 1 million in population.
- Metropolis** A big city that dominates the surrounding area economically, socially, and culturally. From the Greek, meaning "mother city."
- Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, a contiguous territorial unit economically and socially integrated around a U.S. central city or twin cities containing at least 50,000 people. The entire county in which the central city is located is always included in the MSA. (In New England, cities and towns are used instead of counties.)
- Micropolitan Statistical Area** Since 2003, a U.S. census term. A U.S. micro area is defined as an urban area containing an urban core city or town of at least 10,000 (but less than 50,000) population. Like the MSA, it is a geostatistical measure. (As originally defined by G. Scott Thomas in the late 1980s, it was a single county with at least 40,000 residents, including the population of the core city, which has at least 15,000 residents, or any independent city with at least 15,000 residents.) As of 2005, using the new definition, the U.S. Census Bureau identified 577 Micropolitan Statistical Areas in the United States and five in Puerto Rico.
- Outside central city** Every place in the MSA minus the central city.

Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA) A major component of a Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA). A county or group of counties recognized as a separate MSA or any additional county or counties recognized by local opinion if it meets certain population and commuting criteria. There are four levels of PMSA, according to total population: level A, MSAs of 1 million or more; level B, MSAs of 250,000 to 1 million; level C, MSAs of 100,000–250,000; level D, MSAs of less than 100,000.

PROJECTS

1. **Metropolitan areas** Using U.S. census data, look at the changes over time in your own or a nearby MSA. Did the population grow or decline since 1950? Did the number of counties in the MSA remain the same? In 1960 and 2000, what percentages lived in the central city and outside central city? What factors account for the demographic changes (or lack of change)?

2. **CMSAs** In the 1980s, 90 percent of U.S. population growth happened in metropolitan areas of more than 1 million people. Why? Show via a chart if this trend is continuing or not.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER LEARNING

U.S. community life is a continuing, lively subject in both the arts and social sciences. Over the years, the popular arts have presented contrasting visions of neighborhood and small community. On one end of the spectrum lies the 2007 Oscar-winning film *No Country for Old Men* (based on a novel by Cormac McCarthy), which shows a rural West Texas town as the setting for individual greed and morally bankrupt or compromised individuals. Wisteria Lane, the site of TV's globally popular *Desperate Housewives* (ABC, 2004–), is fraught with suspicion and juicy gossip—with caring and neighborliness thrown in. Emmy-winning TV show *Everybody Loves Raymond* (CBS, 1996–2005 and in syndication), set in a village on Long Island, is a sitcom built on the theme of family. Featured are an Italian American sportswriter and his family, with its share of obnoxious members who care about one another just the same. The

show is nostalgic but adds the twist of unappreciated family members living nearby, which recalls Margaret Mead's putdown of "community." Popular culture works that emphasized positive attributes of neighborhood and community within modern society were more the norm a generation ago in the United States than now.

For a strong argument that the small town in America is not the polar opposite of urban society but instead is permeated by the culture and politics of mass society, see Arthur J. Vidich and Joseph Bensman, *Small Town in Mass Society* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, [1958] 1968).

Studies of *Gemeinschaft*-like communities within urban-industrial or industrializing societies include Charles Nordhoff's observations of utopian communities in nineteenth-century America, *The Communistic Societies of the United States* (New York: Dover, [1875] 1966). Of special note is Jacquelyn Dowd Hall et al., *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (New York: Norton, 1987); interviewees use the imagery of family to describe their own social relationships in a mill village.

William H. Whyte depicts what he views as the loss of individualism to corporate values, both in managerial work and in home life, in Park Forest, Illinois (and by extension other suburbs), after World War II. See *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956).

Can new communities be constructed with democratic decision-making structures, ecological awareness, and communitarian social relations? Some think so. In *We Build the Road as We Travel* (Santa Cruz, Calif.: New Society, 1991), Roy Morrison tells the story of the Mondragon cooperatives in the Basque region of Spain. Started by a parish priest and a few students in the early 1950s, the network has grown to employ some 21,000 people. They have developed their own nongovernmental social welfare and educational systems, as well as businesses.

In the United States, Rancho Linda Vista, 35 miles north of Tucson, Arizona, is a communally-owned, close-knit community. Founded in 1968, it remains dedicated to providing its members with an environment organized around promoting artistic purposes. What has held it together for all these years?

"Art," says one resident painter. (For information about the community, see: <http://interstice.us/rivweb/index.htm>)

Connecting via the Internet with others who have the same name may or may not promote community. But it is the subject of at least one book, *Finding Angela Shelton* (Toronto: Meredith Books, 2008), by filmmaker/actress Angela Shelton. She describes her getting together with 40 other Angela Sheltons, the majority of whom (like herself) suffered abusive family relationships.

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