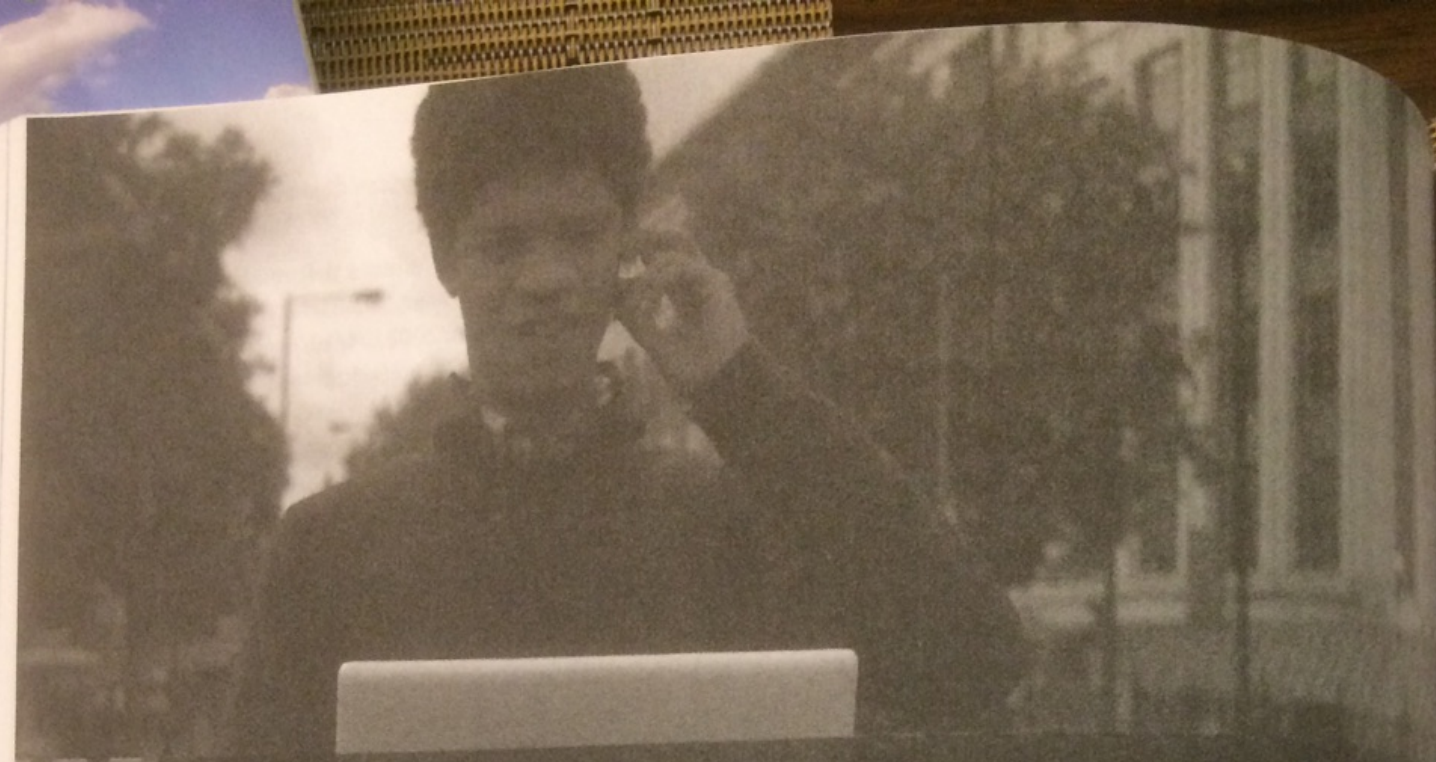


Gesche Würfel

CHAPTER 8
MAKING CONNECTIONS

SEARCHING FOR COMMUNITY, OR NEW HOUSES?

Millions of people in the United States voted with their cars between 1950 and 1970. They moved from the urban core to the suburbs. By 1970 more Americans lived around cities than within them.

SUBURBANIZATION: AN ALMOST WORLDWIDE PHENOMENON

From Marin County, California, to the rings around Vienna, Austria, many are now rethinking their suburban lifestyles. This is particularly so if their work is far from home, they use high-priced gas to get there, and worry over carbon emissions as an element in climate change.

However, in the 1950s, gas in the United States was relatively cheap, climate change was not a concern, and millions moved to U.S. suburbs. And they were far from alone: Suburbanization occurred in metro areas worldwide (Mills and Tan, 1980).

Note: Typically, "suburbs" around cities that grew up before industrialization (e.g., Paris, Lima) do not fit the U.S. stereotype. Indeed, *globally, many areas outside the central city are the opposite of what are called suburbs in the United States*: squatter settlements, slums,

or poverty-stricken zones with substandard housing and extremely crowded conditions. (The stereotype of "suburbia" may be changing in the United States too. As noted in this chapter and elsewhere, the poverty rate is often higher in the inner suburbs than in their nearby central cities.)

The population shift from city to suburb proceeded more quickly in the United States than in most other nations. One major exception is Canada. Canada became a suburban nation by 1960 (Harris, 2004). Vancouver, British Columbia, for instance, experienced rapid suburban growth from 1900 to 1930.

Since the 1980s, suburbanization has proceeded apace in many nations, fueled by personal preferences. In Estonia, as in many countries of the former Soviet Union (but not those of East Central Europe), the major population movement has been to suburbs; the more highly educated and those with families have been the most likely to move there (Kontuly and Tammaru, 2006).

Turkey's suburbanization is following another path. It began in the 1980s as upper-class professionals voted with their cars and began acquiring "villas" in gated communities outside of cities, such as Kemer Country, a resort village outside Istanbul.

Suburbanization can also result from government policy, as in Shanghai, China. City officials in Shanghai, a city with one of the densest urban cores in the world, plan to move 5.4 million residents out of older, low-rise buildings in the core and relocate them to nine new satellite suburbs and 60 new small towns with populations of about 50,000 each (Peralta, 2006).

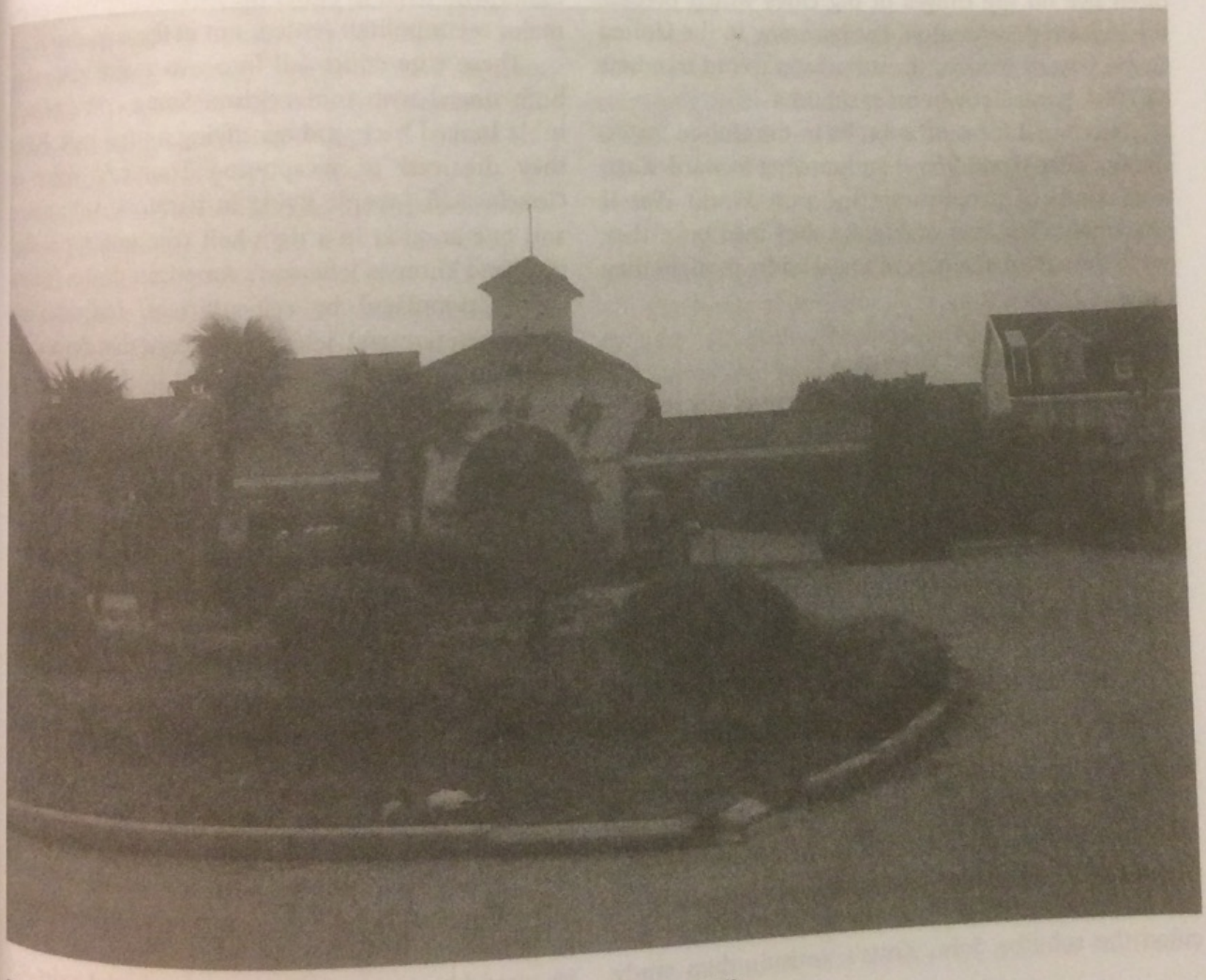


Fig. 8.2 GATED COMMUNITY IN SUBURBAN SHANGHAI. (John Randall)

Why did suburbanization occur very quickly in Canada but more slowly in Europe and Japan? Some (e.g., Montgomery, 2003:81) say that auto-love and suburbanization go together with national prosperity. Others say culture plays a role: personal preferences to live in single-family homes with space rather than high-density, city settlements. And some point to government strategies as a key factor: prosuburban policies, such as the building of highways to make commuting easier, or antisuburban public policies, such as higher taxes past city limits.

Why did suburbanization *not* happen in much of Latin America? Some say that land limits and transport deficiencies inhibited the suburbanization of high-income people.

Suburbanites were not—and are not—all the same. As noted, historically (and even now), the poor often live on the fringes of big cities which predate the Industrial Revolution. Furthermore, in the United States, poverty reached the suburbs in record numbers by 2005, particularly in inner suburbs.

Here, we'll focus on suburbs in the United States, starting after World War II and moving forward. First, what kinds of people were the post–World War II migrants? What kind of life did they lead once they got to the suburbs? A host of social critics thought they knew.

DIATRIBES AGAINST "SUBURBIA"

Shortly after the mass exodus from central city to suburb began after World War II, U.S. social critics looked at "**suburbia**," and here is what they saw:

> Boring couples with small children, spending Saturday picking crabgrass out of their lawns.
> Ugly, poorly planned tract developments called "Merry Meadows" or "Happy Acres," high-sounding names that masked cheap construction and dull lives.
> A land of joiners and conformists.

That was the stereotype of the U.S. suburb: a vast wasteland. This negative image dominated novels and even so-called empirical studies in the 1950s.

With little evidence but much venom, most of the supposed social science studies in the 1950s crucified the suburbs. John Keats's antisuburban study *The Crack in the Picture Window* (1956) is exemplary. According to Keats, John and Mary Drone decorate their shoddily-built, look-alike tract home in Rolling Knolls with plastic reproductions of high art. Further, the Drones live in a "jerry-built, homogeneous, post-war hell that destroys individualism" (61).

To Keats and numerous other critics, suburbia was the American nightmare, not the American dream. It symbolized middle-class mediocrity, spiritual malaise, and materialism.

Who were these critics who painted such a devastating picture of suburban life? Why did they attack with such venom? It is significant that the negative suburban image was the work of a small segment of people in the United States: urbane, upper-class, white intellectuals. Overwhelmingly, the critics were well-educated white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant (WASP) males who lived in either the rural countryside or the major metropolitan centers, not in the suburbs.

These elite critics fell into two major categories, both tinged with romanticism. Some critics of suburbia looked backward, glorifying a rural past. Either they dreamed of recapturing Tönnies's vision of *Gemeinschaft* (people living in harmony with nature and one another in a tight-knit community) or they idealized Thomas Jefferson's American dream (a rural nation populated by self-sufficient, individualistic gentlemen farmers). Jefferson thought that democratic traditions needed to be nourished in the soil of yeoman farmers' fields.

Jefferson's ideal underlies the most influential attack on suburbia of the era, William H. Whyte's best-seller *The Organization Man* (1956). Whyte's analysis "The New Suburbia: Organization Man at Home" is one of the few empirically grounded studies of the 1950s, and his treatment of suburban Park Forest, Illinois, is more even-handed than other critics' anti-suburban tracts. Yet, on balance, Whyte concludes that the group tyrannizes the individual: "group immersion" equals "imprison[ment] in brotherhood" (404). Whyte's verdict: The price of a tight-knit community is tyranny of the individual, a price too high to pay.

Whyte looked back to self-sufficient communities. Other critics of suburbia looked forward to an imagined urban future. In this romantic vision, cities would be centers of high culture, social order, and

true sophistication. (Contemporary cities, these critics bemoaned, were disorderly and barbaric.)

To both kinds of romantics—the traditionalists and the futurists—suburbia was a dismal failure. Neither countryside nor city, the suburbs seemed to combine the worst features of both.

This antisuburban literature has a familiar ring, for the same themes run throughout U.S. intellectual history. Indeed, the antisuburban diatribes of the 1950s echo the antiurban harangues of earlier times. In both cases, members of the traditional WASP elite led the attack. They seem to have been reacting to an alien presence in their midst that threatened their most cherished dreams for their nation.

Comparing the antisuburban diatribes to the antiurban attacks of the 1880s, we can see what fears these social critics shared. In the late nineteenth century, upper-crust, educated WASPs worried that the immigrant "mobs" would destroy "their" cities and U.S. high culture. Such literary figures as novelist Henry James did not hide their disdain for the lower-class ethnics streaming into New York City. To James, they represented the first stage of "alienism."

Patrician James also criticized the newly rich business tycoons, whom he called the "vulgar rich," for their bourgeois values. (Today, some refer with disdain to such folks as "nouveaux riches," a category that typically includes newly rich people of all sorts, not just business tycoons.) James especially disliked tycoons who made their fortunes in U.S. cities and then deserted them for the "non-descript excrescences" of fashionable suburbs.

Henry James was a patrician or "blue blood." The United States did not have an aristocracy, but James no doubt considered himself aristocratic and feared the spread of two alien traditions: (1) mass culture and (2) bourgeois values.

Similarly, Whyte and other antisuburban critics in the 1950s found fault with mass culture and bourgeois values, this time symbolized by a new mass migration: the move to the suburbs. But this time the "aliens" weren't lower-class ethnics; they were members of the white, new middle class of corporate America.

To conclude: Lurking behind the 1950s critique of suburbia is the specter of George Orwell's nightmare world of *1984* (see Orwell, 1949). There, mass-produced people live in authoritarian mass society. Critics like Keats and Whyte feared that mass society, symbolized by suburbia, would destroy individualism. (There is a certain irony here, for according to Durkheim, Tönnies, and others in the typological tradition, individualism can flourish *only* in urban-industrial society.) These fears were fueled by the cold war vision of the then Soviet Union, depicted—like suburbia in the United States—as the quintessence of conformity.

THE MYTH OF SUBURBIA

When the dust started settling on the newly paved roads of tract homes, social scientists began to paint a more complex portrait of suburban life. Post-1950s studies show that life beyond the city limits is hardly a wasteland of drab conformity and dreary, look-alike lives.

By the 1960s, researchers dropped the label "suburbia." It was, they inferred, a myth. Suburbs do not look alike, nor do their inhabitants share a lifestyle. Instead of homogeneity, the 1960s studies revealed a variety of suburban types: from enormously wealthy to middle income and dirt poor, Democratic and Republican, and from high- to low-density communities. Some urbanists (e.g., Schnore, 1963) distinguished suburbs on the basis of function: (1) residential bedroom suburbs, (2) industrial-manufacturing suburbs, and (3) mixed residential–industrial suburbs. Whatever their function, few fit the 1950s stereotype of suburbia. Take, for example, Levittown.

LEVITTOWN

Constructed by a single developer in the late 1950s, Levittown, New Jersey, is a bedroom suburb outside Philadelphia. (Residents later changed its name back to "Willingboro.") From the outside, it could have served as a model for Keats's dread "Rolling Knolls," home of the Drones. But from the inside, as Herbert Gans's monumental study *The Levittowners* (1967) documents, this then mainly working-class and lower middle-class suburb did not fit the stereotype of suburbia.

Sociologist Gans lived in Levittown during its first years, gathering data as a participant-observer on the new suburb's way of life and politics. He found

that the generally young residents were not marked by crushing conformity and homogeneity. He also found, among other things, that "by any yardstick one chooses, Levittowners treated their fellow residents more ethically and democratically than did their parents and grandparents. They also lived a 'fuller' and 'richer' life" (1967:419).

Gans noted that most Levittowners were neither rich nor poor. The middle-income population was a result of the developers' key decision: to build houses in the $12,000–$15,000 price range (in 1950s dollars). In essence, this one decision by the builders (William J. Levitt, his father, and his brother) determined who lived there and what kinds of groups developed in the new community.

Note: When various Levittowns were built in the late 1940s and early 1950s, racial discrimination was legal in the United States. At that time, Levitt refused to sell to African Americans because he feared losing potential white home buyers. He told the *Saturday Evening Post* in the mid-1950s that "as a company, our position is simply this: we can solve a housing problem or we can try to solve a racial problem. But we cannot combine the two." In 1954, he said that "As a Jew, I have no room in my mind or heart for racial prejudice." But, he added, "if we sell one house to a Negro family, then 90 to 95 percent of our white customers will not buy into the community. That is their attitude, not ours" (in Blackwell, n.d.).

Among white residents, there was a limited range of occupations, mainly in the technical and service areas. But people did come from various white ethnic backgrounds. And, after a court order and some original homeowners reselling houses to them, some African Americans.

Most Levittowners saw their homes as the center of their lives. But, Gans noted, they were much more "in the world" and less parochial than their ethnic or WASP grandparents or parents.

According to Gans, there was little evidence in Levittown of what Whyte and others so feared: tyranny of the majority over the individual. Levittown neighbors did apply peer pressure to conform in minor ways (say, to keep the front lawn trimmed), but this did not lead to sameness of thought and action.

In general, Gans (1967:417–420) found that the young Levittowners did *not* resemble Whyte's and Keats's suburbanites. They were neither fearsome "apathetic conformists" nor frightful "organization men." Nor did they resemble the residents of upper-class, prestigious suburbs.

To conclude: Was Levittown a community? No. According to Gans, it was neither an economic unit (where members depend upon one another for their livelihood) nor a social unit nor a symbolic unit (for the sense of community was weak (1967: Chapter 7).

Then what was it? In Gans's view, Levittown was only a loose network of groups and institutions. Mainly, it was an administrative-political unit (with many community-wide associations). Levittowners, Gans concluded, did not come to find a sense of community; they came to carry on old ways of life in new houses (149). They were trying to re-create old life styles and institutions—but on new soil. Sociologist and planner Gans decided that social planners shouldn't waste their time trying to recreate something that never existed in the first place: the cohesive community.

Updates to Gans's classic study: (1) After the "whites-only" policy was declared illegal, Willingboro (Levittown) became split almost evenly between black and white. Ironically, real estate agents, who had earlier told prospective white home buyers that the suburb was "homogeneous" (read "all white"), then touted Willingboro's peaceful diversity as a selling point. (2) By 2007, the company that built Levittown was in bankruptcy.

Gans's study of Levittown—plus other early social science studies of more affluent suburbs such as Princeton, New Jersey (Sternlieb et al., 1971), and poor suburbs like East St. Louis (Bollens, 1961)—suggest that *suburbanism is no more a single way of life than is urbanism*. Years ago, these scholars found that communities on the city's rim shared a label—"suburb"—but not one way of life.

In the United States, this conclusion still holds today, perhaps even more so. By 2005, many inner suburbs of large cities had poverty rates higher than areas inside those cities. Further, some suburbs featured cultural palaces, media outlets, and an array of ethnic restaurants as well as locally-based jobs (see Figure. 8.3).

In other words, unlike Gertrude Stein's proverbial rose, a suburb is not a suburb is not a suburb. And

moving beyond Stein's rose, a suburb may no longer be sub-anything.

But the negative reputation of the U.S. suburb dies hard. James Howard Kunstler (1994) wrote that suburbs were *The Geography of Nowhere*, and Bonnie Stern Kahn compared suburbs, unfavorably, to the cosmopolitan culture of cities (1987:107).

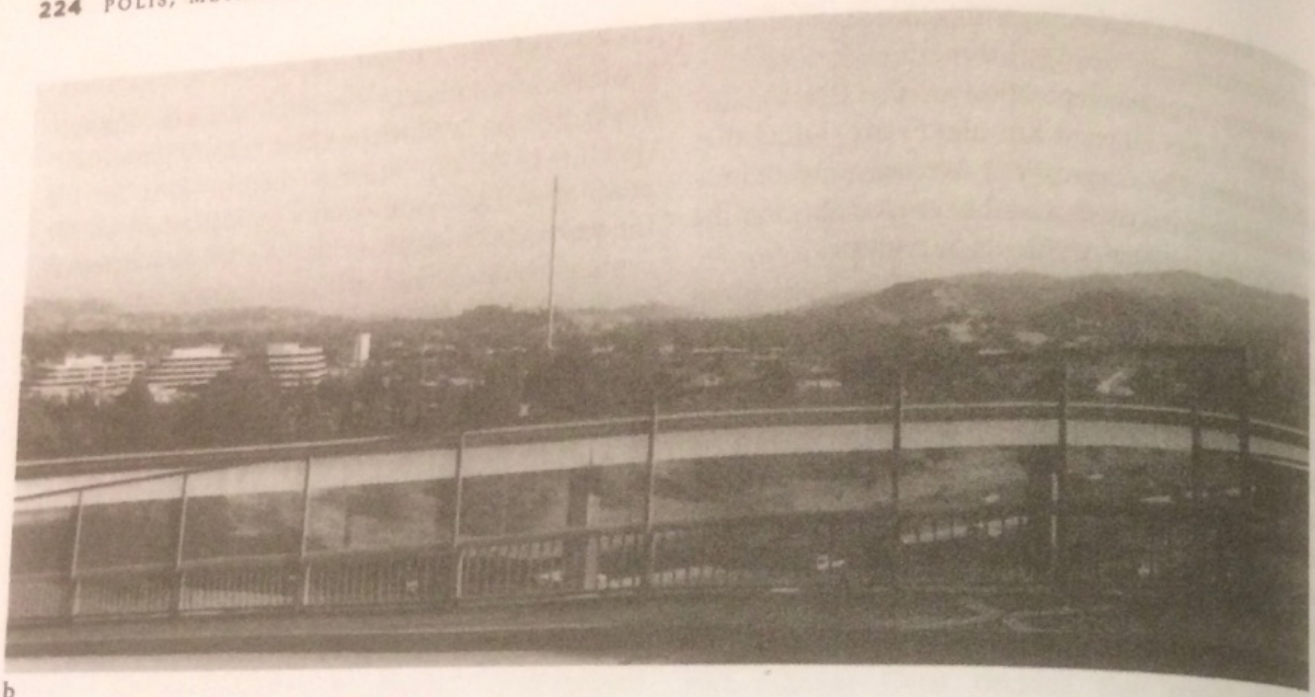
In other nations, critics continue to lambast contemporary suburbs. Australian architect–trained journalist Elizabeth Farrelly, for one, writes about what she calls *Blubberland* (2008). There, in her view, bloated, bored, and miserable residents suffer from "affluenza." To Farrelly, Blubberland is not only a place but a state of mind where people live in McMansions or gated communities and leave a destructive eco-footprint.

TAKING THE *SUB* OUT OF SUBURBAN

Suburbs, as historian Lewis Mumford stated long ago, originally were "a collective effort to live a private life" ([1938] 1970:215). Modern suburbs—first on the outskirts of eighteenth-century London, then on the fringes of U.S. industrial cities in the late nineteenth century—housed the rich and powerful. Indeed, these strictly segregated (by class and function) bedroom suburbs of substantial houses on tree-lined lots have been called "bourgeois utopias," blending ideas of "property, union with nature, and family life" (Fishman, 1989:15).

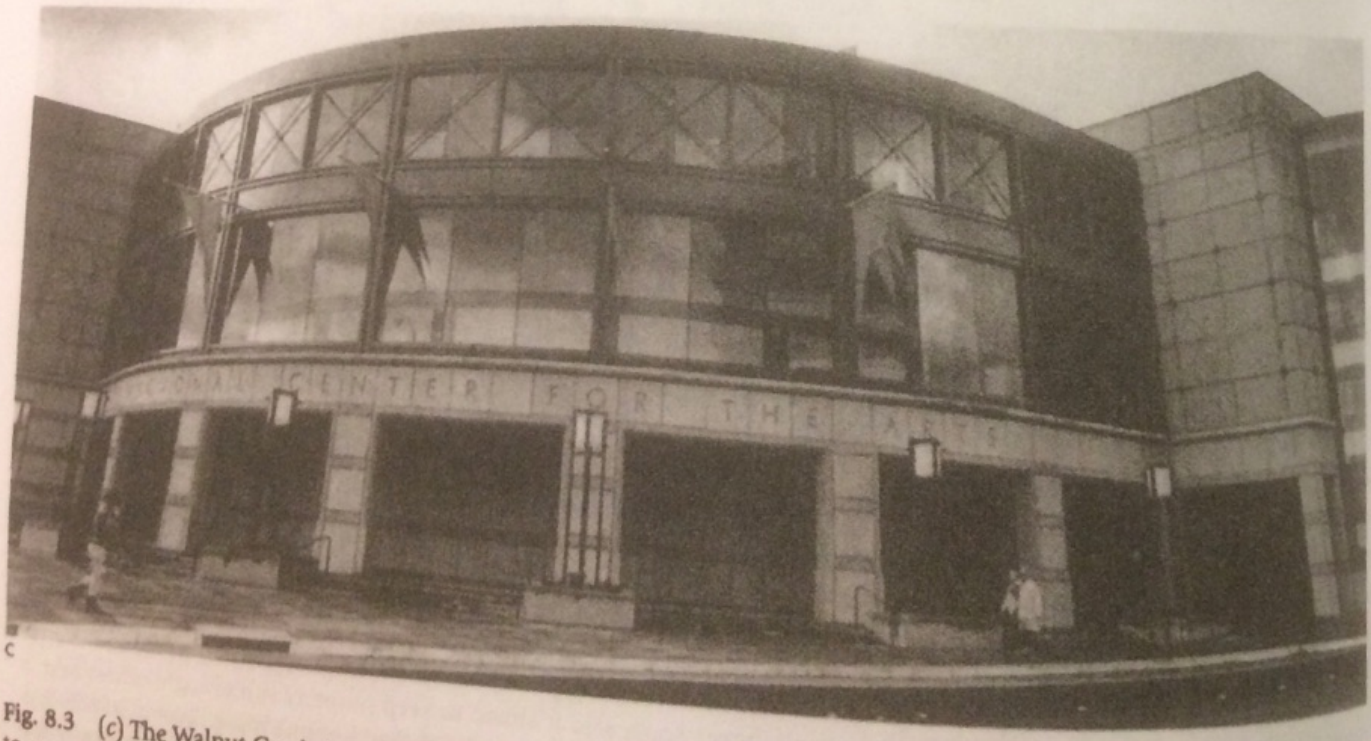
However, by the twentieth century, the dream of a suburban life reached beyond the elites. Los Angeles—"Autopia," as architectural historian Reyner Banham ([1971] 1976:chapter 11) called it—best represents

Fig. 8.3 FROM SUBURBIA TO CYBERBIA, A PHOTO ESSAY.
[a] In the 1950s, Dublin, California, had a population of 1,000 ("most of them cows") plus "15 gas stations, six supermarkets, two department stores and a K-Mart." By 1973, when Bill Owens profiled Dublin in *Suburbia* (1973, reissued and revised in 1995, New York: Fotofolio), the San Francisco suburb was a fast-growing, lower middle– and middle-income community. By 1990, it had grown to over 23,000 people. (And had passed an "anti-ugly" ordinance, prohibiting peeling paint and drying clothes outside, among other things. Why such an ordinance? Some said it aimed to keep property values high; others said it aimed to beautify the community.) By 2000, its population, numbering almost 30,000, had become more diverse; it included 13.5 percent Latinos, 10.1 percent African Americans, and 10.4 percent Asian Americans. (Dublin is still famous locally for its annual St. Patrick's Day Parade.) By 2000, residents' median household incomes soared to $77,283, much above the U.S. household median income ($49,995). Nielsen Claritas described it in 2006 as a SER 12 "Brite Lites, Lil City" community (see Box 8.1 in this chapter). According to Joel Garreau (1991:436), Dublin, together with three East Bay cities on the Interstate-680 corridor, constitute an edge city. Others call it "postsuburbia" or "cyberbia." (Bill Owens)



b

Fig. 8.3 (*b*) Few walnuts remain in Walnut Creek, California (2000 population 64,296), now a postsuburban development or edge city. It is located only a few miles from Dublin on the I-680 corridor and about 1 hour from San Francisco by Bay Area Rapid Transit. Its downtown, seen here in the distance, features both big department stores and upscale boutiques. (Deborah Mosca)



c

Fig. 8.3 (*c*) The Walnut Creek Arts Center, festooned with flags. According to Joel Garreau (1991: 443), flags are often added to overcome sterility and to suggest "animated space" in edge cities. (Victoria Sheridan)

d

Fig. 8.3 (*d*) Residents of edge cities often feel quite separate socially and politically from nearby central cities. This is what Larry, an edge city resident, says: "About twice a year we get to San Francisco. We live here [in Walnut Creek], go out to the movies and restaurants here. We shop here, and we go to the doctor and vet here." (Deborah Mosca)

the fulfillment of the U.S. dream: money, speed, freedom, mobility, and a single-family suburban home. (*Note:* Most often, this is called the "American dream" as if the United States constituted North, Central, and South America.)

Los Angeles, the quintessential suburban metropolis of the twentieth century, is a 70-square-mile area of "limitless horizontality" (Baudrillard, [1986] 1989:52). It is bound by a network of freeways and "shaped by the promise of a suburban home for all" (Fishman, 1987:15).

This metropolitan form, developed in the 1920s and 1930s, features a complex mix of urban, suburban, and rural spaces. Its basic unit is the decentralized suburb, or what we could call the "California Dreaming" utopia (my term)—in contrast to the "bourgeois" utopia (Fishman's term). In the California Dreaming utopia, offices, shopping, services, and industries, formerly concentrated in the industrial city's core, are dispersed throughout the suburban area.

By 1945, its suburbs were no longer satellites of Los Angeles. Instead, the suburb had become the heartland of the fastest-growing elements of the late twentieth-century economy.

The image of the suburb as a borderland—a privileged zone between city and country—became superseded by what some call a "posturban era," where hi-tech research centers sit in former farm fields and abandoned factory sites in the core are surrounded by growing grass.

Sociologist Fishman wondered, "As both core and periphery are swallowed up in seemingly endless multicentered regions, where can one find suburbia?" He answered his own rhetorical question as follows: The movement of houses, industry, and commerce to the outskirts has created

> perimeter cities that are functionally independent of the urban core. In complete contrast to the residential or industrial suburbs of the past, these new cities contain along their superhighways all the specialized

> functions of a great metropolis—industry, shopping malls, hospitals, universities, cultural centers, and parks. With its highways and advanced communications technology, the new perimeter city can generate urban diversity without urban concentration. *(1987:17)*

The basis of this new city, Fishman wrote, is "the invisible web of advanced technology and telecommunications that has been substituted for the face-to-face contact and physical movement of older cities" (17).

To distinguish this new peripheral city from dependent, suburban bedroom communities, Fishman dubbed it a **technoburb**. Others call this new city or zone **postsuburbia**, a form organized spatially around many distinct, specialized centers (Kling et al., 1991) or an **edge city** (Garreau, 1991), which has 5 million square feet or more of leasable office space (the workplace of *Techno$chaft*) and 600,000 square feet or more of leasable retail space, has more jobs than bedrooms, is seen by locals as one place, and was a bedroom community or cow pasture as recently as the early 1960s. Lastly, this relatively new type of settlement is also called **cyberbia**, a science fiction–sounding term that evokes an image of people connected by high-tech electronic communications.

Whatever it's called—perimeter city, technoburb, postsuburbia, edge city, or cyberbia—it has become the center of most people's lives in the United States, replacing traditional categories of urban, rural, and suburban areas. Driving time, not space, determines its fluid boundaries: how long it takes to reach work, shopping, college, and so on by car conveniently.

ENERGY COSTS AND SUBURBS

Although much maligned—notably as unsuited to family patterns and needs (e.g., single moms who commute to faraway workplaces), as eco-unfriendly and energy-inefficient, and/or as designed mainly by traffic engineers—car-based suburbs are not disappearing in the United States or elsewhere.

At least not yet. High energy prices, some think, may fuel a suburban demise. For one, planning professor and real estate developer Christopher B. Leinberger predicted in 2008 that "today the pendulum is swinging back toward urban living, and there are many reasons to believe this swing will continue." If it does, the consequences will be considerable. "many low-density suburbs and McMansion subdivisions, including some that are lovely and affluent today, may become what inner cities became in the 1960s and '70s—slums characterized by poverty, crime, and decay" (2008).

Others are not so sure. Some say that if high energy costs continue, what the United States will more likely see is a gradual reordering of the city–suburban landscape.

Still, many tend to support the demise-of-the-suburbs scenario, at least in the United States. A *New York Times* reporter put it like this: "Basic household arithmetic appears to be furthering the trend [back to the city]: In 2003, the average suburban household spent $1,422 a year on gasoline…by April, [2008]…the same household was spending $3,196 a year, more than doubling consumption in dollar terms in less than five years" (Goodman, 2008). However, a global recession could change much and quickly, so this trend bears close watch.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF MILPITAS, CALIFORNIA, 1954–2000

Post–World War II Los Angeles pioneered the technoburb. This postsuburban form now exists in many hi-tech areas, typically near research universities—from Boston's Route 128 (MIT) and North Carolina's Research Triangle (Duke, University of North Carolina, North Carolina State University) to Silicon Valley, California (Stanford).

A brief history of Milpitas, California, located in northern California's Silicon Valley (see Chapter 4), the hi-tech complex near Stanford University, illustrates one place's swift transformation. In little more than one generation, Milpitas ("little cornfield" in Spanish) evolved from a semirural community to a working-class suburb to a multicultural technoburb.

During World War II, only 600 people lived in semirural Milpitas. It didn't become a city until 1954. One year later, it was transformed into a residential-industrial suburb when the Ford Motor Company opened a new plant there. Virtually all Ford autoworkers moved from industrial Richmond, the former Ford plant site, to Milpitas in 1955. Two years later,

sociologist Bennett M. Berger interviewed 100 Ford workers and their spouses. As he documented in *Working-Class Suburb* ([1960] 1971), these autoworkers and their wives were apparently unaffected by their move from industrial city to suburb; they didn't take on the habits, attitudes, and aspirations of the middle class when they became suburban homeowners.

During its early years, Milpitas was the butt of wisecracks by TV comedians, perhaps because "the local fragrance was a gagging mix of sewage and drainage ditch water" or perhaps because "the city's night life was an adult drive-in theatre across the road from the Ooh La Lodge Motel" (Tessler, 1989:A2). Then, the jokes turned sour. Over 2,400 workers lost their jobs in 1983 when the Ford plant closed.

Then, Milpitas was reborn. Again. The once blue-collar city joined upscale Silicon Valley. It developed 24 industrial parks, 23 retail-professional centers, and 120 manufacturing plants (largely electronics). Its households had the highest income growth in the Bay Area—over 60 percent—from 1980 to 1987. And a $100 million giant shopping mall opened in 1994 on the very site of the former Ford assembly plant in Milpitas.

By 2000, Milpitas was an affluent, ethnically diverse, well-educated community. Its median family household income was $93,531. The majority of its residents were Asian (52%), with white non-Hispanic (27%) and Hispanic (17%) minorities plus a small African American presence (3%). (The percentage of Asian American residents in Milpitas skyrocketed from 12% in 1980 to 51% in 2000.) More than one-third of its residents held a college or graduate degree.

To conclude: As the head of the Milpitas Chamber of Commerce noted years ago, "You can live here, work here, play here. It's a complete community. You can even die here. We have senior citizen centers" (in Tessler, 1989:A2). This statement sums up the new technoburban reality. Milpitas originated on the suburban periphery of another urban core (in this case, San Jose). Then it broke away economically and socially. Now, like other postsuburban developments, Milpitas is much more than a *sub*-urb. It is something relatively new: a conglomerate of residences, technologically-advanced industries, services, cultural activities, and information processing.

ZIP CODES AS NEIGHBORHOODS

Conscious, perhaps touchy, about its former reputation, Milpitas launched a public-relations campaign to change its image. Starting in 1989, the mayor worked hard "to let people know this is not a one-gas-station town anymore. It's upscale. My address is as good as the next guy's" (in Tessler, 1989:A2).

Address, as Milpitas's mayor implies, has important symbolic value. For example, *Beverly Hills, 90210*, a TV series (FOX, 1990–2000; available on DVD), and its update *90210* (CW, 2008–) cram a great deal of information about its characters into an address: a five-digit ZIP code. Why? Because, like it or not, in the United States, your ZIP code symbolizes much more than a postal zone.

The United States is not alone. ZIP codes (often called "postal codes" outside the United States) reveal a great deal about their residents. This is true in Canada, South Africa, Japan, or Australia, to name just a few places.

Market researchers were quick to see that a ZIP (or postal) code represents the social status, values, even political beliefs of a neighborhood. Journalist Michael J. Weiss put it this way: "You are where you live." Maybe not to your mother, but to people who want to sell you things and ideas your ZIP code has become "a yardstick by which your lifestyle is measured" (Weiss, 1988:xi).

A related notion, one long recognized by social scientists, may be a better motto: "In the eyes of others, you are what you buy." (The eminent sociologist Max Weber, among others, based his ideas of social status on shared consumption patterns or lifestyles; see Chapter 11.)

Blending census data, market research, and consumer surveys, analysts can predict a great deal about the consumption patterns, political preferences, and social backgrounds of residents in a ZIP code. The creator of one market research system, PRIZM (an acronym for Potential Rating Index for Zip Markets), goes as far to say this: "Tell me someone's zip code, and I can predict what they [*sic*] eat, drink, drive—even think" (Robbin in Weiss, 1988:1).

Many resist the notion that they can be pigeonholed by any social marker, particularly a ZIP code. They see themselves as totally self-willed. Marketeers and sociologists do not agree.

a

Fig. 8.4 WHAT SER IS THIS? In Nielsen Claritas's PRIZM system, neighborhood types are assigned a SER (socioeconomic rank, formerly called a ZQ, or zip quotient) based on residents' household income, home value, education, and occupation. (All examples except [*g*] are based on Nielsen Claritas's 2006 data; [*g*] is based on Global Mosaic's 2000 data. [Note that Claritas became Nielsen Claritas in 2008 and is referred to here as "Nielsen Claritas".]) (*a*) SER 01 Upper Crust was the highest-ranked neighborhood in the United States in 2006. This SER 01 home, located in the San Francisco Bay Area, is superexpensive. SER 01 homes are filled with artisan touches and original art, not unframed posters and brick-and-board bookcases. Typically, there is no TV set in the living room and no rap music playing. (*b*) SER 04 Young Digerati is an area of sophisticated, affluent, and educated professionals such as Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood. (SER 04 appeared in 2006. Formerly, Lincoln Park was part of SER 03 Urban Gold Coast, a PRIZM cluster that disappeared by 2006.) (*c*) Bohemian Mix, a SER 16 neighborhood (formerly ranked ZQ 11), is an urban area with liberal, ethnically diverse, culturally bohemian lifestyles and a high percentage of college graduates like this neighborhood, the Haight-Ashbury section of San Francisco. (*d*) White Picket Fences (SER 34) is an ethnically mixed, middle-class, blue-collar area like this one in northern Indiana. (*e*) American Dreams (SER 29) is a multilingual area (one person in 10 speaks a language other than English) and home to middle-income, immigrant, ethnic families. (*f*) Shotguns and Pickups (SER 51) is a rural crossroads village or small town, characterized by U.S.-branded pickups and mobile homes. (*g*) Clever Capitalists, Great Britain's top cluster in 2000, live in once-aristocratic "digs" such as this former baronial mansion in London. Inhabitants of Upland and Small Farms, Great Britain's poorest cluster, live outside London in places described by the cluster title. ([*a, c, d, e*]) Deborah Mosca; [*b*] iStock Photo, [*f*] Tim Teninty, [*g*] Gesche Würfel)

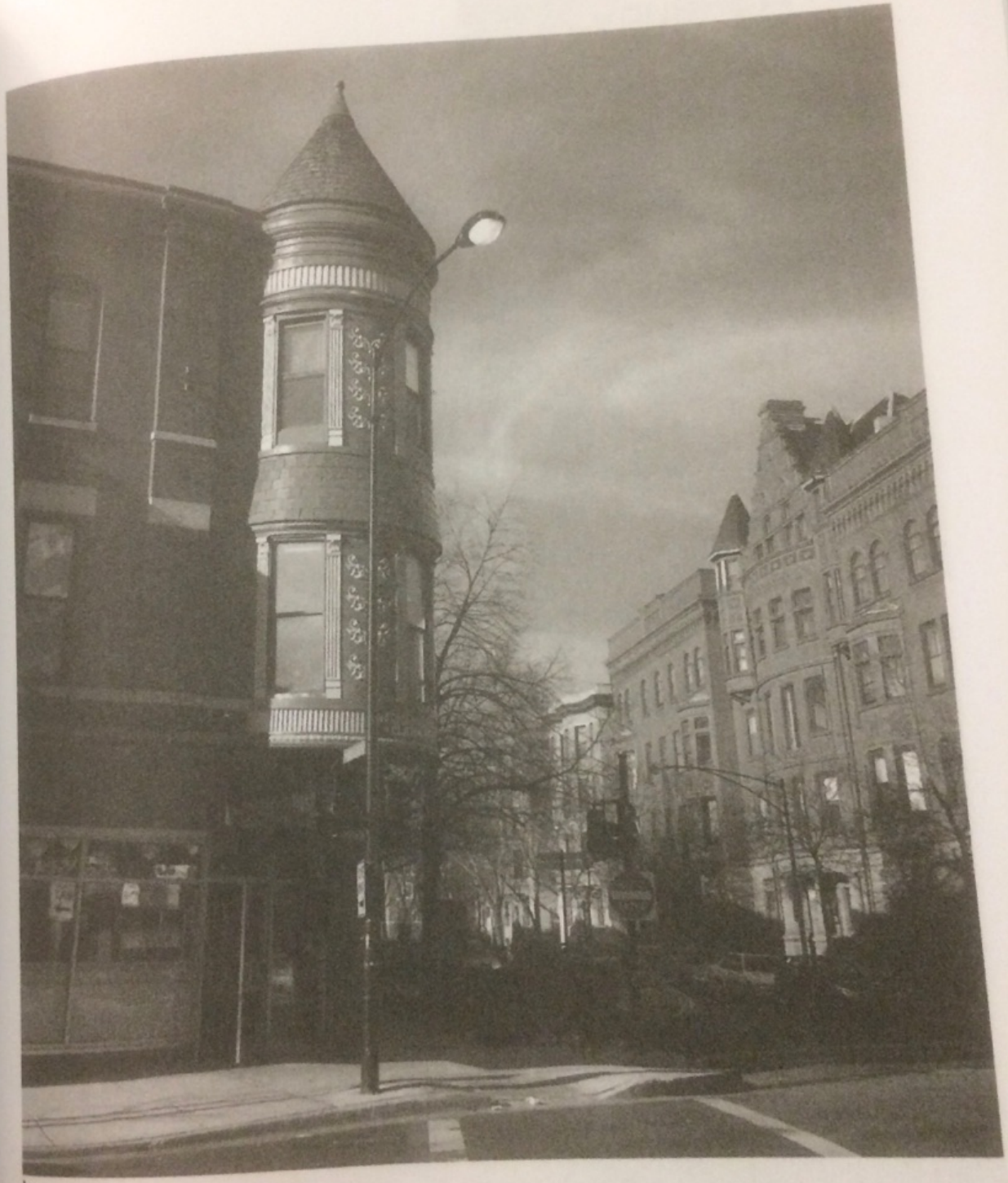


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Fig. 8.4 (*continued*)

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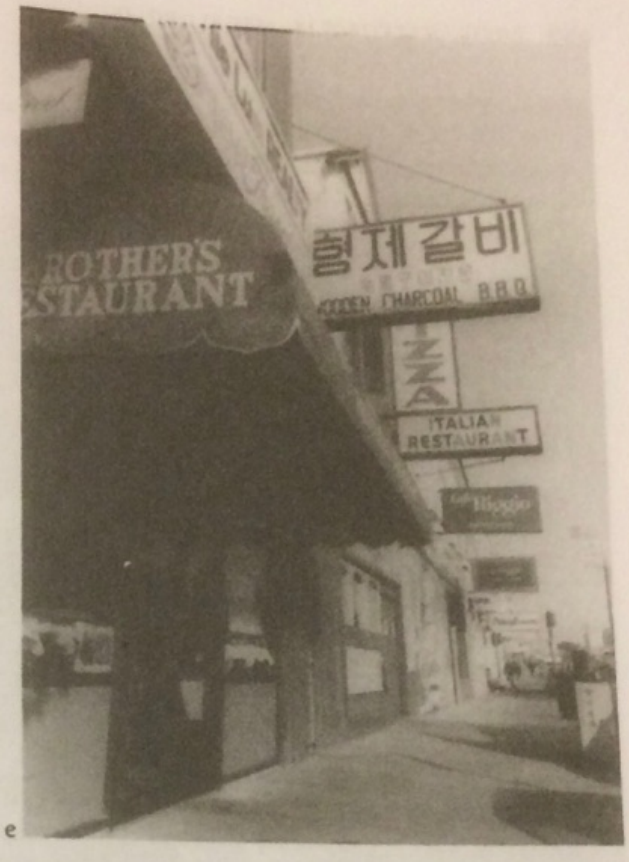

Fig. 8.4 (*continued*) e

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Fig. 8.4 (*continued*)

Examples of social markers by ZIP code follow. They come from Michael Weiss's 2000 book *The Clustered World*. (*Note*: PRIZM updated these data online in 2006. See Box. 8.1.) In the United States, Weiss wrote in 2000, a small percentage of households (1.2%) lived in suburbs that served as "executive suites," which mainly consisted of upper middle-class subdivisions. Mainly, residents in executive suites were 25–44 years of age. They voted moderately independent, bought gourmet coffee and Brie cheese, read business and cooking magazines, and stayed away from auto races and lottery tickets. In such communities, such as Piermont, New York (10968), and Huntington Beach, California (92649), residents drove Lexuses, Volvos, and Alfa Romeos. Residents tended to be comfortable but not rich.

In contrast, those in "upward-bound" neighborhoods (2% of U.S. households) shared the same age range (25–44) but not consumption habits. Upward-bounders tended to be upper middle-class families living in suburban satellite cities, such as Marietta, Georgia (98023), and Columbia, Maryland (21045). Typically, these folks were soccer moms and dads, drove GMC Suburbans, voted conservative Republican, listened to golden-oldies radio, and shopped at Costco.

Another group, mainly in the same age range (24–44, but some also under 24) lived in a cluster called "mid-city mix." This neighborhood was urban, middle-class, and mainly African American. (About 1.3% of U.S. households fell into this category.) In mid-city mix, the median household income was much lower than in upward bound and executive suite

communities. Further, it was characterized by a different set of social markers: Residents voted for liberal Democrats, drove Hyundais and Pontiac LeManses, bought *Essence* and *Ebony*, and drank malt liquor. They lived in such ZIP codes as 07017 (East Orange, New Jersey), 90221 (Compton, California), and 60620 (Auburn Gresham, a community on Chicago's far southside).

In the PRIZM system, clusters come and go. By 2000, PRIZM's original 40 clusters had morphed into 62. ("Mid-city mix" had disappeared by 2006.) No doubt, housing foreclosures and the global economic crisis will impact future cluster rankings in the United States and elsewhere (see Box 8.1).

To conclude: Groups with similar demographic characteristics, such as age and income, can lead very different lifestyles. The three groups mentioned share one key characteristic—age—but *not* lifestyles.

Based on Weiss's data, we can assume that Milpitas residents (ZIP codes 95035 and 95036) bought Ford Escorts when it was a working-class suburb. Now, its white-collar and "no-collar" (Chapter 19) technoburbanites probably buy higher-end Toyotas instead.

Weiss's data come from a computer-driven market research tool, PRIZM (an acronym for Potential Rating Index for Zip Markets). PRIZM was developed by social scientist-turned-entrepreneur Jonathan Robbin. Its original use was to target audiences for Robbin's marketing company, Claritas (since sold and known as Nielsen Claritas). There is no use, for example, in advertising Ford pickup trucks in a Volvo neighborhood.

PRIZM is a for-profit, entrepreneurial tool geared to delivering potential buyers to sellers. But it has much wider applications, both practical and scholarly. It can be useful for planning a global vacation, finding potential voters for your cause, or operating across-border, nonprofit organizations. For example, residents of the same cluster—whether in Italy or Australia—will tend to drive the same cars, enjoy similar entertainment, and worry about similar political issues. Thus, if trolling for donors to support a nonprofit concerned with the environment or gun rights or health-care insurance, staffers would be wise to look in certain neighborhoods and not in others, whether in the United States or Australia.

Advisers to political candidates may want to know what's for dinner in a household. Why? Because it can be a clue to their voting choice! White wine and butter in the fridge can signal one preference, while crusty pizza would signal another (Severson, 2008). This practice, called "microtargeting," mirrors Weiss's cluster analysis.

Practically speaking, if you're moving to an unfamiliar place, the PRIZM cluster system can help you select new neighbors and preferred nearby activities: singles bars, bowling alleys, ranch houses with teenagers, gas chainsaws, novellas (Spanish soap operas), CB radios, college basketball games, health-food stores, conservative politics, union meetings, cafés, funky brownstones, and/or fast-food restaurants. If you work as a fund-raiser or door-to-door magazine salesperson, it can assist you to pinpoint potential donors to the local symphony or subscribers to *Ebony*.

Indeed, PRIZM contains much more cultural and economic information about individuals than countries' censuses. But, unlike data collected by national census bureaux, data collected by Nielsen Claritas and other marketeers are privately held (proprietary). In cost terms, they are not free.

What's interesting to social scientists about PRIZM is its approach to the study of community and metropolitan differentiation. Essentially, it divides the United States's 36,000 ZIP codes into neighborhood types or **lifestyle clusters**.

Cluster analysis doesn't stop at U.S. borders. As journalist Weiss notes in *The Clustered World* (2000), market research companies expanded cluster analysis to Canada (60 dominant lifestyles) and the global village (based on Global MOSAIC, a system classifying 800 million people who produce about 80 percent of the world's gross national product). According to MOSAIC (Weiss, 2000:144), groups with the same demographics can lead very different lifestyles. Take, for example, young middle-class British singles. One group, named "Studio Singles," tend to drink about four times the amount of red wine, play less bingo, and own more computers than another British group of similar age, marital status, and income level: Military Bases. Residents of military base neighborhoods are disproportionately male; they tend to spend money on home entertainment, music, and sporting

goods. They play more bingo than Studio Singles but chow down less often in eat-in restaurants.

As of 2000, 19 countries had been "clustered." These include Great Britain, Australia, Belgium, South Africa, and the United States. Clusters reflect a nation's culture, not size. For example, Norway had about 2 million households, divided into 30 clusters or lifestyles (e.g., "Maritimers," "Mountain Farmers"). Belgium, with twice the number of households, had only 27 clusters (e.g., "Active Retired People," "Mining Villages").

Clusters reflect a culture's history too. For example, many of the poorest European clusters are rural. These include France ("Agrarian Decline"), Belgium ("Farmers & Agricultural Areas"), and Great Britain ("Upland and Small Farms"). By contrast, Japan's poorest cluster—"Old People's Home"—is not necessarily rural. Meanwhile, South Africa's largest cluster, predominantly black, is called "Matchbox Houses": more than 11 percent of the population live in small, modest houses built during apartheid times.

How can it be that people of similar status—whatever their nationality—share similar tastes? In Weiss's view, one key reason is *globalization*: Globalization of brands helps to create common tastes for a variety of products, from food to media. Indeed, Weiss says, "The net effect of these globalizing forces e.g., Internet sites; Starbucks, CNN, U.S. multinational retailers like Levi Strauss, McDonald's is the creation of similar desires and cookie-cutter stores everywhere on the planet" (2000:164).

Concerning the United States, Weiss thinks that clustering represents a newer way of looking at the nation: *not as 50 states but as neighborhood types*—40 in the late 1980s, 62 in 2000, and 66 by 2006, "each with distinct boundaries, values, consuming habits and political beliefs." Each neighborhood type, Weiss says, has a particular personality, described in 2006 by such colorful names as "Multi-Culti Mosaic," "Mayberry-ville," "Gray Power," "Big Fish, Small Pond," "Park Bench Seniors," and "Shotguns and Pickups" (Box 8.1).

By 2006, Nielsen Claritas, working with data from the 2000 U.S. Census and other sources, defined 66 U.S. clusters. These included some new high-income and low-income additions. Also, some clusters disappeared altogether. For example, SER 3 Urban Gold Coast disappeared. At the highest end was a new cluster, SER 01 Upper Crust, the United States's "most exclusive address." Other new, high-end clusters were added, including SER 03 Movers and Shakers (home to the U.S. up-and-coming business class) and SER 04 Young Digerati (tech-savvy, highly educated, ethnically mixed singles and couples in trendy neighborhoods). In 2006, two new low-end clusters were also added, including the lowest: SER 66 Low-rise Living (a transient world for young, ethnically diverse singles and single parents in a struggling area of mom-and-pop commercial stores) (Nielsen Claritas, 2006b).

Notes: Here I use both the 62 neighborhood types outlined in Weiss's 2000 book, *The Clustered World*, and the 66 clusters posted online in 2007 for 2006. Box 8.1 is based on the 2006 data. Why both? Because Nielsen Claritas's online update, based on the 2000 U.S. Census and other data, are incomplete—purposefully—for nonpaying visitors. Most kindly, a Nielsen Claritas representative made these data available to me, gratis. But, as of this writing, the 2006 data were not widely accessible to citizens or scholars. Thus, I use both published, pre-2000 data and 2006 data, published in 2007 but only online. Estimates for 2008 and 2013 projections are available from Nielsen Claritas too. With the U.S. subprime mortgage "meltdown" or "crisis" of 2007 onward, many clusters have recently experienced big changes; but as of this writing, no data confirm the particulars. Still, it is noteworthy that some ZIP codes, such as 94806 in suburban San Francisco, lost almost 41 percent of their square-foot price between 2007 and 2008.

PRIZM neighborhood types are ranked in terms of status, from highest to lowest. Ranks, now called SERs (socioeconomic ranks, formerly ZQs or zip quotients), are based on *residents' household income, home value, education, and occupation*.

At the top of the pre-2000 U.S. Census status ladder was SER 1 Blue Blood Estates (followed by SER 2 Winner's Circle and SER 3 Urban Gold Coast). By 2006, a new, wealthier neighborhood type replaced Blue Blood Estates as the top-ranked cluster: SER 01 Upper Crust, the nation's "wealthiest lifestyle." Who lives in SER 01? Many empty-nester couples over 55 years old. SER 01 has the highest concentration of

residents earning over $200,000 a year and possessing a postgraduate degree. No cluster "has a more opulent standard of living" (Nielsen Claritas, 2006b).

The lowest-status neighborhood in 2006 was SER 66, Low-rise Living. It is mainly characterized by renters earning less than $23,000 per year.

According to Weiss, neighborhoods separated geographically can be virtually identical in lifestyle. Take, for example, U.S. ZIP codes 08003 (East Cherry Hill, New Jersey) and 91367 (Woodland Hills, California) just before 2000. Geodemographically, both were classified SER 02 neighborhoods. They had similar consumption habits as well as personal backgrounds. (*Note*: By 2006, Woodland Hills dropped in rank from 2 to 15, while East Cherry Hill climbed the status ladder to the highest rank: SER 01 Upper Crust.)

In any SER 02 neighborhood, you can expect to find sophisticated, well-heeled, college-educated suburbanites who live in million-dollar homes, go to exclusive clubs, play tennis or racquetball, ski, own or lease a new Mercedes or BMW, take three or more cruises a year, and do not smoke or listen to rap music. You can expect to find cappuccino bars but not fast-food eateries nearby. Clearly, if you like to hunt, fish, listen to CB radio, and watch the roller derby, this is not the neighborhood for you. Even if you could afford it.

One implication here is that *people in the United States, known for their propensity to move, do not really move; instead, they merely go to and from the same neighborhood*, say, from New York's Greenwich Village (10014) to San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury (94117) to Washington, D.C.'s Dupont Circle (20036), all primarily Bohemian Mix neighborhoods.

Whether in the United States or elsewhere, clusters are not randomly distributed over space. Some are rural or small-town and others urban or suburban. Some are found nationwide, or nearly, while others are regional or concentrated in a particular area. And some cross boundaries.

Over time, some clusters change their identity. Take, for instance, 80110 (Englewood, Colorado). In PRIZM's late 1980s analysis, this ZIP code was ranked 15 (New Beginnings). By 2000, it had become a SER 28 Upstarts & Seniors cluster. By 2006, the neighborhood again changed: The top two groups living there were SER 30 Suburban Sprawl and 52 Suburban Pioneers. In other words, over time, neighborhood types can change status.

To conclude: Residents of the highest-status SER neighborhoods in the United States and elsewhere are the very people that Robert Reich described sometime ago in "The Secession of the Successful" (1991)—part of the top 20 percent working mainly as symbolic analysts and living in aesthetically-pleasing neighborhoods, often protected by gates or private guards. It is the same group that a *New York Times* reporter calls "the checked-out classes," referring to middle-class people in India who dream of living "in a foreign-style villa in a gated township outside the city, with its own privately built roads, hospitals, corporate offices and schools" (Giridharadas, 2008:2). Typically, in the United States, residents are white or Asian American, conservative or moderate in their politics, well-paid, and college-educated.

Does—or can—this financially successful elite feel a sense of community with the bottom 80 percent? Weiss thinks not. He offered this explanation: Most Americans have a narrow "bubble of consciousness" that allows only a close circle of acquaintances inside; these acquaintances tend to live in SERs near their own socioeconomic level (1988:268). (We might add that this is probably true in many places, including London.) Moreover, Weiss claims that "people who live 3,000 miles apart yet share the same neighborhood type have more in common with each other than with those people who live only three miles away" (6).

In other words, *birds of a feather not only flock together, they exclude all others from their consciousness*. This implies that reaching across barriers—of status and neighborhood, income, education, ethnicity, political and social preferences—is rare. As a historian so nicely phrased it, "Walls and gates assume a world of strangers" (Leed, 1991:18). In contemporary society, the barriers may be literal (gated communities) or figurative (communities that erect an invisible wall against the lower middle class via zoning ordinances).

Whether or not some observers (e.g., Bishop, 2008) decry the clustering of "like-minded" people in

BOX 8.1

Rank/Name	For Selected Clusters: Date Defined as Cluster/Previous Rank	Thumbnail Demographics	Some High-Usage Products & High Media Uses	Sample Neighborhoods	% of the U.S. Population	MHI (Median Household Income)
Elite, Suburban/Exurban Households						
SER 01 UPPER CRUST	New in 2006	The U.S.'s most exclusive address. Graduate plus. White, Asian mix. Mainly empty-nesters, 45–64.	Shop at Costco, Bloomingdale's. Drive Jaguar XK. Luxury international travel. Give to NPR, PBS. Drink domestic & imported wine. Read *Atlantic Monthly*, *Wall St Journal (WSJ)*, *New York Times (NYT)*, *Architectural Digest*.	Potomac, MD (20854), McLean, VA (22101), Mill Valley, CA (94941); Benecia, CA (94510)	1.51%	$110,142
SER 02 BLUE BLOOD ESTATES	SER 01 in 1988	Very rich. Graduate plus. White, Asian. Management (mgt). 45–64 with kids.	*The New Yorker*, *WSJ*, *NYT*, *Scientific American*, NPR. German luxury car. Luxury international travel, country clubs, skiing, racquetball. Shop at Costco, Nordstrom's. Buy Apple iPod.	Derwood, MD (20855)	0.98%	$115,814
SER 03 MOVERS & SHAKERS	new in 2006	White, Asian. Wealthy, suburban world of dual-income couples. Home of up-and-coming business class; folks here are more likely to own a small business and have a home office than in any other cluster. Executives, white collars. Graduate plus. Mainly no kids, 35–64.	Luxury European car. Shop at Banana Republic, Bloomingdale's. First-class air travel.	Clayton, CA (94517), Avon Lake, Ohio (30311)	1.61%	$99,130
SER 05 COUNTRY SQUIRES		*Mostly White, exurban families. Graduate plus. 35–64 with kids.*	*Country club. Skiing, biking, tennis. Order from on-line retailers. WSJ, Fortune, PC World, O* (the Oprah magazine). Lexus SUV.	*Avon, Ohio (44011).*	*1.90%*	*$102,265*
SER 06 WINNER'S CIRCLE	*SER 02 in 2000*	The youngest of the wealthy, suburban lifestyles. White, Asian. Graduate plus. 25–44 with kids.	Big spenders who ski, eat out. *Fortune*, *Architectural Digest*, *WSJ*, *Travel & Leisure*. Disney Channel. Infiniti SUV.	Brentwood, CA (94513), Antioch, CA (904531)**	1.10%	$102,213
High Income, Sophisticated Tastes, Urban						
SER 04 YOUNG DIGERATI	new in 2006	White, Asian. Tech-savvy singles plus family mix. 25–44.	Visit Disneyland, Buy Apple iPods. Travel internationally. *NYT*, *Esquire*. NPR, alternativer rock radio. Shop at Banana Republic, Bloomingdale's, Nordstrom's. Mercedes, Range Rover.	Lincoln Park, Chicago (60614), various ZIP codes in Silicon Valley, CA, Cambridge, MA (02140)	1.23%	$80,782
SER 07 MONEY & BRAINS	SER 03 in 2000	Multi-ethnic: White, Asian, Hispanic. Graduate plus. 45–64. te plus. 45–64. Family mix.	Shop at Nordstrom's. *The New Yorker*, *Fortune*, *WSJ*, *NYT*, NPR, all-news radio. Mercedes Benz E class, European luxury car. Travel outside the U.S. 3+ times per year.	Berkeley, CA (94707), Boston, MA (02110), New York City (10021)	2.02	$84,506
Affluent, Town/Rural, exurban or smaller cities						
SER 08 EXECUTIVE SUITES	SER 08 in 2000	White, Asian. College grad. Upper-middle class singles, couples. 35–54.	Golf, snowboarding, in-line skating. Shop Saks Fifth Avenue, Victoria's Secret. NPR. *Esquire*, *Fortune*, *WSJ*. New VW, Acura TSX.	Redmond, WA (98052), Piermont, NY (10968)	0.91%	$71,804

Continued

BOX 8.1 *Continued*

Rank/Name	For Selected Clusters: Date Defined as Cluster/ Previous Rank	Thumbnail Demographics	Some High-Usage Products & High Media Uses	Sample Neighborhoods	% of the U.S. Population	MHI (Median Household Income)
SER 09 BIG FISH, SMALL POND	SER 18 in 2000	Older, upscale, empty-nesting couples. Mainly White. Graduate plus. Mgt. 45–64 w/o kids.	Large investment portfolios. Country club. Own motor home. Give to NPR. Read *Atlantic Monthly*. Lexus LS430.	Cedar Crest, NY (87008), Orinda, CA (94563), Concord, MA (01742)	2.26%	$82,416
SER 10 SECOND CITY ELITE		Mainly White, prosperous executives. Graduate plus. 45–64 w/o kids.	Enjoy attending theater, dance productions, reading. CNBC. *WSJ*, *Travel & Leisure*, *Inc*. Order from *Readers' Digest*. Multiple computers. Largescreen TVs, nice wine collections. Toyota.	Kailua, HI (96734), Pleasanton, CA (94566)	1.18%	$74,375
SER 11 GOD'S COUNTRY		Mainly White, affluent, exurban. High-power jobs and laid-back leisure time. Spacious homes. College grad. 35–54 w/o kids.	Golf vacation. Skiing. Outdoor Life network. Toyota Land Cruiser SUV.	Chantilly, VA (20152), Ben Lomond, CA (95005)	1.55%	$83,827
SER 12 BRITE LITES, LI'L CITY	new in 2006	White, Asian. College grad. Mainly middle-aged couples in satellite cities.	Racquetball, water skiing. New BMW. Order from priceline.com. MTV, "Comedy Central," sports TV. Macworld. Toyota Land Cruiser SUV.	Dublin, CA (94565), Pleasant Hill, CA (94523)	1.50%	$69,380
SER 13 UPWARD BOUND	SER 13 in 2000	Multiethnic: White, Asian, Hispanic. College grad. 34–54 with kids.	Visit Disneyland, go to the zoo. Skiing Vacation. Men's Health. All-talk radio, sports radio. Toyota Sequoia SUV.	Edmond, OKLA (73003), Pittsburg, CA (94565)	1.60%	$80,345
SER 20 FAST-TRACK FAMILIES		Mostly White, upper-middle-class, child-filled families in their prime acquiring years. College grad. Rustic locales. 35–54 with kids.	New computers. Home theatre systems. Boating, fishing, ice hockey games. Order from walmart.com. Contemporary Christian music. Country music. *Parenting Magazine*, *Field & Stream*, *Redbook*. Dodge Ram minivan.	Waddell, AZ (85355)	1.74%	$74,562
Affluent, Suburban *SER 14 NEW EMPTY NESTS*		Mainly White, retired (age 65+). College grad, w/o kids.	Take cruises. Shop Nordstrom's. Give to PBS. Order from L.L. Bean. Buy classical music. *AARP*, *the Magazine*. *The New Yorker*. Watch "Antiques Roadshow." *WSJ*. Cadillac Seville.	St.Louis, MO (63126)	1.05%	$69,595
SER 15 POOLS & PATIOS	SER 09 in 2000	White, Asian. College grad. Stable neighborhoods, evolved from young-to-mature empty-nesters. 45–64 w/o kids.	Homes built in the 1960s. Read *Sunset*. Own motor home, new European luxury car. Listen to all-news radio, religious radio. Shop high-end department stores. Mercury Mariner SUV, Mercedes.	Escondido, CA (92029), Catonsville, MD (21228)	1.31%	$69,382
SER 17 BELTWAY BOOMERS		Multiethnic: White, Asian, Hispanic. Upper-middle class Baby Boomers. College grad. Kid-centered lifestyles. Comfortable suburban subdivisions. 45–64 w/kids.	Buy Apple iPods. Shop Ethan Allen. Minivan. *PCWorld*, *Vibe*, *Essence*, *Seventeen*, *Parenting*, *Star*. Sports radio,religious radio. Izusu Ascender.	American Canyon, CA (94503).	0.96%	$72,262
SER 18 KIDS & CUL-DE-SACS		Multiethnic: White, Asian, Hispanic. Upper-middle class, married couples with kids. College grad. 25–44. Recently-built subdivisions.	Buy toys on Internet, go to zoo. Disney Store. Roller-blading, soccer. Minivan. *Parenting* magazine. Cartoon network. Rock music. Nissan Armada SUV.	Laguna Hills, CA (92653)	1.63%	$70,034
SER 19 HOME SWEET HOME		Multiethnic: White, African-American, Asian. Under 55, w/o kids. Upper-middle-class married couples. College grad. Professionals.	Mountain biking. Inc., *NYT*, NPR, *Rolling Stone*, *Vibe*, *Essence*, *Parenting*. MTV. Saturn Vue SUV.	Parkville, MD (21234), Fox Lake, IL (60020), Crockett, CA (94525), Orangedale, CA (95662)	1.74%	$74,562

Continued

BOX 8.1 *Continued*

Rank/Name	For Selected Clusters: Date Defined as Cluster/ Previous Rank	Thumbnail Demographics	Some High-Usage Products & High Media Uses	Sample Neighborhoods	% of the U.S. Population	MHI (Median Household Income)
Affluent to Comfortable, Urban						
SER 16 BOHEMIAN MIX	SER 17 in 2000	Multiethnic: African-American, White, Asian, Hispanic. College grad. Renters. Under 55, mobile. Most liberal cluster.	Go dancing once monthly +. Buy Apple iPods, use laundromat, drink imported beer. Mini Cooper car. *New York* magazine.	Burlingame, CA (94010)	1.79%	$51,588
SER 21 GRAY POWER		Mostly White, retirees. College grads. 65 +.	Take cruises.Give to PBS. Shop Costco, Lord & Taylor. Belong to veterans' clubs. *AARP, the Magazine, WSJ Report*. "Jeopardy." Buick LaCrosse.	Indianapolis, IN (46228), Healdsburg, CA (95448)	0.92%	$51,053
SER 26 THE COSMOPOLITANS		Multiethnic: Asian, White, African-American, Hispanic. Some college. White-collar mix. 55+ mostly w/o kids. Concentrated in just a few metro areas, including Miami, Albuquerque.	Shop at Bloomingdale's, Saks Fifth Avenue, Macy's. Drink imported wine. Take cruises. *WSJ report. Black Enterprise*. Jazz radio. *AARP the Magazine*. New Mercedes, Infini 136.	Monterey Park, CA (91754), El Cerrito, CA (94530)	0.17%	$54,229
SER 29 AMERICAN DREAMS	SER 13 in 2000	Multiethnic: Asian, White, Hispanic, African-American. Multilingual (1 in 10 speaks a language other than English) and middle-class comfort. Some college. 35–54.	Shop at Bloomingdale's, Saks Fifth Avenue, Macy's. Drink imported wine. Take cruises. *WSJ report. Black Enterprise*. Jazz radio. New Mercedes, Infini 136.	Forest Park, IL (60130), Calumet City, IL (60409), San Pablo, CA (94806)	2.18%	$52,863
Affluent to Comfortable Suburban town/Smaller cities/Rural						
SER 22 YOUNG INFLUENTIALS		Multiethnic: White, African-American, Asian. College grad. Suburban renters, under 45, middle-class singles/couples (once called ":yuppies") who try to balance work & leisure.	Play soccer, go to auto races. Buy rap music, Spanish/ Latin music. MTV, *Rolling Stone, Essence*. Mazda 3.	Manchester, NH (03102)	1.46%	$47,717
SER 23 GREENBELT SPORTS	new in 2006	Mostly White, ex-urban couples. College grad. 35–44.	Active lifestyles. Mountain biking, power boating. Own motorcycle, RV. Motor Trend, rock radio, country music radio & TV. Suburu Impreza	Forestville, CA (95436)	1.44%	$57,042
SER 25 COUNTRY CASUALS		Mainly White in small towns or rural areas with a laid-back feel. 35-54 with kids. Upper-middle class. College grad. Many two-income, Baby Boomer households.	*Guns and Ammo, Field & Stream*. BBC America. NASCAR, Country radio. GMC Sierra.	Red Wing, MN (55066), Santa Claus, IN (47579)	1.61%	$71,266
SER 27 MIDDLEBURG MANAGERS	SER 20 in 2000	Mainly White in satellite communities. Solid managerial jobs or comfortable retirement in older homes. 45–64.	Do needlepoint, play musical instruments, refinish furniture. Belong to country club. Give to NPR. Own motor home. *AARP, The Magazine*. TV figure skating, "Jeopardy." All-talk radio. Mercury Sable.	Fort Mitchell, KY (41047)	1.85%	$49,468
SER 28 TRADITIONAL TIMES		Mostly white. Some college. Small-town couples beginning to enjoy empty nests. 55+	Own motor home, camper. Belong to country club. Order from Land's End. Drive RV. Satellite dish or disc. Bird watching. Member of fraternal order. *AARP, The Magazine*. "Antiques Roadshow." Buick LaCrosse.	Pollack Pines, CA (95726), Myrtle Beach, SC (29572)	2.84%	$54,801

Continued

BOS 8.1 Continued

Rank/Name	For Selected Clusters: Rate Defined as Cluster/ Previous Rank	Thumbnail Demographics	Some High-Usage Products & High Media Uses	Sample Neighborhoods	% of the U.S. Population	HHI (Median Household Income)
SER 30 SUBURBAN SPRAWL		Multiethnic: White, African-American, Asian. College grad. Suburban Professionals.	Play billiards, tennis. Laptop/ Notebook PC. *Rolling Stone, Car & Driver, Black Enterprise.* Rock & alternative rock radio. MTV. Ford Escort.	Baton Rouge, LA (70810)	1.6%	$49,734
SER 33 BIG SKY FAMILIES		Mostly White & younglish (25–44) with kids.	Own a camper, horse, all-terrain vehicle, motorcycle. Hunts with gun. Dodge Ram. "Noticiero Telemundo." *Vibe, Essence,* TV soccer. "The Simpsons."	Lexington, NE (68850), Forest Hill, LA (71450)	1.79%	$55,675
Midscale City Districts, Mid-to-small Towns & Suburbs & Rural Settings						
SER 32 NEW HOMESTEADERS		Mostly White, young, middle-class families in small, rustic towns. White-collar & service jobs. College grad.Dual-income couples. Child-centered lifestyles.	Play softball, golf. Contemporary Christian music. Own tent. Read off-road magazines, *Parenting, Field & Stream.* Country music, religious radio. Kia Sedona.	Indianapolis, IN (46231), Hyde Park, NY (12538)	2.09%	$56,164
SER 34 WHITE PICKET FENCES		Multiethnic: Asian, White, African-American, Hispanic. Young (25–44),married with kids, middle-class. Some college. Modest homes.	Own a treadmill, tent, fishing equipment. Visit Six Flags Park. Buy kids' bikes. Attend pro football games. Hispanic radio, BET, MTV. *Seventeen.* "Noticiero Telemundo." Mitsubishi Montero sport.	Fairfield, CA (94533), Oxnard, CA (93030)	1.25%	$49,545
SER 36 BOOMTOWN SINGLES	*SER 27 in 2000*	*Thirsting singles' scene in fast-growing, satellite cities. Working-class, young singles with some college, renting in apt. complexes. Bars, laundromats nearby. Under 45 w/o kids.*	*Snowboarding, in-line skating, volleyball, bowling. "Noticiero Telemundo," BET, MTV, classic rock radio. Nissan Sentra.*	*Boise, ID (83705), Columbia, SC (29205)*	*1.39%*	*$38,606*
Urban Gateway Communities						
SER 24 UP-AND-COMERS		Multiethnic: Asian, White, Hispanic. Colleger grad. Professional. A Stopover for some young singles before marriage. Mobile 20somethings, 25-44.	Snowboarding. Attend ice hockey games. First-class international travel. Golf vacations. MTV, Sundance Channel. *Car and Driver, Men's Health.* Mitsubishi Eclipse Spyder.	Walnut Creek, CA (94596).	1.21%	$48,620
SER 31 URBAN ACHIEVERS	SER 22 in 2000	Multiethnic: White, African-American, Asian, Hispanic. Mainly in U.S. port cities. Often, the first stop for up-and-coming immigrants. Young (under 45) singles. Some college.	Buy rap music. Go snowboarding.Use laundromat. Buy Spanish/ Latin music. Watch "Jerry Springer Show," Maury," "Noticiero Telemundo," cartoon network, BET. *Essence, Vibe.* Nissan Sentra.	West Vern, LA (90062), Pawtucket, RI (02860)	1.71%	$34,070
Midscale City Districts or Mid-to-small Towns & Suburbs						
SER 36 BLUE-CHIP BLUES	SER 30 in 2000	The nation's largest lifestyle cluster in the 1980s, shrunk by one-half following the decline in blue-collar jobs. Multiethnic: Multiethnic: White, African-American,	Go roller skating,buy rap music. Visit Six Flags Park. *Parenting, Essence, Vibe, Soap Opera Digest.* BET, MTV. Izuzu Ascender.	Baton Rouge, LA (70814)	1.25%	$49,138

Continued

BOX 8.1 *Continued*

Rank/Name	For Selected Clusters: Date Defined as Cluster/ Previous Rank	Thumbnail Demographics	Some High-Usage Products & High Media Uses	Sample Neighborhoods	% of the U.S. Population	MHI (Median Household Income)
SER 36 (*cont.*)		Asian, Hispanic. Comfortable, suburban lifestyle for young families with good, blue-collar jobs. Some college. Modestly-priced homes near commercial centers catering to child-filled homes. 25–44 with kids.				
SER 37 MAYBERRY-VILLE		Mostly White in small towns. Middle-class couples & families who like to fish, hunt, stay home, watch TV at night. High school grad. Good paying blue-collar jobs. 35–54 w/o kids.	Hunt with gun. Own pickup truck, camper, horse, motorcycle. Go to auto races. Country music TV, radio. Rock radio. Fishing/ hunting magazines. *Field & Stream*. Chevy Silverado.	Interlochen, MI (49643)	2.49%	$53,563
Midscale Blue-Collar (or former Blue-Collar) & White-Collar in Towns/rural places/suburbs						
SER 38 SIMPLE PLEASURES		Mainly White, high school grads. Mostly a retirement lifestyle with lower-middle-class singles & couples in modest homes. 65+. Very large % served in the military.	Member, veterans' club. "Jeopardy," "Wheel of Fortune," "Antiques Roadshow." Order from *Readers Digest*. Travel by motor home. Bird watching. *AARP, The Magazine*. Ford Crown Victoria.	Alden, KS (56712), Cumberland, WS (54829)	2.30%	$42,732
SER 39 DOMESTIC DUOS		White, African-American. Mix of over-55 singles & married couples in older, suburban homes, w/o kids. High school. Fixed incomes. White-collar mix.	Bowling. Member, veterans' club. Attends pro baseball games. Own motor home. Give to PBS. Order from Home Shopping Network. Chevy Cobalt. TV bowling. *AARP, The Magazine*. "Antiques Roadshow."	Atlanta, GA (30310), Chicopee, MA (01020) Schnectady, NY	1.19%	$48,315
Lower-middle Class, Mainly Older & Urban						
SER 40 CLOSE-IN COUPLES		Multiethnic: African-American, White, Asian, Hispanic. Mostly retired in older homes in mid-sized metro areas. Some college. 55+.	Order from *Readers Digest*. Watch TV bowling, "People's Court." Eat at Denny's. Member, veterans' club. Shop Bloomingdale's, Macy's. *Black Enterprise*. All-news radio. Suzuki Grand Vitara SUV.	Baltimore, MD (21229)	1.18%	$39,220
SER 41 SUNSET CITY BLUES		White, African-American. High school grad, living in older areas of small cities. Many retired or near retirement. Under 55 w/kids.	Low-key lifestyle.Family-style restaurants. Member, veterans' club. Travel by motor home. Do needlepoint. College basketball games. "Maury," TV pro wrestling. *Wrestling* magazine, *Esquire, Black Enterprise*. Hispanic radio. Kia Rio.	Bangor, ME (04401)	1.17%	$28,460
Rural/Town/Satellite Cities—Middle Class & Poverty Areas						
SER 45 BLUE HIGHWAYS		Mainly White. Remote stretches of the U.S. landscape. Lower-middle-class couples, families in isolated downs, farmsteads. High school grad. 35–54.	Hunting, fishing. Sewing, crafts. Country music. Own horse, all-terrain vehicle, tent. Hunt with gun. *Guns & Ammo, Field & Stream*. Dodge Ram.	Homer, GA (30547), Louisa, VA (23093)	1.46%	$42.88

Continued

BOX 8.1 *Continued*

Rank/Name	For Selected Clusters: Date Defined as Cluster/ Previous Rank	Thumbnail Demographics	Some High-Usage Products & High Media Uses	Sample Neighborhoods	% of the U.S. Population	MHI (Median Household Income)
SER 48 YOUNG & RUSTIC		White, African-American. Young, restless singles with lower incomes. High school grad. Tiny apts in exurban towns. Under 55.	Car, dating, and sports-centered lifestyles. Go to auto races. Hunt with gun. Order from priceline.com, QVC. Own motorcycle. Roller skating. TV wrestling. Dodge Neon.	Spartanburg, SC (29301), Tonopah, AZ (84354) Cynthiana, KY (41031)	2%	$32,338
SER 51 SHOTGUNS & PICKUPS		Mostly White, working-class couples with large families, many (nearly 33 %)in mobile homes. High school grad. 25-44 w/kids.	Own tent, horse, all-terrain vehicle, motorcycle. Go fresh wter fishing. Attends auto races. Hunt with gun. Watch country music TV. *Field & Stream. Parenting.* Satellite dish. Dodge Ram.	King Hill, ID (83633), Moundville, ALA (35474).	1.61%	$41,673
SER 55 GOLDEN PONDS		Mainly White, retirement lifestyle in bucolic, small towns or rural area. Some high school. 65+ w/o kids.	Member, veterans' club. Do needlepoint. Buy gospel music. Use magazine coupons. TV bowling. "Jeopardy," Oprah Winfrey, "Antiques Roadshow." *AARP, The Magazine.* Mercury Grand Marquis.	Wellton, AZ (85356)	1.58%	$31,029
SER 56 CROSSROADS VILLAGERS		White, African-American mix. Middle-aged, blue-collar couples & families. Classic rural lifestyle: modest homes with 1/4th in mobile homes. Fishing, gardening, hunting. High school grad. 35–44 w/o kids.	Own motor home. Play soccer, go whitewater rafting.Shop at Saks Fifth Avenue, 7/11. NASCAR radio. *Soap Opera Digest, Guns & Ammo.* Dodge Neon.	Raceland, LA (70794)	2.10%	$32,275
SER 57 IKD NUKKTIWBS		White, African-American. Once-thriving manufacturing, mining towns—aged as have most of their residents. Retired singles, couples. Some high school. 65+, mostly w/o kids.	Gardening, sewing, socializing at veternas' clubs. Watch soap operas, play bingo. Oprah Winfrey, TV figure skating. Cable TV. Chevy Cobalt.	Dowagiac, MI (49047), Wabash, IN (46992)	1.59%	$30,235
SER 58 BACK COUNTRY FOLKS		White, African-American. Tend to be poor, over 55, living in older, modest homes or manufactured housing. Some high school. Mostly retired, w/o kids.	Own motor home, horse. Daytime TV, "Antiques Roadshow," "the Jerry Springer show," TV horse racing. *WSJ Report.* GMC Sierra 3500 pickup.	Richwood, WV (26261), Waynesboro, TN (38485)	2.18%	$31,811
SER 60 PARK BENCH SENIORS		White, African-American. Typically, retired single renters in racially-mixed neighborhoods in "second cities." Some high school.	Daytime TV, TV bowling. Play bingo. Watch Game Show network, "Noticiero Telemundo." Eat at Sizzler. *AARP, The Magazine.* Kia Rio.	Manchester, NH (03101)	1.07%	$23,073
SER 62 HOMETOWN RETIRED		Multiethnic: African-American, White, Hispanic. Majority are retired homeowners in second cities. Over 65 w/o kids at home. Some high school.	Watch soap operas, bowling, "Noticiero Telemundo." *AARP, The Magazine.* Travel the U.S. by bus. Chrysler Sebring.	West Palm Beach, FL (33404)	1.11%	$26,269
SER 63 FAMILY THRIFTS		Multiethnic: White, African-American, Hispanic. Young parents in second cities working in entry-level service jobs. High school grad. Under 45 w/ kids.	Buy rap music, Spanish/ Latin music. Go roller skating, visit Six Flags Park. Eat fast food. *Vibe.* Daewoo, Hyundai, Kia Spectra.	Petersburg, VA (23803), Montgomery, ALA (36104), Cumberland, MD (21502)	1.69%	$29,346

Continued

BOX 8.1 *Continued*

Rank/Name	For Selected Clusters: Date Defined as Cluster/ Previous Rank	Thumbnail Demographics	Some High-Usage Products & High Media Uses	Sample Neighborhoods	% of the U.S. Population	MHI (Median Household Income)
SER 64 BEDROCK AMERICA		Multiethnic: African-American, White, Hispanic. Blue-collar jobs. Living in towns or rural places. One-quarter in mobile homes. High school grad or some high school. Under 45 w/ kids.	Haven for fishing, hunting, hiking, camping. Own tent, horse. Buy rap music. Go rollerskating. *Vibe, Parenting, Soap Opera Digest*. "Maury," "The Jerry Springer show." Pro wrestling fans. Chevy Silverado.	Greenville, MS (38701)	1.81%	$27,581
Urban Poor or Nearly Poor						
SER 59 URBAN ELDERS		Multiethnic: White, Asian, African-American, Hispanic. Living in downscale apts in down-town areas of bigger metro areas. Mostly retired renters. Some high school. 55+ w/o kids.	Daytime TV, "Noticiero Telemundo," "Maury," Hispanic radio. *Black Enterprise*. Eat fast food hamburgers. Toyota Corolla.	Roxbury, MA (02019), Chicago, IL (60612)	1.32%	$23,301
SER 61 CITY ROOTS		Multiethnic: White, African-American, Hispanic. Lower-income, urban retirees. Many widows, widowers on fixed incomes with low-key lifestyles. Some high school. 65+.	Daytime TV, "Noticiero Telemundo." Member, veterans' club. Stamp collecting. *WSJ Report*. *AARP The Magazine*. Hyundai Accent.	Detroit,MI (48214)	1.15%	$36,943
SER 65 BIG CITY BLUES		Multiethnic: African-American, White, Asian, Hispanic. More than 50 % Latino. Concentrated in major metro areas. Young singles, single parent families. Some high school. Under 45. Renters.	Play soccer. Eat at Sizzler. Do needlepoint. Buy rap music. Use laundromat. "Noticiero Telemundo," "Maury," Hispanic radio. *Vibe*. Nissan Sentra.	Sections of the Bronx, New York City (e.g., 10460)	1.12%	$29,946
SER 66 LOW-RISE LIVING		Multiethnic: African-American, White, Hispanic. Transient, poorest urban cluster. Young singles & young parents (under 45). Some high school. Low home values, mostly renters.	Watch syndicated TV. East fast food burgers. Buy Spanish/Latin music, rap music. Eat at White Castle, Sizzler, Jack in the Box. Use laundromat. "Noticiero Telemundo," "Maury." *Vibe, Essence, Black Enterprise*. Hispanic radio. Hyundai Accent.	Sections of the Bronx, New York City (in ZIP Code 10460)	1.43%	$22.88

Source: Claritas Nielsen Company Used by permission.

* A ZIP code can, and often does, contain multiple lifestyle clusters.Claritas Nielsen uses the cluster most-often occuring in each ZIP code to define the cluster rank. For clusters SER 65 and SER 66, I could not find any Zip codes (there is no information given for many ZIP codes) that were primarily defined as above, but there were sections in the ZIP codes so defined.

** Change can happen fast. Fallouts from U.S. subprime mortgage lendind situation and the financial crisis will undoubtedly impact PRIZM's next rankings. Take, for example, a Winner's Circle cluster of 2006: 94531: From January to August, 2007, ZIP Code 94531 in Antioch, California, experienced 525 foreclosures, the highest rate—23.1 per 1,000 homes—in the San Francisco Bay Area (home to 236 ZIP Codes). Antioch, CA also experienced the region's biggest drop in housing prices: a 15 percent from May 2006 to August 2007. (See Kelly Zito et al, "Neighborhoods Crumble in Wave of Foreclosures," San *Francisco Chronicle*, October 14, 2007: 1+.) If these conditions continue, we can expect Antioch's rank—as well as many other ZIP Code areas—to change radically in future PRIZM rankings.

the United States as separating individuals into thousands of insular tribes, it is happening. People in the United States cluster in increasingly homogeneous communities. And they are far from alone globally.

This brings us back to the two-sided face of community. To live near people one has "more in common with" or feels "comfortable with" usually means to live near people like oneself. To some, this is an ideal. For example, the St. Johnsbury, Vermont's, Preface to the Town Plan suggests that people *need* "spiritual unity" and to pass on "*the* basic cultural inheritance." But whose inheritance? Only in a homogeneous community is there one agreed-on culture.

This brings us to the other face of community: parochialism and insularity. In other words, the price of feeling a sense of we-ness and community with members of a small group is estrangement from people unlike those in the group.

Questions of democracy also arise. In a small community, the possibility of the majority's tyranny over the minority looms large. There is also the problem of scale: "Democratic" decisions at the micro-level can be restrictive, even oppressive, to outsiders and harmful to the society as a whole. For instance, is it democratic if a group of 2,000 or 20,000 keeps people unlike themselves out of the neighborhood (e.g., by passing restrictive zoning regulations or by prohibiting children), thus ensuring homogeneity?

Are we doomed to live either without individual freedom in local community or without close bonds in cosmopolitan society? Can any real-life community meet the dual challenge of (1) encouraging personal freedom and openness to new ideas and (2) providing intimacy and cohesive social bonds? There seem to be no easy answers to these questions.

PLACELESS, FACELESS COMMUNITIES: INTERCONNECTIVITIES

There are a few "places" that don't identify "residents" as members of either high-, middle-, or low-status ZIP codes. These places (or "nonplaces") may be instrumental in forging a new sense of we-ness among people of different ages, backgrounds, status positions, and tastes. To some, these "communities" meet the challenge: They guarantee freedom and provide intimacy.

"Residents" may be shut-ins, geographically distant folks, family members, students, or people sharing a particular interest (chess, games, conspiracy politics, etc.). Whichever, growing numbers of such "residents" spend hours daily communicating electronically with people they've never seen or met in any traditional manner. Students and faculty have a particular interest in the Internet, mobile phones, and allied telecommunications because they can be academic goldmines. First, courses offered online increase annually. Second, teleconferences can cross costly travel barriers, bringing together distant students and teachers. Third, scholars and students can share their findings and get feedback quickly, thus bypassing the much longer process of publishing an article or book.

In addition, Internet use is changing how many people, especially young people, communicate. A 2008 study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project (in Jesdanum, 2008:A5) showed that teens who blog or use sites like Facebook or MySpace often use "nonstandard" elements of speech–such as "LOL"—in written school assignments. This means, perhaps, that the digitally connected may increasingly share a language of informal writing that their elders neither comprehend nor respect.

Mobile phones may be changing communication patterns too. In European Union (EU) member countries (which had over 85 percent "teledensity" by 2004, the highest rate in the world [see Castells et al., 2007:12]; the EU has since expanded) and other places, notably the United States, the widespread diffusion of mobile phones may be leading to a separate youth subculture with peer-to-peer networks.

Do such mobile phone users and computer networkers constitute a community? On the one hand, social relationships carried on by impersonal technologies seem to be an oxymoron like "jumbo shrimp" [deleted standard deviation à la Andrew's note, now disappeared; comma may remain-I cant tell....] On the other hand, computers and mobile phones promote a new sort of interconnectivity that is both placeless and faceless. People meet in no place or cyberspace—a keyboard-connected computerland of shared information and inner secrets.

Most computer users think that some cyberspace meet-up groups are virtual communities—"places that

are no place." Some say that they feel "in" something. Many who share an issue, say, surviving breast cancer, use online "communities" to share emotions as well as information. Many such users see themselves as members of a real community. Members of some online networks, such as abuse support groups, agree.

But critics are not so sure. Some claim that there is a significant difference between virtual and real communities: Only in real communities is there a sense of responsibility to fellow members.

To conclude: "Human identity," philosophizes architect Christian Norberg-Schulz, "is to a high extent a function of places and things" ([1979] 1984:21). He argues that individual identity and physical environment have been linked for centuries. But if the human identity–physical place relationship existed historically, it is being changed, perhaps destroyed, by computers and telecommunications. Indeed, "the digitization of the entire world," as reporter John Markoff (1994) once called the global spread of electronic media, may change the very definitions of "human identity" and "place." Manuel Castells and his coauthors (2007) imply that social life and individual identity are being transformed by mobile communications.

Observers from many disciplines and fields insist that electronic media affect social relationships and human identity in deeply significant ways. Some stress the impact of television or newer technologies, such as texting, in changing our feeling of connectedness and offering users a wider but shallower sense of community.

Ever-increasing numbers of people spend hours "together" on the Internet. These exchanges of ideas depend on having unique e-mail addresses, not similar SERs or lifestyles. Indeed, in this setting, the concepts of local—and national and international—addresses become meaningless.

The impacts of newer, citizen-based media such as YouTube and Godtube are being studied now. Already, we have seen a few impacts. For one, reputations can be affected in a nanosecond. Take the 2006 political campaign for the U.S. Senate. A camera phone captured one candidate's unscripted racist remark, which was played almost instantaneously on YouTube. The upshot: The candidate dropped out of the race.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

A STRUCTURAL APPROACH TO COMMUNITY

Excluding hermits, people are not isolated. Instead, they belong to "communities" and/or social networks. Analyzing these networks is another approach to studying how contemporary people maintain a sense of connection.

Network theory was pioneered by Elizabeth Bott (1957). It is associated with the work of sociologists Barry Wellman (1979), Mark Granovetter (1973), and Claude Fischer (1982). (John P. Scott's 2000 text tries to simplify some of the more complicated mathematical procedures used in applying this approach.) It is based on four interrelated premises:

1. *Gesellschaft* and *Techno$chaft* are not socially "disorganized" (as Tönnies and early urban theorists thought); modern institutions and processes, particularly the highly specialized division of labor and physical and social mobility, are tools for individual freedom.
2. People are involved in a "web of group affiliation" (Simmel, [1922] 1955), with varying intensities and degrees of stability.
3. Social structure is not spatially bounded in contemporary life.
4. Social networks play a variety of roles, from helping people to find jobs, spreading gossip, and offering social support and friendship to bridging the gap between different social worlds.

To illustrate this perspective's basic concepts, consider one of your networks—say, your friendship or work network. First, put yourself at the center of the network (called an "egocentric network" because you are at the center). Then try to determine your network's *range* (from narrow to wide, depending on the number of direct contacts you have within the network), its *stability* over time, and its *density* (from close-knit to loose-knit; density is the proportion of actual connections among network members compared with the possible number of connections if all members were connected to the entire network). Next, look at the nature of the social ties. Are they *single-stranded* (one-dimensional, as in the case of you and a bank teller, who interact only about a banking transaction)

or *multistranded* (multidimensional: say, you and the bank teller interact in many roles—you raise children together as mates, play soccer, and care for your aged aunt together)? Are the ties strong, as in warm friendships with reciprocity, emotional intensity, and frequent contact, or weak, as in acquaintanceships that are peripheral and less intense?

Network analysts offer the following kinds of insights based on their empirical studies:

1. *Ubiquity*. Most people, whether urban, suburban, or rural, maintain close social ties with people outside their own households.
2. *Number and kinds of ties*. Rural dwellers have no more close social ties than urbanites or suburbanites; all have about the same number of close bonds. However, the kind of involvement differs: People in small towns and nonmetropolitan areas are more involved with kinfolk; urbanites and suburbanites are more involved with nonkin friends.
3. *Homogeneity*. Close associates tend to be similar in age, income level, religious preference, education, marital status, and occupational level. However, some groups tend to have more heterogeneous networks than others in terms of ethnicity and religion (ethnoreligion). For example, Laumann (1973) found that urban Protestants were more likely to be in networks that were occupationally alike but ethnoreligiously much more mixed than either Catholics or Jews.
4. *Strength of weak ties*. Weak ties are very useful; they can bridge diverse networks. Typically, strong ties are forged with people of similar backgrounds. While strong ties may provide emotional security, they can limit opportunities. For example, Boston's Italian American "urban villagers" studied by Gans ([1962] 1982) had such strong ties in the West End and so few weak ties outside the close-knit circle that they missed out on valuable information carried by weak ties, including political gossip about the city's plans to tear down their neighborhood.

   Note: People located anywhere in cyberspace can share interests and information, from job openings and recipes to wellness hints, without meeting face-to-face. Developing "friends" or social contacts online at social networking sites may represent a new kind of weak tie. (Already, employment counselors suggest buoying up networks in flush times as well as lean times.) No doubt this will be the subject of future social science research.
5. *Strength of strong ties*. In general, urban villages—low-income, ethnic city neighborhoods such as Boston's former West End—are characterized by strong ties; they tend to function more as subcommunities than do upper-income, more ethnically heterogeneous neighborhoods. In such parochial (rather than cosmopolitan) urban enclaves, strong ties provide an important support system where residents routinely exchange tools, resources, and favors. However, Gans is careful not to romanticize the West End's distinct working-class subculture. He says that the area was "not a charming neighborhood of 'noble peasants' living in an exotic fashion…and overflowing with a cohesive sense of community"; rather, it was a "run-down area of people struggling with the problems of low income, poor education, and related difficulties" ([1962] 1982:16).
6. *Mobility*. Both geographic mobility and social mobility are heavily influenced by social ties. Most often, job seekers find employment information and get chosen over others with the same qualifications for a job because they have connections (the "who you know" factor) through weakly tied persons. In terms of geographic mobility, close ties play a key role in the creation of ethnic neighborhoods via "chain migration." *Chain migration* happens when prospective movers get survival information and jobs in a new place arranged for them by closely tied previous migrants, normally kinfolk or coethnics. In recent times, chain migration has become an issue for those wanting to limit immigration to the United States. For example, a blog in 2008 posted this excerpt from Americans for Better Immigration, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization which

Fig. 8.5 A COMMUNITY OF EXTREMELY LIMITED LIABILITY. Dogs cavort at an off-leash dog park in Berkeley, California, while their human companions schmooze. The dog park is somewhat like a neighborhood bar; most human visitors (predominantly women in this case) are regulars, arriving at about the same time of day and talking to the same people. Rarely do the humans know one another's names, but many know the names of each dog regular. (Barbara Cohen)

"lobbies Congress for reductions in immigration numbers."

Chain Migration refers to the endless and often-snowballing chains of foreign nationals who are allowed to immigrate because previous immigrants can send for ADULT relatives.... Because each of those can then bring in their own adult relatives and nuclear family, a single immigrant can eventually be responsible for the arrival in the United States of his/her aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, first cousins, second cousins once-removed, in a spiraling chain that eventually could reach most of the world's 6 billion-plus residents. (http://michiganredneck.wordpress.com/2008/03/08/no-milk-and-cookies/).

7. *Single-stranded ties.* A person's neighborhood is not the only warm nest for birds of a feather. As Louis Wirth and many others have suggested, shared interests bring the flock together too. A shared interest is often the basis for a single-stranded tie, resulting in only minimal mutual responsibility. In some cases, it is the foundation for what might be called "communities of extremely limited liability." (Sociologist Morris Janowitz coined the term "community of limited liability" back in 1952. He meant that a local community today resembles a corporation: Neither has total liability for its members.) Members—if we can even call them by such a

name—of a community of extremely limited liability have very limited expectations of one another, but they maintain regular social interaction (Figure 8.5). Here are some examples:

a. The Chicago "Court Buffs" are a group of men and women—mostly not lawyers—who watch federal trials every day. They debate and analyze the lawyers' performances. They have a kind of bond, but they rarely see one another outside a Federal court.
b. Members of 12-step groups offer support focused on a particular need—say, avoiding alcohol, gambling, overeating, or cocaine.
c. People who pray or study Scripture together—the most common type of limited-liability community in the United States.

Interestingly, these groups complement (rather than clash with) U.S. values of individualism and personal growth. Such groups demand little but give participants a sense of feeling good about themselves (Wuthnow, 1994).

To conclude: Even without formal study, many people understand the importance of social networks. Indeed, understanding how social networks operate is relevant to a range of practical and theoretical pursuits, including getting a job and choosing a college or university. (Some families understand this and are willing, if able, to pay for family members to profit from, say, graduating from prestigious Harvard University rather than a community college. Why? Better educational opportunities may be only part of the reason; the hope for better social connections may play a significant role.)

WHAT NOW, WHAT NEXT?

GATED COMMUNITIES

Privacy, prestige, and protection—those are the promises of a relatively recent international phenomenon: gated communities (GCs) (Blakely and Snyder, [1997] 1999). Few residents of GCs see themselves as living in architecturally or environmentally cutting-edge communities. That is not their draw. But GCs, in both cities and suburbs, are proliferating across the globe today (see Chapter 7).

GCs are residential neighborhoods enclosed by fences, walls, landscaping, or other physical barriers designed to protect the people, homes, and all facilities (e.g., pool) from "them" or "outsiders"—those who don't live there. Typically, GCs are run by self-governing homeowner associations, which can establish restrictions, including who can live there.

Although such privatized areas in the United States began in the nineteenth century for the wealthy and white (e.g., Tuxedo Park in New York), one researcher and her colleagues (Vesselinov et al., 2007) believe that this is no longer the case. They say that gated living is no longer only for the top tier of U.S. society. Rather, gated enclaves are spreading across the middle class, as well as across minority groups.

Why do so many people choose GCs? Some move into GCs because their options are limited: Developers build most new homes there, as in Las Vegas. Some movers seek security from fear and crime. Others wish to avoid rubbing shoulders with people unlike themselves. Some are concerned with maintaining their property values. Others seek a sense of community. Sociological researchers Vesselinov et al. (2007) conclude that the increase of GCs in the United States results from both (1) consumers' wants and (2) the marketing strategies of planners and developers. We can intuit from Mike Davis's book *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in L.A.* ([1990] 1992:chapter 15) that he would add a particular consumer desire: escape from fear.

What about the social impacts of GCs? Many scholars (e.g., Blakely and Snyder [1997] 1999) are alarmed by the recent and rapid increase in the number of U.S. GCs because they fear that "gating up," or "forting up," extends residential segregation, increases social separation and fragmentation, and leads to more urban inequality.

GCs are increasing worldwide. From Shanghai (Fig. 8.2) to the Côte d'Azur, residents are gating up. In India, for example, many exclusive enclaves have emerged outside prospering cities. A resident of Hamilton Court, a suburban GC outside high-tech Bengaluru,India calls it "a kind of self-contained island" (in Sengupta, 2008); Hamilton Court boasts a private school, manicured lawns, and security guards

and it's located just across the street from a shantytown, which houses its servants.

GRAND DREAMS AND GRANDIOSE SCHEMES

Living in GCs, technoburbs, and megalopolises. Romanticizing rural retreats. These are some responses to urban growth in the past 30+ years.

What about the next 30 years? Here, we enter a mind-boggling realm where proposals range from cities floating in space to cities below the earth and sea. Imagine, for example, "commuting" daily from Los Angeles to Boston. It might take only 21 minutes by a passenger train powered by pollution-free magnetic levitation.

Gerard K. O'Neill, professor of physics at Princeton University, envisioned even grander technological projects before his death in 1992. It may sound like science fiction, but he wrote in 1977 that it is "almost inevitable" that humans will "break out" from earth, creating permanent colonies in space that could house up to 10,000 people. And what would life be like in these orbiting cities? (*Note*: O'Neill died before an earth-like planet was detected in 2007, ingloriously named Gliese 581c. Located over 120.5 trillion miles from earth, Gliese 581c may be habitable, astronomers say; this led London bookies to lower the odds on extraterrestrial life from 1,000 to 1 to 100 to 1.)

While O'Neill touted human colonies in space, others look to a Jules Verne-like vision: cities beneath the sea. Some envision a marine civilization with underwater urban structures.

At present, cities below and above the earth are only a twinkle in the visionaries' eye. But even if they remain just a twinkle, the potential of such space-age cities may spur our collective imagination to redesign earthbound settlements. Likewise, imaginings of the future—from cultural historian William Irwin Thompson's (1978) generation-old vision of new "metaindustrial" villages and smaller, decentralized, symbiotic cities and Richard Register's (1987) carless "eco-city" to Robert Reich's (1991) two-tier society, composed of the successful 20 percent and the unsuccessful 80 percent, to some socialist-feminist visions of a classless, gender-equal society shake our most basic assumptions about what is and what ought to be (see Chapter 17). Essentially, visionaries, whether scholars, mystics, science fiction writers, or artists, are moralists; they comment on good and evil in the present while presenting alternatives for the future. Long may the imaginers live to enliven our sense of possibility! As a congressperson put it some years back, "Unless we try to visualize what is beyond the horizon, we will always occupy the same shore" (Brown, 1993:B2).

ANOTHER LOOK

For a change, theorists seem to agree on a basic point: Urban–industrial–capitalist society is too big, too specialized, and too heterogeneous to promote a sense of community except within smaller subcommunities. But on the question of what to do about this situation, if anything, consensus breaks down.

Differences in ideology and historical perspective are the basis of dissent over questions of modern community. Decentralists like William Irwin Thompson (1978) think that communications technology permits a return to a smaller-scale, more humane village life without the parochialism of preindustrial communities. In this view, the global village is possible without reinventing what Marx called the "idiocy of rural life." Centralists, on the other hand, tend to be prourban. Those in the Marxist tradition look to the radical restructuring of economic and political institutions as the precondition for reconstituting a sense of community by abolishing inequality and oppression. Ultraconservatives argue that secular modern urbanites cannot handle freedom, democracy, and advanced technology; a return to benevolent, authoritarian, religious rule is one answer for them. Other conservatives wish for a Jeffersonian past. Meanwhile, numerous philosophers are skeptical about whether *any* form of human social organization—urban, suburban, or rural—can encourage both personal freedom and intimate social bonds.

Theory aside, there seems to be a growing recognition that members of the global community share common concerns, perhaps a common fate. Since Hiroshima, Chernobyl, and melting ice caps, an understanding of the destructive power of technology—destruction that cannot be contained by

political borders—combined with the spread of a global economy and culture have alerted us to our interdependence.

This situation is reflected in language. "Afghanistanism" was once a term newspaper editors used to refer to the preference for stories about far-away, exotic places over hard-hitting, close-to-home news. That term disappeared almost overnight in 1980 when Soviet troops marched into Afghanistan, and no term has replaced it. Perhaps this signals the idea that no place on earth is now so remote as to deserve our ignorance or lack of concern.

KEY TERMS

Cyberbia A postsuburban human settlement in an information-based, electronic (cybernetic) society.

Edge city Joel Garreau's book title (1991) and term for any place outside the central city that contains the following: (1) at least 5 million square feet of leasable office space, which is more than downtown Memphis; (2) at least 600,000 square feet of leasable retail space—the equivalent of a fair-sized mall; and (3) more jobs than bedrooms. In addition, these places (4) were merely bedroom communities or semirural places as recently as the early 1960s but now (5) are seen by the local population as one place that "has it all"—jobs, shopping, and entertainment.

Lifestyle cluster A term used by Nielsen Claritas, a marketing firm, to distinguish neighborhoods in the United States and elsewhere. Clusters, given colorful names such as "Blue Blood Estates" and "Shotguns and Pickups," are ranked from top to bottom. Status rankings are based on residents' household income, home value, education, and occupation. A key assumption of cluster analysis (and other geodemographic systems) is that birds of a feather flock together.

Mass society An imprecise term, used in the sense of *Gesellschaft*. Usually viewed as large-scale, urban-industrial society characterized by loss of traditional community ties, dependence on mass (instead of face-to-face) communications, and impersonal social relations.

Postsuburbia A spatial form pioneered in Los Angeles in the 1920s and 1930s and developed elsewhere after World War II, characterized by a complex, decentralized mix of urban, suburban, and rural space and a mix of residents in terms of class and ethnicity.

Suburbia Negative term, a stereotype of the suburbs created by social critics in the 1950s, connoting ugliness, tacky construction, middle-class mediocrity, and conformism.

Technoburb A perimeter city or zone, perhaps as large as a county, that is functionally independent of the central city and can generate urban diversity without urban concentration; it is made possible by technologically advanced industries. Its residents meet their work, housing, and other needs in their immediate surroundings. The term was coined by Robert Fishman, author of *Bourgeois Utopias* (1987).

PROJECTS

1. **ZIP codes and postal codes as communities.** First, walk through two residential neighborhoods that appear, on the surface, to represent different neighborhood types or SERs. Record—but do not judge—what you see: Alfa Romeos? motorcycles? pickup trucks? private security? tricycles? single-family, large houses on tree-lined streets? condos? multiunit apartments? the *New York Times* on the doorstep? ale bottles? toy-sized dogs? remnants of TV dinners? imported French wine bottles and/or freeze-dried coffee jars in the curbside recycle container? Then, using U.S. Census of Population and Housing data (plus any proprietary data you can find, perhaps in a business library, organized by ZIP codes), check out the residents' median income, ethnic background, presidential voting records, home value, and occupations. Based on the information you've collected, in what SERs would you place the two neighborhoods?

2. **Neighborhoods as communities.** Do people in your city's neighborhoods feel a sense of community? Choose two neighborhoods and try to find out how residents perceive and feel about social relationships there. Construct a short questionnaire, including background questions on age and ethnicity and questions on the use of neighborhood facilities. Personally administer the question-

naire to residents, perhaps a nonrandom sample of 20 persons. Are there differences between respondents in the two neighborhoods concerning their social relationships? If so, why might this be? (*Note*: Don't generalize on the basis of your nonrandom sample. That is, avoid all claims about what "people" say or do; report only what your *respondents* say or say they do.)

3. **Social networks.** Choose two novels and trace the social networks of the main characters in each. Are their relationships close- or loose-knit, multi- or single-stranded? Do their webs of affiliation differ? If so, what difference does it make to the story and to the characters' feelings?

4. **Social networks.** How might the Internet be affecting social networks, particularly those of young adults and elders? First, see what others have written about the possible impacts and do a review of the key notions. Then, weigh in with your own observations.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER LEARNING

The social science literature on suburbs is extensive. Unsurprisingly, scholars hold a variety of opinions on the topic. Marxist David Harvey contends that suburban growth served an extremely political purpose. In his major study *The Urbanization of Capital* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), geographer Harvey argued that suburbanization was but one "bourgeois response" to the ghetto riots of the 1960s; the aim was to disperse potential revolutionaries who were highly concentrated in cities.

For a historical study of one suburb, see *Westchester: The American Suburb, 1875–2000*, Roger Panetta, editor (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006). The forward was written by one of the United States's keenest observers of suburbs, Kenneth T. Jackson.

In "Between the County and the Concrete: Rediscovering the Rural–Urban Fringe," Jeff S. Sharp and Jill K. Clark (in *City & Community* 2008;7(1):61–79) find in their research in Ohio that rural–urban distinctions are not as helpful as rural–urban fringe differences. For example, they found that people living in the urban fringe differ from both urbanities and suburbanites (74).

Rants against suburbia did not end in the 1960s. See, for example, James Howard Kunstler, *The Long Emergency: Surviving the End of Oil, Climate Change, and Other Converging Catastrophes of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Grove Press, [2005], 2006), and Elizabeth Farrelly, *Blubberland: The Dangers of Happiness* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008).

One strain of anti-suburbanism concerns the supposed lack of spirituality and/or religiosity there. Two books in this tradition are *Death by Suburb: How to Keep the Suburbs from Killing Your Soul* (New York: Harper One, 2007) by Dave L. Goetz and Albert Y. Hsu, *The Suburban Christian: Finding Spiritual Vitality in the Land of Plenty* (Westmont. IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006). (Note that the publisher of Hsu's book is a division of the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA.)

First published in 1961 and made into a motion picture in 2008 (starring Leonard DiCaprio and Kate Winslet), Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road* (New York: Vintage, 2008) is a searing critique of U.S. suburban life. The novel and movie suggest that the United States may have been founded on revolutionary principles, but it now (and in the 1950s) celebrates spirit-crushing conformity, symbolized by the suburbs.

TV satires of the suburbs are alive and well. One, critically acclaimed cable TV's *Weeds* (Showtime, 2005–), stars Mary Louise Parker as a suburban U.S. housewife whose husband dies of a heart attack and who then turns to drug dealing to support her family.

Thirty-five years after William Whyte's *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956), Paul Leinberger, a son of one of the original "organization men," and Bruce Tucker published their study, *The New Individualists: The Generation After the Organization Man* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991). They claim that while their parents valued consumption, sociability, and a sales mentality, their generation values creativity, subjectivity, and the artistic.

More than a half-century after three Levittowns were built in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, two of the three still fit the former stereotype. But Levittown, New Jersey (renamed Willingboro), does not. Ironically, this suburb—where builder Levitt once refused to sell to African Americans—is now majority

African American. In "Race and Place in Willingboro, NJ," Karen Beck Pooley comments that

> In today's Willingboro, the homes look the same but the faces have changed. And because the faces are different, the perception of the town's condition and the level of its property values stand in stark contrast to the New York and Pennsylvania Levittowns—confirming that the link between race and real estate is alive and well decades after the judicial and legislative repudiation of exclusionary zoning and other discriminatory practices. (June 2003): http://www.dreampioneers.org/id20.html.

In just one generation, very rich people in the United States seem to have changed their wants. According to Les Cristie's article, "Living Rich: What the Wealthy Want in a Home" (CNNMoney.com/Netscape May 9, 2006), the wealthiest people in the United States—the top 0.05% of the population in terms of assets–want very large homes, what others call "McMansions."

Those interested in telecommuting or working near home will be buoyed in spirit by some current practices. In some cities, people can drive a few miles to a telecommuting center. Or they can use groupware to work together. And some businesses and government agencies encourage employees with computer-related jobs to work at home a few days each week.

In his often amusing and pointed study *Richistan: A Journey Through the American Wealth Boom and the Lives of the New Rich* (New York: Crown, 2007), *Wall Street Journal* columnist Robert Frank looks at what Nielsen Claritas considers the top SERs in the United States.

For a discussion of network analysis that requires some sophisticated understanding of math, see Ulrik Brandes and Thomas Erlebach, *Network Analysis: Methodological Foundations* (New York: Springer, 2005). Several chapters involve connectivity.

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