

## the pop sociology of suburbs and new towns

Because Professor Fava, in the review article below, discusses a very large number of books and articles, we decided not to place at the head of this review the usual bibliographical information. The reader is directed to her footnotes, which identify the works under consideration, and distinguish between those which she considers "pop sociology" and those which she calls "professional." In this piece, in short, friends, you can't tell the players without the small print.

—SGL

The mid-twentieth century is a sociologizing age, as the early twentieth was a psychologizing period, and still earlier periods were dominated by biological and mechanical frames of reference. We hear sociologizing at cocktail parties and kaffeeklatsches, in corporate boardrooms and in laundry rooms—and sometimes even in sociology classrooms. The household words and themes of pop sociology include *anomie*, alienation, the Protestant Ethic, intergroup relations, the "empty nest stage" of family life, mass society, the generation gap, participatory democracy, the "other directed type," conflict, the role of women, the "power elite" and the "establishment" and, of course, the urban crisis.

In many ways the world is now viewed in sociological images—groups, affiliations, social class and social mobility, deviance and control, the processes of change, the structure of institutions, demographic and ecological balance. We have now reached the point where few college freshmen have to be taught that socialization has another meaning than the nationalization of steel and coal production. Sociological thinking has become part of what John Kenneth Galbraith called "the conventional wisdom—the structure of ideas that is based on acceptability."<sup>1</sup>

Much of the sociology we find around us is pop sociology. The overriding characteristic of pop sociology is that it involves no suspension of judgment or assessment of evidence and is therefore stereotyped and unscientific. Pop sociology's second major feature—the ideological, moral or evaluative tenor of its statements—is linked to its stereotyped approach and, in fact, often explains why such an approach was applied. These two defining traits of pop sociology lead to a host of subsidiary characteristics. Pop sociology is "instant"—it never fails of an answer because judgment is seldom suspended. It is simple and clear. Indeed it is oversimplified, for it has few definitions or delineations of statements; pop sociology is relatively untested. It is also all-encompassing; it applies sociological approaches broadly to all areas and topics. Pop sociology is

often geared to a wide audience in response to a social "crisis." In sum, pop sociology may be provocative but it is also superficial, often to the point of inaccuracy or confusion. Pop sociology is not new; it is deep-seated and probably as old as sociology. What is new is the widespread currency of pop sociology.

As indicated above, the most important characteristic of pop sociology is its lack of rigor or systematic thought. Pop sociology is seldom empirical or "factual" but that is not its crucial lack; whether empirical or speculative it fails in giving a reasoned base and thorough search. These very failings give pop sociology its virtues. Precisely because it is free-flowing and unfettered by a broad conceptual apparatus, pop sociology may provide useful insights. One of the uses of pop sociology lies in providing hypotheses for new research. Unfortunately this is not typically the course of pop sociology; rather it is offered, without *caveats*, to a wide public as "answers" and conclusions.

Although usually presented in simple language, pop sociology must be distinguished from the attempts to "translate" technical sociological concepts, language and findings into layman's terms. Such "translation" is the aim of the project, Sociological Resources for the Social Studies, sponsored by the American Sociological Association and supported by the National Science Foundation. The volume on urban sociology is a notably successful attempt at clearing out the underbrush and presenting the major contributions in a responsible, interesting and lucid way.<sup>2</sup>

Several illustrations may clarify the nature of pop sociology. The youth rebellion, particularly on campuses, is the focus of pop sociology that we are probably most familiar with at the present time. The explanations include affluence and poverty, each of which is used to "explain" disregard of property and propriety; permissive parents who don't keep their offspring in line and restrictive parents who have to be rebelled against; rebellious youth is characterized as still struggling to find itself via identity crises and is also characterized as exceptionally mature and clearthinking.<sup>3</sup> A year or so ago the major focus of pop sociology was the "culture of poverty" in which the concepts of culture and subculture were bandied about so loosely as to be almost shapeless, particularly when they were applied to discussion of the lower-class black family.

Pop sociology is widespread in the mass media and practiced by the "man in the street." But it is also often found among professional social scientists themselves, particularly when they are pressed into making quick analyses of profound issues for a waiting public. Thus, an issue of the *New York Times Magazine*<sup>4</sup> featured a symposium, "Is America by Nature a Violent Society?" in which the following analyses were made:

However repulsive and shocking H. Rap Brown's quip may seem—"Violence is as American as cherry pie"—his motive for saying it must not obscure the fact that he was telling it like it is.

The American white-collar set have so little direct experience with violence that it is difficult for them to conceive of it as an ever-present reality—or possibility—in a person's daily life, although they know that the Indians were herded onto the reservations by force, that violence was used both to keep Negroes in slavery and to free them, and that assault and battery, rape and murder occur every now and then. The older people in the labor movement know something

of the historic confrontations between trade unionists and the forces of law and order, though young workers know almost nothing of the great labor struggles of the past. Negroes understand the reality of violence better than most Americans, for most of them have witnessed it in varied forms, even if they have not experienced it. But all Americans need to face the fact that American society—as compared with some others in the world—is a very violent society. Self-delusion is self-defeating. We can never lower the level of violence unless we admit that it is omnipresent and understand the forces that generate it. (St. Clair Drake)

The next participant in the symposium says:

In a period which has seen the German massacre of the Jews, the communal horrors of Indian partition, the convulsive destructiveness of the last days of L'Algerie Francaise, the mass executions accompanying the Indonesian change of regime, the terrible civil wars in Nigeria and the Congo, and the wild riots in Sharpesville, it is difficult for the hardiest celebrant of the American Way of Life to claim for his country any special gift for violence. We are, it turns out, a people like any other. There is nothing particularly distinctive about the ways we destroy one another.

The notion that “violence is as American as cherry pie” is one more cliché which we invoke to prevent our seeing our situation for what it is . . . . (Clifford Geertz)

Why should we take pop sociology seriously? Perhaps for somewhat the same reasons that caused pop sociology to become prominent now: the predominantly *social* nature of many of the problems around us today: civil rights, family interaction, the aged, population growth and redistribution; the emergence of large-scale organization and bureaucracy in virtually every phase of life including the school, religion, and leisure; and the very rapid social change on a scale without precedent in human history. The pervading nature of these pressures leads to a sense of urgency in understanding and in finding solutions.

The urgency of our concern often produces elements of pop in the many attempts to apply social science, especially sociology, to policies and programs on specific current issues. Since so many of these current issues are urban-located or urban-related, approaches to urban phenomena are often infected with pop. The pressure on sociology and other social sciences for “answers” to the urban enigma are widespread. The pop approach and reform may often be related, as sociologically unsound or half-baked programs are put into effect based on *convictions* rather than evidence. Thus, a *belief* in participatory democracy—or in the stultifying impact of suburban life—may lead to projects or to individual and group actions which are not well-supported by data or logic. All action programs tend to be “arts” rather than “sciences,” as administrators know. Yet even a brief look at the community action field—whether the war on poverty, community control of schools, decentralization of government, advocacy planning, or other instances that might be cited—suggests that action programs often have in addition some pop qualities, pseudo-expertise and ideological bias, compounded by urgency, concern and widespread interest.

How is suburbia a manifestation of pop sociology? Suburbia has a legitimate claim as the first of the major social changes that attracted broad public attention and was widely disseminated through the mass media.<sup>5</sup> The "teenager" syndrome and the early Kinsey reports on sexual behavior are, I believe, the other two major examples of pop sociology in the immediate post-war period.

Suburbia entered the public awareness about the time World War II ended, when the building-boom in outlying areas became a visible signal of something new on the horizon. Sociologists had been studying and writing about metropolitan development, of which suburban development is a part, for several decades before then; United States suburbs themselves date at least into the latter part of the nineteenth century and had become widespread by 1920. It is neither the time lag between professional and public awareness nor the popularity of the topic which makes suburbia "pop," however, although these do enhance the process. It is the spurious accuracy and partisanship which make pop sociology of many public, and some professional, presentations of suburbia. The result is a debased public currency of suburbia.

The pop image of suburbia revolves around the related themes of a contrast between the central city and the suburb, and stultifying, homogeneous conformity. Thus, the suburbs are presented as bedroom communities, residential outposts of the white, educated, affluent middle class for which Scarsdale has become the national byword. The central cities are the home of the blacks, the poor, and the locales of the problems besetting American society. This stereotypical central city-suburban contrast has long since been shown false in the professional literature.

There is no one kind of suburb (neither is there one kind of city), hence there is no one central city-suburb contrast. It follows there are no uniquely urban or suburban problems. The sociologist Leo Schnore, has been working for at least a decade on detailing the various types of central city/suburban contrast and seeking the dynamics explaining the formation of types of metropolitan area.<sup>6</sup> Using education as an index of socio-economic status, he delineated six different patterns of variation between central city and suburb. Only one of these exemplified the pattern reflected in the pop conception of suburbs, in which the lowest classes are overrepresented in the central city and the higher the educational status the more suburbanized the population.<sup>7</sup> The New York metropolis exhibits this classic pattern, while Los Angeles exemplifies another and Tucson and Albuquerque still other patterns. The classic pattern appears to be associated with the larger metropolitan areas and those which are "older," that is, which reached large size relatively early. In the "newer" and smaller metropolitan areas suburbanization may not be so far advanced toward the classic pattern, or population may actually be redistributing in accord with newer, different industrial and transport processes.

On the basis of the professional literature, then, a simple contrast between high status suburbs and low status cities is at best only partly true. Similarly, if we turn to the pop picture of the stultifying and conformist nature of suburban life we find that professional sociology has shattered this image. At least as long ago as Bennett Berger's 1960 study,<sup>8</sup> there have been data available to show that suburbanites are not miraculously reborn in the suburban setting. Politics and voting behavior, religion, family life, personality formation, educational goals and practices, leisure pursuits, interactive patterns in the neighborhood and participa-

tion in voluntary organizations have all been put under the microscope in literally dozens of studies. They show there is no single way of suburban life nor any uniform effect of the suburban experience on those who live in suburbs.

The reality of the suburban impact on individuals' lives and thought is far more complex than pop sociology would lead us to believe. One study dealt with the question of whether there are distinctive suburban psychological characteristics, particularly the assertion that suburban residence fosters anti-intellectual attitudes.<sup>9</sup> The data included questionnaire responses from over 33,000 college seniors graduating in 1961 from 135 colleges in the United States. Initial comparisons showed no significant differences in intellectual attitudes between college seniors who had been raised in cities and those who had been raised in suburbs.

However, further analysis showed that there *is* a relationship between suburban residence and anti-intellectualism, but that it is more complex than commonly supposed. When the items measuring anti-intellectualism were cross-tabulated with the kind of communities students said they *wished* to live in rather than by the communities the students had grown up in, then the suburb-oriented students differed significantly from the urban-oriented students in anti-intellectualism. That is, those who indicated a *desire* to live in the suburbs were less likely to be concerned with access to cultural activities and less likely to think of themselves as intellectuals. The final analysis suggests that anti-intellectualism in suburbia is partly a result of family-cycle (more married students prefer suburbs and they are likely to have less time for intellectual activities), partly a result of selectivity (the students expressing a preference for suburban living are more anti-intellectual) and partly a result of the influence of community of origin (regardless of their marital status and intellectual attitudes, students who were brought up in suburbs more often expressed a desire to live in suburbs than those who had been raised in the city).

The vision of a homogeneous and conformist suburbia has been negated by sociological research, yet the pop version remains and continues to be spread by the mass media. Why? The answer, I think, lies in the ideological aspect of popness. The pop sociology of the suburbs is not only inaccurate, it is inaccurate for a reason. (In saying this, I do not mean that there exists a conscious plot to make it inaccurate.)

The ideological aspect of pop suburbia has two main components. The first relates to the persistence of the myth of homogeneity. According to one sociologist, the belief that suburbs are homogeneous operates to sustain a belief in the "American dream" of equals cooperating in a democratic society. The American dream is undermined by the realities of long-standing economic and ethnic differentiation and by our fundamental ambivalence toward melting-pot as opposed to pluralist development. In view of the flaws in the American dream it becomes important to reaffirm it in the major new setting of American life, the suburbs. Thus, the myth of the homogeneous, classless suburbia persists.<sup>10</sup>

Although the foregoing observations were based on impressionistic data they are lent some substance by Herbert Gans' study of Levittown, New Jersey, in which he concludes, after several years of participant-observation and close study that one of the shortcomings that Levittown shares with other American communities is an

inability to deal with pluralism. People have not recognized the diversity of American society, and they are not able to

accept other life styles. Indeed, they cannot handle conflict because they cannot accept pluralism. Adults are unwilling to tolerate adolescent culture, and vice versa. Lower middle class people oppose the ways of the working class and upper middle class, and each of these groups is hostile to the other two. Perhaps the inability to cope with pluralism is greater in Levittown than elsewhere because it is a community of young families who are raising children. Children are essentially asocial and unacculturated beings, easily influenced by new ideas. As a result, their parents feel an intense need to defend familial values; to make sure that their children grow up according to parental norms and not by those of their playmates from another class. The need to shield the children from what are considered harmful influences begins on the block, but it is translated into the conflict over the school, the definitional struggles within voluntary associations whose programs affect the socialization of children, and, ultimately into political conflicts. Each group wants to put its stamp on the organizations and institutions that are the community, for otherwise the family and its culture are not safe.<sup>11</sup>

The second ideological component of pop suburbs relates to the allegedly conformist, anti-intellectual features of suburban life. Most likely this evaluation is a function of the fact that most writers on suburbs are upper middle class intellectuals who are projecting onto the suburbs their dissatisfaction with the "bourgeois" and to them debased standards in lower middle class suburbs. Most recently this tendency has been revealed in the characterization of Spiro T. Agnew. One newspaper columnist, under the title, "The Sterile Paradise of Suburban Man," says:

Agnew's biography sounds like Warren Harding's might if Harding had been a character in a novel by Sinclair Lewis and Lewis had been writing in the 1960s. He [Agnew] is so typical of the new suburban man that he almost seems to parody his class. . . . The people to whom he speaks are at least as afraid of losing what they already possess as they are eager to acquire more. For every daydream of personal success they have two nightmares of armed, marauding Negroes who will burn down their communities. They do not want to nationalize the giant corporations . . . they only want the great businessmen they've been raised to respect . . . to protect them and stop encouraging their enemies, the black and the student dissenters. . . . And his audiences seem eager to live in the sterile paradise his speeches promise. As far as many of America's new suburbanites are concerned, Agnew, son of a poor Greek immigrant, the luckiest Horatio Alger in this country's history, is describing the enchanted, protected land their parents and grandparents came all this way to find.<sup>12</sup>

Another author says: ". . . Agnew the Vice President is no more than the commonplace made exceptional, the conventional made controversial, instinct promoted into intellect and suburbia made sublime."<sup>13</sup> This kind of bias would account for the lingering tendency of even professional

sociologists to write condescendingly of suburbs. To the upper middle class professional the "city" is the place where civilization resides.<sup>14</sup>

In the broadest sense it appears that the suburban myth of harmony, greenery and cultural kitsch is the contemporary staging ground for the long-standing American preference for rural life. In the modern age, when, through the sheer lack of farm experience on the part of the vast majority of the population, agrarianism has lost its force as a normative standard, the familiar dialogue between ruralism and urbanism may peter out. In place of the nineteenth-century discussions of whether the city or the country is more "civilized," we may have discussions of whether urban or suburban life is more "cultured." In place of the city versus the country debate we may have the city versus the suburb. This does not necessarily mean that suburbs are replacing the country in the sense of being rural; it does mean that the suburbs, like all community forms, have the power to arouse emotion and partisanship. As new community forms arise, they become invested with symbolic meaning and enter the arena of public opinion.

After studying the political structure of suburbs, Robert Wood, a political scientist, concluded that it represented a renaissance of the small-town and village ideal.<sup>15</sup> Suburban governments, according to Wood, are typically small, ineffective and expensive, unsuitable for coping with metropolitan area problems. Yet suburbanites stubbornly resist efforts at a consolidation into larger governmental jurisdictions, and small-scale suburban governments are, in fact, proliferating. Wood points out that the attachment to suburban government is ideological, stemming from a belief that the small community produces the best life, and the best government.

Suburbia, defined as an ideology, a faith in communities of limited size and a belief in the conditions of intimacy, is quite real. The dominance of the old values explains more about the people and politics of the suburbs than any other interpretation. Fundamentally, it explains the nature of the American metropolis. . . . If these values were not dominant it would be quite possible to conceive of a single gigantic metropolitan region under one government and socially conscious of itself as one community. The new social ethic, the rise of the large organization, would lead us to expect this development as a natural one. The automobile, the subway, the telephone, the power line certainly make it technically possible; they even push us in this direction.

But the American metropolis is not constructed in such a way; it sets its face directly against modernity. Those who wish to rebuild the American city, who protest the shapeless urban sprawl, who find some value in the organizational skills of modern society, must recognize the potency of the ideology. Until these beliefs have been accommodated reform will not come in the metropolitan areas nor will men buckle down to the task of directing, in a manner consonant with freedom, the great political and social organizations on which the nation's strength depends.<sup>16</sup>

It has become increasingly difficult to maintain the simple pop sociology view of suburbs as evidence mounts, from the 1970 census and other sources, of the diversity of suburbs and the increasing resemblance of

older suburbs to cities, in terms of structure and problems. Crime and delinquency rates have been rising rapidly in many suburbs, as has the drug problem; welfare, pollution, traffic congestion and unbalanced budgets have emerged as major issues; office decentralization has accelerated in many large metropolitan areas and some shopping centers have become miniature downtowns in the range and variety of goods and services offered—and as locales for vandalism and burglary, as congregating places for “undesirables.” “Black suburbs” have become increasingly important, although this trend does not appear to be accompanied by racial or economic integration, despite the mounting attack on suburban exclusionary zoning. Both the professional literature and the mass media have begun to reflect this new view of suburbia.<sup>17</sup>

Suburbs are now being succeeded by a new community focus of pop sociology, New Towns, the large planned communities of which Reston, Virginia, and Columbia, Maryland, are often cited as examples.<sup>18</sup> Suburbs were the focus of community pop sociology in the period of public awareness of metropolitan emergence; New Towns are the expression of community pop sociology in the era of the mature metropolis.

New Towns represent a new policy for the same set of needs expressed earlier in the image of suburbia. There is the same anti-urbanism, the fear and distrust of the city, expressed now in the desire to control and manage urban growth and density by carefully pre-cast new communities. As with suburbs there is also the same concern with diversity, the containment of conflict and the maintenance of outward harmony and equality. There are, however, two important ways in which New Towns contrast markedly with suburbs. First, New Towns, usually called New Communities in this context, have become a legislatively-enacted goal of the federal government. Although it has been argued that home mortgage legislation, subsidies for highway construction and other governmental policies indirectly fostered suburban expansion,<sup>19</sup> there was never specific suburban legislation.

The official support of the federal government for New Towns dates to the passage of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966. This Act expanded FHA mortgage coverage, through the Department of Housing and Urban Development, to include privately financed New Communities. However, these provisions were hedged with so many restrictions that the New Communities provisions were not put to effective use. Many of these restrictions were removed by the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, legislation which has been called the urban equivalent of the Homestead Act of 1862. Title IV of the 1968 Act, entitled “New Communities,” expanded the financial backing of New Communities and this prompted a large number of applications to HUD by private developers.<sup>20</sup> By 1971 five New Communities had received federal financial guarantees. The Housing and Urban Development Act of 1970, under Title VII, “Urban Growth and New Community Development,” carries federal support of New Towns several important steps further,<sup>21</sup> and has attracted widespread interest from private and public developers.<sup>22</sup> By Spring 1973 fifteen New Communities had received federal guarantees of the specified financial obligations.

The second major way in which New Towns in the United States contrast with suburbs is in the explicit concern in the New Towns with social issues. Thus, Title IV of the 1968 Act includes as one of the conditions of eligibility that the New Community include the “proper balance” of housing units for families of low and moderate income. The



1970 Act lists among the ten reasons for developing new communities that "continuation of established patterns of urban development . . . will result in . . . (1) unduly limited options for many of our people as to where they may live, and the types of housing and environment in which they live; . . . (2) further lessening of employment and business opportunities for the residents of central cities and of the ability of such cities to retain a tax base adequate to support vital services for all their citizens, particularly the poor and disadvantaged; (3) further separation of people within metropolitan areas by income and by race."<sup>23</sup> Each New Community proposal presented by HUD must contain a special social plan indicating how it proposes to implement the stated goals.

In understanding the social concerns of the New Communities legislation one must recognize that the New Towns movement in the United States gathered momentum in the 1960's in the wake of the "urban crisis." Important milestones in the mounting urban concerns of that period include the first message on cities to Congress by any President, President Johnson's March 1965 message on "Problems and Future of the Central City and Its Suburbs," and his February 1968 message, "The Crisis of Our Cities"; a series of comprehensive reports<sup>24</sup> documenting in staggering detail a group of urban problems: poverty, unparalleled growth, gross housing inadequacy, racial segregation, crime and violence; and the piecemeal recognition of the changing nature of the American city as metropolitan development entered a new phase heralded by suburban dominance.<sup>25</sup>

New Towns are clearly a matter of public policy. How does our public and professional view of them partake of pop sociology? Essentially because New Towns are seen as a solution to many urban and indeed national ills for which critical evidence on specific social questions involved is lacking or ambiguous. Ideology has taken the place of evidence; matters of belief have become accepted as matters of fact.

Such socially-relevant terms as "participation," "balance," "diversity" and "optimum size" have seldom even been defined in the context of New Towns discussion. New Towns involve assumptions regarding the nature and desirability of neighborhood interaction; high-rise and multi-family vs. low-rise and single-family homes; the impact of density and community size on the human psyche; the importance of propinquity as a catalyst for meaningful contact; the merits of community self-sufficiency; the benefits of diversity and balance; the manner in which housing choices are made; the virtues of local participation and decentralization.

An overview of the published work on New Towns indicates the pop nature of public and much professional thinking on the social goals of New Towns. There is a Niagara of material: for example, at least seven bibliographies on New Towns in the United States.<sup>26</sup> Allowing for duplication there are several thousand separate published books, articles and reports. They come from a broad spectrum of national circulation magazines (*Harper's*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Saturday Review*) and from the professionals journals, house organs and publications of sociologists, planners, architects, builders, large corporations, housers and public officials. The literature is overwhelmingly pro-New Town, indicating a broad dissemination and acceptance of the New Town idea, which is underscored by the passage of the 1970 Housing and Urban Development Act and by the testimony in its favor from witnesses representing a wide variety of groups.

Only a relatively small proportion of the published work deals with

the social aspects of New Towns in the United States; most treats architecture, design, finance, management and legislation. This emphasis seems significant in view of the importance of social goals both in the federal legislation and in many of the privately financed New Towns.

For the purpose of pop sociology, there are two significant characteristics of the existing socially-relevant material. First, the empirical material is typically fragmentary, low-level description with little possibility of generalizability. In this, the literature on the New Towns resembles the pop sociology of suburbia. The two are also alike in that definitional problems compound the difficulty of generalizing. One man's New Town is another's satellite city and still another's "large development." Second, much of the material has no empirical base at all, but is hortatory—it merely advises and states the desirability of New Towns to achieve social goals and policies. Given these two characteristics it follows that the "how" of achieving the social goals of New Towns is not often specified.

Behind the pop treatment of suburbia lay a backlog of professional research which needed popularization; for the New Towns, there was no such backlog. The central issue of racial and economic integration in New Towns is a case in point.<sup>27</sup> While this situation offers opportunity for well-focused research on major public policy implications of New Towns, it also warns against unexamined acceptance of the pop sociology view of New Towns as the brake halting the movement toward "two societies." There are only two investigations of any depth related to this matter; neither is conclusive. In one study a multiple-choice questionnaire which had been developed from long depth interviews, was administered to almost 800 residents of New Towns in two different metropolitan areas of California.<sup>28</sup> The results indicated that a major reason for buying in New Towns was the belief that "planning" protected the community against the intrusion of economic and racial diversity.

The other study examined a matched sample of ten new communities differing in location, age and degree of planning. It concluded that degree of residential satisfaction with the community as a whole was positively associated with degree of planning.<sup>29</sup> The analysis of reasons for satisfaction with the immediate neighborhood was less clear, although dwelling unit density, the condition of the neighborhood (whether it is "well kept up") and compatibility of neighborhood residents were important features. The authors stress the difficulties in measuring compatibility, which they found related to attitudes rather than to the expected socio-economic and demographic homogeneity. "For people in our sample it appears that shared attitudes and evaluations concerning the neighborhood and community were most salient in defining neighbors as both 'friendly' and 'similar.' . . . In other words, when consensus (homogeneity) exists among neighbors about qualities of the residential environment, the neighbors themselves tend to be more positively evaluated."<sup>30</sup>

The matter of operationalizing the concept of "homogeneity" (and, of course, "heterogeneity" and "balance") remains, although both New Towns studies above indicate the importance of some kind of local homogeneity, as do studies in such diverse New Town settings as Britain<sup>31</sup> and Israel.<sup>32</sup> The burden of these studies is not to discourage policy planners from aiming at racial and economic integration and "balance" in New Towns. On the contrary, it should point up the necessity of going beyond the labeling of pop sociology which simply defines "balance" as a goal.

The pop sociology of New Towns offers a current opportunity to

utilize the immediacy and provocativeness of the pop approach in generating wide interest, while avoiding the instant "solutions" of pop. If sociology is to be useful in dealing with vital issues such as the form of future urban growth then action must be taken. However, the public and the government must recognize more fully the need for experimental approaches which permit tests of the validity of unproved assumptions. As we have indicated, the pop sociology of suburbs and New Towns provides many such assumptions. What has been lacking is the spelling out of assumptions and the attendant hidden hypotheses with which pop sociology abounds and the systematic testing out of these hypotheses in a variety of simulated or actual suburbs or New Town contexts. The result would give us knowledge about the social processes at work and the limits of such knowledge. We would have laid the basis for improved decision-making in selecting the goals for further community development. More broadly we would have substituted sociology—warts and all—for the silicone curves of pop sociology.

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#### footnotes

1. *The Affluent Society* (Boston, 1958), 18.
2. Helen MacGill Hughes, compiler and editor, *Cities and City Life* (Boston, 1970). It is most instructive for an understanding of pop sociology to compare the Hughes book with even a superior, relatively well-balanced treatment of urban phenomena in the pop genre: Vance Packard's *A Nation of Strangers* (New York, 1972).
3. In contrast to the pop treatment of youth, see Philip C. Altbach and Robert S. Laufer, eds., *The New Pilgrims: Youth Protest in Transition* (New York, 1972). This reader includes historical and cross-cultural materials and relates youth protest to the structure of society as an aspect of generational conflict, social class and radical movements; an appended bibliography by Kenneth Keniston contains several hundred items reviewing research and further indicates how youth movements are imbedded in the overall social system.
4. April 28, 1968.
5. For example in such works as: Frederick Allen, "The Big Change in Suburbia," *Harper's*, CCVIII, 1249 (June, 1954); Hal Burton, "Trouble in the Suburbs," *Saturday Evening Post*, CCVIII, 12-14 (September 17, 24; October 1, 1955); R. Gordon, K. Gordon, and M. Gunther, *The Split Level Trap* (New York, 1961); Sidonie Gruenberg, "The Homogenized Children of the New Suburbia," *New York Times Magazine* (September 19, 1954); Harry Henderson, "The Mass Produced Suburbs," *Harper's*, CCVII, 1242-1243 (November-December, 1953); T. James, "Crackups in the Suburbs," *Cosmopolitan*, CLI, 4 (October, 1961); John Keats, *The Crack in the Picture Window* (Boston, 1956); Alice Miel, *The Shortchanged Children of Suburbia* (New York, 1968); A. C. Spector, *The Exurbanites* (Philadelphia, 1955); William H. Whyte, *The Organization Man* (New York, 1956); Peter Wyden, *Suburbia's Coddled Kids* (Garden City, 1960).
6. See for example, the articles collected in Parts II and IV of Leo F. Schnore, *The Urban Scene* (New York, 1965); also his "Measuring City-Suburban Status Differences," *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, III, 1 (September, 1967) and Schnore and Pinkerton, "Residential Redistribution of Socioeconomic Strata in Metropolitan Areas," *Demography*, III, 2 (1966). For a different approach which also supports the diversity of the central city-suburban contrast see, Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *Metropolitan Social and Economic Disparities* (Washington, D.C., 1965) and Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *Metropolitan Fiscal Disparities*, vol. 2 of *Fiscal Balance in the American Federal System* (Washington, D.C., 1967).
7. "Urban Structure and Suburban Selectivity," in Schnore, *The Urban Scene*.
8. *Working-Class Suburb* (Berkeley, 1960).
9. Joseph Zelan, "Does Suburbia Make a Difference," in S. F. Fava, ed., *Urbanism in World Perspective* (New York, 1968).
10. Bennett Berger, "Suburbia and the American Dream," in Fava, *Urbanism in World Perspective*.
11. Herbert J. Gans, *The Levittowners* (New York, 1967), 414.
12. Paul Cowan in *The Village Voice* (New York) October 10, 1968.
13. Peter Jenkins, "Agnew is the Common Man Made Exceptional," *New York Times Magazine* (October 29, 1972), 94.

14. The reviews of Gans' *The Levittowners* have already noted that it is the first major sociological work on suburbs which does not condescend to the new middle classes. Gans "does not find them comic or menacing, barbarians to be subdued or living corpses to be exhumed," says Marvin Bressler in his review of Gans' book in *The Public Interest* (1968), 102.

15. Robert C. Wood, *Suburbia, Its People and Their Politics* (Boston, 1958), chapter 1.

16. *Ibid.*, 18-19.

17. John B. Orr and F. Patrick Michelson, *The Radical Suburb* (Philadelphia, 1970); Scott Donaldson, *The Suburban Myth* (New York, 1969); "The Suburbs: Frontier of the '70's," special issue of *City*, V (January-February, 1971); "Suburbia: A Myth Challenged," cover story in *Time*, XCVII, 11 (March 15, 1971); "The Outer City: U.S. in Suburban Turmoil," series of five articles in the *New York Times* (May 30-June 3, 1971).

18. A useful definition of New Towns in the United States is that they are ". . . large-scale developments [1,000 acres or more] constructed under single or unified management, following a fairly precise, inclusive plan and including different types of housing, commercial and cultural facilities, and amenities sufficient to serve the residents of the community. They may provide land for industry, offer other types of employment opportunities, and may eventually achieve a considerable measure of self-sufficiency. With few exceptions, new communities under development today are within commuting distance of existing employment centers." Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *Urban and Rural America: Policies for Future Growth* (Washington, D.C., 1968), 64. HUD has estimated that in 1947-1969 there were 63 new communities built or under construction in the U.S. which met such a definition. Virtually all were built under private financing since they predated the federal supports for New Towns. "HUD Survey and Analysis of Large Developments and New Communities," *Urban Land*, XXIX (January, 1970), 11-12.

19. See for example, B. Weissbourd, "Segregation, Subsidies, and Megalopolis," in Fava, ed., *Urbanism in World Perspective*.

20. The 1966 Act had required developers to obtain funds from private lenders and was restricted to mortgages on land; the 1968 Act authorized HUD to guarantee the bonds and other obligations issued by developers of New Communities to finance land acquisition and its development for building.

21. Major new provisions: (1) the federal government will assume responsibility for formulating a national urban growth policy which includes the encouragement of a variety of planned new communities; (2) the Domestic Council in the Office of the President will send to Congress every two years, beginning in 1972, a Report on Urban Growth covering the preceding ten years; (3) the creation within HUD of a Community Development Corporation working with public bodies and private developers to spur new community development through a system of loans, guarantees, and technical assistance to provide for planning, land acquisition, development, public facilities and services; (4) loans for new communities totaling \$240 million are authorized (\$20 million limit per community) as are \$500 million in guarantees of obligations of private and public developers (\$50 million limit per community).

22. For example, see Eleanore Carruth, "The Big Move to New Towns," *Fortune*, LXXXIV, 3 (September, 1971).

23. Housing and Urban Development Act of 1970, Part B, Sec. 710 (b).

24. An incomplete list would include: National Commission on Urban Problems (the "Douglas Commission"); President's Commission on Urban Housing (the "Kaiser Commission"); National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder (the "Kerner Commission"); Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *Urban and Rural America: Policies for Future Growth*.

25. The 1970 census showed, for example, that in only 7 of the 25 metropolitan areas with over a million in population, did the central city population outnumber that of the suburban areas surrounding it; in 1960 central city population outnumbered suburban in 15 of the same 25 metropolitan areas.

26. Joy Akin, *The Feasibility and Actuality of Modern New Towns for the Poor in the United States* (Monticello, Ill., 1970); James A. Clapp, *The New Town Concept: Private Trends and Public Response* (Monticello, Ill., 1970); HUD, *New Communities: A Bibliography* (Washington, D.C., 1969); T. C. Peng and N. S. Verna, *New Towns Planning, Design and Development: Comprehensive Reference Materials* (Lincoln, Neb., 1971); Melvin C. Branch, "New Towns," in his *Comprehensive Urban Planning* (Beverly Hills, Calif., 1970); Housing and Home Finance Agency, *New Communities: A Selected Annotated Reading List* (Washington, D.C., 1965); *Minnesota Experimental City Progress Reports*, 2nd edition, Appendix A, "A Compendium of Publications relating to Socio-Cultural Aspects," and Appendix D, "Bibliography" (Minneapolis, 1969).

27. The question has been examined in detail elsewhere. See Sylvia F. Fava, "The Sociology of New Towns in the U.S.: 'Balance' of Racial and Economic Groups" (paper delivered at the American Institute of Planners Conference, Minneapolis-St. Paul, October 1970).

28. Carl Werthman, Jerry S. Mandel and Ted Dienstfrey, *Planning and the Purchase Decision. Why People Buy in Planned Communities* (Berkeley, 1965).

29. John B. Lansing, Robert W. Marans and Robert B. Zehner, *Planned Residential Environments* (Ann Arbor, 1971).

30. *Ibid.*, 125.

31. B. J. Heraud, "Social Class and the New Towns," *Urban Studies*, V (February, 1968); and Heraud, "New Towns: The End of a Planner's Dream," *New Society*, XII, 302 (July 11, 1968).

32. Judith Shual, "Relations between Ethnic Groups," Appendix A to "The Integral Habitational Unit at Kiryat-Gat," *Ministry of Housing Quarterly* (Israel), III (December, 1967), 92-98.