

PATCHWORK PLACES: REGIONAL AND HISTORICAL VARIATIONS IN SUBURBAN POVERTY IN THE UNITED STATES

by

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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The majority share of metropolitan poverty in the United States has shifted from cities to suburbs through the effects of employment losses and the movement of lower-income populations. However, varied histories of suburban development, class and racial/ethnic divisions within and among suburbs, and widening suburban inequality all suggest that understanding suburban poverty requires moving beyond a simplified view of low-income suburbs as a uniform set. Suburbs are embedded in regions and have different degrees of connection to their associated metropolitan areas. These differences hint that symptoms of economic disadvantage in suburbs today are historically related to local patterns of social and economic development, prompting the central question of this dissertation: *How have location and regional development histories shaped the economic trajectories of suburbs that could today be considered poor?*

The nature of the research question lent itself to a mixed-methods analysis of past and present suburban development. In the first part of this study I developed a five-category typology for more than 2000 low-income suburban Census Places. Mapping each category showed identifiable regional patterns suggesting a potential connection between major historical development processes and present-day spatial arrangements of poor suburbs. In the second part, I used the typology to select five case studies. Guided by a theoretical framework employing geological language of flows, deposits, and waves, I analyzed these individual locations whose narratives are engrained in regional and national processes of place formation but mediated by the expansive development cycles of the 20th century. My research demonstrates that poor suburbs are multilayered, contingent processes with links back to the selection of their spatial locations and the functions established in their earliest years of settlement.

I argue that bound up in the socioeconomic status of individual suburbs are spatio-historical roots of those conditions. The variables contributing to change in suburbs do not simply move through time, but through space-time among a network of interdependent places. The economic development history of a suburb interweaves with its spatial location nested in different geographical scales to create its defining characteristics at any point in time. Strategies to address suburban poverty must therefore be contextualized and interscalar as well as backward and forward looking.

Thesis Supervisor:
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1 INTRODUCTION

SUBURBAN POVERTY AND ITS FORMS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

*“Hit by poverty, Ferguson reflects the new suburbs.” “How Ferguson went from Middle Class to Poor in a Generation. “Ferguson unrest shows poverty grows fastest in suburbs.”*¹ These headlines written after the protests in August 2014, and one of the more polarizing—“Suburban ghettos like Ferguson are ticking time bombs”—typecast Ferguson, Missouri, just outside of St. Louis, as the leading example of a phenomenon attracting popular attention over the last five years: the growth in the share of poor people living in suburban areas in the United States.

With a quarter of its more than 21,000 residents below the Federal poverty line, Ferguson meets a threshold for concentrated disadvantage, particularly in comparison to suburbs like nearby Clayton with a poverty rate at only eight percent of its population. Unemployment sits at more than 12 percent, and the median income of \$38,685 is substantially lower than the metropolitan area median of \$54,449. But inequality of income and opportunity is the more pressing issue: 30 percent of Ferguson’s black residents have incomes below the poverty line and black unemployment is at 16 percent, compared to a poverty rate of 10 percent and an unemployment rate of 5.5 percent for white residents.² Inequality also extends to the suburb’s power distribution—until the 2015 municipal elections the Ferguson City Council has always been predominantly white even after the majority population shifted from white to black.

600 miles away from Ferguson is Sharon, Pennsylvania, a municipality of 14,000 in the far west of the state near its border with Ohio. Sharon is a suburb in the Youngstown metropolitan area. Similar to Ferguson, 25 percent of Sharon’s residents have poverty-level incomes, and the unemployment rate is a staggering 15 percent. At 20 miles distance from Youngstown and 75 from Pittsburgh, Sharon would not be categorized as an “inner-ring” suburb, communities near the borders of central cities that up until the last several years garnered much of the scholarly scrutiny directed toward suburban poverty.³ In fact, Sharon’s identity has been more tied to the surrounding Shenango

Valley, a group of Pennsylvania and Ohio municipalities near the eponymous river. In the early 2000s, the Shenango Valley Initiative, an organization considering strategies for economic growth, brought Sharon into the local news by calling for the consolidation of Sharon and four of its neighbors into one “Shenango Valley City.”⁴ A 2004 ballot measure was soundly defeated, with opponents in more affluent communities resisting taking on Sharon’s economic struggles.⁵

But “you can’t really understand Ferguson,” wrote former Missouri State Senator Jeffrey Smith in the *New Republic*, “without first understanding three things”—the municipality of Kinloch, adjacent to Ferguson and the oldest black town in Missouri; J.D. Shelley, the defendant in the case of *Shelley v. Kraemer*, in which the United States Supreme Court ruled against restrictive covenants preventing African-Americans from buying property in certain neighborhoods; and the village of Bellerive, a wealthy community of about 200 people right across highway 170. What Smith means, of course, is that you can’t really understand Ferguson without understanding its location—in the lower Midwest/Upper South, in the St. Louis Metropolitan area, particularly in north St. Louis County—and its history—from its incorporation in 1894 to the 2015 municipal elections that recently shifted the racial balance of power in city government.

Ferguson was settled near the turn of the century around a station of the Wabash Railroad, and its transport connections and proximity to St. Louis made it a desirable suburban location for commuters. Later decades brought industries like Emerson Electric to the town, providing additional employment for locals. Kinloch, settled at about the same time, was mainly black, separated from Ferguson by a gate that closed at sundown, when African-Americans were obligated by law until the mid-1900s to exit the predominantly white suburb. Kinloch’s economy centered on its airfield, an early center of activity in the burgeoning aviation industry and the future Lambert International Airport. The status quo of segregation began to crack in 1945, when J.D. Shelley bought property in a suburb north of St. Louis, close to Ferguson, and the U.S. Supreme Court upheld his right to keep his home in the face of suburban racial zoning.

In Ferguson itself, Larman Williams, with the assistance of his church, was one of the first African-Americans to purchase a home in the mostly-white suburb in 1968.⁶

A combination of events coupled with the prevailing late twentieth century pattern of racial tension, institutionalized discrimination, and white flight contributed to shifting the demographic composition of Ferguson from 14 percent black in 1980 (up from one percent in 1970) to 67 percent in 2010. St. Louis began to demolish its segregated public housing projects in 1972, reinforcing a housing shortage in the city and pushing households to look for other options. At the same time, the city began buying up properties for a major runway expansion at its airport in Kinloch's back yard, initially offering above market prices but then using its eminent domain powers to take the majority of homes in the town. Kinloch lost three-quarters of its population from 1990 to 2000, and the once bustling town of 4000 is now home to 300. Some of those leaving Kinloch settled next door in Ferguson. White residents moved out as African-Americans moved in – the population of Ferguson fell from almost 29,000 in 1970 to about 21,000 in 2010. And the poverty rate rose at the same time – from 11.6 percent to 24.9 percent in 2010. The associations between race and class are pronounced in Ferguson, but the same patterns are not present everywhere in north St. Louis County – as former state senator Smith pointed out, the small community of Bellerive just across route 70 is a reminder to Ferguson's residents of the advantages of wealth. This small village with a median income of more than \$100,000 and very little poverty has an almost even mix of black and white households.

Likewise, you can't really understand Sharon, Pennsylvania, without understanding its position within the steel triangle of Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Buffalo; its proximity to Youngstown, Ohio, or its link to the industrial Shenango River Valley. The abundant coal veins of the Valley were the foundation for its early mining and iron industries in the nineteenth century, and Sharon was first settled by employees in those sectors. As steel began to replace iron as the construction material of choice, however, investors realized the plentiful raw materials and existing industry made the Valley a prime site for the steel business. Numerous steel mills and related facilities were developed along the

river in the early 1900s, several connected to the emerging U.S. Steel conglomerate, others owned independently. Over the years a series of corporate mergers and acquisitions resulted in the dominance of the Sharon Steel Corporation in the Valley, incorporated in 1936.

In the decades following the Depression, Sharon followed a path similar to hundreds of other industrial suburbs as Sharon Steel built its capacity during World War II and the 1950s but then became part of the casualties of the decline of the sector in the second half of the twentieth century. Sharon Steel filed for bankruptcy and closed its plants in 1992, and the facilities were demolished for scrap materials in 1995.⁷ The rest of the Shenango Valley, Youngstown and its metropolitan area, and indeed the entire Ohio/Pennsylvania steel region was suffering under the same conditions, and few opportunities remained for those out of a job. Poverty rose from 18.8 percent in 1990 to the 2010 rate of 25.2 percent, and the suburb's population, which had been plummeting from a high of more than 26,000 in 1960, dropped by another 3,500 from 1990 to 14,000 in 2010.

These two places, Ferguson and Sharon, both fall within the collective territory labeled “suburbs”—communities with a defined sense of place located outside of the bounds of a larger central city but within a recognized metropolitan area, connected to the urban center to some extent by economic or social ties. The substantial concentrations of poverty, more than 20 percent in each municipality, are examples of a geographical shift in metropolitan income distribution from urban to suburban. In 2010, for the first time the decennial Census showed that within metropolitan areas the number of people with poverty level incomes in suburbs surpassed the number in cities.

In this dissertation, I break down the current landscape of U.S. suburban poverty into constituent parts using a quantitative analysis of the more than 2000 suburbs with large concentrations of poor households. I then exhume the phenomenon's historical basis by analyzing individual locations whose narratives are engrained in regional and national processes of place formation but mediated by the expansive development cycles of the

20th century. Each cycle activated the seeds of future economic activity while retaining the remnants of past systems of economic wealth creation. Adding to the nascent literature on the roots and ramifications of suburban economic disadvantage, I use the language of space and time to illuminate the processes and forces underlying the formation of concentrated poverty in locations that have traveled from economic ascent to economic vulnerability. My research demonstrates that poor suburbs of the early twenty-first century are actually multilayered, contingent processes with links back to the selection of their spatial locations and the functions established in their earliest years of settlement.

Far from the 1950s cookie-cutter vision of the well-off suburban bedroom community, today's multidimensional suburbs are home to households from all income levels. Though the existence of suburban poverty and speculations about its causes were frequently in the news after the release of 2010 Census data and the publication of a 2013 book by Elizabeth Kneebone and Alan Berube at the Brookings Institution, rumblings of a shift in metropolitan income distribution surfaced more than a decade before.⁸ Research by Alan Berube and William Frey indicated that in 2000 in the nation's 100 largest metropolitan areas, 49 percent of people in poverty lived in suburbs in contrast to 46 percent the decade before, and Janice Madden documented rising poverty in inner ring suburbs of Northeastern and Midwestern cities using data from 1970 to 1990.⁹ A majority share of metropolitan poor households living in suburbs, then, has been a long time in the making.

Scholars and policy-makers have pointed out that the planning implications of rising poverty in suburbs may differ from those associated with concentrated urban poverty studied for the last three decades given some physical, economic, and social dissimilarities between many US suburbs and their central cities.¹⁰ A smaller group of social service providers serve a broader delivery area, leaving suburban organizations short on the resources needed to administer an adequate safety net. The low-density nature of many suburbs raises transportation costs and complicates access to services.¹¹ The ramifications of suburban income changes became alarmingly evident

as employment losses and home foreclosures during the late 2000s recession that plunged middle-class families into financial trouble and liquidated their assets.¹²

Until relatively recently, the literature examining suburban poverty focused mainly on measuring changes in income distribution within metropolitan areas and these types of generalized statements on the potential impacts of suburban poverty in the aggregate.¹³ Some current work, however, has begun to address the impacts of rising poverty on the experience of living in specific suburbs.¹⁴ Another nascent strain delves into the varied nature of lower-income suburbs and the potential drivers behind the perceived growth in economic vulnerability and distress in suburban areas.¹⁵ The two cases of Ferguson and Sharon showcase that heterogeneity; both have high concentrations of poverty relative to other suburbs, but their predominant characteristics and needs are different.

Racial inequality is present to some extent in Sharon, but the large majority of poor residents in the suburb are white (15 percent of the population is black or African-American). This is not to say racial discrimination and tension do not exist, but poverty, unemployment, and income do not seem to be as divided along the lines of race in Sharon as they do in Ferguson. From another angle, Sharon has been deeply affected by the loss of its steel company in the 1980s and has struggled to build back a strong commercial tax base, and residential tax revenue has diminished as incomes have fallen.¹⁶ Ferguson, on the other hand, is home to Fortune 500 Company Emerson Electric as well as a revitalized downtown commercial district and a functioning office park. The higher incomes of many of Ferguson's residents also help to bolster the tax base.¹⁷

The growth in the share of the nation's poor in suburbs has been held up as a transformation of the geography of poverty in the United States, a "new normal" across the national landscape of inequality. But what the two vignettes of Sharon and Ferguson suggest is that the diversity of suburban poverty has its own geography, shaped not only by events of the last fifty years, but also by much earlier movements of people and

industry as the U.S. solidified its economic position through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

THE DYNAMICS OF SUBURBAN POVERTY: A QUESTION OF SPACE AND TIME

Varied histories of suburban development, class and racial/ethnic divisions within and among suburbs demonstrated through time, and the large number of possible contributing factors to widening suburban inequality suggest that understanding and responding to suburban poverty requires moving beyond a simplified view of low-income suburban places as a uniform set. As such, the motivation for this study was to examine the shifting geography of poverty in the U.S., certainly, but more explicitly, to probe the complex nature of the geography of *suburban* poverty. As the above examples imply, suburbs are embedded in regions and have varying degrees of connection to the metropolitan areas with which they are associated. The differences between Sharon and Ferguson also hint at the idea that symptoms of economic disadvantage in suburbs today are historically related to distinct local patterns of social and economic development. Keeping spatial ramifications and historical trends at the forefront, the main research question of this dissertation is:

How have location and regional economic histories shaped the economic trajectories of suburbs that could today be considered poor?

That is, addressing the question requires an explicitly dynamic lens through which to consider poor suburbs, one focused less on discrete events and more on continuous movements and their effects. I situate my research within the theoretical discussion of the interaction of time and space in geography that coalesces from several different perspectives within the discipline. Fundamental is Torsten Hägerstrand's conceptualization of time geography, providing a framework for understanding the collective mobility patterns and decisions of individuals as a means of defining physical and social space.¹⁸ Allen Pred and Doreen Massey layered on this foundation their own richly described arguments for understanding places not as objects but as processes

within a pulsing network, creating and being created by other places at scales from the neighborhood to the continent.¹⁹

Poverty has its own dynamism. Some people remain poor all their lives and pass their circumstances down to their children, but many cycle in and out of situations of financial need based on employment, skills, or support systems.²⁰ And if places are characterized as “poor” based on the concentration of persons or households at specific income levels, as they often are, both the individual poverty timelines and the consolidated in and out-migration of lower- and higher-income groups have the potential to change a place’s balance of affluence or privation. These income changes and their effects are just one element of the processes of place.

To deconstruct the potential nature of these processes, I use existing theory to argue that all places, including suburbs, are bundles of flows—formed of continuous movements of subgroups of people and various forms of capital that, while distinct, interact with each other in the bounds of a specific spatial location. As the flows combine and separate in space, they leave deposits of settlement or structure in a manner similar to streams of water distributing layers of sediment along a riverbank. But in places, these deposits serve as attractors or repellants for new or sustained subflows and deposits in an application of Myrdal’s theory of cumulative causation.²¹ In-migration of one group of people spurs the departure of another group, for example, or the outflow of capital in the form of firm relocation diminishes residents’ income streams at one site, but raises them at the firm’s new destination. The effects of these interactions tend to be self-reinforcing in upward or downward cycles, and in the broad interpretation of the theory, contribute to geographically “spiky” development as some locations accrue certain combinations of migratory and monetary flows with related deposits while others experience a hemorrhage of people and resources.²² Spatial location plays a key role early in development history as the source of the first deposits: endowments of natural resources.

The complex bundling and unbundling of flows that constitute the processes of place themselves suggest that the linear, predictive theories of place development or decline prevalent in the body of scholarly work on urban neighborhood change may be less applicable than planners and policy-makers once suspected. But another complicating factor is that this network of flows is not a closed system, subject only to its internally generated effects. Instead, the direction, type, and magnitude of movements of people and capital, I propose, are influenced by broader global forces that create decades-long socio-economic waves of development. Urbanists and economists have debated the existence and nature of these “long waves” for decades, but the concept in one form or another has been used as a structuring framework for historical analyses. In this case, I draw on Allen Scott’s delineation of three urbanization waves spanning the industrial revolution, the expansion of industry facilitated by the world wars and the wide-scale implementation of mass production, and the information and communications revolution starting later in the twentieth century.²³

Structural forces in the form of long waves play a role in directing the flows within the network of places, but the actions of individual or corporate power brokers also have the potential to attract or push away a current of people or capital. Influential political leaders with strong social connections or entrepreneurs with access to means often make the decisions—perhaps within the larger context of a global or regional economic shift—that nurture or tank a local economy. Mayors may successfully advocate for federal funds, but town councils may inefficiently use them. Business owners decide to open a facility in one location or close one in another place. These individual moves can start or redirect a long-term cycle of flows and deposits.

The current geography of suburban poverty traces its roots back to the earliest emergence of suburbs, formed based on spatial considerations—access to natural resources or proximity to employment-rich cities. But it is also a product of forces within a series of long development waves that advanced population and production streams across the country. These surges left settlements of people groups and clusters of fixed investment in locations depending on what was already there. These deposits varied in

their durability—some structures like manufacturing facilities or less mobile residents defined the character of suburbs for decades while the lasting impact of other flows, physical or otherwise, were more ephemeral. The current suburban landscape we are analyzing, then, is made up of layers we can disassemble to understand historical development patterns.

TYPING AND TRACKING: DISSERTATION RESEARCH METHODS

My research question rests on two main assumptions, as demonstrated by the contrast between the two examples of Ferguson and Sharon. The first is that suburban poverty is a larger label for a patchwork of people and places with different characteristics. That is, suburbs that might be classified as poor are not the same. The second assumption, as expressed earlier, is that suburban poverty, being concerned with spatial units, has its own geography. Suburbs are obviously not evenly distributed across a “featureless plain;” they are clustered around cities and throughout regions.

Because the focused, in-depth study of suburban poverty is relatively new, only a handful of studies provide descriptive overviews of the current state of suburban poverty in the United States or theorize about the mechanisms creating today’s conditions. In addition, the nature of the research question, requiring an understanding of both the past and the present, pragmatically lends itself to multiple methods. For these reasons, this theory-building dissertation consists of two parts within what Tashakkori and Teddlie label a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design—the first descriptive, broad, and quantitatively oriented, and the second, analytical in nature and based on qualitative historical case study data.²⁴

The quantitative aspect of the dissertation empirically fleshes out the last element of the research question—“suburbs that could today be considered poor”—by building on the assumptions noted above and examining patterns in a cross section of recent data from suburban places across the country. I use 2010 Census data in a combined principal components and cluster analysis to develop a typology consisting of five distinguishable categories of low-income suburbs, defined by median incomes relative to the

metropolitan area and poverty rates. I then map the suburbs within each type to show their spatial distributions and identify regional clusters.

The value of the typology is two-fold. First, it offers a simplifying structure through which to examine the current state of suburban poverty by laying out identifiable patterns in the data and across the physical landscape. The goal was not to develop a typological *theory*; I am using the typology purely as an exploratory device to understand how suburbs cluster along a range of variables. Second, the typology provides a guiding framework for choosing cases. Selecting one case study from each of the five types more accurately represents the variation in the general concept of suburban poverty than deciding on cases solely based on poverty rates, location, or historical narratives.

The research question's emphasis on space and time required using those case studies in a second phase of qualitative work to trace the ways that regional development histories connect to present day economic conditions. When the typology was complete, I synthesized existing literature in geography and planning to suggest a series of theoretical propositions that together offered a possible explanation for the development of current geography of suburban poverty, as outlined above. After mapping the locations of poor suburbs across the U.S., I examined spatial clusters within the types that emerged from my previous analysis and selected cases out of the densest clusters using specific criteria. I collected historical and current data for each case starting at the point of initial settlement.

Following Robert Stake's and Robert Yin's methodological recommendations, I used the five historical case studies as instruments to examine more deeply my theoretical propositions. This examination entailed a process of explanation-building that added richness and nuance to the discussion of mechanisms by which suburban places develop concentrations of poverty over time. As Yin notes, explanatory cases can be used as theory-building (as opposed to only theory-testing) devices as they offer a vehicle for expanding and detailing existing theoretical statements.²⁵

UNDERSTANDING THE REGION IN REGIONAL COLLABORATION

I am completing this study at a moment when policy-makers and planners are directing new and perhaps unprecedented attention to understanding the ramifications of and developing responses to suburban poverty. At the same time, popular writings in the last five years have once again (echoing past scholarly work) predicted “The End of the Suburbs,” suggesting that U.S. residents of all kinds increasingly prefer cities, and a “Great Inversion” under which the population characteristics of cities and suburbs—in terms of perceived wealth and affluence as well as race and ethnicity— are essentially switching places.²⁶ Christopher Leinberger proclaimed “The Death of Fringe Suburbs” and the rise of exurban slums. In response, critic Joel Kotkin contended that most population growth in the US is still occurring in suburbs—and they will likely continue to be sites of growth, a perspective that is supported by William Frey’s analysis of 2014 Census data. More people means more poverty in suburbs then, from a straightforward numbers perspective, not because of some proposed inversion or death of suburbia. And plenty of wealthier Americans will still clamor for their single family houses on large lots in suburban enclaves.²⁷

This ongoing (and somewhat tired) debate on the future of suburbia occurring largely in the popular press is less useful than it could be because writers continue to some extent to consider suburbs as an aggregate entity. Yes, *some* central cities are attracting wealthier residents and some suburbs, poorer ones. Yes, on the whole suburban population growth remains stronger than that in urban centers. But the larger trends obscure the finer points necessary for developing policy responses.

The scholarly discussion is far more nuanced, with researchers emphasizing the diverse nature of suburbs in general and poor suburbs in particular, and underscoring that the interventions used in the past to address poverty in urban neighborhoods are not directly transferable to many suburban environments.²⁸ What is so far lacking in the emerging body of literature, however, are examinations of the role of space and location in shifting metropolitan income distributions. It is difficult to miss the spatial significance in the examples of Ferguson and Sharon—they are rooted in regions with distinct socio-

economic systems. In an age of resource scarcity, determining the best use of limited funds at federal, state and municipal levels requires detailed, location-specific knowledge about urban and suburban economic conditions. It is not enough to pinpoint areas of high poverty concentration in suburbs and allocate funds according to those numbers. The drivers and consequences of rising poverty manifest themselves differently across regions and metropolitan areas.

But spatial location is not the sole consideration in determining effective policy responses for income declines in suburbs. As Neustadt and May famously pronounced, good governance decisions demand attention to and use of history.²⁹ The same can be said for good planning. Cross-sections show economic conditions in suburbs as they are but do not reveal the paths to those conditions, paths shaped by such factors as regional resource endowments, economic cycles, and high level decisions on capital investments. Studying historical development paths is essential to policy formulation not only because it allows for more accurate predictions of potential outcomes of proposed programs, but also because it supplies information on methods that have already been tried, or initiatives that have succeeded or failed. Tracking the trajectories of places uncovers momentum in a particular direction and away from others, thereby narrowing the field of possible policy interventions and guiding policy-makers toward more effective targeting decisions.

These elements of location and history are particularly important in light of the suburban poverty responses discussed in the public sphere. In the wake of the crack epidemic and the breakdown of high-rise public housing projects of the 1980s and early 1990s, an explosion of scholarly work on urban poverty all but drowned out any dialogue about suburban socioeconomic status (described in Chapter 2).³⁰ Economic class in suburbs came to be discussed primarily in relation to alleviating central city ills, spurring the growth of literature on regional equity. Regional equity strategies were based on the idea that regional (largely metropolitan) governance models would press suburbs to contribute their “fair share” of taxes to combat central city deterioration, that poverty hurts the economic development prospects for metropolitan areas (not just central

cities), and that thinking regionally rather than perpetuating urban/suburban dichotomies would reduce both racial and economic segregation.³¹ Myron Orfield, in *Metropolitics* and *American Metropolitics*, was one of the few to ensure that low-income suburbs did not disappear from policy discourse by pointing out that regional governance structures that united inefficiently fragmented jurisdictions would assist ailing inner suburbs with similar resource limitations while simultaneously supporting central cities.³²

The discussion of regional collaboration continues in the most recent recommendations for alleviating poverty in suburbs.³³ Over the years, however, “regional” has come to be somewhat indistinguishable from “metropolitan” in describing the potential strategies. The findings from this study indicate that location and economic history of a suburb are linked in different ways to not only its metropolitan area but also to larger economically and socially defined regions. In fact, although suburbs by definition have some type of tie to their central cities, those ties might be weaker than their connections to broader regional systems, as in the example of Sharon, Pennsylvania, the Shenango Valley, and the Ohio-Pennsylvania Steel region. Moreover, the potential success of metropolitan solutions may be affected by economic conditions in a more expansive geographic area; strategies for a poor suburb within a stable metropolitan area would be structured differently than those for a poor suburb within a region of struggling cities and suburbs.

DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

The dissertation is organized into nine chapters. In Chapter 2, I use a broad sweep of suburban history to suggest that poverty in suburbs has existed as long as suburbs themselves, and the general characteristics of concentrations of poverty in suburbs have always been differentiated; that is, types of suburban poverty that resemble those evident today were present in earlier periods. From preindustrial iterations to current city-like “metroburbs,” my review of a variety of historical texts indicates that poor households have always had a presence in suburbs, if not in each individual location. This historical analysis provides the context to understand and evaluate the accuracy of current perceptions of suburban poverty and a foundation for the rest of the dissertation.

In Chapter 3 I lay out in more detail the theoretical underpinnings for the study, offering definitions of the key concepts of “suburb” and “poverty” and drawing together the scholarly work that is the basis for my conception of places in general and poor suburbs in particular as bundles of specific flows within a larger spatial network, subject to the tidal shifts brought about by global waves of development.

Chapters 4 and 5 document the methods I used in the study. First I describe the creation of the typology and the procedure I employed to provide additional support for the validity of the categories I developed. In Chapter 5, I map the resulting clusters of suburbs and discussed the spatial patterns evident within the groupings. I then discuss the ways in which developing and mapping the categories of low-income suburbs informed my selection of cases from each of the five suburban types, and outline the process of analyzing the case study data.

Detailed descriptions of the typological categories coupled with broad narrative histories of each case study form the content of Chapter 6. I ground each type description in existing scholarly work on the characteristics of suburbia. The case narratives are intended to provide an overview of each suburb’s development path from inception to present day as a point of departure for the succeeding chapters.

In Chapters 7 and 8 I present and integrate evidence from the five cases to expand on the theoretical propositions and elaborate on the nature of the mechanisms outlined in Chapter 3. I use narratives from different points in the development history of each case suburb to illustrate and explain how flows of people and production, guided by global forces and individual or corporate actions, interacted with resource endowments and strategic location to shape the course of its economic trajectory. In Chapter 9 I conclude, summarizing my findings and laying out implications for policy and further research.

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2 SUBURBAN POVERTY THROUGH U.S. HISTORY

In the last five years, changing metropolitan income distributions and the high share of poor individuals living in suburbs have received increased popular attention with highly visible coverage in books, newspapers, and radio features.¹ Certainly, it could be that the main reason for this surge of low-income suburban dwellers is that on the whole these communities now hold significantly more people than do cities, poor people among them. And it is true that in terms of concentrations, suburbs in the aggregate maintain much lower poverty rates, in some cases less than half, than central cities.² But these facts miss the point. Why, despite close to a century of scholarly work on U.S. suburbs and their various forms, is the idea of growing poverty levels in these communities surprising enough to be featured so heavily? And more pressing, why have planners and leaders in suburbs across the country been caught off guard by this phenomenon, finding themselves lacking critical resources to manage increasing needs?³

In this chapter, I examine the massive literature on suburbia through the lenses of affluence and poverty, considering the questions posed above and connecting past development on the urban periphery to the metropolitan income distributions we currently observe. The analysis reveals two key points of interest with regard to suburban poverty in the past and present that planners and policy-makers should consider when formulating responses to the effects of suburban income shifts.

First, the image of the homogeneous middle-class automobile suburb from the post-World War II era with its single family homes on separate lots and white "traditional" families has disproportionately burned itself on the American collective consciousness. As late as 2013 one writer on the subject of suburbs opined, "Despite their differences, the American suburbs share one thing in common—they evoke a certain way of life, one of tranquil, curving streets and cul-de-sacs; marching bands and soccer leagues; bake sales and PTA meetings and center hall colonials."⁴ Similarly, the media coverage of poverty in suburbs demonstrates a certain incredulity about the topic that indicates that

vestiges of this perception of suburbs remain embedded, despite an exhaustive scholarly debunking.⁵ Until the past decade, suburban poverty was not a topic that many academics had addressed with a singular focus. However, reading between the lines of historical accounts and the existing scholarly work on American suburbia reveals a nuanced portrayal of the developing urban periphery that contained a broad and sometimes chaotic mix of classes and uses. Singleton suggests that we can resolve contradictory histories of suburbs by noting that the suburbs of early U.S. history would not fall into the same category as the “modern suburb”--the rapidly expanding post-war monolith of his and others' mid- to-late- twentieth century understanding.⁶ In contrast, the narrative of historical and current suburban poverty developed in this paper suggests that the dominance of this "modern suburb" of uniformity and affluence is no more than a several-decades-long blip in centuries of the American suburbanization process. In fact, the diverse, multifaceted suburbs that we see today, complete with their patterns of poverty, share more in common with the eclectic, mixed-class urban fringe of the mid-nineteenth century than with their 1950s counterparts.

Pointing out the functional heterogeneity of U.S. suburbs throughout history is nothing new, though the idea needs occasional reiterating.⁷ In fact, the same year that Robert Park and Ernest Burgess published their seminal work on concentric zones of metropolitan development that grounded the persistent view of a fundamental distinction between city and suburbs, Harlan Douglass differentiated between suburbs of a range of types, from residential and industrial to rich and poor.⁸ What becomes clear from this broad retelling of historical suburbanization with respect to income is that poor suburbs, or even poor settlements within more affluent suburbs, were also heterogeneous in ways that were far more nuanced than the residential-industrial binary would suggest.⁹ The characteristics of households living with little income differed by skill levels, employment types, and demographic background, and the clustering of low-income households has been influenced or even determined by such dynamic, interlinked factors as historical industrial development, urban and fringe land prices, and racial and ethnic discrimination. Moreover, while the populations in some communities shared a

fairly uniform low income level, in many suburbs the poor and the wealthy—or the poorest and the less-poor—shared common, though segregated, space.

Well-known suburban scholars such as Kenneth Jackson and Dorothy Hayden have chronologically laid out different eras of American suburbanization, describing each period's dominant suburban form and characteristics. Loosely, these phases comprise pre-industrial suburbs, or “borderlands” of mixed industry, farmers, self-built housing, and new entrepreneurs; the early elite suburbs constructed with the advent of railroad lines, “streetcar suburbs,” as portrayed by Warner, that opened up to the middle and working classes; the pre-World War II manufactured suburbs arising with the start of the FHA, the post-war “Levittowns”; the edge cities of the 1980s and 1990s, and the proliferation of exurban fringe subdivisions until the recent recession and foreclosure crisis.¹⁰ However, the new construction during each succeeding era did not eradicate the remnants of the previous years. Instead, suburbs in each period reflect the settlement patterns of earlier times, with new buildings and infrastructure added, while some old structures are removed. Suburbia expands as this development extends farther out during each era where there are fewer existing structures to destroy and plenty of land on which to build. The idea of the creation of the modern suburban landscape through historical waves of development and deterioration suggests a level of path dependency present in the manifestations of suburban poverty we see today.

TRACING SUBURBAN POVERTY

Tracking poverty—defined in contemporary terms as having income below a predetermined level—through earlier time periods is complicated by a lack of historical income data. However, individual occupational skill levels can reasonably serve as a proxy for wages. In this article then, the story of the suburban poor, at least up to the 1960s and prior to any comprehensive social safety net, is also the story of the lowest-skilled, most marginalized workers. And in many cases the most vulnerable were the most recent migrants to the area, whether internationally from Ireland or Eastern Europe, or domestically as in the case of the Great Migration of African-Americans from

the South. The following sections follow suburban poverty, mainly represented by the relative skill levels of workers, through several overlapping time periods, distinguishing among various types of settlements providing land or housing for low-income individuals and their families.

Pre-industrial Suburbs and Nineteenth Century Borderlands

The pattern of point and counterpoint in suburban development narratives, particularly in relation to marginalized populations, is demonstrated clearly in accounts of early suburbs. Some scholars portray the story of the suburbs of preindustrial cities as beginning at the bottom of the income scale. Given the high value of proximity to the central city in an age of limited transportation options, the early *faubourgs* or *Vorstadts* of Europe were dilapidated, clinging squatter settlements formed just outside of the thickly walled medieval city. Lacking the security and modern conveniences found within the walls, these settlements sought security and enrichment through annexation.¹¹ In colonial United States history some of the earliest suburbs followed the same pattern, with lower classes locating at the outskirts while the wealthy congregated at the center of the walking city. Larger centers such as Charles Town in South Carolina had walls for protection. Since by 1720 only eight percent of colonial residents lived within town limits, it is not far-reaching to assume that some poorer residents working in the city were forced to cluster near the edge.¹²

Although Jackson presents a case that on the whole, suburbs were viewed as inferior to cities prior to the inception of mass transportation technologies in the 1830s, not all suburbs in colonial America were necessarily patterned after the poor *faubourg*.¹³ In his description and analysis of prerevolutionary American towns, Carl Bridenbaugh surmises:

“...the flight from the city began in the first half of the eighteenth century—and for the same reasons as today. The differences were in degree only. Just as Londoners moved westward from the City in search of quiet, better air, comfort, lower rents, and more room for display, so did Philadelphians cross the northern and southern bounds of the metropolis in a perennial search for the “green” the founder had hoped to preserve within, for it was a ‘countrie towne’ no longer.”¹⁴

Owners of large estates around Philadelphia and New York, he contends, became developers in the 1730s to 1750s when they subdivided their land just outside the city into smaller lots.¹⁵ Given the lack of Census data prior to 1790, it is difficult to discern the first residents of these settlements, but advertisements indicate that the original intent of the property owners was to sell lots to members of the middle and upper classes.¹⁶ However, by 1774 rising land prices in the city had made the new Philadelphia suburbs of Northern Liberties and Southwark havens for unskilled workers, to the extent that “[laborers] were more segregated in this period than in the mid-nineteenth century, when the immigrant laborer was such a prominent element of the city.”¹⁷ Differences in location, immigration patterns, and urban and suburban economic function played roles in determining class distinctions within and among suburbs of early U.S. cities.

The vast array of uses and residences on the edge of cities prior to the development of mass transportation technologies in the mid-19th century is perhaps best described by the idea of “Borderlands”.¹⁸ This fringe society, separated from both urban and rural but with elements of both, was an unplanned, eclectic mix of farmland, country estates, ribbon villages forming along roads into the city, and noxious industrial uses.¹⁹ Ripe for entrepreneurship, these “first suburbs” benefitted from economic opportunities linked to the city but also developed independent identities.²⁰ With a remarkable diversity foreshadowing today’s suburbs, early peripheral settlements outside of Boston and other cities blended farmers, skilled craftsman, speculating businessmen, and middle-class entrepreneurs with young men seeking their fortunes and unnoticed lower-class laborers that kept the wheels of industry and development turning.²¹ John Stilgoe’s analysis of Westchester County suggested that as the borderlands became more settled, traditional farmers fell into poverty when their work was undermined by such destructive forces as crop thieves and packs of roaming dogs. At the same time wealthy urbanites purchased large country seats looking for relief from the city noise and crowds, accelerating already growing class divides.²²

Much of the early urban fringe consisted of unplanned and unincorporated settlements and land uses. Even as the formal process of suburbanization progressed through the nineteenth century, significant sections of the urban environs remained unregulated. In some localities, this lack of oversight continued through the first half of the twentieth century, a fact that Harris emphasized in his carefully documented pieces.²³ The unconstrained nature of many of these informal communities allowed poorer residents freedom to construct inexpensive dwellings, but also allowed the central city governments to neglect provision of basic municipal services as utilities evolved. These unincorporated places, a specific type of suburb different in form to existing residential or industrial settlements of the time, tended to be lower in status than their central cities, serving as "a refuge for those who were marginal to the urban economy, or who could not afford to live elsewhere...the poorest [suburban type] of them all."²⁴

Certainly, the "poorest of them all" in pre-industrial America included slaves and free persons of color living in southern cities. Urban slavery differed substantially from the plantation system in the limitations on available space. On large plantations, slaves could remain somewhat separated from the slaveholder's family in their own barracks but would still be isolated from the outside world. Households in urbanized areas in the South tended to build shelters on their much smaller plots of land for their slaves, but constraints on their interactions with other slaves and free blacks in cities were impossible to enforce. When land became too tight, slaves were given opportunities to "live out," renting rooms or even building tiny shacks away from the slaveholders' properties.²⁵ In some cities, slaves "living out" were scattered throughout the urban area, but in others such as Charleston where blacks outnumbered whites, "the population there spilled over the town line and thus created a kind of low-income suburb."²⁶

This northern "Neck" of the Charleston urban peninsula was officially outside of the city limits and therefore beyond the reach of city regulations, allowing for leniency in the construction of shelters and relief from the constant monitoring of white slave masters.²⁷ Though in earlier years Charleston Neck had been sparsely settled, by the 1820s the

economical land and construction costs were also attracting new Irish and German immigrants leading to rapid population growth until the suburb was annexed in 1849.²⁸ It is important to note that this peripheral settlement pattern was not limited to Charleston; slave and free black households tended to seek the privacy of the urban periphery in many of the largest southern cities including Richmond, Savannah, and New Orleans.²⁹

Some of these forms of low-income suburbs or poor, unplanned pockets within the suburban fringe would continue to expand and reproduce through succeeding decades. However, emerging transportation technologies and the explosion of industrial activity would make class distinctions in newly-established suburbs even more evident.

Railroad and Streetcar Suburbs

The invention of the steam engine and the creation of railroad-based suburbs in the mid-to-late 1800s spurred systematic movements out of the city and transformed the process of suburbanization to that point. Railroad suburbs, such as those along the Main Line in Philadelphia, have long had a reputation as a haven for the elite who could afford the cost of commuting to the corresponding central city. It was not the case, however, that all residents of railroad suburbs had incomes placing them in the upper-middle classes. Residents in these settlements still required a range of services, from household maintenance to groundskeepers, meaning that “even the richest communities were dotted with the small dwellings of those who furnished the support a large group of mansions required.”³⁰

Although this phrasing suggests that lower-income service workers were scattered in an isolated fashion among the suburban homes of the wealthy, in reality low-income service workers could make up a substantial proportion of residents in affluent railroad suburbs, living in separate homes on the larger estates or clustered together. In her research on working class suburbs in Los Angeles, Becky Nicolaides described the domestic service enclaves that established themselves in the Los Angeles suburb of Pasadena, California. Made up of black and Mexican workers employed by nearby

wealthy estates, these settlements consisted of small shack-like dwellings signifying the low income levels of their inhabitants.³¹ Domestic service suburbs were not limited to the Los Angeles area; many wealthy suburbs in different regions of the country had separate communities of house and estate workers that tended to form on land rejected as unsuitable by higher-income residents. Andrew Wiese found that in the 1940s service workers could comprise up to 25 percent of residents of the most affluent suburbs, and in some cases, domestic laborers made up a larger share of the population than did professional or managerial commuters.³²

Members of the lower classes in affluent railroad suburbs were not only workers in domestic employ. In Chicago, where railroads quickly defined metropolitan development patterns after the city became firmly established in the 1830s and 1840s, Everett Chamberlin noted a determined penchant toward suburban living over and above that present in other large cities, even if it meant an hour's commute.³³ Only 15 percent of Chicago's suburbs along its rail lines in the early 1900s were residential commuter suburbs; most were farm centers or industrial towns that used the railroads not to travel but to ship and receive products. However, even in the wealthiest Chicago suburbs, professionals were interspersed with or sometimes outnumbered by railroad laborers, fishermen, agricultural workers, and stockyard employees.³⁴ In fact, Carl Abbott claimed that "Only in Evanston did men in finance and the professions outnumber farmers, gardeners, and farm laborers."³⁵

The creation of the omnibus, horsedrawn streetcar, and finally the electric streetcar famously led to the rapid development of what Sam Bass Warner termed "streetcar suburbs," smaller towns much nearer to central cities than the farther-out railroad suburbs that experienced a population inflow in the last half of the nineteenth century.³⁶ The rapid growth of streetcar suburbs corresponded with a before-then unparalleled influx of European immigrants, both skilled artisans and unskilled laborers. In a manner similar to today's patterns, some new arrivals skipped over central cities to move directly to suburbs, where, presumably, real estate prices were lower and housing less

congested. Warner describes the physical class divisions of streetcar suburbs in Boston, saying:

“...from 1850 to 1870 Roxbury had enjoyed a great industrial and building boom, but much of today's lower Roxbury was at this time still the unfilled marshes and flats of the Back and South bays. Along the edge of these marshes lived the poor of Roxbury, the shanty Irish...These were not the packed slums of Boston's North End or New York City, but rather a small drab section of little two- and three-story wooden houses and barracks such as could be found in any New England Mill Town.”³⁷

The housing might have been preferable to the options the city offered, but the flooding that plagued these lowlands certainly offset the extra space.

Responses of wealthier suburban residents strike a familiar chord. William Dean Howells in his descriptive account of “Dublin,” a similar Irish neighborhood in the Boston suburb of Charlesbridge, presents a bleak portrait of the district as dirty and muddy, lacking in infrastructure, neglected as much by its inhabitants as by the rest of the world. Howells’ hefty dose of anti-Irish racism reflects the era’s widely held perceptions of the immigrant group and presages the urban and suburban implications of intentional spatial segregation which echo throughout recent U.S. history: “...when the calamitous race actually appears, a mortal pang strikes to the bottom of every pocket. Values tremble throughout that neighborhood, to which the new-comers communicate a species of moral dry-rot.” The homes thus abandoned by the fearful “Yankee” residents, according to Howells, were the only respite from the “hopeless ugliness” of the Irish shanties.³⁸

There is even some suggestion of early gentrification-based displacement of the poor (or at least a perception of it) from city to suburbs. In a review of Timothy Sawyer’s historical account of Charlestown, Massachusetts, G. Hamlen lamented that “Today the site of the Battle of Bunker Hill is environed by the most squalid and least prosperous of the suburbs of Boston...” due in part to an influx of “foreign poverty” as immigrants were uprooted by renovations in central Boston neighborhoods.³⁹ Given the dramatic transformation of the city with extensive landfilling projects during the second half of the nineteenth century, it is feasible that poor city residents were forced to peripheral

locations either due to rising rents or the destruction of their dwellings during the landfill process.⁴⁰

Boston was by no means unique with regards to suburban poverty during 1800s. In one of his influential texts on suburbanization, Richard Walker made the sweeping statement that “early suburbs were not, to any measurable degree, residential bedroom communities for well-to-do commuters to the central city, and their class character was more likely to be common than elite.”⁴¹ Warner, in an account of the historical development of Philadelphia, describes at length the twenty years of riots from the 1830s to the 1850s that took place on the urban fringes in suburbs such as Northern Liberties, Kensington, and Southwark to the north and south of the city, in which were concentrated poor enclaves of free blacks and unskilled immigrant laborers.⁴² The persistent riots, arising in part from class tensions and low quality living and working conditions, led to a call to annex the poorer townships in order to rein in the chaos. With the Consolidation Act of 1854, Philadelphia became one of the first U.S. cities to expand its borders by absorbing its suburbs, growing from two to 100 square miles with one legal maneuver.⁴³

By this time the American industrial revolution was well underway, and immigrant laborers were feeding its rapid expansion. While some of the newest suburbs were home to commuting professionals, others were industrial districts catering to workers in new and established factories. In fact, industrial developments formed their own class of lower-income suburbs as detailed in some of the earliest documentation of the process of American suburbanization.

Production-Based Suburbs

The terms “industrial,” “manufacturing,” and “satellite” have been used interchangeably as qualifiers for a certain category of suburb, one centered on production facilities and the labor required to support them.⁴⁴ Although most industrial enterprises were closely tied to the centers of port cities in the early 1800s to benefit from local demand or to

take advantage of water-based shipping methods, the detached New England and Southern mill towns of the textile industry were precursors of industrial settlements that were to come.⁴⁵ Richard Harris and Robert Lewis documented that industries, particularly those with noxious elements, were moving away from city centers at least by the mid-1800s in waves of development that built on one another.⁴⁶ In other industries, however, business owners had long contracted out work to rural households through the pre-industrial mass employment structure of the “putting-out” system, providing the owners with some incentive to relocate to the urban periphery in order to exert more control over their workers.⁴⁷

As the factory system became the dominant industrial model, mavericks of urban industries, observing the potential of the urban periphery, began to move their firms to take advantage of lower suburban land and labor costs. Moreover, labor unrest had begun to take a toll on central city industries, increasing employers’ incentive to move to outlying locations to avoid unionization.⁴⁸ By 1900 manufacturers were rapidly and systematically sinking capital into plants or even entire districts outside the city limits.⁴⁹ Concurrently, outside of many cities low-income workers sought the unregulated peripheral havens that would allow them to construct their own homes.⁵⁰ Firms followed workers and more workers followed these firms, creating communities composed almost entirely of factory laborers. The trend of the industrializing suburb was so pronounced that the first scholars to dissect separate categories of suburban development differentiated suburbs first into residential and industrial types, or as Harlan Douglass iterated in 1925, “suburbs of consumption” and “suburbs of production.”⁵¹

Industrial suburbs as a category were not homogeneous. Robert Lewis differentiated between four types varying by level of organization, distance from and integration with the central city, and the construction and ownership of worker housing.⁵² Satellite towns tended to have separate labor markets though they maintained input and output connections with the nearby city, as opposed to informal and organized industrial areas at the urban edges that were more connected to the urban area. In some manufacturing

suburbs, particularly company towns, the business itself provided housing for its laborers, while in others homes were formally or informally constructed by worker households.⁵³

What sets these suburbs apart from those discussed earlier in the paper is the fact that the populations of many industrial communities of all types were almost exclusively workers, and as such have often been given the indistinct label “working class,” complete with the connotations that term entails.⁵⁴ As William Dobriner noted, however, the suburban working class can include a spectrum of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled laborers, offering enormous variation in income levels and the extent of poverty.⁵⁵ Certainly not all industrial or laborer-centric suburbs would be considered poor. In fact, in many cases manufacturing communities became definitively more middle class in comparison to their white-collar parallels, particularly as unions solidified and embedded themselves in the American industrial complex. Bennett Berger’s examination of life in a suburb established around a manufacturing plant in Milpitas, California highlighted tastes and preferences in political participation, religion, and leisure activities that differed from those associated with standard “middle class” suburbs of the time, but his account does not suggest that these working class suburbanites were struggling to feed their families or keep their homes.⁵⁶ Owners of some company towns constructed well-designed housing and in many cases also provided pension plans and employee stock ownership options.⁵⁷ Adequate income from steady factory jobs offered certain workers stability far removed from poverty.

That level of stability and comfort, however, was not uniformly present in industrial suburbs. Class distinctions driven by skill level, apart from the social distance between worker and factory owner, existed both within and among industrial suburbs from their inception. Migration, international and domestic, was a key determinant of these divisions during the 1800s. Massive waves of first Irish, then Eastern and Southern European laborers sought relief in the United States from famine and instability in their home countries. Eventually immigrants from China and Latin America joined the ranks of workers, along with African-Americans fleeing the harsh environment of the Southern

states. As in all eras past, the unskilled among these groups performed the hardest, most unwelcome tasks for the lowest wages.

Unskilled workers also endured the worst living conditions. Graham Taylor, in his description of worker housing in the steel town of Gary, Indiana, noted that while housing provided by the United States Steel Corporation as rental units for steel workers showed “considerably diversity of architecture and little of the monotony ordinarily characteristic of ‘company housing,’” these rentals were largely taken by skilled employees. However, there were two other categories of laborer employed by the steel mill in Gary: thousands of transient construction workers, as well as a permanent unskilled labor force. For the former, “housing provision...has been unsatisfactory and inadequate in Gary as in other towns of the Steel Corporation.” Forced to house themselves, these workers lived in tents or informal shacks constructed of discarded materials that barely sufficed during the cold winters. The Corporation initially constructed barracks of attached four room units for its permanent, largely immigrant, unskilled workers, but to increase their small incomes the residents of these structures would take large numbers of boarders into their already cramped quarters. Frustrated by the toll this overcrowding took on the properties, the company forced out the inhabitants and remodeled the units for workers with families.⁵⁸

The housing patterns in Gary were similar to those in other steel towns of the early twentieth century. Apollo Steel’s Vandergrift, Pennsylvania, for example, was an idyllic company town designed in 1895 by Frederick Law Olmsted’s firm, offering curvilinear streets, a village green, and low-cost housing purchase options for skilled craftsmen and company higher-ups.⁵⁹ Unskilled workers, while also essential to the work of the Apollo steel mill, were relegated to a nearby community of overcrowded shacks dubbed Rising Sun. A comparable settlement outside of Granite City, Illinois was known as Hungary Hollow.⁶⁰

Differences in income levels were evident not just within, but also among production-oriented suburbs. Prime examples are the poor “labor camp suburbs” that developed

and became permanent around settlements of railroad construction workers as the tracks were laid in the early 1900s.⁶¹ Chicago was well-known for its Mexican *colonias*, immigrant settlements established to house railroad workers. Paul Taylor, in his comprehensive research on Mexican workers, interviewed families that had resided in the *colonias* for years, noting the condition of their land and housing. Houses in railroad camps near Chicago were initially older unused boxcars that provided shelter for entire families. As their time in the camps progressed, households would construct additions of extra rooms or porches to the boxcar to increase living space.⁶² In Southern California, diverse communities such as Watts, at the time outside of Los Angeles, began as boxcar camps for Mexican railroad workers. As transportation options improved, real estate developers saw the potential in the cheap land along the tracks and subdivided it into small, inexpensive plots. Black, Mexican, and white laborers built homes for themselves on these lots with no basic services as they completed construction on the railroad lines or carried out maintenance. They saved money by building with discarded materials and grew food in backyard gardens to stretch their small incomes.⁶³

Coal mining towns in Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and West Virginia, or coal “patches” as they were sometimes known, were also among the lowest-income of this type of suburb. To allow for rapid work start-up, a patch’s shelters were initially shacks constructed from discarded wood and tar paper. As time passed, streets were added along with more durable three-or-four-room rental units that would be inhabited by as many as 15 to 20 people, but the early shanties often remained standing.⁶⁴ In some coal villages, “every inch of the ground and every house is owned by the independent companies,” who exerted tremendous amounts of control over their laborers.⁶⁵ Bosses could easily evict renters who displeased them and often ignored maintenance needs. A central company store provided necessities to workers and their families at above-market-rate prices, further diminishing their rock-bottom wages.⁶⁶ In other settlements, more established residents would purchase land and construct homes, renting space to new arrivals looking for board. These towns allowed for somewhat more upward mobility with the opportunity to supplement income through enterprise.⁶⁷

With the onset of World War II, labor-oriented suburbs took on a new form. Young men were fighting across the ocean, defense industries needed workers, and remaining men and women were searching for opportunities to support themselves and their families or contribute to the war effort. Workers of all skill levels began to flood cities with heavy defense-oriented production, rapidly creating severe housing crises. The government responded by diverting public housing funds into support for public and private war housing development. The result was a series of large, often low-income housing settlements constructed on open land at the urban periphery.⁶⁸ As laborers responded to recruiting efforts for Kaiser Company shipyards and other defense industries in Portland, Oregon in the early 1940s, the lack of adequate housing reached an alarming state. Edgar Kaiser requested federal funding to construct a new low-income housing project on 650 acres of land outside of the city limits. The more than 9,500 units eventually held 42,000 people in what amounted to a new town called Vanport with its own schools, medical facilities, daycare centers, and shops.⁶⁹ Vanport became one of two housing projects in Portland in which African-Americans—15 percent of the 160,000 migrants to the Portland area during the War—could find housing.⁷⁰ The town's existence was short-lived, however—shoddy construction and lowland location made Vanport particularly susceptible to the 1948 flood of the Columbia River that all but eradicated the housing units and sent the population (by that time, about 18,000) scurrying to Portland for emergency shelter.⁷¹

Not all of these defense suburbs were as impermanent, no matter the intent of the builder. San Diego, with its concentration of military bases and aircraft industries, faced a similar housing shortage by 1940 as 1,500 individuals relocated to the city per week. Sidestepping city officials who were ambivalent toward public housing, the federal government initiated the construction of “3000 houses in 300 days” in a community they named Linda Vista on a mesa north of San Diego.⁷² The original 3000 units were supplemented with almost 2000 temporary units (demountables) added to meet the needs of incoming workers, making Linda Vista the largest public housing project in existence at the time with 13,000 residents. The severity of the housing crisis resulted in costly, ill-planned, and ultimately slapdash construction that failed to link the remote site

to existing transportation networks or provide adequate commercial facilities and services. However, the wartime need for workers had out of necessity suspended some racial and gender discrimination in hiring and housing, making Linda Vista an affordable haven for single women alone and with children and one of the few places giving African-Americans access to rental housing outside of ghettoized Southeast San Diego.⁷³ With the end of the war, the temporary housing was demolished or relocated, and the City of San Diego eventually absorbed Linda Vista as one of its neighborhoods.

The above examples demonstrate that worker-oriented suburbs could vary widely both in the skill levels of their inhabitants and in the living conditions to which the workers were subject. The poorest and the most vulnerable made their way among the more comfortable lifestyles of skilled employees, highlighting the ambiguities of the “working class” distinction.

Suburban Persistence

Up to now, the suburbs discussed each emerged prior to the archetypal “modern” suburb, the post-World War II middle class enclave simultaneously hailed and jeered, that came to signify American suburbia while failing to accurately capture it. In short, the advent of the automobile and the development of the highway system, the return of young soldiers after World War II eager to start families and the shift to low-cost mortgages subsidized by the federal government, and the creation of new assembly-line techniques to mass produce housing clearly altered the landscape of the urban fringe and quickened the pace of the movement out of cities. But the prior waves of suburban development left some aging and deteriorating suburbs in their wakes, and the expanses of new tract housing overshadowed but did not eliminate the phenomenon of older suburban decline. Arnold, in describing the motivation behind the Federal Greenbelt Town Program started in the 1930s, noted,

“By the end of the century many of these settlements on the urban fringe had been passed over by new waves of suburbanites seeking newer and larger homes now available through the extension of railroads and trolley lines. Increasing numbers of old suburban settlements had degenerated into

slums...The affluent now remove themselves deeper into the countryside, remote from the city and from each other.”⁷⁴

It seemed evident that older suburbs were not exempt from the decay ebbing into central cities.

Yet even the new post-war suburbs, symbolized by the fluid spread of middle-class Levittowns, were certainly not as homogeneous and “classless” as critical opinion assumed.⁷⁵ Nor were they simply heterogeneous in terms of individual backgrounds in the sense that Herbert Gans described in *The Levittowners*.⁷⁶ Three years before Gans penned his classic work and in the same year that Lyndon B. Johnson announced his urban-oriented War on Poverty, the New York Times reported that poor populations were increasing in New York’s suburbs in Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk counties. While the number of residents in Nassau County⁷⁷ had only risen by 6.5 percent, the number of people collecting welfare had more than doubled since 1960; in Suffolk County the population grew by 30 percent and welfare rolls increased by 85 percent over the same period.⁷⁸ In 1968, the problems described by poor interviewees in wealthy Westchester County seem eerily familiar to those captured by recent media coverage: transportation difficulties, lack of social services, judgment from affluent neighbors. “We’re fighting not even a holding action because of the limited resources we get,” lamented the director of the anti-poverty agency in Nassau County.⁷⁹

Almost two decades later, while Robert Fishman used 200 years of British and American history to paint a compelling picture of suburban life as the development of prosperous *Bourgeois Utopias* that were created to separate the rich from the poor, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development wrote a report on “Troubled Suburbs” that tracked suburban fiscal and economic indicators in more than one thousand suburbs, finding huge variation and evidence of the seepage of “urban” problems such as poverty and crime into the suburban aggregate.⁸⁰

Scholars were clearly challenging the idea of the suburban homogeneity during and following the rapid suburbanization of the 1950s. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s

researchers exchanged theories on suburban persistence, the claim that suburbs reproduced their middle class or affluent socioeconomic status over time, instead of falling prey to the deterioration predicted by the Chicago School's urban ecological theories. Suburban persistence adherents hypothesized that population was originally determined by the suburb's function in the metropolitan area (employing or residential). If the suburb maintained that function over time, residents moving out of the suburb would be replaced by incomers of a similar socioeconomic position.⁸¹ Studies more than a decade later demonstrated that suburbs tended to maintain their functions to some extent, contributing to the longevity of suburban socioeconomic status, and that persistence in characteristics reflecting economic status was more evident in suburbs between 1950 and 1970 than from 1920 to 1950.⁸²

Critiques of suburban persistence as defined by municipal function and unconstrained population movements generally fell into two categories: support for Burgess' urban ecology model, or alternative explanations related to place stratification.⁸³ Taking issue with earlier methods and measurements, researchers used different techniques and found evidence of socioeconomic change in individual suburbs. Choldin and his colleagues used their evidence to shore up ecological theories and to draw parallels between the deterioration patterns of cities and suburbs, but John Logan put forward a new conception of suburban status change based on the role of local government and other institutional actors.⁸⁴ Population change and the deterioration of suburban housing stock may have some effect on socioeconomic levels, he claimed, but ultimately suburban governments attempt to control the economic levels of their populations through zoning regulations, development controls, and tax rates. In the end, political agents create and maintain persistence of socioeconomic status and intensify disparities among suburbs by using exclusionary tactics.

The socioeconomic persistence discourse has become obsolete over time, though the insights this research contributed remain relevant to understanding the various dynamics behind the economic trajectories of suburban places. Certainly some locations—often affluent, historical suburbs such as Llewellyn Park, New Jersey or the

Main Line destinations around Philadelphia—have maintained high income levels over decades or even centuries, owing to a range of factors including location, historic and well-maintained housing, and regulatory environments. Others, such as the Watts neighborhood in Los Angeles, started as low-income suburban outposts and remained poor even as they were absorbed into the nearby city. But many suburbs, particularly those adjacent to urban centers, have experienced general income declines in recent decades. And as the suburban landscape has evolved through the early twenty-first century, sweeping statements about socioeconomic changes in suburbs as an aggregate have had even less predictive value.

Suburban Diversity

By the 1990s and early 2000s, the development of “edge cities,” “metroburbia,” and “boomburbs” on urban peripheries drew renewed attention to the fuzzy boundaries between urban centers and suburbs.⁸⁵ These recent forms of suburban development, far from representing new and unfamiliar landscapes, hearken back to the eclectic mix of uses and classes in the early borderlands and bring to mind Walker’s observation that “the suburbs appear to be a kind of uneasy compromise between country and city, the city spilling out over the countryside and the countrified landscapes incorporated into the city.”⁸⁶ Yet these city-suburbs, different as they were from the massive Levittown-like developments of previous decades, inspired new waves of research as scholars followed in the footsteps of their predecessors, attempting to distinguish suburbs from cities and from one another by developing categorizations that highlight suburban diversity on a range of parameters.

Numerous suburban typologies have been added to the literature on suburbia over the last fifteen years. Myron Orfield was the first to examine metropolitan, non-central city, incorporated places using a cluster analysis based on fiscal variables such as local revenue capacity as well as social and economic variables related to poverty levels, demographics, and commercial economic development. He identified six types of suburbs, three in an “at-risk” category based on fiscal and social vulnerability, one

characterized as “bedroom-developing” with significant growth but limited resources, and two classified as “affluent job centers” with large tax bases and high-income residents. More than one-third of the suburbs he analyzed in the 25 largest metropolitan areas were at risk, with over half of these at the low-density edges of metropolitan areas.⁸⁷

Mikelbank expanded on Orfield’s analysis by including a broader array of population, location, economy, and government variables. He posited four major categories of suburbs: “white bedroom,” “manufacturing,” “suburban success,” and “working-diversity,” and concluded that the concept of suburbs as affluent and exclusively residential communities does not align with characteristics of a large majority of modern-day suburban locations.⁸⁸ Similarly, Hanlon, Vicino, and Short looked at 13 major metropolitan areas, identifying “poor” suburbs, “manufacturing” suburbs, “black” suburbs, and “immigrant” suburbs as digressions from the traditional wealthy residential settlement.⁸⁹

“Inner-ring” or “first-tier” suburbs have received the most attention in relation to shifting metropolitan income distributions. Though a somewhat contentious term, inner-ring refers to the suburban settlements that were the first to develop during the post-war suburban expansion, with housing stock built between 1945 and 1970.⁹⁰ Short, Hanlon, & Vicino describe a “new suburban gothic,” a bleakness that characterizes declining inner ring suburbs relative to their urban centers.⁹¹ Signs of inner-ring suburban deterioration—white flight, rising poverty, and population declines—are similar to symptoms exhibited by failing inner cities.⁹² Resources are often funneled to outer growing suburbs or back into gentrifying city neighborhoods, while inner suburbs are passed over.⁹³

But even inner ring suburbs are not homogeneous. Hanlon created a typology specifically for these older, fading suburbs, dividing them by income, age of housing stock, and predominant ethnicity.⁹⁴ Not all first-tier suburbs, she found, were experiencing declines in socioeconomic status, though 40 percent of her sample

demonstrated those tendencies. At least a third was solidly middle class, and some of the older picturesque inner suburban areas had been wealthy since their inception. Moreover, the distribution of vulnerable inner-ring suburbs differed by region, with the majority concentrated near the old manufacturing centers of the Northeast and Midwest.

The problem with focusing on inner ring suburban decay is that economic vulnerability is not limited to these locations. Bollens and Orfield noted that even in the age of wealthy exurbia, the outermost “fringe” suburbs of a metropolitan area can also be associated with low socioeconomic status, either because of the almost rural nature of these settlements or because they were satellites developed prior to the large-scale decentralization of people and jobs. Moreover, income declines related to the recent Great Recession may affect smaller pockets within suburbs. This vulnerability may remain hidden when data are aggregated at the suburb level.⁹⁵

Although each of the cited analyses above touches on the existence of lower-income suburbs, these authors do not distinguish poorer suburbs from one another. Nicolaidis was the first to differentiate among types of historical working class suburbs, using the Los Angeles metropolitan area from 1920 to 1960 as her primary case study. Her four categories are similar to some of the types examined in this paper: industrial suburbs, settlements for domestic workers, railroad labor camps, and what she has termed “farm-fringe streetcar suburbs,” enclaves with cheap land and self-built housing that were almost rural in nature but were connected by streetcar to the city.⁹⁶ Murphy brought the discussion up-to-date by developing a classification scheme of three types of modern poor suburbs focusing on institutional dimensions. Her symbiotic suburbs demonstrate similar poverty trends to their corresponding central cities, and are often located in the metropolitan inner ring. Skeletal suburbs are the ailing industrial and manufacturing suburbs from the post-war period that declined over the last half-century with the loss of manufacturing employment. Overshadowed suburbs are affluent but contain poor quarters obscured from view.⁹⁷ Murphy’s analysis is compelling but was limited to eight locations surrounding Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, by her own account constraining the generalizability of her findings. In a broader analysis, Kneebone and

Berube examined suburbs in the largest 100 metropolitan areas by their change in poverty from 2000 to 2008-10, separating them by quadrants according above average or below average population and regional employment growth. There is the most comprehensive typology of suburban poverty, but limiting the study to places experiencing changes in poverty rates excludes persistently poor suburbs or those whose incomes declined prior to 2000.⁹⁸ My analysis of poor suburbs in the following chapters elaborates on these more recent findings.

CONCLUSIONS

Tracking the narrative of suburban poverty and class differentiation through historical accounts of suburban development from its earliest points in U.S. history indicates that the manifestations of poverty we observe in suburbs today share similarities with those in suburbs of earlier eras. The urban periphery of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries provided living space and employment for households and individuals with the lowest of incomes, from unskilled immigrant construction workers to domestic laborers serving the suburban elite. The heterogeneous, mixed-class suburbs with substantial poor populations we currently identify have more in common with earlier suburban forms than with the post-World War II middle-class settlements that still seem to define the characteristics of a suburb in American popular culture.

Moreover, the terms “poor suburbs” and “suburban poverty” do not describe singular distinguishable characteristics that easily separate these communities or individuals from others. Historical and contemporary commentary suggests that poverty in suburbs can be classified into different types related to the skill levels, employment situations, housing conditions, and demographic backgrounds of clusters of households that form each suburban settlement. In the following chapter, I bring together theories on the connections between place, space, and time to suggest possible mechanisms by which different categories of suburban poverty develop.

CHAPTER 2 ENDNOTES

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² Joel Kotkin and W. Cox, "Poverty and Growth: Retro-urbanists Cling to the Myth of Suburban Decline," *The Daily Beast*, May 21, 2013, accessed June 11, 2013, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/05/21/poverty-and-growth-retro-urbanists-cling-to-the-myth-of-suburban-decline.html>.

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⁶ Gregory Singleton, "The Genesis of Suburbia: A Complex of Historical Trends," in Louis Masotti and Jeffrey Hadden, *The Urbanization of the Suburbs*, (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973), 31

⁷ Becky M. Nicolaides and Andrew Wiese, *The Suburb Reader*, (New York: Routledge, 2006); 100

⁸ Harlan Douglass, *The suburban trend*, (New York: Arno Press, 1925). Robert Park and Ernest Burgess, *The City*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925).

⁹ Becky Nicolaides also makes this point in "'Where the Working Man is Welcomed.'"

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¹² Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness: The First Century of Urban Life in America, 1625-1742*, (New York: Knopf, 1938), 144.

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- ¹⁸ Hayden, *Building Suburbia*, Stilgoe, *Borderland*.
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- ³⁰ Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 99.
- ³¹ Nicolaides, "Where the Working Man."
- ³² Weise, *Places of Their Own*.
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- ⁴⁷ David Ward, *Cities and Immigrants: a Geography of Change in Nineteenth-Century America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 90;
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- ⁵³ Margaret Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise: The Design of American Company Towns*, (London; New York: Verso, 1995); Linda Carlson, *Company towns of the Pacific Northwest*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).
- ⁵⁴ Bennett Berger, *Working-class Suburb: A Study of Auto Workers in Suburbia*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960). Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven*.
- ⁵⁵ William Dobriner, *Class in Suburbia*, (Englewood Cliffs N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), 49. In her research on working class suburbs in Los Angeles, Nicolaides (1999, 2002) notes that the workers in these suburbs were not all of the same income or skill level, but in her case study of Southgate, California she does not concentrate on the plight of the most vulnerable.
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- ⁵⁷ Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise*, 55.
- ⁵⁸ Taylor, *Satellite Cities*, 189-194.
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3 THE DYNAMICS OF SUBURBAN POVERTY

In order to discuss current and past suburban poverty, we must first understand the historically loaded terms “suburbs” and “poverty.” “Suburbs are important enough for people to routinely write books to clear up the myths and misconceptions that previous writers have purveyed,” as Harris and Larkham point out, and the vast literature on suburbia is littered with scholarly statements about the characteristics of suburbs of a particular time, later contradicted or clarified by other work.¹ Poverty, too, has a seemingly infinite number of definitions offered in the enormous body of international and domestic research on the subject. Developing theory regarding suburban poverty requires precision in terms. In this chapter, I bring fundamental ideas about suburbs and poverty into focus and present the key descriptors of each that form the theoretical underpinnings for the study. I trace the conceptual work that equates both places and poverty with dynamic processes related to the movements of labor and capital—or more simply, people and money—and apply these themes to create a lens through which to examine the spatial and temporal mechanisms associated with the development of poor suburbs.

DEFINING SUBURBS

Narrowing the definition of “suburb” to a generally applicable idea is a thorny proposition—many well-respected authorities on suburban development have submitted distinct characterizations of the urban periphery in the United States. The preeminent scholar of suburban history, Kenneth Jackson, for example, outlined four popularly-held descriptive elements of American suburbia: “function (non-farm residential), class (middle and upper status), separation (a daily journey to work), and density (low relative to older sections).”² This interpretation, loosely corresponding with that of several others, applies to bedroom communities supported by locally-serving retail with residents commuting to central cities, but it has never accounted for the spectrum of industrial and worker-oriented settlements in existence since the late 1800s, or the unincorporated fringe agglomerations of industry, farm, and residence.³ Moreover, the

large-scale decentralization of employment has now blurred the averred city-suburb divide, turning William Alonso's paradigmatic monocentric city model dividing central business districts from residential outskirts on its head.⁴ Job sprawl and associated population movements have spawned the development of polynucleated metropolitan areas, eliciting from academics and pundits a variety of appellations—edge cities, boomburbs, metroburbia—to try to describe the metropolitan reality.⁵

In Massachusetts, older mill towns such as Lawrence and Lowell could be considered cities in their own right, but literature on industrial suburbs suggests that these places have always been linked to Boston, the central city of the metropolitan area, at least as a source of product demand.⁶ Leaving these types of communities out of analyses because they are not “suburban” enough in functional terms limits the scope of suburban research and does not allow for new insights regarding the development of metropolitan locations. The fact is that the overlap of cities and suburbs is not new; some suburbs have long reflected more urban patterns while others have shared characteristics more in line with rural locations. This ambiguity may explain the U.S. Census Bureau's decision to shy away from a hard definition of suburbs, instead classifying them as a residual of the metropolitan area apart from central cities.

And yet the boundaries of suburbs and central cities are not yet so amorphous as to render suburban and urban locations identical. It may be the very heterogeneity of suburbs that provides the basis for defining them, but negative definitions—what suburbs are *not*—do not explain the essence of the concept.⁷ So what can we say about how suburbs—specific to the U.S. context—should be positively defined? There are three qualities that can be associated with suburbs without linking them to constraints that ineffectively bound the observations made about them. First, they are *metropolitan* in that they maintain some connection to the central city and their neighboring municipalities through employment, housing, production, or commuting patterns, though they may not be entirely economically reliant on an urban center. The term “metropolis,” of course, dates back to Greek antiquity—connoting the idea of colonial ties, whether economic, cultural, or political, to a city of origin.⁸ But

“metropolitan” today is more a product of measurement methods, dating back to 1905 and 1910 efforts by the Census Bureau to identify densely populated areas that included not just specific city boundaries but also economically and socially integrated fringe areas.⁹ Now the extent of a Census metropolitan area is determined by population and commuting data alone. The upshot is that suburbs are associated with central cities but not necessarily dependent on them—the key element is the fact of the link, not the type of link.¹⁰

Second, suburbs are *territories* in the sense that they are “claimed spaces.”¹¹ Whether officially incorporated or not, suburbs are generally politically distinct from central cities with a recognized sense of physical place (if not agreed-upon boundaries). They may be self-governed or under the control of county authorities, but they are not controlled by the central city government; that is, they have separate identities.¹² While some, such as Warner in *Streetcar Suburbs*, have argued that certain neighborhoods within city limits have suburban qualities related to class and density and that historical annexation patterns suggest that some urban communities are, in fact, still suburban, the broader view in the suburban literature is toward the separation of city and suburb by at least the urban border.¹³

Third, suburbs are generally *lesser in population and density* than central cities, but only as considered within defined geographic regions and in relation to their associated central city.¹⁴ For example, Boston’s suburbs have substantially fewer people than the city itself, but Lowell, Massachusetts has a larger population than Canton, Ohio, a city with its own metropolitan district. Density has been a prevalent defining attribute of suburbs given its ease of measurement and common sense appeal, but the spatial element is essential here; historical regional development patterns and land constraints have shaped the categories of urban and suburban in different areas of the United States.¹⁵ In the South and West, the ability to annex outlying areas well into the twenty-first century means that urban municipalities frequently absorb denser peripheral settlements, but the political fragmentation of the Northeast contributes to the higher suburban population share in that region.

The common thread of these three characteristics is that they all refer to suburbs in relation to the major cities in their metropolitan areas. That is, suburbs are a relative concept.¹⁶ As the name (sub-urb) suggests, they must be described in relation with urban centers, but yet remain politically, economically, and socially distinguishable entities. "...a suburb by definition is not simply a small social island but a distinctively powerful ingredient within a larger urban orbit," as Mattingly declares, suggesting that the meaning of "suburb" is inseparable from its situation in networks of global, regional, and metropolitan systems.¹⁷ Suburbs are therefore constantly shaping and being shaped by their connections to other places, in a dynamic process that defines their patterns of development.

SUBURBS AS FLOWS

Places as Flows

In economics, finance, physics, and other disciplines, theory distinguishes between stock variables that reflect a picture in time and flow variables measured over intervals. The distinction facilitates understanding present conditions while allowing for analysis of the past and prediction of the future, and is a result (in economics) of the Marshallian differentiation between long-run and short-run outcomes. The challenge is that we never find ourselves at a point where a description of stock variables is accurate. Time moves on and current conditions change from second to second. The nature of time suggests that all variables are flow variables in the long run.

Time's movement does not stop when we add physical space to a conceptual framework, yet too often planners still default to thinking of space, and particularly specific places, as static, "frozen scenes for human activity."¹⁸ It is not for lack of theoretical analysis on the interlinked nature of space and time, which has been debated philosophically and scientifically from time immemorial in numerous fields including physics, math, philosophy, and geography.

Torsten Hägerstrand brought the conversation on the space-time relationship into modern social science research with the development of his sub-discipline of “time geography.” Using visualization techniques that were highly innovative at the time, Hägerstrand conceptually explored the movement of individuals, institutions, and objects along three-dimensional time-space paths, which can be “channeled or dammed up” by a range of internal and external constraints.¹⁹ For each person, the variety of paths that could theoretically be taken each day over a certain period of time formed what Hägerstrand called a “prism,” and the paths of different entities intersected to create “activity bundles.” Mapped together, the activity bundles delineate the physical and social landscape.²⁰ Hägerstrand’s paths and prisms focused on the individual as the unit of analysis, but they were meant not only to track individual movements but also to provide an understanding of the time-space paths of the individual in order to more accurately comprehend the context and social interactions that make up the whole. Time-geography could then be used as a basis for identifying local and regional “structural patterns” that would be obscured in aggregate data.²¹

Time geography has had a long theoretical and applied legacy, but for our purposes here what matters is Allan Pred’s extension of Hägerstrand’s work to the idea of place as distinct from space. Place is, of course, another concept that has been debated since antiquity. Agnew distilled three generally accepted critical elements: location (in physical terms), locale (a setting for social interactions, as conceived by Giddens) and sense of place (individual perceptions of what the place “is”), but Gieryn offers a simpler definition: “Place is space filled up by people, practices, objects, and representations” – or space made meaningful.²² These definitions, however, fail to capture the dynamism of places. Tying the time geography framework to structuration theory then being formulated by Giddens, Pred made the case that places are “constantly becoming,” in the words of the modernists, while at the same time linked to what has gone before:

“Place is therefore a process whereby the reproduction of social and cultural forms, the formation of biographies, and the transformation of nature ceaselessly become one another at the same time that time-space specific activities and power relations ceaselessly become one another. The components of the theory

are universal in the sense that they are inextricably interwoven with one another in the becoming of every place or region. However, the ways in which they are interwoven are not subject to universal laws, but vary with historical circumstances. The proposed theory of place, after all, is historically contingent.”²³

Pred presented place as one more dialectic, simultaneously shaped by and shaping people but constrained in its trajectory by past events. Places were re-envisioned as processes, rather than as static dumping grounds for objects of meaning.

By the mid-1980s, the communications and transportation revolutions had thrown a wrench into the definitions of place scholars had refined. No longer was proximity required for social interaction or information exchange. Transportation technologies enabled the rapid movement of labor and goods across vast distances. Scholars, led by David Harvey and building off of Giddens’ concept of time-space distancing, began to discuss the compression of space-time in the context of globalization, reflecting the rapid elimination of spatial impediments to socioeconomic interaction, the so-called “friction of distance.”²⁴ The breaking down of these global barriers ushered in transnational flows of labor, capital, goods and services, and information, new not in their presence but in their magnitude. Saskia Sassen argued that these flows have reconstructed not only the social but the spatial order of “global cities” like London, New York, and Tokyo, which are themselves arbiters of these global processes and connections. Gleaming buildings signify gentrified downtown neighborhoods while concentrated disadvantage continues unabated, shifting only in physical location.²⁵

Rather than serving as a great equalizer, the information age has brought new forms of exclusion. Around the time of Sassen’s writing, Castells described a destructive dialectic in cities between the “space of flows” and “space of places.” The space of flows, “the material arrangements that allow for simultaneity of social practices without territorial contiguity” he claimed, was in constant tension with the space of places, with place defined as “the locale whose form, function, and meaning are self-contained within the boundaries of territorial contiguity.”²⁶ The struggle arises because of the competing goals of the networks linking urban centers to global society and the localized nature of

social interaction—specifically social movements to assert identity and maintain political control under unstable social and economic conditions. As place is eradicated, it is also created by these conflicting forces. Local governments, Castells asserts, take on more prominence because they are the only entity able to bridge the divide between the global and the local; that is, in fact, their function. However, the competition for resources arising from the increasing magnitude of these flows motivates leaders to prioritize projects that will effectively link their municipalities to worldwide networks, not those that will enhance quality of life for local residents.

Yet inasmuch as Castells, Sassen, and even Giddens discuss flows and places, they maintain the separateness of the concepts. It is Doreen Massey who unites them. Echoing Pred's ideas, she defines places as processes, the outcomes of embedded and intersecting flows:

[Places] can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a larger proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street, or a region or even a continent. And this in turn allows a sense of place which is extroverted, which includes a consciousness of its links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive way the global and the local... If places can be conceptualized in terms of the social interactions which they tie together, then it is also the case that these interactions themselves are not motionless things, frozen in time. They are processes. One of the great one-liners in Marxist exchanges has for long been, 'Ah, but capital is not a thing, it is a process. Perhaps this should be said also about places, that places are processes, too.'²⁷

Here, far from being autonomous locales being destroyed by flows, places *are* flows. Their forms, functions, and meanings, to draw again on Castells, are not determined entirely by physical proximity, as he claims, but instead by relationships with and movements between other places at a range of scales.

We can see the precursors of this idea in Ullman's work on spatial interaction, or the flows among locations. He suggests three reasons why these movements occur: complementarity, the demand in one location for something that can be supplied by another location; transferability, the time/travel/transport costs of dealing with distance;

and intervening opportunity, the supplanting of one destination by a more proximate location. Considering the connections between spaces, he noted, shifted the thinking in human geography from the static *site*—a physical conception of geographical space—to the dynamic *situation*, the impacts that a location has on other locations.²⁸

Within this framework, places are continually being remade by flows occurring within networks of places. A complicating factor, as noted in Massey's quote above, is that these networks encompass all scales from the global to the local. A locale as small as a neighborhood is not just shaped by flows from other neighborhoods, but from other states, regions, and countries. There is no hierarchy in these networks; that is, global dynamics do not necessarily have stronger effects than those at the local level, but neither can any scale be considered in isolation. Places are *interscalar* flows.

The idea of places as flows is insufficiently abstract, however; it is more accurate to say that a place is a *bundle* of flows in the same manner as property in law is considered a "bundle of rights" or a house in economics is viewed as a "bundle of attributes"—that is, constituted by a set of elements that overlap and interact but can also be disaggregated for greater conceptual clarity. Hagerstrand alludes to a similar idea of a "bundle of paths," or the conjunction of separate time-space paths of individuals. In the end, the character of a place is determined by the constituent flows (out of the set of all possible flows) that make up its bundle. This subset of flows, in turn, is continually determined within a historical trajectory, as described in the following section.²⁹

Deposits Forming the Structure and History of Places

A related phenomenon contributes to determining the specific flows that make up each place's bundle at any point in time. It is helpful here to refer to a metaphor from the field of geology: that flows leave deposits. In simple terms, as the water in a river moves from one location to another, it carries materials—rocks, sand, silt, and living organisms—eroded from its banks by the force of the flow. The fixed geographical features and weather patterns that shape the direction and flow of the water also

influence its speed. As the water slows, the force of the flow recedes to the point that it is overcome by gravity, and the particles the river was carrying settle out in different locations according to their weights—heavier pebbles in one place, lighter silt in another. But as the stream, fed continually by rain and melting snow and ice, moves over the same location at different points in time, external weather shocks cause it to leave different types of deposits in the same areas, forming layers of mixed sediment. In the ocean, this process occurs within waves, where wind and tidal currents dictate the direction and force of the flows that carry the particles. Scientists in the field of stratigraphy then study the sedimentation for insights into the historical determinants of the layers. But the sediment itself is not static either—at any point the strength of the water flows can erode and carry off particles deposited at an earlier time to be left in another location, changing the character of the sedimentation.

In the case of places, the currents of people, goods, money, and information from one location to another overlap and leave deposits that depend on the initial endowments in the area, the magnitude and control of the flows, the entities that compose them, and exogenous forces or shocks that act on them. Where the metaphor may fail is that in places, the deposits from each flow act as determinants, or magnets, for the deposits of future flows, either attracting or repelling them. As Massey noted, speaking in reference to the spatial outcomes of production:

“Each new layer, each new round of investment, brings with it potentially new economic bases of social organization, new ‘structural capacities’ and a new overall position within the broader geographical division of labour...The actual implications will depend, not just on the nature of the new round of investment, but also on the existing character of the areas affected. The combination of layers is a form of mutual determination, of the existing characteristics of the area or regional system with those of the geographical pattern and effects of previous uses.”³⁰

Again, this idea has its beginnings in multiple theories in economic geography. Ullman also compared processes of spatial interaction to gravitational force, under which principle the pull of gravity between objects increases with mass but decreases with distance. In a similar manner, he suggested, flows between an origin and a destination may surge with the size of the destination but diminish with the growth of the space that

separates them.³¹ More to the point is Myrdal's concept of cumulative causation—that events, actions, or forces create changes in a place that in turn cause other changes in a self-reinforcing cycle with ripple effects. Multiplier effects, or an increase in economic growth that is disproportionate to the inputs that caused it, compound the impact of the changes. Far from converging to the stable equilibrium proposed by traditional microeconomic theory, the processes of cumulative causation result in competition among regions and geographically uneven development as some areas pull scarce resources away from others.³²

The system of flows and deposits combined with initial spatial differentiation based on the physical features of a location accounts for the tremendous diversity in, and even uniqueness of places. As Massey noted, “Geographical uneven development does not vary only in degree, as some of the arguments about increasing uneven development imply, it varies also in nature.”³³ And yet, in that variation we observe patterns that allow us to group and categorize places according to their dominant characteristics and economic functions. The most basic of these is size, which in part creates the scale distinctions of such places as nations, regions, and cities. But even within these scalar groupings are other patterns that scholars have used to sort and classify places in an attempt to understand the dynamics that shape them.³⁴ Creating these kinds of typologies at a variety of scales reveals similarities and differences among places we sometimes consider in the aggregate, and is a useful tool with which to analyze suburban poverty in the following chapters.

Waves of Development

As in the geological metaphor, the flows among places can occur within the larger movement of waves. The idea of waves in the history of development is a common one. From Kondratieff to Kuznets, economists have used waves to describe cycles encompassing patterns of growth, stagnation, decline, and recovery. Schumpeter summarized this thinking in a typology of four cycles ranging in time periods, each named for their theorists. The Kitchin cycle, a short wave of three to five years, and the

Juglar fixed-investment cycle of seven to eleven years most closely approximate the short-term business cycles of boom and recession. Kuznets and Kondratieff hypothesized longer waves, of 15 to 25 years and 40 to 60 years respectively, that follow an S-curve pattern of economic expansion, sluggishness, and contraction. Kuznets linked his cycle to migratory movements and building and land patterns, while Schumpeter connected Kondratieff's work to tipping points of technological innovation.³⁵ While modern economists dispute the existence and regularity of these waves, discussion of short-term boom and bust cycles is clearly in the vernacular, and scholars continue to propose theories centered on the possibility of long waves.³⁶

Waves of urbanization are a linked construct with a more spatialized theme. Marxist writers have frequently drawn on the idea of "periods" or "stages" of urbanization as described by Gordon: "...urban history, like the history of other social institutions, does not advance incrementally, marching step by gradual step along some frictionless path. Urban history advances *discontinuously*, instead of *continuously*, periodically experiencing qualitative transformations of basic form and structure."³⁷ The stages are defined by capitalist accumulation that surges to a crisis point, resulting in large-scale urban transition. Writing outside of the Marxian frame, Beauregard connected these metamorphoses in the United States to Kondratieff long cycles, suggesting four waves of urbanization starting prior to industrialization and advancing to the current era of technology and globalization-driven change.³⁸ Scott takes a slightly different view, identifying three waves including the industrial revolution, the dominant Fordist system of mass production in manufacturing of the early to mid-twentieth century, and the so-called knowledge economy emerging since the 1970s.³⁹ Each wave is characterized by specific economic processes with concurrent population movements and restructuring of physical form.

Suburbanization can be included in descriptions of urbanization cycles, but some scholars have speculated specifically about the form and repercussions of waves of suburbanization. For example, Joel Garreau, author of the 1991 work *Edge Cities*, declared,

First, we moved our homes out past the traditional idea of what constituted a city. This was the suburbanization of America, especially after World War II. Then we wearied of returning downtown for the necessities of life, so we moved our marketplaces out to where we lived. This was the malling of America, especially in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, we have moved our means of creating wealth, the essence of urbanism - our jobs - out to where most of us have lived and shopped for two generations. That has led to the rise of Edge City.⁴⁰

Garreau's statement captures some of the essence of the waves that have shaped today's suburbia, but his premise is so generalized as to become simplistic. At no time have movements to suburbs been solely residential or solely employment-based—as we saw in Chapter 2 these streams have interacted and overlapped since the Revolutionary era). It is more appropriate to refer to the more nuanced eras that Jackson and Hayden use to describe the suburbanization of the United States, as noted in the previous chapter—preindustrial, borderlands, elite, streetcar, manufactured, post-war, exurbs.⁴¹ Each of these shifts was catalyzed by economic growth and advances in technology that spurred movements of people and money.

Types of Flows

My goal is to link this abstract discussion more concretely to the development of suburbs in the U.S. If places in general are flows, suburbs are each unique constellations of flows, set within interscalar networks at the metropolitan, regional, and global levels. Understanding what comprises these currents requires a general assumption that suburban (and urban) development trajectories are determined in part by the interdependent location decisions of households and firms. Both types of economic actors choose their locations based on unique economic and social constraints, and these decisions create feedback effects that influence other actors' spatial choices. At the same time, firms and households entrenched in their locations experience change-in-place due to external economic and demographic dynamics or feedback loops created by the investment behavior of other actors. Incumbent improvement or decline in turn impact household and firm location decisions and national and regional policy decisions are woven through these processes of change,

making it difficult to determine exogenous and endogenous processes or the direction of causality.

Four broad categories of flows link suburbs to other places in an interscalar network: people, money, goods and services, and information/communication.⁴² Within those categories, however, is a variety of individual streams—all flows of people are not the same, for example, nor are all flows of goods. In this study, I focus on flows of people (migration of all kinds) and “flows of consumption and production,” a category that collapses money with goods and services. Information and communication is undeniably relevant to the development of poverty in suburbs, but to contain the scope of the study I chose to leave that topic for future research.

Table 3.1 Examples of Flows and Deposits

FLOWS		DEPOSITS	
People	Consumption and Production	People	Consumption and Production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Migration • National migration • Regional/local migration • Specific demographic groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household income • Wages and Salaries • Firm migration • Flows of goods and services • Streams of public and private funds 	Settlement of population, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • Culture • Ideology • Human capital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resources • Employment • Fixed capital outlay (structures and infrastructure)

Flows of People

Migration occurs at a range of scales. The population movements that shape the development of suburbs are both transnational and domestic, and within those categories sub-flows are influenced by a variety of push and pull factors.

Transnational Movements

International migration takes several forms that fall into a 2 x 2 matrix: skilled and unskilled, and documented and undocumented. The U.S. frequently imports skilled workers in largely science and technology-related fields to fill the gap for this type of employee in large firms, many located on the coasts or in areas with high university concentrations. It is possible for some of these workers to remain in the country illegally by overstaying visas. But the majority of transnational migration to the US involves unskilled or semi-skilled workers, people seeking better options for providing for themselves and their families. A large subset of these laborers are undocumented, crossing U.S. borders in a dangerous and costly journey, often with the assistance of other immigrants.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, scholars began to observe that while established patterns of inner city immigrant enclaves were still being perpetuated, some immigrants were settling in outer urban neighborhoods and even moving into suburbs.⁴³ As early as 1990, census data revealed that 43 percent of immigrants to US metropolitan areas in the 1980s lived in suburbs, not in cities.⁴⁴ Singer, Hardwick and Brettel suggested that immigrants have followed the decentralization of industry, commercial and office space, settling in dispersed metropolitan areas lacking the dense urban centers typical of the Northeast and Midwest.⁴⁵

Once the process of transnational migration to suburbs has begun, it is facilitated by the distinct social networks developed by different immigrant groups. Individuals who have settled in a particular area and secured housing and employment are in a good position to assist others, including other family members, who wish to migrate. Research suggests that new immigrants are significantly more likely to locate in a neighborhood with a substantial grouping of people from their country of origin. These connections can provide temporary housing, links to possible employment, and the emotional support needed by those moving in.⁴⁶

Domestic Movements

Like international migration, domestic migration is also differentiable into separate streams depending on scale and motivating factors. One of the implications of Massey's spatial division of labor is that people with specific skill levels may need to move within their metropolitan areas or interregionally to find adequate employment commensurate with their abilities.⁴⁷ The large-scale decentralization of both skilled and unskilled employment has made it likely that many of those relocating are as likely to end up in suburbs as in cities. Despite the enduring conception of a monocentric city with commerce and industry at the center, almost three-quarters of metropolitan employment is now located more than five miles away from Central Business Districts.⁴⁸ Joint causality makes it difficult to tease out whether firms pursued workers or workers tracked firms, but Glaeser and Kahn noted that even prior to 1950 half of employment was located outside of the largest metropolitan counties.⁴⁹

At the same time, some are suggesting that we are witnessing a "back to the city" movement that is resulting in the gentrification of downtowns and the forced displacement of low-income urban dwellers.⁵⁰ The potential costs of gentrification are high, including the effects of forced displacement, heightened community conflict, and increased segregation by race, ethnicity, and class.⁵¹ Not all researchers, however, have found strong evidence of displacement in their studies of gentrifying areas.⁵² There is some question whether gentrification-related displacement, if it is indeed occurring, is pushing poor urban residents to outlying suburbs (as opposed to different urban neighborhoods or different metropolitan areas)—a question that requires extensive and accurate household mobility data that is difficult to secure.⁵³

Housing policy accounts for another factor pushing lower-income urban residents to outlying parts of metropolitan areas. Concerns over the spatial mismatch between poor urban workers and suburban jobs, the effects of urban concentrated poverty, and the unequal "geography of opportunity" afforded to low-income city dwellers have motivated some scholars and policy-makers to support dispersing poor urban residents to low-

poverty areas through Section 8 and other housing voucher programs.⁵⁴ Vouchers not only allow for and encourage a broader scope of locations but they also allow families to choose higher rent units if they can pay the remainder after the voucher is used. Data suggests that the share of low-income housing voucher recipients living in the suburbs has grown several percentage points over the decade to reach about half of all recipients, though the extent of the causal relationship is uncertain.⁵⁵

Movements of specific demographic groups also influence the socio-economic development path of suburbs. Blacks and African Americans, for example, have typically been thwarted by racial discrimination in their attempts to relocate to suburbs, particularly if those suburbs are predominantly white. Though discrimination continues to shape the opportunities and fortunes of black Americans, there is evidence that racial segregation has diminished since the 1980s.⁵⁶ Fischer suggested that a factor explaining increasing integration is the rapid expansion of African Americans into suburban locations as barriers to entry decrease, although in some cases black population movements into the suburbs may trigger white flight to locations even farther out on the metropolitan fringe.⁵⁷ In fact, Frey documented that by 2010, 51 percent of the black population in the 100 largest metropolitan areas now lives in suburbs, up from 37 percent in 1990.⁵⁸ The aging population is another key population sector that can determine the character and needs of suburbs. In the United States, the share of the population over 65 stood at 12.9 percent in 2010, and is projected to increase to 19.3 percent by 2030.⁵⁹ Although the elderly have a tendency to “age in place,” remaining in the suburbs of their middle age, substantial numbers also move for various reasons as they hit retirement age, preferring to locate near their families or to take advantage of the warmer climates and senior amenities of sunbelt locations.⁶⁰

Migration of some groups may also spur the outward movement of others. As suburbs open themselves to those who have been traditionally excluded or change their construction patterns away from single family homes on large lots to accommodate new populations, middle class or wealthy households, often white, exhibit behavior similar to the “white flight” away from urban areas in the 1970s and 80s. Some seek refuge in the

farthest outskirts of exurbia, while others may move to gentrifying city centers. This process may not be overtly racist or classist but may instead be a response to a perceived “decline” in the suburban environment.⁶¹

Flows of Consumption and Production

Money and goods also move between places at a range of scales. The flows originate with and move in a continuous cycle among three main entities: households, firms, and government, with intervening effects from the financial sector and foreign markets.

Households

Households have their own income streams originating from wages and earnings, government transfers, returns on their assets, or pensions/social security. Income moves in a circular manner between consumers and producers as households purchase goods and services and firms pay out wages. Flows of income are in part determined by individual skill level but they are also affected by exogenous factors over which households have little control. For example, changes resulting in regional economic growth or decline related to the trajectories of specific industry sectors such as biotechnology in some Northeastern cities or manufacturing in the Great Lakes region have led to job gains or losses that have had significant impacts on metropolitan or even regional income levels. Similarly, the booms and busts of economic cycles, most recently the 2005-2006 boom followed by recession of 2007-2009, have the potential of drastically changing incomes.

Land and housing markets are a principal recipient of flows of income, generally mediated by the financial sector. The magnitude of income moving through property markets make expenditures on housing a major element of the bundle of flows constituting a place. Households purchase not only housing, but also services related to their homes, creating significant multiplier effects for a local economy. As such, the industry is also a major employer and contributes more than 15 percent of GDP.⁶²

Firms

Business-related monetary flows take several forms. The most basic is the wages and salaries to employees. As transportation technologies have improved, jobs have decentralized, and two family incomes have become the norm, living and working across suburbs or between suburbs and cities has become more common; in fact, in 2009 more than 30 percent of U.S. employees commuted more than 30 minutes to work. In addition, corporate headquarters may be situated far from the majority of their workers in plants or retail establishments. The rising distances between workers and firms increase the proportion of wage and salary flows linking places to one another.⁶³

Globalization has expanded the scope of these linkages. Continuing a process of global economic restructuring starting in the 1960s, levels of international trade have grown astronomically as corporations compete for profit and nations remove trade barriers. The importance of trade integration to the world economy, as measured by imports and exports as a percentage of GDP, rose from 24.5 percent in 1960 to 51 percent by 2007, and it will continue an upward trend as the economy recovers from the most recent downturn.⁶⁴ Supply chains have globalized with trade, making it more likely that consumer goods will have one or more elements produced in another country. At the same time, “buy local” movements are attempts to keep dollars circulating within a more localized economy, whether a neighborhood, region, or country. These activities expand the number of locations connected by processes of consumption and production.

Flows of private capital, both global and local, are also central to shaping the character of places. Firm migration, intercorporate investment, mergers and acquisitions, and venture funds are vehicles by which capital moves from one place to another, relocating jobs and investment. With the rise of global financial markets and the rapid growth of foreign direct investment both from and to the United States, capital flows are as likely to originate or land outside of the country as inside. At the center of much of this movement are transnational corporations and their activities. The U.S. is the largest single receiver of FDI, a substantial portion of which goes into manufacturing operations

with foreign headquarters. Multinationals based in the U.S. send their own financial flows throughout the country, but their external expansion is far more significant.⁶⁵

Public Sector

Municipalities fund their budgets primarily through taxes on residential and commercial property, sometimes combined with sales taxes and very rarely supplemented by income and corporate taxes. Those streams are then reinvested by the municipality into infrastructure and services for its residents. The structure of the local tax system means that suburban services and amenities are strongly determined by the strength of their property tax bases—wealthy households and numerous commercial entities ensure a solid financial standing while the opposite is also true.

Federal and State government agencies generate public capital flows directed toward development. Municipal governments can apply for any of a range of grants or other financing from Washington through such programs as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) or the Economic Development Initiative (EDI) that come in the form of direct funding or loan guarantees. States have also set up their own funds to assist the cities and towns within their boundaries to attract employment-generating land uses, and often offer tax incentives to redirect investments toward promising locales.

Clearly these streams are highly interdependent. At the global level, Saskia Sassen has argued that capital flows, rather than simply the sending country's economic conditions, have had a strong impact on labor migration since the 1960s. On one side, US investment in developing countries, she posited, destabilized existing structures and forced migration as a survival strategy. On the other, domestic investment in new industrial development required inflows of workers to sustain it. However, more localized narratives also demonstrate the overlaps and feedback effects among flows of people and money.⁶⁶

Let's take as an example a metropolitan area with decentralized employment. Because of its strategic location within the metro, one suburb succeeds in attracting the headquarters of a multinational firm by offering financial incentives made possible with the support of a state economic development loan fund. Wanting to live closer to their place of work, employees of the corporation with professional incomes relocate to the suburb, and new demand for housing causes property prices to rise. Increased revenue from property taxes allows the suburban municipality to improve its services and amenities or lower its tax rate, making the location a metropolitan hotspot. Concurrently, the lower-income population of that suburb can no longer afford the taxes or rent, and move to a suburb with lower property values. These new residents have fewer dollars to spend on the upkeep of their homes, resulting in deterioration that diminishes the suburb's attractiveness. A lower-income population leads to lower market demand, creating difficulties in drawing and keeping businesses. Although this suburb may be able to apply for need-based government funding, it may also be passed over for major investments because of its lack of growth potential.

Another well-known example illustrates the embedded nature of these flows. Driven by increased global competition, the manufacturing sector in the U.S. continued to seek better bottom lines by shifting its capital investments not only from city to suburb, but away from the industrial centers in the Northeast and the Great Lakes. Firms first relocated their facilities to the lower-cost South and West as costs rose and innovation waned in the dominant regions, but eventually moved their production centers to countries with cheap labor in the Global South.⁶⁷ At the same time, rapid advancements in technology allowed for the mechanization and subsequent elimination of jobs that previously required a live person. Some manufacturing plants around which industrial suburbs had been structured were forced to close their doors or relocate due to cost-cutting efforts. The regional nature of deindustrialization limited residents' opportunities to find new employment. Even if they were hired by a firm outside of their particular suburb, the loss of the commercial tax base provided by the closed manufacturing plant was devastating to the municipalities. No longer able to fund key

services and infrastructure, the local government would be forced to raise taxes while cutting costs, leaving it with few resources to achieve a reversal in its circumstances.

Types of Deposits

As compelling as the flows are the deposits they leave. Although in the long-term all variables are flow variables, each flow has its own timeline, some immediate, some extended. As such, these flows do not sync. This differential in time paths is the basis for the deposits that shape the characteristics of a place. The deposits themselves are dynamic, but some move more slowly relative to others. Additionally, the layers deposited in a spatial locale, once left there, are magnetized through social and economic interactions to attract and repel the deposits from other flows in the aforementioned process of cumulative causation.

People-related Deposits

Despite having continual time-space paths, individuals do not constantly change their places of residence. At the micro scale, one person's life is a series of disjointed movements from place to place to place, linking one place to another through their presence at points in time. In combination, these movements form the migratory flows discussed in the earlier section. But at any point, subsets of people moving within these streams generally inhabit one primary location—home. People-related deposits are the main characteristics of the residents of a place.

Language, and often by extension, culture, may be one of the starkest representations of these types of layers. Immigrant enclaves or neighborhoods with large populations of certain ethnicities provide the best example. Since, as Muth pointed out, migration and employment form a causal loop, the initial migration location decision is generally related to the presence of jobs corresponding to the skill levels of the first migrants.⁶⁸ All migration involves leaving much of what is comfortable and familiar for foreign environments, in some cases (especially with undocumented international migration)

creating crises of survival and safety. The tangible and intangible costs of such movement can be high. Migrant social networks, once established, significantly reduce these costs and increase the probability of migration in a process of cumulative causation.⁶⁹ On the receiving end, these networks are spatially bound—at least in the destination country, but often in the destination city or even neighborhood. In some cases, clusters of residents of a certain ethnic origin combine with entrepreneurs of the same home country to form enclaves where a specific culture and language dominate. These locations provide social support, relieve pressure to assimilate, potentially speed economic mobility, and reproduce the cycle of migration.⁷⁰

These self-reinforcing migratory flows are not limited to international movements but can be extended to any demographic cluster. Although it is not the primary cause of the segregation by race and ethnicity in the United States or even a major one, particularly for African-Americans, there is still some evidence that people tend to prefer to live with others at least somewhat like themselves in terms of race, family type, or economic status.⁷¹ This clustering is not limited to separation by race or ethnicity. The elderly are another group that tend to live near one another, for reasons that may relate to personal similarities or personal preferences (e.g. climate, amenities). In addition, some places develop concentrations of seniors as younger community residents leave over time. Some places have such large populations of those 65 and over that they are referred to as Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs).⁷²

People also sort along ideological lines, seeking hometowns with like-minded populations. The existence of the political “red states” and “blue states” typifies this phenomenon of locating according to worldview. These patterns reflect Tiebout’s sorting principles, the idea of “voting with one’s feet” by selecting location based on the level of services provided and the rate of taxation.⁷³ These taxing and spending decisions are typically made along ideological lines, so the choice to move to a place can also be about the dominant mindset of the people, another form of deposit. Language, demographic similarity, and ideology may all contribute to the development of the local

culture of a place, a more ambiguous concept that nonetheless can represent a strong force pulling people in or pushing them away.⁷⁴

Human capital is another layer that can define a place. Individuals with certain skills or skill levels show some tendency to cluster together, whether because of existing jobs (although as jobs disperse this is becoming less likely), preferences that are associated with skills, or the reciprocal nature of migration and jobs—firms will group around skilled people who group around firms.⁷⁵ There is also some evidence that people of certain skill levels will select locations based on the availability of certain amenities that facilitate their lifestyles. These amenities are goods and services, or environmental factors, which have often arisen in response to the initial cluster of people with specified preferences and continue to attract more people that share those interests or desires. Tracking workers with an array of longitudinal data, Glaeser and Maré found that wage premiums in cities do not seem to be the result of more highly skilled workers moving to urban centers. Instead, some wage growth occurs after migrants arrive and the wage premium is maintained after they leave, suggesting that living in cities could contribute to human capital growth.⁷⁶ In a slightly different vein, Glaeser and Saiz asked why cities with more highly skilled populations have experienced more growth over time. They found that wages in highly educated cities continue to rise, indicating that the growth in these “skilled cities” is related to increasing productivity, rather than attractive attributes.⁷⁷

The above paragraphs emphasize the voluntary nature of household relocation decisions and emphasize the role of agency in sorting, but the fact is that the selection of where to reside is made up a mix of structural constraints and personal choice. Individuals are limited in where they can move by a range of external factors. Racial and ethnical discrimination in the forms of redlining and deed restriction have historically ghettoized whole groups. Low socioeconomic status can either prevent people from moving altogether or eliminate locations with high cost housing, goods, and services. Individuals are constrained in their choices by the availability of jobs in a particular area and the level of saturation in the job market. They also have personal requirements

such as proximity to family and friends or schooling needs that prevent them from moving. In that sense, while moving is often an expression of preferences, people can also involuntarily “get stuck” in a place due to endogenous and exogenous limitations.⁷⁸

Production-related Deposits

Deposits linked to production have two dimensions: business location and fixed capital outlay. The first of these is enterprises themselves, legal corporations which always create at least one job, if only for the founder. In general, location decisions form deposits because of the relative inertia related to relocation; once a business decides on a location, it is there for some extended period of time. Firm location is a complex topic that has been studied for centuries, and scholars of location theory have managed to pin down several key elements.⁷⁹ Firms are constantly dealing with tradeoffs among three variables: endowments of natural resources, transportation and communication costs, and economies of scale due to clustering. Firms will choose places that maximize their profit in terms of increased market demand and lowered costs of production. Cost reduction is the primary reason for firm agglomeration, or clustering, in certain places that then gain a reputation for a particular character, such as Silicon Valley.

Despite the compression of space-time, plenty of evidence suggests that geography and proximity still matter for production in the form of agglomeration economies. These economies of scale due to clustering involve three major forces at work: improved input-output linkages, including co-location of key providers of support goods and services, large and specialized labor markets, and idea sharing and knowledge spillover.⁸⁰ Firms continue to agglomerate to take advantage of these benefits until diseconomies of aggregation such as congestion or pollution offset the savings from clustering. In the retail sphere, businesses situate together for some of the reasons mentioned above but primarily because of the increased consumer visits generated by colocation. The success of planned centers such as malls and specialized business districts demonstrate the appeal of one-stop shopping and the cost-cutting benefits of sharing infrastructure and marketing. The clusters continue to draw more businesses until the

market is saturated or the local economy changes, at which point enterprises leave and the district begins to repel business investment.⁸¹

The most tangible form of deposit in a place is fixed capital outlay in the form of housing, structures related to commerce and industry, and infrastructure. The critical aspect of fixed capital is its durability—if well-constructed, buildings and roads can remain a part of the physical landscape of a place for tens or hundreds of years. Yet in the long-term even fixed capital is not a permanent stock. First, it deteriorates over time, and that breakdown requires a stream of financial investment in maintenance. Second, as long as there is land on which to build, people will add structures in a relatively continuous manner. Finally, when land becomes scarce and land prices rise, eventually the cost of the land will overcome construction costs, leading individuals and firms to tear down one structure to rebuild on the lot.⁸²

Like the other forms of deposits discussed, fixed capital is itself a determinant of the bundle of flows and deposits that define a place. The examples most related to suburban development are filtering of housing and redevelopment of former industrial areas. Researchers have shown some evidence that as housing ages, wealthier and more economically mobile residents will leave their deteriorating homes for newer, larger ones that have recently been developed in other locations, in the case of suburbs, often farther out in the urban periphery. This process leaves the older homes with falling property values for a new cycle of lower-income households, who presumably occupy the units until they are able to cash in for a higher value house. The cycle continues until eventually households occupy the spaces who are unable to invest in their properties and unable to move given their levels of income.⁸³ At that point, according to an extended version of neighborhood change theory, the neighborhood or community remains in decline unless it can somehow attract reinvestment in the form of initial government subsidies or through the attention of up-and-coming population groups that, noticing some locational benefit and the low-cost housing, decide to move in and sink money into their houses (otherwise known as gentrification).⁸⁴ Although this theory has holes and leaves some influential factors unaddressed, it serves an example

of how fixed capital as a deposit can attract different flows of people and money depending on the phase of its deterioration/renovation cycle.

Similarly, the construction of manufacturing plants in or near a town will draw one stream of people because of the created jobs and tax base offered to the municipality but will also repel another stream of people reluctant to settle near an industrial land use. If that same plant shuts down, the structure becomes a blight on the landscape that is difficult to redevelop. The particular type of building is difficult to reuse, while the costs for cleaning a polluted site can be prohibitively high. The municipality might have difficulty attracting new corporate investment given the existing structures.

The interaction of the flows and deposits combined with initial natural resource endowments theoretically lead to regional and local economic specialization due to the basic tenets of comparative advantage and the economic benefits of interregional and international trade, as long as transportation costs are manageable.⁸⁵ However, agglomeration can take two forms—localization economies and urbanization economies—leading to different outcomes.⁸⁶ Strong localization economies consist of clusters of firms producing similar goods or services, and result in a highly specialized region exporting one or few products. Urbanization economies, in contrast, bring together a variety of different firms that produce complementary goods and services, spurring economic diversity within the bounds of interrelated sectors. Specialization and diversity each have benefits and drawbacks. Firms in specialized areas will experience the cost-reducing advantages related to the clustering of similar firms, but they face significantly more risk if their primary industry sector fails. Places with higher sector diversity are likely to be larger and more congested, but also tend to be innovation hotspots.⁸⁷

Regional and local specializations tend to be self-perpetuating, but economic shocks can have long-term effects on dominant industry sectors. Suburbs in the Northeast region, earliest settled and industrialized, experienced the pangs of industrial restructuring and manufacturing loss long before other regions. Around Boston, for

example, textile manufacturing in (now suburban) mill towns like Lawrence and Lowell began to die out as early as the 1920s, as even then, textile manufacturing began to shift to the lower-cost South. This wave of development left mill structures that have later been redeveloped into office space and residences, though Lawrence in particular has struggled to stay afloat in the new economy. The development of the Route 128 corridor shifted the balance for some Boston suburbs and redefined their economic fortunes through the transition from manufacturing to diverse technology-related fields. The skilled workforce was leveraged into a booming economy labeled the “Massachusetts Miracle” and touted for years to come. The positive effects of these changes, however, have been fairly localized. Other Northeastern economies, particularly in Rhode Island, Western New York, and parts of Pennsylvania, have not had the same good fortune.

Clearly, a successful shift in specialization or a move toward employment diversity in a region or metropolitan area is not easy to secure. Few manufacturing-dependent areas in the Great Lakes region of the Midwest have been able to adjust their labor forces and existing capital investments to attract new industry sectors. Specialized industrial suburbs created around single plants for automobile manufacture or raw materials processing continue to face devastating consequences as these plants close or relocate. Southern suburbs also experienced these consequences in the last thirty years as the factories that relocated to southern metropolitan areas from the Northeast and Midwest eventually closed or moved overseas to further expand industry profitability in a globalizing world economy. However, the rapid growth and prosperity of Southern and Western Sunbelt locations since the 1970s, accelerated by Federal allocations of capital particularly in defense industries and overproduction of housing creating a booming construction industry, has brought aggregate southern incomes up and has obscured the struggles of many southern metropolitan areas.⁸⁸ Whether due to excess housing, amenities, or jobs, Sunbelt suburbs have seen rapid population growth that remained relatively unchecked until the 2007 to 2009 recession blasted the construction industry that dominated the economies of many Sunbelt metropolitan areas

and the foreclosure crisis left large subdivisions partly vacant. The landscape of Sunbelt suburbs is still adjusting to this new reality.

Flows and Power

Behind the network of flows that create places and link them to one another, there is human agency. And with human agency comes power in greater and lesser degrees. In her discussion of place, Massey makes a critical observation:

Now I want to make one simple point here, and that is about what one might call the power geometry of it all; the power geometry of time-space compression. For different social groups, and different individuals, are placed in very distinct ways in relation to these flows and interconnections. This point concerns not merely the issue of who moves and who doesn't, although that is an important element of it; it is also about power in relation to the flows and the movement. Different social groups have distinct relationships to this anyway differentiated mobility: some people are more in charge of it than others; some initiate flows and movement, others don't; some are more on the receiving-end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it.⁸⁹

Hagerstrand also talks about power dynamics in the different forms of constraints that guide each person's time-space path, suggesting an inverse relationship between constraints and power. Limitations on movement are related to power hierarchies.⁹⁰ From these ideas, we see that power is not an element of the bundle of flows that constitutes a place; rather power is the extent of the ability an individual, institution, or entity has to control and manipulate flows and deposits. The exercise of that power may be beneficial, benign or intensely damaging. Federal governments, for example, have the power to decide where to distribute limited development funds; dynamic mayors and highly-reputed political groups can pull that financial flow toward their locations, taking it away from less powerful ones. Lenders and real estate brokers have the power to facilitate or stymie household and corporate investment in certain communities.

Part of the power comes in the form of political and administrative shifts and regulations that help or hinder flows of people or money to a particular place. Land use regulations (e.g. residential, not industrial) and zoning restrictions (e.g. single-family rather than

multifamily dwellings) can determine the socioeconomic status of the people that move in or the types of businesses that invest. Deed restrictions on suburban development in the 1950s and 1960s, for instance, ensured that the new subdivisions remained predominantly white, while redlining pushed people of color to central city neighborhoods. Urban annexation in the North and Midwest in the 1800s and in the South and West even today changed the character of metropolitan areas, creating politically fragmented spaces in the former and severe urban sprawl in the latter. Phoenix, for example, added 37 square miles to its municipality from 2000 to 2005 through annexation. A mid-1970s article in the *Arizona Republic* summarized the city's position: "Phoenix has had an aggressive annexation policy, officials explain, to prevent a landlocked core city that eventually would decay and cause residents to move to the suburbs. Instead, [Mayor] Barrow said, 'we annexed the suburbs.'"⁹¹

Social and political capital in the form of community institutions, defined social norms, and community cohesion may increase the power of certain groups to control flows of people and production, for better or for worse. Local militia patrolling the Arizona border, for example, may prevent a stream of immigrants from entering their towns, or a strong neighborhood turnout to vote could result in the election of a Mayor willing to direct city funds toward that community. Strong social ties may have considerable influence over exclusionary or inclusionary decision-making in an environment of scarce resources.

DEFINING POVERTY

Poverty has an almost inexhaustible number of sociological and philosophical interpretations which vary in scope from the economic to the physical, social, and spiritual. Because this study examines suburban poverty in the broadest sense in order to assess the heterogeneity within it, I use a simple income-oriented definition of individual poverty that will allow for comparison of my work with other research on poverty in the policy and planning fields. The reality is that the definition of poverty is usually intertwined with its measurement, and the data available for measuring poverty at a large-scale in the United States is income-based.

Like “suburb,” the concept of poverty is, by and large, relative. Although absolute poverty has been discussed for decades and manifests itself most prominently in the idea of those living on \$1 or \$2 per day, in essence poverty is a function of location. In this study, I concur with Townsend’s seminal argument that being poor is not only the inability to adequately provide for one’s survival needs (food, clothing, shelter), it is falling below the norms of what is considered standard, or “customary” to meet those needs in society. Since those norms can vary among and within countries, poverty in one place often looks different than in another.⁹² It certainly has different characteristics in the United States than in its neighbor country, Mexico.

Poor individuals, however, are substantively different than poor locations. Once we begin to think in terms of place, we are now dealing with concentrated poverty, or the density of poor people in a particular bounded area. The difficulty lies in the idea that we cannot aggregate from parts to whole; that is, the effects of poverty may compound with their concentration. A body of literature on these “neighborhood effects” has tried to tease out the implications of concentrated economic disadvantage on childrens’ outcomes, employment, family, and the continuation of household poverty with somewhat limited success given the tightly connected reciprocal relationships among the contributing variables.⁹³ But again, as with individual poverty, definitions and metrics are linked out of necessity. Concentrated poverty is typically identified, at least in the United States, using a set percentage of the population living below a specified poverty line as a proxy for representing poor places.⁹⁴ However, given the relative nature of poverty, I also consider places with median incomes below that of the surrounding metropolitan area to be poor (Please see Chapter 4 for my empirical strategy for identifying poor suburbs).

A major confounding factor is that poverty seems to differ by place in its manifestations, leading to confusion over how to select a lower bound for identifying poor places using poverty concentrations. The most profound divide is between rural areas and urban neighborhoods. Until the most recent conversation emerged on suburban poverty, most

of the research on place-based disadvantage was bifurcated by metropolitan area boundaries with surprisingly few overlaps. Rural poverty was shown to quantitatively and qualitatively differ from urban poverty, both in characteristics and duration.⁹⁵ Rural residents are far more likely to struggle for employment given limited job opportunities, for example.⁹⁶ In addition, rural social capital and power dynamics may have different effects—those at the upper end of the hierarchy may be more invested in maintaining their positions at the expense of the lower classes which may contribute to the higher incidence in the persistence of poverty in isolated rural locations as opposed to more connected ones.⁹⁷ Many of these rural/urban distinctions are associated with differences in employment and population densities. Therefore, the concentration of poverty necessary to identify a place as “poor” may vary according to density as well. This point is also relevant in understanding poverty in suburban as compared to urban or rural locations, and suggests that there may be certain types of poor places that are spatially differentiable.

A key point to note is that places with high concentrations of poor people are not necessarily fiscally at risk as measured by their budgets. Municipal revenues are indeed linked to property taxes, and the revenue collected on residential properties may well be inversely related to the percentage of residents living below the poverty line depending on the incomes of the remaining population share. However, municipal funds can also include commercial property taxes, which may or may not be connected to household poverty. It has been difficult for some poor areas to attract the businesses that would provide them with this additional revenue, but it is not impossible, particularly in places with numerous wealthy households in addition to poor ones, or other features that are attractive for commerce or industry.

Re-envisioning place-based poverty, like suburbs, as constituted by a bundle of flows rather than as a state of existence can help to reconcile the different representations of poverty across space as well as the simultaneous existence in one municipality of concentrated poverty and fiscal stability.

Poverty as a Bundle of Flows

The same question of stocks and flows arises when considering poverty. Poverty is generally measured around the flow of income to a household, yet is reported by the Census in static terms for ease of measurement. The topic is also generally studied using static measures. But a small body of literature considers the dynamics of poverty at the individual and household levels. This group of studies examines two facets of poverty flows: Movement within the individual life-course (poverty spells), including the ways in which people move in and out of poverty, the length of time they live with incomes below the poverty line, and the life circumstances that push people into poverty; and movement across generations, covering the reproduction of poverty from parents to children.⁹⁸

Longitudinal data sets such as the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) and the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) allow researchers to follow the economic narratives of individuals over time to discern the extent to which the poverty they are experiencing is short or long-term, described in the field as transient or chronic. In general, far fewer households experience persistent poverty in the United States than those who go through lower-income spells, but as Bane and Ellwood showed in their seminal paper, in a cross-section of a population the share of those who are persistently poor may be overrepresented because of the duration of their spells.⁹⁹ Moreover, the longer a person is in poverty, the lower the probability they will emerge from it, either because of the effect of an extended duration of poverty or personal characteristics. Individual poverty spells tend to be fairly short with the majority of the poor experiencing durations of less than a year, but reoccurrence is fairly frequent.¹⁰⁰ In fact, Stevens shows that more than half of people who exit poverty will face it again within five years.¹⁰¹ These findings suggest that a substantial percentage of those who show up poor (and those who do not) on Census surveys hover near the poverty line, illustrating the fluidity of poverty as we currently measure it. The shocks (or in Hagerstrand's terms, constraints) that direct a trajectory toward poverty entry and exit are primarily related to changes in employment, which directly affect earnings and ultimately income.¹⁰²

Although it is not a given, poverty can be transferred to succeeding generations. Despite the persistence of the American Dream, intergenerational mobility is less pronounced than once believed. Solon found that parental income is a fairly strong predictor of their children's eventual earnings, and more recent work has confirmed that finding.¹⁰³ In fact, doubling the incomes of families living in poverty may increase their children's future incomes by as much as 30 to 40 percent.¹⁰⁴ The causes of inequality of economic mobility across generations are difficult to tease out, although family influence, labor market conditions, and public policy have emerged frequently as potential contributors.¹⁰⁵

Chronic indigence manifests itself differently than episodic privation in terms of access to government resources and short-term solutions such as family support, asset liquidation, or credit. Moreover, policy solutions for chronic poverty require more than a safety net of temporary welfare benefits to break generational cycles.

From a time-geographic perspective, poverty in the United States is a bundle of individual time-space paths, made up of individuals staying persistently under the poverty line and those moving in and out of poverty. The aggregate flows also include children who continue the cycle of parental disadvantage. But all of this has to do with the time-space poverty paths of individuals. What about the poverty dynamics of places? To understand the processes of place poverty, it is necessary to link space to time in the discussion. The paths of places resemble individual trajectories. Places can become chronically poor, they can hover around a certain proportion of poverty, or they can move permanently out of or into poverty.

Clearly concentrated poverty develops through numerous well-documented indirect mechanisms that have been debated to decide those that are the most important for policy creation. As discussed, arguments around race and class, discrimination and mobility, poverty dispersion and neighborhood upgrading have dominated the urban poverty literature for decades. However, there are actually a finite number of *direct*

causal mechanisms by which a place can become poor, as defined by a specified concentration of its population living below the poverty line: 1) Poor people move in; 2) Non-poor people move out; 3) People who were not previously poor experience a drop in income without changing location. The first two of these are concerned with flows of people, the third, with flows of money.

The breakdown of these mechanisms indicates that poor places are simply places created by a particular bundle of flows and their resulting deposits. But since there are three different direct ways that places can become poor, the resulting manifestations of poverty may be dramatically different. Just as there is a spatial division of labor, there is also a spatial distribution of poverty—poverty is unevenly spread across locations depending on a variety of factors. Because this uneven distribution is not simply a matter of magnitude but also of essence, poor places are heterogeneous and can be categorized into types depending on their dominant patterns and characteristics. The nature of the typology depends on the question being asked.

Addressing poverty in places, then, requires a subtle shift in thinking toward examining in more detail and developing policy around the flows that determine poverty concentrations.

CONCLUSIONS

So far, we have defined suburbs, made an argument for seeing places as flows, and identified different flows and deposits of people and money. We have then defined poverty and reconceived poor places as bundles of particular flows. Now I want to synthesize these elements to put forward a framework for the discussion of suburban poverty that will guide the remaining chapters of this study.

The processes, or flows, of place that have defined and continue to define US regions, their metropolitan areas, and their municipalities began with location-specific endowments, such as natural resources, climate, and physical features that were in

place before settlement. In general, these resources were deposits left by natural processes over millions of years. Successive but distinct waves of urbanization spurred by changing economic conditions and technological innovation directed flows of labor and capital farther and farther out across the country as the population grew. Over time, places with certain constellations of initial endowments attracted certain kinds of flows that left deposits of specific types of households and investments. Far from being a random process, the flows were guided and manipulated toward selected locations and away from others by individuals and institutions practicing their agency within a hierarchy of power relationships.

The distribution of flows led, for better or for worse, to regional and metropolitan economic specialization, with some distinct functions emerging even prior to the Civil War.¹⁰⁶ This spatial division of labor that Massey hypothesized, however, has been in constant flux due to rapid movements within the network of interspatial connections, reflected by a globalizing economy, industry sector oscillations, and the adoption of new technologies and organizational philosophies. Yet the relative durability of fixed capital investments and inertia of household and firm location decisions suggests that, despite the processes of change, what we currently see of regional and metropolitan development is a mix of old and new created through waves of development, in which each successive wave destroys or moves some, though by no means all, former settlements and structures and deposits new ones.

Suburbs—defined as metropolitan, spatially distinct, and smaller in size and density than their central cities—are themselves embedded in the networks of flows that form and change regions and metropolitan areas in the United States. The expansion of suburbia, though, had its own identifiable waves of development which extended farther out each era where there were few existing structures and settlements to destroy and plenty of land on which to build. Suburbs have been created by their own flows of people moving in from local, regional, and global origins, and by their own flows of capital related to business and government decisions. They have subsequently developed their own initial specializations or functions which sometimes (but not

always) paralleled those of the metropolitan area and region and may or may not have changed over time.

Suburbs' first specializations built from the specific flows and deposits they attracted based on initial endowments interacted with the decisions of power-brokers to determine future residents and investments. These new flows then reinforced, expanded, or broke down the existing specializations and power relationships in a cycle that continued with each wave of development. Taking a cross-section of suburbs reveals that they are not homogeneous. The suburban places we see today reflect decades of bundling and unbundling of migratory and monetary streams, directed by the deposits left during each preceding wave. These streams have moved in patterns that allow for a categorization of suburbs by types to clarify and facilitate understanding of complex processes.¹⁰⁷

One type that has emerged in several studies is poor suburbs. But because these places are also formed from bundles of differentiable flows, at any point in time they can also be disaggregated into types according to economic structure and descriptive attributes. It is in looking back at the deposited layers of suburbs in these typological categories that we can perform a sort of geographical and sociological stratigraphy to identify the spatial and historical mechanisms shaping their economic trajectories. In the next chapter, I discuss my process of developing a typology of low-income suburbs and the characteristics of the categories that emerged from the analysis.

CHAPTER 3 ENDNOTES

¹ Harris, Richard, and Peter J. Larkham. *Changing Suburbs: Foundation, Form, and Function*. (London; New York: E & FN Spon ; Routledge, 1999), 1

² Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 11. It is not the goal of this dissertation to present all working definitions of suburbs, although there are many in the literature.

³ For definitions along similar lines to Jackson's, see Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia*, (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 22; Marsh, Margaret. *Suburban Lives*. (New Brunswick

[N.J.]: Rutgers University Press, 1990), Introduction and Prologue. Harris and Larkham (*Changing Suburbs*, 8) suggest that most definitions refer to five elements: location outside the city, residential quality, low density, cultural separation, and political identity.

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⁵ These names come from, respectively, Joel Garreau, *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier*, (New York: Doubleday, 1991); Paul Knox, *Metroburbs, USA*, (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008); Robert Lang and Jennifer LeFurgy, *Boomburbs: the Rise of America's Accidental Cities*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2007).

⁶ Sam Bass Warner, *Greater Boston: Adapting Regional Traditions to the Present*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); James C. O'Connell, *The Hub's Metropolis: Greater Boston's Development from Railroad Suburbs to Smart Growth*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013).

⁷ Harvard Law Review Association. "Locating the Suburb." *Harvard Law Review* 117, no. 6 (2004): 2003–22.

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⁹ For additional history on ways the Census has defined metropolitan areas, see: "Metropolitan Areas," https://www.census.gov/history/www/programs/geography/metropolitan_areas.html.

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¹² L.S. Bourne, "Reinventing the Suburbs: Old Myths and New Realities." *Progress in Planning* 46, no. 3 (1996), 165; Harris and Larkham, *Changing Suburbs*, 8

¹³ Sam Bass Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs: the Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1962); For definitions that separate suburbs and cities, see for example: Harlan Douglass, *The Suburban Trend*, (New York: Arno Press, 1925); Harris and Larkham, *Changing Suburbs*, 8-14; John Palen, *The Suburbs* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1995), 11; Jon C. Teaford, *The American Suburb: The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

¹⁴ Richard Harris makes the point that suburbs in the Global South are not always smaller and less dense than their principal cities: Richard Harris, "Meaningful Types in a World of Suburbs," in Mark Clapson and Ray Hutchison, eds, *Suburbanization in Global Society (Research in Urban Sociology, Volume 10)*, (Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing House, 2010), 15-47.

¹⁵ Ann Forsyth, "Defining Suburbs," *Journal of Planning Literature* 27, no. 3 (2012): 270–81; E. Dunham-Jones and J. Williamson, *Retrofitting Suburbia*, (New York: Wiley, 2009).

¹⁶ Bourne, "Reinventing the Suburbs," 2. Bourne argues that suburbs are a "residual concept and construct", which has a more negative meaning.

¹⁷ Paul Mattingly, "Suburban Landscapes Culture and Politics in a New York Metropolitan Community," (Baltimore : Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 13

¹⁸ Allan Pred, "Place as Historically Contingent Process: Structuration and the Time-Geography of Becoming Places," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 74 no. 2 (1984): 282.

¹⁹ Torsten Hägerstrand, "What about People in Regional Science?" *Papers of the Regional Science Association* 24 (1970), 11

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²⁷ Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place," *Marxism Today* 38 (1991): 27; Pred, "Place as Historically Contingent Process."

²⁸ Edward L. Ullman, "Geography as Spatial Interaction" in *Geography as Spatial Interaction* by Edward Ullman, edited by Ronald R Boyce (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1980).

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³⁰ Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor: Social Structures and the Geography of Production*. (New York: Methuen, 1984), 118.

³¹ Ullman, *Geography as Spatial Interaction*.

³² Gunnar Myrdal, *Economic Theory and Under-Developed Regions*, (London: G. Duckworth, 1957);

³³ Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor*, 82.

³⁴ See, for example: Harris, Chauncy D. "A Functional Classification of Cities in the United States." *Geographical Review* 33, no. 1 (January 31, 1943): 86-99. doi:10.1126/science.15.370.195. H.J. Nelson, "A Service Classification of American Cities," *Economic Geography* 31 (1955): 189-210; Grady D. Bruce and Robert E. Witt, "Developing Empirically Derived City Typologies: An Application of Cluster Analysis," *The Sociological Quarterly* 12 no. 2 (1971): 238-246; Jabareen, Yosef Rafeq. "Sustainable urban forms their typologies, models, and concepts." *Journal of planning education and research* 26.1 (2006): 38-52.

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- ⁴⁰ Joel Garreau, *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier*, (New York: Doubleday, 1991).
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4 A TYPOLOGY OF LOW-INCOME SUBURBS

The history of poverty in suburbs, as I portray it in chapter 2, revealed that income diversity has long been a characteristic of communities on the urban periphery. In fact, suburban socioeconomic heterogeneity was the norm rather than the exception until the post-World War II housing expansion, and after two decades of association between suburbia and the American dream, ever expanding exurban development and other structural economic factors recreated on a larger scale the suburban diversity evident in earlier eras. Moreover, even in the early stages of suburbanization, poverty in suburbs was not a uniform phenomenon. Instead it appeared in a number of different manifestations, from enclaves inhabited by domestic workers and slaves to boxcar *colonias* of Mexican railroad laborers. This historical precedent suggested that the panorama of suburban poverty in the twenty-first century might be similarly differentiated.

Numerous typologies have highlighted the diversity of suburbs, but fewer have done the same to capture the dissimilarities among low-income suburban communities. In the emerging discussion of suburban poverty, we run the risk of overlooking both the long-term nature of changing incomes in some suburbs as well as the disparate dynamics that construct their current economic conditions. My goal in creating a typology of low-income suburbs is thus two-fold. First, the typology is a tool for simplifying this landscape while capturing as much variation as possible. Second, it serves as an organizing framework for selecting case studies that display a wide range of interactions between flows and deposits but come to similar outcomes (low-relative incomes or a large poor populations).

In this chapter, I describe the technical methods I used to develop a typology of low-income suburbs. First, I empirically define both suburbs and poverty. I then create two datasets, one composed of suburbs with large concentrations of poverty, the other of places with low relative median incomes. Combining principal components and cluster

analysis, I separate these suburbs into five categories, comparing the two datasets to check the typology for robustness.

CREATING DATASETS OF SUBURBAN PLACES

Unit of Analysis

I use three embedded units of analysis in this research: the suburb within the metropolitan area within the Census region. The network of connections that have shaped the development of each U.S. metropolitan area indicate that researchers should analyze a suburb not in a vacuum, but relative to its central city, surrounding municipalities, and other metropolitan areas in the macroregion.

Identifying suburbs empirically is a challenging task complicated further by national data collection methods. The U.S. Census Bureau does not have a distinct suburban category, instead representing suburbs in the aggregate as a residual—the parts of a metropolitan area that are not a Census-defined Principal City.¹ That said, two Census geographies can approximate suburbs. Minor Civil Divisions (MCDs) are administrative/legal areas that represent the individual governmental units in a county, including townships, precincts, and districts. They formally exist in only 28 states, but the Census Bureau has combined census tracts to create similar boundaries in the remaining states. MCDs aggregate to county census boundaries and as such account for all of the land area in the U.S. The boundaries of Census Places, in contrast, often correspond with the limits of specific cities and suburbs and do not aggregate to county or metropolitan area divisions. Census Places include both incorporated locales, such as cities, towns, and villages, and Census Designated Places (CDPs), populated areas that are often defined settlements but do not have their own formal governments. For the purposes of this analysis, Census Places are the most appropriate unit of analysis given that they reflect distinct geographical units with locally determined boundaries that are easily distinguishable from principal cities.²

Since the Census Bureau does not have a distinct suburban category, many analysts operationalize suburbs using geographical units that fall within metropolitan areas but outside of Census-defined principal cities.³ Using this convention does in fact identify places that track with the definition of suburbs I put forward in Chapter 3 (metropolitan, territorially politically distinct, smaller and less dense population than principal cities).

Metropolitan area boundaries as defined by the Census Bureau have shifted over time based on population growth and changes in bureaucratic definitions. In 2003, the Census Bureau developed Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs) to refer to both larger (metropolitan) and smaller (micropolitan) areas centered on a principal city, substantially increasing the portion of the U.S. considered “urbanized” and further blurring the lines between metropolitan and rural.⁴ Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) are defined by the Office of Budget and Management as a collection of counties with a central city (or cities) of 50,000 or more people. The counties are linked to the core and to each other by commuting patterns. To avoid confusion and maintain a level of consistency over time, I limit my analysis to the suburbs of the 381 MSAs in the United States rather than including all CBSAs.

Empirically Identifying Low-Income and Poor Suburbs

Selecting suburbs that can be categorized as “poor” may be more of an art than a science, given both the limitations of existing measures of income and poverty and the complexity of considering poor places instead of poor individuals. Rarely are 100 percent of the residents of a place living below the Federally-defined poverty line, and the implications of surviving on that level of income differ according to regional costs-of-living. Geographies such as cities and suburbs may have extremely poor individuals living near the very wealthy, or they may consist of households with similarly high or low incomes. The difficulty is in discerning the difference between suburban poverty (based on a study of individuals or aggregates) and poor suburbs (the places where the individuals live and the effects of concentration).

The standard measures of poverty do not facilitate the process of defining low-income suburbs. The absolute thresholds of poverty used to determine family eligibility for government assistance programs were developed in the 1960s and formulated using the cost of food and before-tax cash income, and have only been adjusted yearly for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI).⁵ Some organizations, such as the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) and the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) have suggested that 1.5 or two times the poverty thresholds for specific family sizes or age groups may be a more accurate measure, but these calculations are complicated by the type of data available for public use. In response to increasing complaints that these thresholds were outdated and ineffective, the National Academy of Sciences convened a panel of researchers to develop an alternative measure that would take into account in-kind assistance, assess geographical differences in standard of living, and place more emphasis on non-food household expenses and the differences in needs among family types.⁶ The Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics have expanded on these ideas to establish a Supplemental Poverty Measure for which limited data is publicly available.⁷ The political ramifications of a new and potentially more inclusive indicator of poverty, however, have inhibited its acceptance and use.

Furthermore, when spatial units of analysis are introduced, the discussion shifts from the problems of defining poverty for individuals or households to representing concentrated poverty and analyzing specific repercussions associated with high shares of poor persons in bounded geographical areas. In cities, the unit of analysis typically associated with this research is the neighborhood as operationalized by the census tract. Based on studies in the 1990s, tracts with 40 percent of their populations living below the federal poverty line became an accepted standard for measuring severe concentrated poverty in urban research.⁸ However, the somewhat arbitrary nature of this line (why not 35 percent? Why not 39 percent?) has been challenged based on the findings of several econometric analyses suggesting that the threshold of 20 percent becomes a tipping point above which residents begin experience crime, employment, and income-related effects.⁹

Despite the exhaustive nature of the literature on concentrated urban poverty, it is difficult to generalize from urban to suburban and from census tracts to census places given potential differences in physical, economic and social conditions. On the other end of the spectrum, in investigations on rural poverty researchers typically use the larger county geography as the primary unit of analysis. The USDA Economic Research Service defines poor counties as those that have had 20 percent or more of their populations living below the poverty line.¹⁰ Suburban researchers have followed this trend and classified suburbs as poor if they have at least 20 percent of individuals living below the poverty line, but rarely has anyone provided a rationale for this measurement.¹¹ Since poverty does seem to be less concentrated at the suburban level because densities are generally lower, and since the census place is a larger geographical unit than the neighborhood, though usually smaller than the county, there is some basis for the use of the 20 percent mark as a cutoff point for delineating poor suburbs.

Using the poverty threshold to assess suburban economic conditions offers the benefit of data standardization—results can be compared across similar studies using the same measure. However, as noted above, the poverty measure has numerous drawbacks related to its origins. Most apropos to this study, rates of concentrated poverty do not take into account cost of living differences across metropolitan areas that lead to differences in purchasing power depending on spatial location. Given the spatial nature of my research questions, it is necessary to check poverty rates against other methods that consider incomes in different ways. The comparative nature of the concepts of suburbs and poverty in the United States, as discussed in Chapter 3, suggests that a relative income ratio may be a more fitting method of separating out low-income suburban locations, and in fact some suburban researchers have begun to use measures that compare median income suburban census places to metropolitan area median income.¹²

Selecting a cutoff point for low-income suburbs using a relative income ratio is less straightforward than the selection of the 20 percent poverty level. Relative measures for

individuals are more common—the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses a benchmark of 80 percent of median income to define low-income households, and other scholars have settled on 50 to 60 percent of median income as an alternative measure for poor individuals based on similar practices in the U.K.¹³ At this point, however, there is little theoretical basis for a relative income threshold for geographical units such as census places. I chose a point between these estimates and defined low-income suburbs as those in which the median income was 75 percent or less than the metropolitan area median.

Several other disadvantages of using the relative income ratio point to the fact that no one measure perfectly captures the nuances of poverty and income distribution in the U.S. First, in states where incomes may be lower or higher in most cities and suburbs, a relative income ratio will not identify suburbs that might be considered low-income in relation to the rest of the country. Second, the results are not necessarily comparable to other research using poverty measures. A third challenge is that it is not easy to control for household size when using a median household income measure based on Census data, creating potentially skewed results. In light of these limitations, considering both poverty rates and relative income ratios is a more comprehensive means of analyzing poor suburbs.

To that end, I examined two subsets of Census places to develop a typology of low-income suburbs. The first was composed of places with median incomes at 75 percent or below the metropolitan area median, and the second, those with poverty concentrations of 20 percent or greater. I used the relative income dataset as the basis for my final typology, qualifying the results by comparing them to the categories established in the concentrated poverty group.

Data Selection

I used 2010 TIGER shapefiles of Census places in all 50 states to create a database of suburbs (non-central city metropolitan census places), first eliminating all principal cities

and then using metropolitan area boundaries to select the remaining municipalities. Variables were taken from the 2010 Census and the 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. From this collection of suburbs, I selected two subsets. The first was composed of 2,263 suburbs in which 20 percent or more of the population was living below the federal poverty threshold (the poverty group). The second contained all non-principal city census places whose median incomes were 75 percent or less of their associated metropolitan area median, for a total of 2,569 (the low-income group). 1,452 of the census places overlap between the two datasets, and the fairly large remainder supports the need to examine poor and low-income suburbs separately.

DATA DESCRIPTION

The subsets of places, though not identical, are similar in key characteristics including size and the distribution among the cases of levels of poverty, relative income and inequality.¹⁴ As Table 4.1 shows, the suburbs in both groups are overwhelmingly small in population size, even in comparison to suburban places as a whole. In each subset, close to 40 percent of the cases contained fewer than 1000 persons in 2010, and about 95 percent had populations lower than 20,000. Very few reached the 100,000 mark. This size distribution is slightly different than that of all suburbs. Only 30 percent of the more than 13,000 non-central city metropolitan census places have fewer than 1000 residents, while about 90 percent have populations of fewer than 20,000 people. In contrast, no principal cities of metropolitan areas had fewer than 1000 people, 61 percent boasted more than 20,000 residents, and 17 percent went beyond the 100,000 mark.

Table 4.1: Size and income characteristics of Poor and Low-Income Suburbs, 2010

	Poor		Low-Income	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Number	2263		2569	
Size				
<i>Under 1000</i>	867	38.3%	1053	41.0%
<i>1000 to 4999</i>	846	37.4%	921	35.9%
<i>5000 to 19999</i>	432	19.1%	450	17.5%
<i>20000 to 49999</i>	96	4.2%	110	4.3%
<i>50000 or above</i>	22	1.0%	17	0.7%
Poverty				
<i>0 to 9.9 percent</i>	-	-	279	10.9%
<i>10 to 19.9 percent</i>	-	-	806	31.4%
<i>20 to 24.9 percent</i>	897	39.6%	445	17.3%
<i>25 to 29.9 percent</i>	521	23.0%	349	13.6%
<i>30 to 34.9 percent</i>	312	13.8%	224	8.7%
<i>35 to 39.9 percent</i>	199	8.8%	155	6.0%
<i>40 percent or above</i>	334	14.8%	279	10.9%
<i>60 percent or above</i>	50	2.2%	45	1.8%
Relative Income ratio				
<i>75 to 70 percent</i>	-	-	663	25.8%
<i>60 to 69.9 percent</i>	-	-	990	38.5%
<i>50 to 59.9 percent</i>	-	-	533	20.7%
<i>40 to 49.9 percent</i>	-	-	269	10.5%
<i>Below 40 percent</i>	-	-	114	4.4%
Gini Coefficient				
<i>Below 0.3</i>	72	3.2%	97	3.8%
<i>0.3 to 0.39</i>	681	30.1%	845	32.9%
<i>0.4 to 0.49</i>	1269	56.1%	1393	54.2%
<i>0.5 or above</i>	241	10.6%	234	9.1%
80/20 Ratio				
<i>1.0 to 2.9</i>	181	8.0%	276	10.7%
<i>3 to 4.9</i>	1200	53.0%	1477	57.5%
<i>5.0 to 9.9</i>	798	35.3%	752	29.3%
<i>10 and above</i>	60	2.7%	37	1.4%

Source: 2010 Census and 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Equally important is the distribution of poverty levels within the subsets of suburbs and the mix of poverty and affluence within the suburbs themselves. Selections of cases chosen on the basis of poverty concentrations of at least 20 percent and median

incomes of 75 percent or less than the area median leave substantial room for variation in the concentration of poor and low-income populations. Within the poverty group, the majority of suburbs had rates between 20 and 30 percent, but somewhat surprisingly 15 percent reached poverty levels of 40 percent or more. The suburbs with the most severe cases of poverty tended to be smaller villages or settlements, most with populations below 1,000, often with specific narratives that relate to their income levels. For example, eleven places sit at the Texas-Mexico border, and several others are on Native American reservations. Two locations, Kiryas Joel and Kaser, NY, are villages with primarily Hasidic Jewish families.

In a similar manner, within the low-income subset 65 percent of cases have median incomes within 60 to 75 percent of the metropolitan area median, while in about 15 percent of cases the relative income is 50 percent or less. Once again, some of the lowest-income places relative to their metropolitan areas are at the Mexican border, on reservations, or home to Hasidic Jewish populations. The most significant difference between the two groups of suburbs is that a full 42 percent of low-income suburbs have poverty rates below 20 percent, suggesting that relative income measures may capture different aspects of suburban income distributions.

Individual suburbs can be large areas with significant populations, and it is just as critical to understand the extent to which low-income and affluent individuals and households live together as to note the shares of population that live in poverty. This analysis requires a measure of inequality. Several calculated variables fit this need. The Gini coefficient indicates the level of inequality of a distribution in relation to the Lorenz curve, which shows the proportion of income earned by varying shares of the population. The second is the P80/20 ratio, calculated by taking the ratio of the upper limits of the fourth income quintile to the upper limit of the bottom income quintile.¹⁵ Each gives a slightly different picture of the spread of incomes within the suburb, but taken together they provide a nuanced view.

To put the inequality measures in context, the Gini coefficient for the United States as determined by the Census bureau is 0.469 without accounting for taxes and transfers, one of the highest levels of income inequality in developing countries according to statistics from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The Census Bureau calculates that the ratio of income at the 80th and 20th quintiles in the U.S. is five, reflecting that households with incomes in the 80th percentile are bringing in five times the income of those at the 20th percentile.

In general, the distribution of inequality in the groups of suburbs leans only slightly more to the unequal side in the poor subset as compared to the low-income subset, though the spreads are still relatively similar. This outcome likely relates to the fact that the federal poverty thresholds are quite low, and higher shares of individuals and households living below these thresholds will lower the 20th percentile income number. The majority of suburban census places show relatively high inequality according to the Gini index, with coefficients tracking with the nation at levels between 0.4 and 0.5. Nine to ten percent of both groups have high Gini scores above 0.5. About one-third of each group has 80/20 ratios above 5.

SELECTING VARIABLES

The national scale of the analysis limited my selection of variables to those available through the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). I used the 2006-2010 5-year estimates in order to be able to access data for census places with smaller populations. 2010 was the first decadal census that did not use the Long Form, and as such there are some issues of comparability between 2000 and 2010 data. For simplicity, in developing the typology I did not look at the selected variables over time and instead saved that type of analysis for the case studies.

The variables for the PCA, shown in Table 4.2, were chosen to reflect as much as possible the economic structure and dominant demographic and built form characteristics of suburbs, constrained by the limitations of census data. They were also

chosen to give some insight into the subjects of mobility and housing. While most of the variables are self-explanatory, others require some background. I combined occupation variables to reflect three separate categories of workers – high-wage, high-skill, medium-wage, medium-skill, and low-wage, low-skill – to more concisely address declines in production-based jobs and the growing demand for skilled labor in the increasingly polarized U.S. labor market.¹⁶

The Economic Census, conducted by the Census Bureau every five years, would have provided more pertinent employment data for actual jobs in suburbs (as opposed to how the people living there are employed), but the last economic census was conducted in 2012. Given the severity and duration of the 2008-2009 recession, I was hesitant to combine 2007 or 2012 economic census data with the ACS 2006-2010 data as those two points in time likely reflect different economic conditions. Also, the shift to the ACS prevented me from selecting certain variables that may have contributed to the study. For example, since rental units in some suburbs are sparse, a variable for median gross rent in each suburban census place was unusable because of the high number of missing observations.

Table 4.2: Variable Selection (2006-2010 American Community Survey)

Employment Variables Percent population 16 years and over: In labor force: Civilian Percent civilian population in labor force 16 years and over: employed Percent civilian population in labor force 16 years and over: unemployed Percent working in a principal city of the Metropolitan Statistical Area of residence Percent employment in manufacturing Percent high-wage, high-skill employment (professional, business, and management) Percent medium-wage, medium skill employment (health and protective services) Percent medium-wage, medium skill employment (construction, production, and transport) Percent medium-wage, medium skill employment (sales and office) Percent low-wage, low-skill employment (services)
Housing and Mobility Variables Median year structure built Percent occupied housing units: owner occupied Percent housing units: vacant Percent multi-family housing units Owner-occupied housing units: Median value Median housing value ratio to metropolitan median value Percent different house 1 year ago: same metropolitan statistical area, moved from principal city Percent different house 1 year ago: same metropolitan statistical area, moved from remainder
Demographic Variables Percent not Hispanic or Latino: White alone Percent not Hispanic or Latino: Black or African American alone Percent Hispanic or Latino Percent foreign-born population Percent 65 and over
Additional Variables Percent population 25 years and over: Less than high school Percent population 25 years and over: Bachelor's degree or more Percent family households with one or more people under 18 years: Single parent Percent of households that received SNAP benefits in the past 12 months

TYPOLOGY METHODS

Given the specifics of my research question in relation to the effects of location on the development of poor suburbs, I initially created the typology using the low-income dataset because the classification allows for regional variation. I then tested the resilience of the categories by running the same combination of principal components and cluster analysis on the poverty subset.

Principal Components Analysis (PCA)

PCA extracts simplified patterns from complex multivariate datasets by creating linear combinations of variables that form uncorrelated components. Theoretically, the first of these components may provide a strong summary of the data without substantial information loss.¹⁷ Following Hanlon's and Vicino's methods of classifying inner-ring suburbs, I used PCA to create components based on a data matrix of 2,569 observations (the number of low-income suburbs) by the 27 variables described above.¹⁸

I conducted the PCA using a Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization. The rotation technique increases interpretability of the extracted components by shifting the axes to extend through clusters of variables while remaining orthogonal. Component loadings are then much higher for some variables and much lower for others. The normalization procedure ensures that variables with strong relationships to the components do not skew the analysis.¹⁹

After running the PCA it was necessary to extract the components most relevant to the analysis. The components together account for all of the variance in the data, but in decreasing magnitudes. There are a number of rules of thumb that provide guidance for selecting the appropriate number of components. The first is the total proportion of variance explained by the chosen components. The recommended proportions vary, but can be smaller when working with a larger dataset and larger number of variables in order to avoid selecting meaningless components.²⁰ The second selection method is based on the eigenvalues of the data covariance matrix, which are the variance explained by each of the components. The component with the highest eigenvalue explains the most variation in the data, and so on. A general rule is to choose components with eigenvalues greater than one, since these explain more than the average variance of the initial variables.²¹ A third guiding principal focuses on the scree plot, in which the principal components are graphed against the individual eigenvalues.

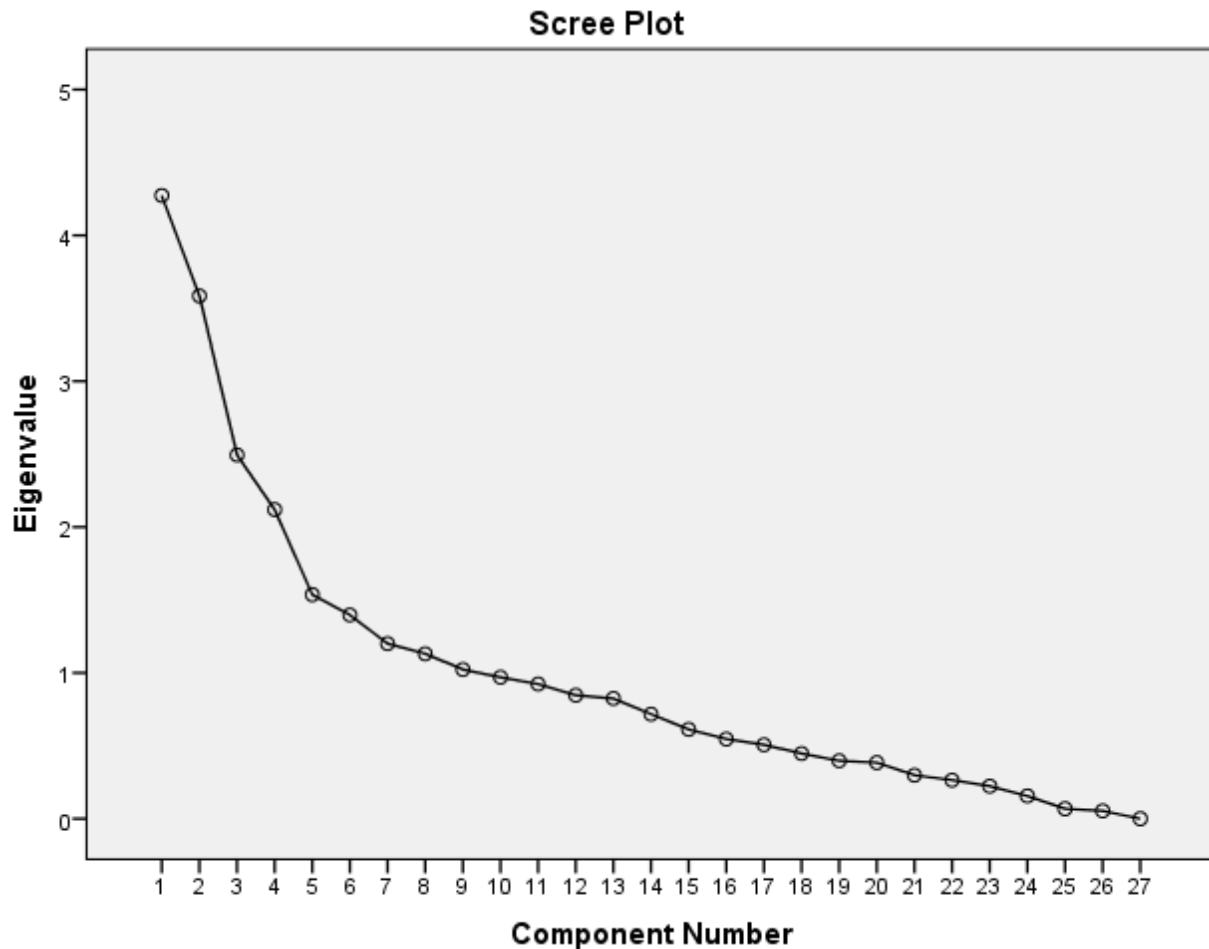
The components selected are those to the left of the kink in the curve with larger eigenvalues and more explanatory power.²²

I chose seven principal components based on the above heuristics and ease of interpretation. The components explained more than 60 percent of the variance in the initial data, with the first component accounting for almost 12 percent (See Table 4.3). Given the large size of the dataset, this proportion of explained variance is reasonable. All of the eigenvalues of the extracted components were greater than one, and more than half were greater than two. On the scree plot (Figure 4.1), the first seven points had the greatest distance between them; after the seventh component, the curve flattened out and the distances between the points were more similar.

Table 4.3: Variance explained by selected principal components

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Eigenvalues (after rotation)	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.132	11.599	11.599
2	2.670	9.888	21.486
3	2.500	9.258	30.744
4	2.454	9.087	39.832
5	1.954	7.237	47.069
6	1.881	6.967	54.036
7	1.767	6.543	60.579

Figure 4.1: Scree plot graphing the initial eigenvalues of the principal components



Interpreting the profiles of the principal components comes from examining the component loadings, which are the correlations between each variable and each selected principal component. The variables with the highest loadings (typically over 0.5) shed light on the meaning of each component. The component loadings are shown in Table 4.5.

The strongest loadings for component one related to the presence of a large Hispanic population as well a large proportion of foreign-born residents, but also showed low-levels of education. Component two had high positive loadings for college education, professional, business, or management employment, and high housing values. The

profile of component three was altogether different, emphasizing variables typically associated with urban poverty, including single parent households, unemployment, and receipt of food stamps. High labor force participation and high employment rates loaded positively on component four, while the population 65 and over loaded negatively, suggesting younger residents. For component five, owner-occupied housing loaded negatively, while the proportion of multifamily units loaded positively. Component six showed strongly negative loadings for manufacturing employment combined with a positive loading for service jobs. The relevant positively loaded variables for the last component were the proportion of residents that relocated from the principal city of their metropolitan area in the last year and the proportion of residents that worked in a principal city while living in a suburb.

Many of the variables associated with the mechanisms involved in shifting metropolitan income distributions discussed at the beginning of the paper were reflected in the outcome of the PCA. Several of those that did not load strongly on one of the principal components, such as the share of population 65 and older, emerged in the final groupings resulting from the cluster analysis.

Table 4.4: Component loadings for the selected principal components

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
% 65 and older			-0.488	-0.607			
% White	-0.601		-0.514				
% Black or African American			0.556				0.388
% Hispanic or Latino	0.927						
% Single Parent Families			0.683				
% Less than high school	0.754						
% in Labor Force				0.943			
% in Labor Force: Employed				0.932			
% in Labor Force: Unemployed			0.657				
% Completed Bachelor's		0.735					
% Employed in Manufacturing						-0.758	
% Owner Occupied Housing					-0.789		
% Vacant Housing Units				-0.319			
Median year structure built					-0.399		
Median value of housing units		0.693					
% Foreign born	0.873						
% Moved from principal city							0.784
% Moved from suburbs					0.454		
% Received Food Stamps			0.605				
Relative median housing value		0.707					
% Worked in a principal city							0.792
% High-wage high-skill emp.		0.708					
% Med-wage, med-skill emp (1)							
% Med-wage, med-skill emp (2)							
% Med-wage, med-skill emp (3)						-0.828	
% Low-wage, low-skill emp						0.565	
% Multifamily housing units		0.346			0.777		

Cluster Analysis

In addition to principal components with specific profiles, the PCA also generated component scores for each of the identified low-income suburbs, estimating the magnitude of the association between each suburb and each of the selected components. These component scores were then used in a cluster analysis to identify in geographical space the suburban census places that are most similar based on the components determined by the PCA. While the PCA reduces the variables, cluster

analysis separates the data into groupings based on similarity among the data points according to their component scores. Cluster analysis techniques typically fall into two categories: hierarchical, in which the researcher does not decide beforehand how many clusters will be chosen but cuts off the clustering process at the preferred number of clusters; and optimization clustering, in which the number of clusters (k) is chosen before the analysis is performed.²³ K-means clustering, which typically uses squared Euclidean distance between data points, is the most popular optimization clustering method and has been used by several researchers in studying suburbs.²⁴

K-means clustering is often the more appropriate technique for large datasets, but it requires predetermining the number of desired clusters. The technique is also sensitive to the ordering of the data as it uses the first several cases as the basis for the rest of the analysis, meaning that sorting the dataset in a different way can lead to varying cluster allocations. Following the recommendation of Mooi and Sarstedt, I first ran a hierarchical cluster analysis of the seven principal components using Ward's method and examined the output to identify the gaps that signify clusters. From that information and the outcome of the PCA, I selected a five-cluster solution, re-ran the analysis, and saved the centroids. I used the saved centroids as the initial cluster centers for a k-means analysis. This procedure provided a more stable and trustworthy cluster solution.²⁵

The cluster analysis generated mean component values that indicated where the clusters fell in terms of similarity to the profiles from the PCA (See Table 4.5). High positive scores indicated that the clusters shared some of the characteristics of the component, while negative values pointed to dissimilarity. These values suggested, for example, that Cluster 3 suburbs reflect the characteristics of principal component 2 (highly skilled residents, relatively expensive housing, while Cluster 5 suburbs have the traits defined by principal component 1 (substantial immigrant populations).

Table 4.5: Mean component values for cluster analysis

	Cluster				
	1	2	3	4	5
Principal Component 1	-0.30558	-0.39562	-0.05122	-0.06861	2.34607
Principal Component 2	-0.16132	-0.33434	1.65483	-0.09408	-0.25532
Principal Component 3	1.03172	-0.26387	-0.1772	-0.74683	0.13083
Principal Component 4	-0.15788	0.30741	0.29748	-1.72563	0.27729
Principal Component 5	0.1338	0.07602	0.08111	-0.53941	-0.15212
Principal Component 6	0.08438	-0.28894	0.40553	0.56006	0.02117
Principal Component 7	1.09708	-0.41462	-0.16548	-0.05128	-0.03413

These values give a general view of the differences between the clusters, but don't provide the information necessary to create a detailed profile for each category. After assigning each low-income suburb to a cluster, I used the raw population counts to calculate the percentages of and examine the variation within a large number of variables in addition to those used in the PCA. This analysis provided the general characteristics of each cluster that formed the basis of my typology. Table 4.6 shows the mean values of selected variables used in the analysis, while Table 4.7 shows the total number of suburbs of each type.

Table 4.6: Cluster percentages for Low-Income Suburbs

	Spillover	Deindustrializing	Diverging	Senior	Latino
Total Population	2,806,470	4,064,692	3,032,364	579,911	2,884,105
% Under 18	27.20%	24.70%	22.97%	13.44%	30.28%
% 65 and over	11.66%	14.72%	12.03%	37.18%	9.02%
% White	30.51%	74.71%	55.34%	75.56%	11.78%
%Black or African American	48.29%	10.27%	14.75%	7.85%	6.40%
%Hispanic or Latino	15.29%	10.98%	21.50%	12.11%	77.88%
%Single Parent households	20.96%	14.80%	13.42%	6.03%	20.05%
%Single, Never married	40.86%	31.40%	40.90%	21.88%	39.18%
%Now married	34.85%	43.67%	39.88%	48.61%	44.01%
%Less than high school	24.13%	20.50%	18.28%	18.71%	42.96%
%Completed high school	35.51%	39.65%	30.06%	37.83%	29.19%
%Bachelor's Degree or more	12.73%	13.47%	24.04%	14.97%	9.35%
%Dropped out of high school	10.63%	9.17%	4.88%	8.37%	11.37%
%in Labor Force	60.13%	60.78%	63.36%	33.76%	61.85%
%in Labor Force: Employed	85.75%	89.95%	90.39%	89.30%	89.24%
%in Labor Force: Unemployed	14.25%	10.05%	9.61%	10.70%	10.76%
%Employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing	1.09%	1.25%	0.83%	2.07%	4.63%
%Employed in construction	7.38%	7.40%	7.27%	8.97%	10.06%
%Employed in manufacturing	10.42%	15.57%	8.56%	6.77%	14.00%
% in farm occupations	0.61%	0.55%	0.55%	0.84%	4.01%
% in construction occupations	10.04%	10.68%	9.27%	11.31%	13.09%
% in production occupations	7.96%	10.56%	5.76%	5.03%	11.26%
Average Household Income	42388.66	46352.82	58359.21	44057.38	46789.85
% Households with earnings	74.70%	73.09%	78.21%	47.31%	81.78%
% Households with social security income	28.86%	32.76%	26.47%	60.69%	23.84%
% Households with public assistance	4.73%	4.03%	3.65%	2.18%	4.71%
% Households with retirement income	15.99%	18.32%	15.57%	35.68%	9.40%
Owner-Occupied Housing	43.48%	51.73%	41.77%	60.46%	41.48%
% Renter Occupied Housing	40.38%	36.10%	44.08%	18.01%	49.18%
% Multifamily Units	38.77%	34.96%	52.39%	25.91%	47.51%
% Owner-Occupied Units with a Mortgage	63.50%	61.92%	68.70%	39.52%	66.60%
% Owner-Occupied Units without a Mortgage	36.50%	38.08%	31.30%	60.48%	33.40%
% Housing built 1940-1979	60.32%	47.47%	51.03%	51.63%	54.76%
% Housing built before 1939	13.05%	29.51%	20.00%	4.00%	17.18%
% Housing built after 2000	7.58%	6.38%	8.13%	8.73%	7.65%
% Foreign Born	12.25%	6.19%	19.75%	8.28%	43.16%
% Foreign Born from Asia	14.45%	14.01%	20.52%	15.26%	5.28%
% Foreign Born from Latin America	71.76%	59.29%	59.66%	46.10%	91.64%
% Receiving Food Stamps	7.69%	6.91%	4.13%	3.55%	5.24%
% Moved from Principal City	5.99%	1.35%	2.29%	1.76%	2.31%
% Moved from elsewhere in the MSA	9.12%	12.31%	11.95%	7.95%	7.91%
% that work in the MSA of residence	95.65%	89.89%	93.59%	89.90%	94.54%
% that work in the Principal City	42.21%	18.17%	25.51%	19.88%	32.28%
% that work in the suburbs	57.79%	81.83%	74.49%	80.12%	67.72%

Source: 2010 Census and 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Table 4.7: Numbers of suburbs in each cluster

	Low-Income Suburbs
Spillover	514
Latino	279
Diverging	344
Senior	265
Deindustrializing	1167
Total	2569

The defining characteristics of each cluster led me to classify them as *Spillover Suburbs*, *Deindustrializing Suburbs*, *Diverging Suburbs*, *Senior Suburbs*, and *Latino Suburbs*. I will describe them briefly here, but discuss them in more detail in the next chapter.

Spillover Suburbs demonstrate characteristics social science researchers have typically associated with low-income urban neighborhoods, including high unemployment, a large share of single-parent households, low educational attainment and significant secondary school dropout rates, older (but not historic) housing stock, and high concentrations of minority populations. The “spillover” label refers to the tendency of these suburbs to be physically proximate to central cities and their economically distressed neighborhoods, as well as to the potential that these suburbs house low-income individuals and families who have moved out of cities either due to displacement or personal choice.

The largest cluster of low-income suburbs, representing more than 40 percent of the total, falls into the category of *Deindustrializing Suburbs*. Predominantly white, these often small suburbs reflect the blue collar middle-class of another era that may be losing ground as firms demand higher skills from their workers. Many of the suburbs in this category resemble the “working class,” “industrial,” and “manufacturing” suburbs described by Berger, Taylor, and Lewis.²⁶

A third category I have labeled *Diverging Suburbs* defies a number of stereotypes associated with low-income areas because their dominant characteristics reflect

affluence and resilience rather than distress and vulnerability. But what the averages of some of the variables fail to show is the extent of economic inequality that obscures the presence of the poorest sectors of the population. These suburbs are home to a broader distribution of households along the income spectrum than places in other categories.

An older demographic characterizes the cluster I have identified as *Senior Suburbs*. More than one-third of residents of these suburbs in the low-income group are 65 and older, compared to 10 to 15 percent of that age group across the other low-income suburban categories. Residents of Senior suburbs have the lowest average labor force participation of any of the clusters, and are the most likely to be collecting social security or some form of retirement income.

As the name suggests, almost 80 percent of the population of *Latino suburbs* identifies as Hispanic or Latino, and more than one-third are immigrants primarily from Latin American countries. In addition, Latino suburbs stand apart from other low-income suburbs because of their economic vulnerability and their youth. These low-income suburbs are mainly situated near to the Southwestern border that the United States shares with Mexico, or with the Southeastern coastline.

Sensitivity Analysis: Using a Dataset of Poor Suburbs

Once I identified the categories that emerged from the dataset of low-relative-income census places, I ran the same combination of principal components and cluster analysis using the dataset I constructed of census places with poverty rates of 20 percent or more. Table 4.9 shows the number of suburbs in each cluster for both datasets. Highlights of the outcome are presented here and the full results are in the Appendix.

In the PCA, the components derived from each dataset were easily identifiable and comparable through the variable loadings, which were very similar for both low-income and poor suburbs. The differences between the outcomes of the PCA between the two

datasets were small but two-fold. First, the first four components shared explanatory power more evenly in the low-income dataset, while in the poverty subset the gap between the first and fourth component were larger. Second, component three (in the low-income group, variables typically associated with urban poverty) and component four (high labor force participation and employment) were reversed in explanatory power in the poverty dataset. However, in both cases the eigenvalues for the first seven components were similar and close to two, but demonstrated a significant drop at the eighth component.

Following on the similarity of the principal components, the key finding in comparing the cluster analysis results is that a similar cluster structure exists for both the poor and low-income subsets, resulting in a parallel typology—Spillover, Deindustrializing, Diverging, Latino, and Senior—for both groups. The mean component values show some similarities in the composition of the clusters, but the percentages calculated using the raw data give a better sense of each grouping’s characteristics (See Table 4.10). Those calculations indicate differences in configuration among the clusters in each dataset.

Although the underlying structure of the data is reflected by the similar typological groups, the differences in the typologies need some unpacking. First, the numbers of suburbs in each group are not identical between low-income and poor suburbs, and second, the cases in the parallel categories of each subset do not perfectly overlap. These discrepancies arise largely because the datasets do not perfectly match—not all low-income suburbs reach 20 percent poverty and vice versa—but also because some suburbs that fall into a certain category in one subset are placed in a separate group in the other subset. This categorical blurring is much less likely with the Spillover and Latino suburbs as they are the strongest and most defined types that emerge from the analyses. The Senior and Deindustrializing groups are somewhat less precise. This is a reasonable outcome given industry and metropolitan development patterns. In some cases, deindustrialization has created incentives for out-migration and younger suburban residents have left their hometowns while older individuals have opted to age in place. However, the variable averages support the differences between the

groupings. Senior suburbs in the poor dataset, for example, have an average of 18 percent of residents over age 65, while in Deindustrializing suburbs that average is closer to 14 percent. The Diverging category showed differences in terms of individual cases because their key attributes their locations in higher income metropolitan areas, corresponded more closely with the low-income suburban subset. In general, while these communities have lower incomes than the surround metropolitan area, they do not always reach the 20 percent poverty cut-off, so fewer census places in this category overlapped between the two datasets.

Table 4.8: Numbers of suburbs in each cluster

	Low-Income Suburbs	Poor Suburbs
Spillover	514	421
Latino	279	347
Diverging	344	168
Senior	265	436
Deindustrializing	1167	891
Total	2569	2263

Table 4.9: Cluster data comparing poor and low-income suburbs

	Spillover		Deindustrializing		Diverging		Senior		Latino	
	Low-income	Poor	Low-income	Poor	Low-income	Poor	Low-income	Poor	Low-income	Poor
Total Population (thousands_	2,806	2,694	4,065	3,271	3,032	1,809	580	758	2,884	2,894
% Under 18	27.20%	28.15%	24.70%	26.17%	22.97%	22.58%	13.44%	22.47%	30.28%	31.94%
% 65 and over	11.66%	11.12%	14.72%	13.74%	12.03%	9.59%	37.18%	17.93%	9.02%	8.99%
% White	30.51%	31.76%	74.71%	70.12%	55.34%	54.39%	75.56%	65.57%	11.78%	11.43%
%Black or African American	48.29%	46.36%	10.27%	12.96%	14.75%	11.94%	7.85%	15.89%	6.40%	3.92%
%Hispanic or Latino	15.29%	16.62%	10.98%	12.51%	21.50%	25.11%	12.11%	11.34%	77.88%	81.28%
%Single Parent households	20.96%	21.39%	14.80%	15.87%	13.42%	12.98%	6.03%	14.78%	20.05%	19.72%
%Single, Never married	40.86%	39.92%	31.40%	31.64%	40.90%	50.24%	21.88%	30.59%	39.18%	36.74%
%Now married	34.85%	36.27%	43.67%	43.86%	39.88%	34.88%	48.61%	42.58%	44.01%	46.78%
%Less than high school	24.13%	24.65%	20.50%	21.24%	18.28%	19.07%	18.71%	25.50%	42.96%	45.71%
%Completed high school	35.51%	35.38%	39.65%	38.27%	30.06%	27.87%	37.83%	37.22%	29.19%	26.57%
%Bachelor's Degree or more	12.73%	12.17%	13.47%	13.54%	24.04%	28.34%	14.97%	10.98%	9.35%	8.25%
%Dropped out of high school	10.63%	11.17%	9.17%	9.64%	4.88%	3.20%	8.37%	11.81%	11.37%	11.51%
%in Labor Force	60.13%	60.13%	60.78%	60.74%	63.36%	59.75%	33.76%	45.38%	61.85%	60.12%
%in Labor Force: Employed	85.75%	85.90%	89.95%	89.25%	90.39%	90.48%	89.30%	87.56%	89.24%	88.44%
%in Labor Force: Unemployed	14.25%	14.10%	10.05%	10.75%	9.61%	9.52%	10.70%	12.44%	10.76%	11.56%
%Employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing	1.09%	1.37%	1.25%	1.75%	0.83%	0.91%	2.07%	3.11%	4.63%	7.43%
%Employed in construction	7.38%	7.78%	7.40%	7.58%	7.27%	5.95%	8.97%	8.60%	10.06%	10.83%
%Employed in manufacturing	10.42%	10.34%	15.57%	15.63%	8.56%	8.31%	6.77%	10.98%	14.00%	11.71%
% in farm occupations	0.61%	0.74%	0.55%	0.74%	0.55%	0.60%	0.84%	1.18%	4.01%	6.27%
% in construction occupations	10.04%	10.62%	10.68%	11.02%	9.27%	7.69%	11.31%	12.15%	13.09%	14.02%
% in production occupations	7.96%	7.87%	10.56%	10.80%	5.76%	5.52%	5.03%	7.98%	11.26%	9.54%
Average Household Income	42389	42819	46353	45763	58359	55750	44057	41841	46789	44907
% Households with earnings	74.70%	75.21%	73.09%	73.59%	78.21%	79.22%	47.31%	64.66%	81.78%	82.00%
% Households with social security income	28.86%	28.54%	32.76%	31.66%	26.47%	22.73%	60.69%	41.13%	23.84%	25.37%
% Households with public assistance	4.73%	4.97%	4.03%	4.21%	3.65%	3.55%	2.18%	4.00%	4.71%	5.05%
% Households with retirement income	15.99%	15.93%	18.32%	17.83%	15.57%	13.33%	35.68%	21.48%	9.40%	9.91%
Owner-Occupied Housing	43.48%	44.34%	51.73%	50.82%	41.77%	37.52%	60.46%	52.23%	41.48%	50.80%
% Renter Occupied Housing	40.38%	40.10%	36.10%	36.15%	44.08%	48.54%	18.01%	28.29%	49.18%	39.46%
% Multifamily Units	38.77%	37.35%	34.96%	30.47%	52.39%	57.47%	25.91%	16.66%	47.51%	28.81%
% Owner-Occupied Units with a Mortgage	63.50%	64.43%	61.92%	61.42%	68.70%	68.92%	39.52%	50.43%	66.60%	62.92%
% Owner-Occupied Units without a Mortgage	36.50%	35.57%	38.08%	38.58%	31.30%	31.08%	60.48%	49.57%	33.40%	37.08%
% Foreign Born	12.25%	13.80%	6.19%	6.29%	19.75%	19.04%	8.28%	4.63%	43.16%	39.17%
% Foreign Born from Asia	14.45%	12.00%	14.01%	12.51%	20.52%	23.04%	15.26%	13.28%	5.28%	4.24%
% Foreign Born from Latin America	71.76%	76.00%	59.29%	66.52%	59.66%	62.20%	46.10%	68.12%	91.64%	94.15%
% Receiving Food Stamps	7.69%	7.84%	6.91%	7.35%	4.13%	3.90%	3.55%	7.28%	5.24%	5.75%
% Moved from Principal City	5.99%	6.47%	1.35%	1.19%	2.29%	2.20%	1.76%	1.26%	2.31%	2.43%
% Moved from elsewhere in the MSA	9.12%	8.92%	12.31%	12.69%	11.95%	13.75%	7.95%	9.42%	7.91%	7.80%
% that work in the MSA of residence	95.65%	95.01%	89.89%	89.06%	93.59%	92.68%	89.90%	84.67%	94.54%	92.64%
% that work in the Principal City	42.21%	44.49%	18.17%	18.15%	25.51%	20.26%	19.88%	20.45%	32.28%	38.39%
% that work in the suburbs	57.79%	55.51%	81.83%	81.85%	74.49%	79.74%	80.12%	79.55%	67.72%	61.61%

Source: 2010 Census and 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

The variation in the typologies provides evidence of the difficulty discussed earlier in this chapter: although the poverty line is useful for its ease of measurement and its comparability across studies and disciplines, poverty rates do not completely capture the variation in suburbs with low-incomes across geographical areas. Using suburbs with 20 percent poverty rates to check the outcome of the initial PCA/cluster analysis with the relative income data validates the typology because the similarity of the cluster characteristics in the two analyses suggests that the five types reflect the underlying structure of the data; that is, the categories fairly accurately depict the broad range of low-income and poor suburbs. However, it is important to note that the groupings are not perfect in their exclusivity, and some suburbs share characteristics across more than one type. In the end, the purpose of the typology in this study is not to create a typological theory, rather it is a tool for exploring heterogeneity while identifying patterns and a method of choosing case studies likely to demonstrate a variety of causal mechanisms related to suburban poverty through time and across space. In the following chapter I discuss in greater detail these patterns and the selection of case studies from each of the typological categories.

CHAPTER 4 ENDNOTES

¹ The Census Bureau defines Principal Cities as the largest incorporated place in a Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA—a term which includes Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas). A CBSA may have more than one principal city based on population size and resident-worker ratios.

² Because the boundaries of Census places (in contrast to Minor Civil Divisions) do not account for all of the land in a metropolitan area, it is possible that some metropolitan residents that would be considered “suburban” by the Census Bureau may not be represented when using Census places as a proxy for suburbs. This issue is less of a problem in the current study as I am using the suburb as the unit of analysis rather than suburban individuals or suburban residents in the aggregate.

³ See, for example: M. Hall and B. Lee, “How Diverse Are US Suburbs?” *Urban Studies* 47, no. 1 (2009): 3–28; Amy Holliday and Rachel Dwyer, “Suburban Neighborhood Poverty in U.S. Metropolitan Areas in 2000,” *City & Community* 8, no. 2 (2009): 155–76; Janice Madden “The Changing Spatial Concentration of Income and Poverty among Suburbs of Large US Metropolitan Areas.” *Urban Studies* 40, no. 3 (2003): 481–503; Harvey Marshall and John Stahura. “Black and White Population Growth in American Suburbs: Transition or Parallel Development?” *Social Forces* 58, no. 1 (1979): 305–28; Alexandra Murphy, “The Symbolic Dilemma of Suburban Poverty: Challenges and Opportunities Posed by Variations in the Contours of Suburban Poverty,” *Sociological Forum* 25, no. 3 (2010): 541–69.

⁴ According to the Census Bureau, "Each metropolitan statistical area must have at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more inhabitants. Each micropolitan statistical area must have at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population."

<http://www.census.gov/population/metro/about/>.

⁵ Gordon M. Fisher, "The Development and History of the Poverty Thresholds," *Social Security Bulletin* 55 no. 4 (1992), 3-14; Mollie Orshansky, "Counting the Poor: Another Look at the Poverty Profile," *Social Security Bulletin* 28 No. 1, (1965), 3-29.

⁶ Constance F. Citro, and Robert T. Michael (eds.), *Measuring Poverty: A New Approach*, (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1995).

⁷ Thesia I. Garner and Kathleen S. Short. "Creating a Consistent Poverty Measure Over Time Using NAS Procedures: 1996– 2005," *Review of Income and Wealth* 56, no. 2, (2010).

⁸ Jargowsky, Paul. *Poverty and Place : Ghettos, Barrios, and the American City*. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1997), 9-13

⁹ Galster, George C. "Consequences from the redistribution of urban poverty during the 1990s: A cautionary tale." *Economic Development Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (2005): 121

¹⁰ Tracey Farrigan, T. Hertz, and T. Parker, *Rural Poverty and Well-being*, US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Accessed March 25, 2013, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/rural-poverty-well-being.aspx#.U-JG3fldV8E>.

¹¹ For example, Holliday and Dwyer, "Suburban Neighborhood Poverty;" Murphy, "The Symbolic Dilemma"

¹² For example, Bernadette Hanlon, "A Typology of Inner-Ring Suburbs: Class, Race, and Ethnicity in U.S. Suburbia." *City & Community* 8, no. 3 (2009): 221–46; William Lucy and David Phillips. *Confronting Suburban Decline: Strategic Planning for Metropolitan Renewal*. (Washington D.C. ; Covelo Calif.: Island Press, 2000); Thomas Vicino, *Transforming Race and Class in Suburbia: Decline in Metropolitan Baltimore*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

¹³ Todd Swanstrom, Rob Ryan, and Katherine M. Stigers, *Measuring Concentrated Poverty: Did it Really Decline in the 1990s?* (Berkeley: Institute of Urban and Regional Development Working Paper, 2007); Timothy Smeeding, Lee Rainwater, Gary Burtles, *United States Poverty in a Cross-National Context*. (Syracuse, NY: Center for Policy Research, Syracuse University, 2001).

¹⁴ These distributions of poverty, relative income and inequality are more important than the average size or median income of the cases in each of the subsets because they better indicate the comparability of the groups.

¹⁵ It is important to note here the limitations of Census data when calculating income ratios. To preserve anonymity of individuals within the ACS, the highest incomes are removed from the public use dataset. As a result, 80/20 or 90/10 ratios created using Census data are often underestimated.

¹⁶ David Autor, *The Polarization of Job Opportunities in the U.S. Labor Market: Implications for Employment and Earnings*, (Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress and the Hamilton Project, 2010).

¹⁷ Brian Everitt, and G. Dunn. *Applied Multivariate Data Analysis*. 2nd ed. (London ;New York: Arnold; Oxford University Press, 2001), 63.

¹⁸ Hanlon, "A Typology;" Vicino, *Transforming Race and Class*.

¹⁹ Abdelmonem Afifi, *Computer-Aided Multivariate Analysis*, 4th ed, (Boca Raton: Chapman & Hall/CRC, 2004), 403-404

²⁰ Everitt and Dunn, *Applied Multivariate Data Analysis*, 48-65.

²¹ Henry F. Kaiser, "The Varimax Criterion for Analytic Rotation in Factor Analysis." *Psychometrika* 23, no. 3 (1958): 187–200. These decisions are based on the recommendations found in P. Kline, *An Easy Guide to Factor Analysis*. (London: Routledge, 1994).

²² Everitt and Dunn, *Applied Multivariate Data Analysis*, 53.

²³ Everitt and Dunn, *Applied Multivariate Data Analysis*, 142-148.

²⁴ See, for example, Myron Orfield, *American Metropolitics: The New Suburban Reality*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), Vicino, *Transforming Race and Class*; Hanlon, "A Typology."

²⁵ Erik Mooi and Marko Sarstedt. *A Concise Guide to Market Research the Process, Data, and Methods Using IBM SPSS Statistics*, (Berlin; New York: Springer, 2011), 265-268.

²⁶ Bennett Berger, *Working-class Suburb: A Study of Auto Workers in Suburbia*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960); Robert Lewis, *Manufacturing Suburbs: Building Work and Home on the Metropolitan Fringe*, (Philadelphia PA: Temple University, 2004). Graham Taylor, *Satellite Cities: A Study of Industrial Suburbs*, (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1915).

5 REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF LOW-INCOME SUBURBS

The narrative of the geography of concentrated poverty in the United States has centered mainly on a siloed urban and rural binary. Researchers have analyzed high poverty city census tracts and rural counties generally within separate wheelhouses. As Alan Berube of the Brookings Institution testified before the Committee on Ways and Means in 2007, that focus was meaningful when 80 percent of poor Americans lived in urban neighborhoods or outlying rural villages.¹ But as the U.S. population has suburbanized, the geography of poverty across the country has also changed. As of 2012, about one-third of the country's poor population lives in metropolitan areas but outside of central cities, and as the last chapter indicated, thousands of suburban places have sufficient concentrations of low-income residents to be considered poor places.

In this chapter, however, I focus not on the larger spatial distribution of poverty in the U.S. but rather on describing the specific geography of low-income and poor suburbs as differentiated by the types established in the previous chapter. Point and Kernel Density maps of the suburbs in each category presented in the following pages demonstrate different patterns of spatial clustering that appear to correlate with long-term regional economic trends. Using this analysis as a starting point, I then discuss the process of selecting case studies from each suburban type and the methods of collecting and analyzing the case data.

SPATIAL CLUSTERS OF SUBURBAN TYPES

Table 5.1 presents the number of low-income and poor suburbs by location in the large Census-defined U.S. regions of the Northeast, Midwest, South, and West.

Table 5.1: Regional distribution of poor and low-income suburbs

Region	Low-income Suburbs	Poor suburbs	Total Suburbs	Low-Income Percent of Total	Poor Percent of Total
Northeast	439	240	2,899	17.1%	10.61%
Midwest	601	419	3,571	23.4%	18.52%
South	1053	1118	4,537	41.0%	49.40%
West	476	486	2,419	18.5%	21.48%
Total	2569	2263	13,426	100.0%	100.00%

The South holds far more of both categories of suburban places, likely reflecting both that the region is the largest and most populous, and is on average lower-income than other parts of the United States. The number of southern suburbs may also be linked to different regional metropolitan settlement patterns. Examining relative income is more revealing for the Northeast and the Midwest, where higher earnings have contributed to declining poverty populations—there are far fewer suburbs with poverty concentrations of 20 percent or more in these regions, but a larger proportion have median incomes well below that of the metro median. Of the census places that do not overlap between the two datasets, the poor suburbs tend to be more concentrated in the South and West, while low-income places are more prevalent in the Northeast and Midwest.

Table 5.2: Regional distribution of poor and low-income suburbs by type

	West		South		Midwest		Northeast	
	Low-income	Poor	Low-income	Poor	Low-income	Poor	Low-income	Poor
Latino	57.0% 159	53.4% 181	37.3% 104	45.1% 153	1.8% 5	0.6% 2	3.9% 11	0.9% 3
Senior	30.5% 79	23.0% 96	46.7% 121	59.8% 250	8.5% 22	11.2% 47	14.3% 37	6.0% 25
Diverging	28.9% 97	30.9% 51	28.3% 95	26.7% 44	12.5% 42	11.5% 19	30.4% 102	30.9% 51
Deindustrializing	6.3% 70	9.3% 80	35.0% 392	44.8% 386	36.9% 413	30.4% 262	21.9% 245	15.5% 134
Spillover	13.9% 70	16.4% 68	62.6% 316	61.0% 253	19.0% 96	17.6% 73	4.6% 23	5.1% 21

Table 5.2 presents a broad overview of the shares of suburbs in each type by region. Although these regional designations have some basis in historical and economic linkages among states, their size inhibits a more detailed understanding of spatial patterns among suburbs. The above data also does not give a good sense of the locations of the suburbs in relation to others, or more detailed concentration patterns.

The relationship between space and processes suggests that rarely can we assume spatial independence (the random distribution of specific spatial data), and the datasets for each suburban cluster are no exception. Geographic data almost always demonstrate spatial autocorrelation, the concept that objects that are closer in space are more likely to be related to or dependent on one another.² Given that knowledge combined with regional development history in the United States and typical patterns of metropolitan organization, it is almost certain that the locations of suburbs in each of the categories will be spatially linked.

Suspecting spatial autocorrelation in a general sense, however, does not provide information on cluster locations or distributions. Kernel density estimation (KDE) is a better means of identifying localized agglomerations. This method allows analysts to use mapped point data to develop a continuous raster surface that indicates the density of objects in the dataset at any one point (represented by a grid cell of specified size) on the map. The process employs kernel functions to weight objects by distance, giving greater weights to those that are proximate.³ The final visualization shows “hotspots” indicating areas of high object density taking into account all surrounding points.

After determining the categories of the typology, I mapped the location of clusters by each suburban type. I then created the Kernel density surfaces, specifying the cell size at a square kilometer. The resulting maps show high density spatial clusters of suburbs for each of the five categories using the low-income dataset. Please see the appendix for maps of the poverty subset.

Figure 5.1: Low-income Spillover Suburbs

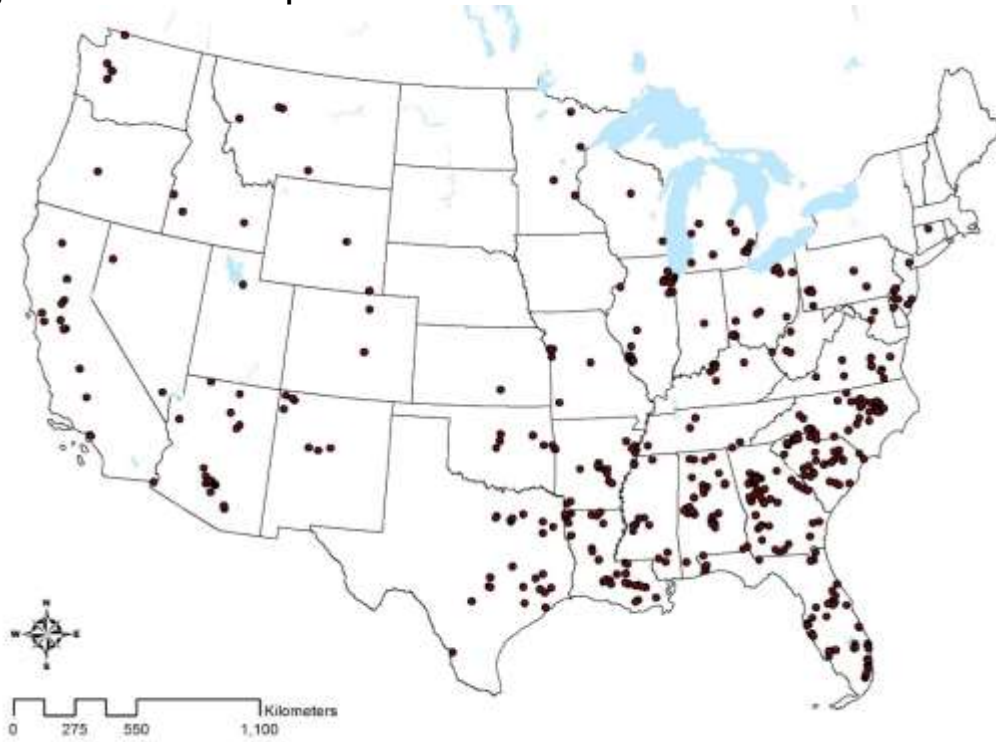


Figure 5.2: Spatial clusters of low-income Spillover Suburbs



The large majority of Spillover suburbs are in southern states, particularly Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, and Florida; however, the key concentrations are in the South and the Midwest, primarily in the metropolitan areas of St. Louis, Atlanta, Chicago, and Miami. The South has long had lower median incomes than other US regions, and though economic conditions have started to trend upward in recent decades with large population and industry shifts to the Sunbelt, not all states have benefitted equally. Moreover, the late 2000s recession decimated the booming construction industry that was inflating southern economies resulting in vast employment and income losses. The predominance of Spillover suburbs in the South, however, may be related to the particular sprawling rollout of suburban development in southern metropolitan areas as well as to lower suburban housing prices linked to aging housing stock and the construction boom of the mid-2000s that have allowed lower-income households to access suburban residences. A key demographic characteristic of Spillover suburbs is a large share of African-American households, and the south's history of racial discrimination may also be associated with these spatial patterns. Spillover suburbs in other regions are concentrated in the large Rust Belt metropolitan areas of the Midwest where similar dynamics may be in effect.

The Midwestern and Southern regions are home to more than 70 percent of the municipalities in the category of deindustrializing suburbs. This spatial allocation is likely associated with the enduring effects of manufacturing concentration in the Midwest and the post-1960s growth of goods-production in the South as firms shifted away from the Northeast to take advantage of lower wages and a less organized labor force.⁴ The sustained decline in manufacturing employment since the 1970s and 1980s and the acceleration of production-oriented job losses in the early 2000s and during the recent economic crisis has taken its toll on local incomes dependent on increasingly obsolete facilities. The smaller shares of Deindustrializing suburbs in the West may reflect a historical lack of traditional manufacturing plants, and in the Northeast, the decades-long redefining of its employment base. The predominant clusters shown on the map include Pittsburgh, PA, Kansas City, MO, Cincinnati, OH, and the Allentown/Bethlehem, PA areas, all with long histories as centers of industrialization in different sectors.

Figure 5.3: Low-income Deindustrializing Suburbs

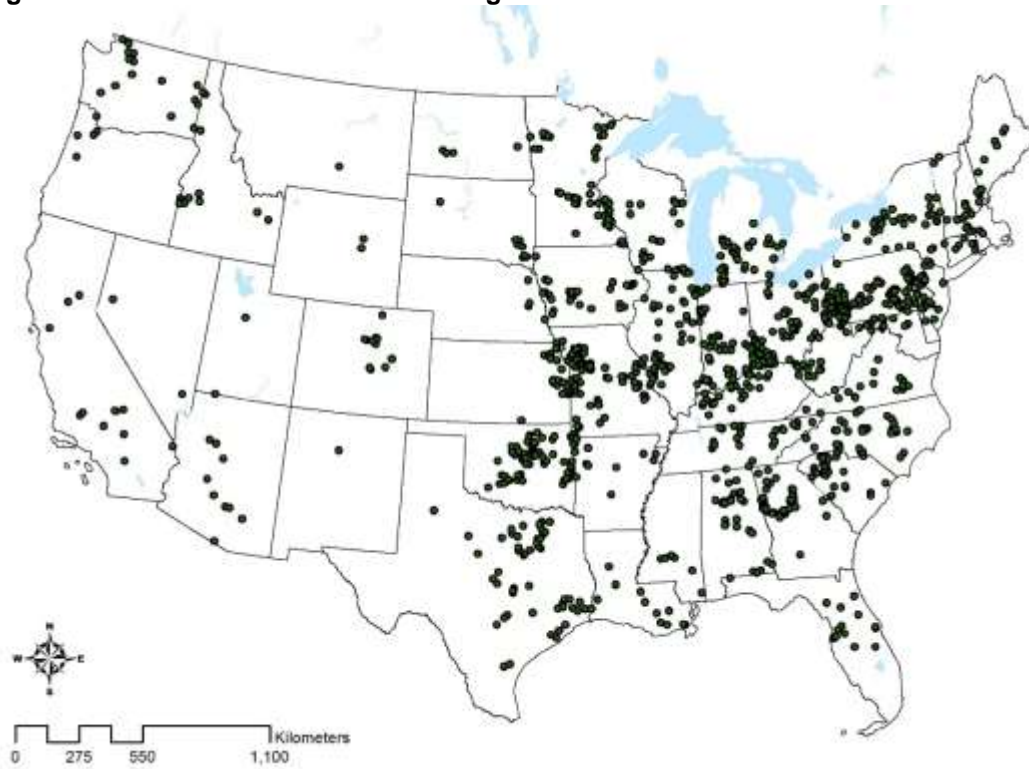
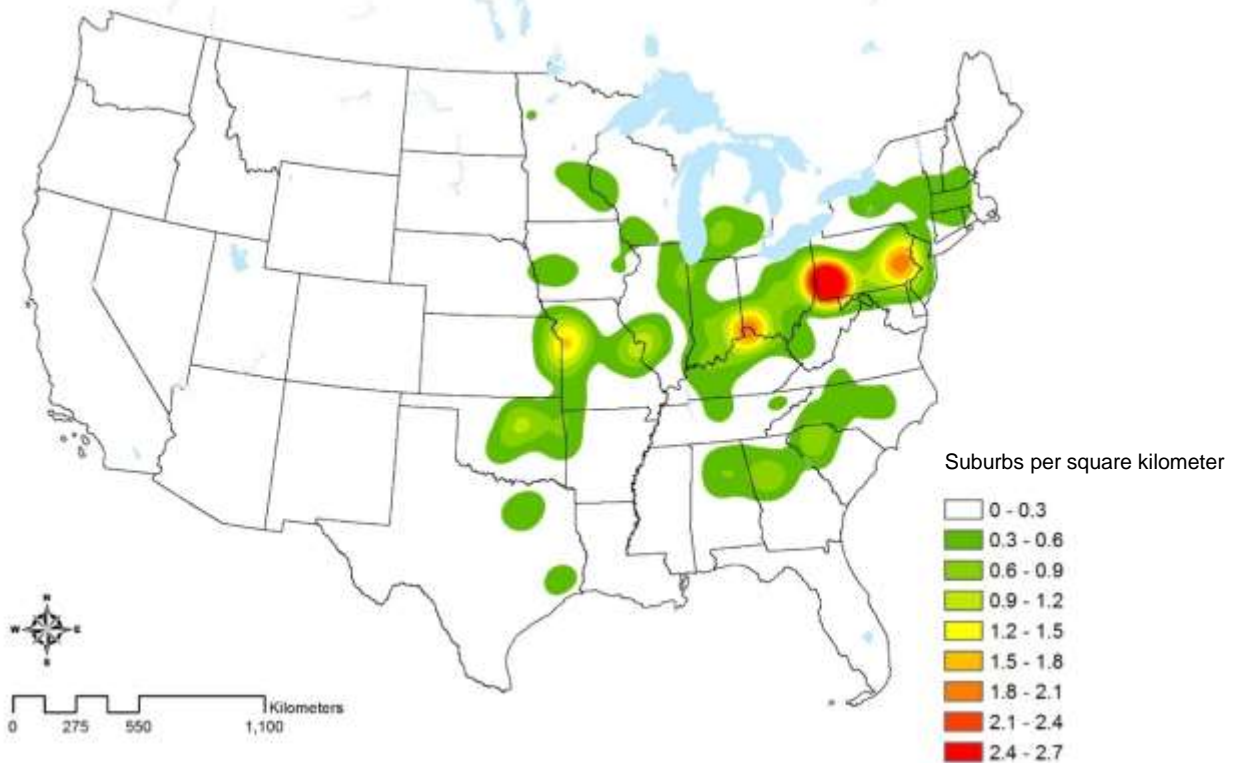


Figure 5.4: Spatial clusters of Low-income Deindustrializing Suburbs



Diverging suburbs tend to be located along the coasts—in the northern states in the east and in California to the west. This pattern is more pronounced in the low-income dataset, although still observable in the poor subset. The difference is likely for two reasons: first, the low-income subset pulled in more university towns with low-income students that do not show in the poverty rate; and second, these metropolitan areas have high-income central cores, increasing the likelihood that the surrounding suburbs will have lower relative incomes. Despite these caveats, the coastal distribution also corresponds with trends in the location patterns of highly educated workers and innovation hubs generating employment for skilled workers, including Boston, New York, Seattle, and the San Francisco Bay area.⁵ Media outlets are noting that Atlanta and Minneapolis are also becoming innovation centers in their own right, with their own influx of highly educated residents.⁶ The lower densities of these suburbs require two kernel density maps to present a more detailed picture of the existing clusters. The first map uses the same measurement breaks, in increments of 0.3 km, as those used for the other types, which have more dense clusters. The second uses a system that visualizes the clusters relative to the density of the points only in that map.

Figure 5.5: Low-income Diverging Suburbs



Figure 5.6: Spatial clusters of Low-income Diverging Suburbs

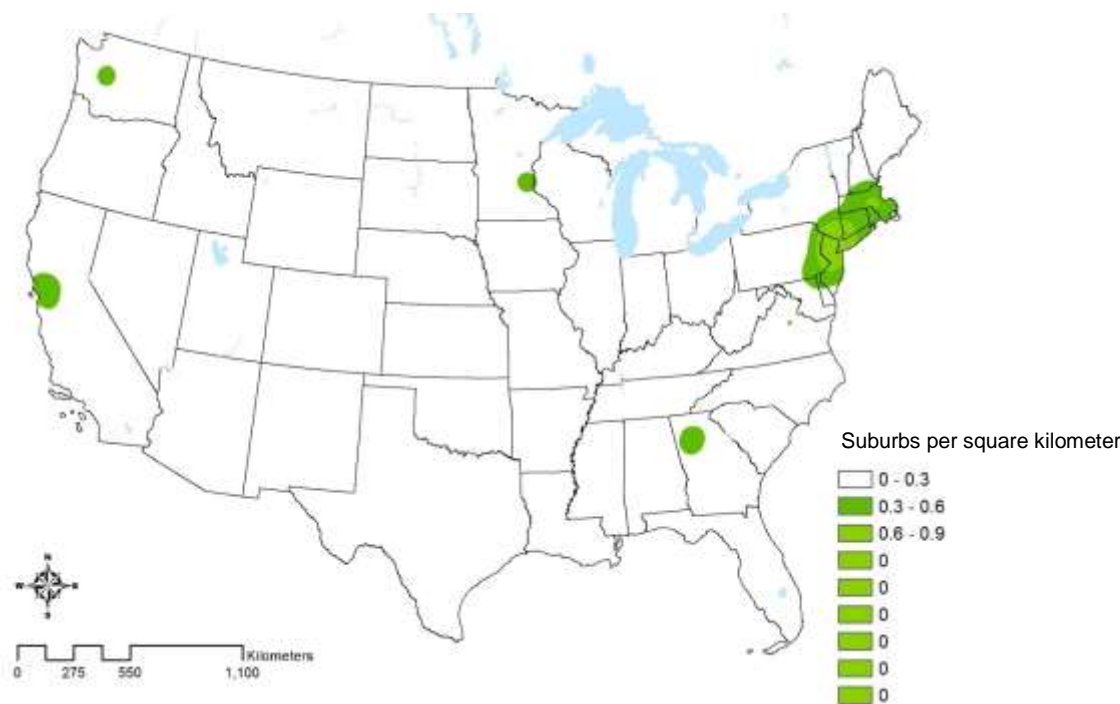
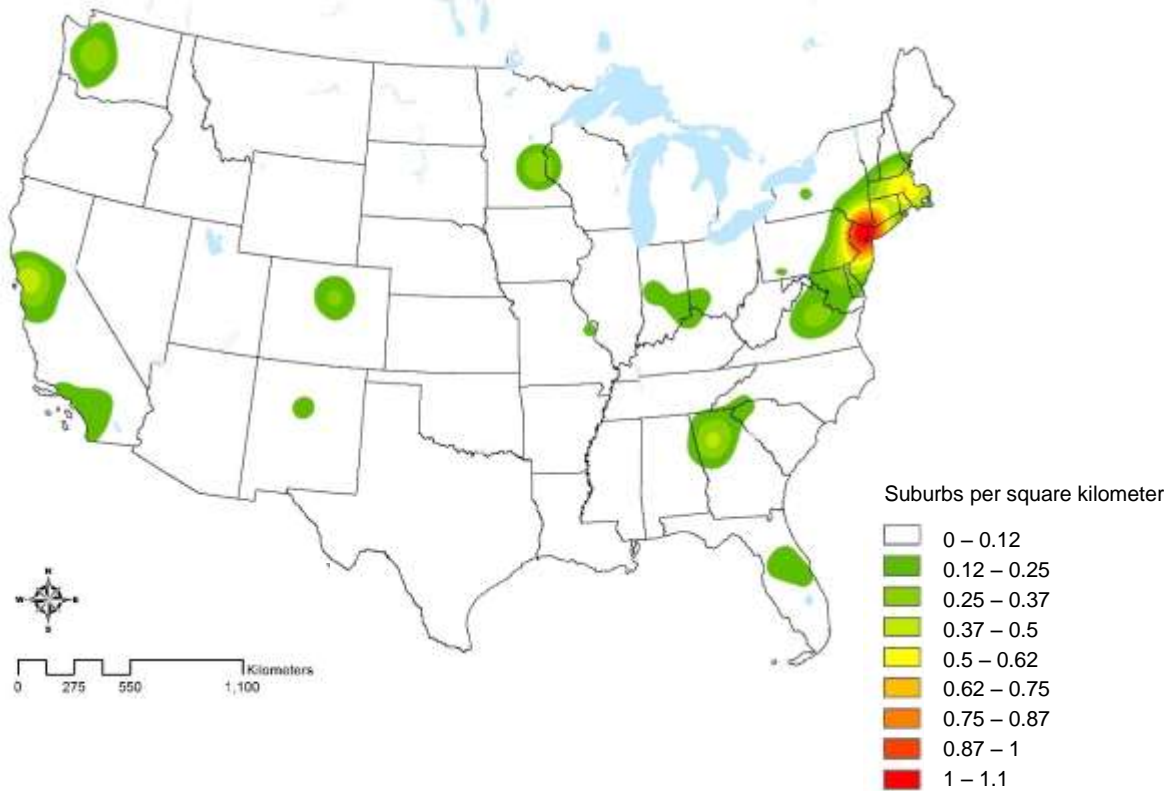


Figure 5.7: Relative concentrations of Low-income Diverging Suburbs



In part reflecting a long-term trend of the movement of aging Americans to the Sunbelt, many Senior suburbs are spread across parts of Florida, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California, and close to 80 percent in each subset are in the warmer West and South. As Walters documents in his extensive review of literature on later-life migration, although population shifts to the Sunbelt are not as prevalent as they once were, Florida has been the main destination of choice for elderly migrants for the last 30 to 40 years with Arizona and California as the distant second and third receivers.⁷ These states hold more than one-third of low-income and a quarter of poor Senior suburbs. However, there are two key points to note. The first is that income levels of the elderly population can be misleading. Although census data collected on incomes include contributions from social security, retirement accounts and pensions, and interest and dividends, the elderly may be living off of accumulated wealth in the form of savings or housing investment that is not accounted for when calculating monthly or yearly income. Second, concentrations of aging households can develop not because of the migration of the elderly but because of the movement of the young. This may be the case, for example, in some of the poorest mining towns in West Virginia.

Figure 5.8: Low-Income Senior Suburbs



Figure 5.9: Clusters of Low-Income Senior Suburbs



Figure 5.10: Relative concentrations of Low-income Senior Suburbs

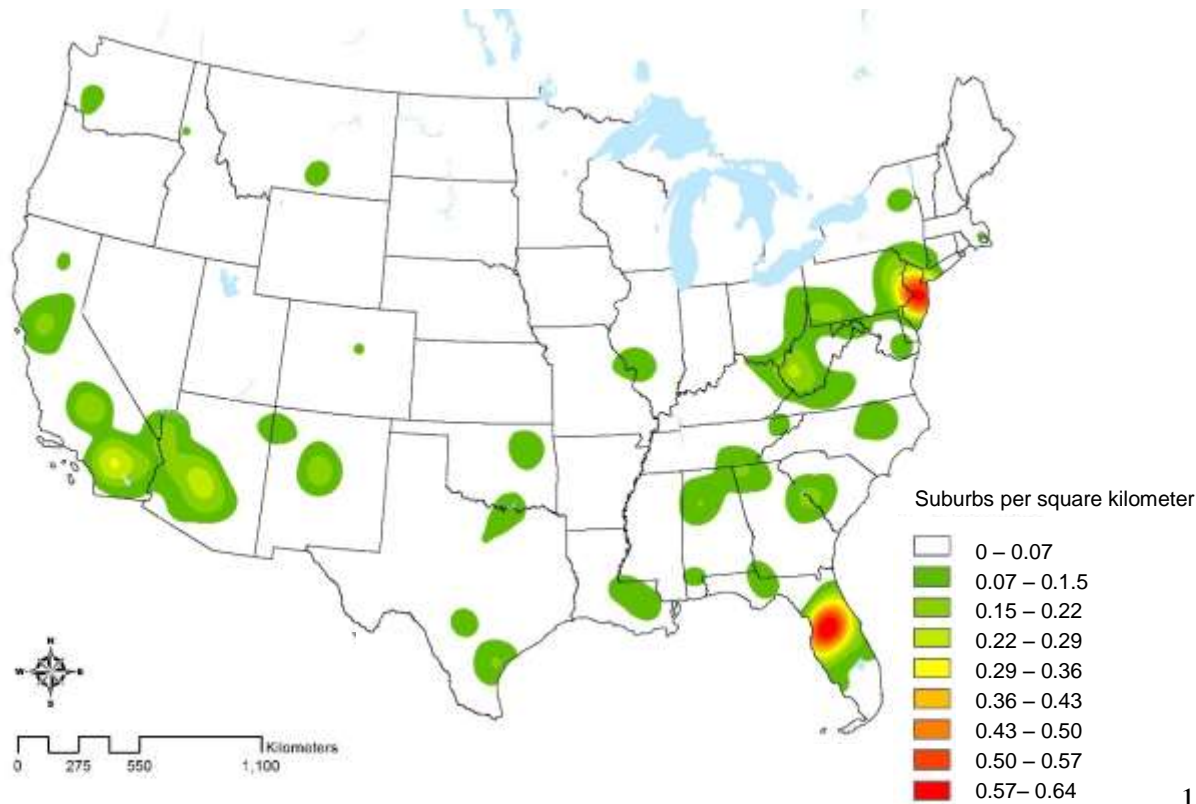
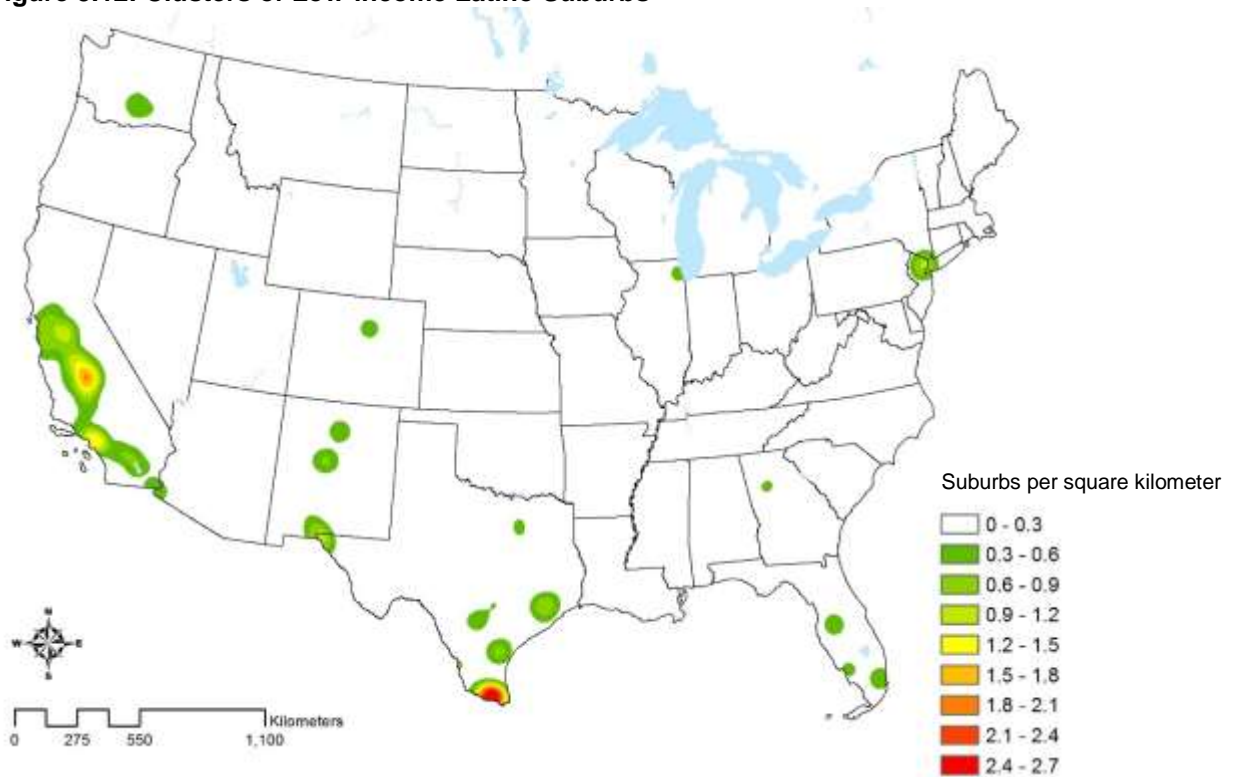


Figure 5.11: Low-income Latino Suburbs



Figure 5.12: Clusters of Low-income Latino Suburbs



Both poor and low-income Latino suburbs are generally fairly close to the southern edge of the United States and many of these suburbs lie directly at the border or coast in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Florida. In fact, California and Texas alone are home to more than two-thirds of low-income and three quarters of poor Latino suburbs, in metropolitan areas such as Fresno and Visalia, CA, and Brownsville, TX. This category best demonstrates the spatial mechanisms potentially associated with the suburban settlement patterns of different demographic groups. Immigration from Latin America surged after 1965 and continued through the 1980s as crises in Central American countries spurred refugee movements, and California saw the majority of the population flows.⁸ South Texas, with its relatively porous borders and historic economic connections with Mexican cities, has long been home to large immigrant populations.

CASE STUDIES

A typology of low-income suburbs provides a broad overview of characteristics and locations and creates a heuristic for analyzing the heterogeneity of suburban poverty, but it also raises a number of questions that cannot be answered with a cross section of data. As discussed in Chapter 3, place and poverty are dynamic concepts, particularly in the long run, and we understand poor suburbs best by connecting their present conditions to their pasts. Introducing variables that reflect change over time into the typology analysis, as others have done, would have been one way to take a more dynamic perspective. But beyond the difficulty of adequately representing change over time with a national dataset is the endogeneity of the flows. Employment and migration are jointly causal, and the cumulative effects of the settlement of people and fixed capital are difficult to model statistically.⁹ Moreover, knowledge of metropolitan and regional contexts is critical to discerning the processes occurring within a network of places. Case studies combining more fine-grained empirical data with historical analysis and field observation in a broader context allowed a more thorough examination of the nuances of suburban income and poverty distribution and the economic and demographic flows and deposits that have shaped their current economic conditions.

Case Study Selection

The typology served as a case selection tool as well as a device for analysis. I chose suburbs from each of the five types to examine in more detail. No case study is ever truly representative of the category it is intended to explore because in the end, the categories we create are simplifications; in this case, there are differences within the types that cannot be captured in one case study. I present a broader view of the categories in Chapter 5. To increase the possibility that the case studies would be somewhat similar to some of the other suburbs within each type, however, I developed several criteria to guide my selection.

The decisions were influenced first by the clusters shown in the kernel density maps. From the maps, I selected five to ten metropolitan areas from each type that contained the largest and densest clusters of suburbs from that category. Using the raw data, I calculated averages and percentages for the same variables originally used to define the five types for just the suburbs in the chosen metropolitan areas. Starting with the metropolitan area with the largest cluster, I examined the data for each suburb and compared the variables with the averages and percentages I had calculated earlier. The purpose of this exercise was to choose case studies for each type that were as archetypal as possible in terms of location, size, demographic characteristics, and economic structure.

I had two other criteria that guided my case study choices. First, each case study had to be present in both the poor and low-income subsets of suburbs. This decision ensured that the case study findings would be more comparable to other qualitative research on poor suburban places. The second stipulation was more practical. In order to access key historical materials needed for the study, I chose case suburbs that were incorporated—politically distinct municipalities with their own governing bodies. The set of Census Places includes a large number of unincorporated areas (identified as Census Designated Places, or CDPs) which are identified as suburbs under my

definition. It is much more difficult, however, to trace the history of such places since they are somewhat less likely to leave a paper trail through time.

Data Collection and Analysis

As George and Bennett discuss in their influential book, rigorous case research requires both between-case (comparative) and within-case analysis. The authors quote Dessler, suggesting that case study researchers should base their work on two foundational questions: “What is this a case of?” (the typology I developed) and “From what historical pathway did this event emerge?” (the exploration of mechanisms related to suburban poverty through the chosen case studies).¹⁰ The *between*-case element requires “structured, focused comparison,” which has at its center orderly data collection based on a set of questions that maximize internal and external validity asked of each of the selected cases. The *within*-case analysis seeks to identify pathways to the case outcome based on detailed historical explanations.¹¹

My intent with this study was to identify and examine the historical flows of people and production and the deposits they leave that interact within a set spatial context to create different types of poor suburbs. To that end, I specified a series of general questions to ask of each case, guided by the theoretical underpinnings of the study:

1. What are the primary economic functions or specializations of each suburb and how have they changed over time?
2. What were the initial resource endowments that influenced each suburb’s development path?
3. What were the main development waves that shaped each suburb and what time periods did they span?
4. What specific flows of people (e.g. international migration, domestic movement of racial and ethnic groups, relocation related to employment) and production (e.g. firm movements, capital flows related to specialization, public funding) bundled together during each development wave to create the characteristics of each suburb?

5. What deposits (groups of people, types of firms, fixed capital, forms of “local culture” and social norms) did these flows leave during each wave? What effects did they have?
6. What individuals, entities, or institutions demonstrated power to control or manipulate these flows during any period? What actions did they take to prevent or encourage movements and investments of people or production?

These questions assisted me to collect comparable data for each suburb and focused the direction of my analysis. Yin, in his guide to case study research, laid out six primary categories of evidence used in constructing case study-based theories and narratives.¹² Since my cases are mainly historical, some sources played a larger role than others in my work, and some types of evidence were not used. I describe the six data sources and their relevance to the study below:

- **Documentation** refers to any text records relevant to the case studies, including papers and organizational documents collected from archives, municipal agencies, or local non-profits; newspaper articles or other print media, or scholarly research on the suburbs or metropolitan areas under study. Documentation provided most of my data given the historical nature of my research question, but the wide variety of documentation sources allowed me to use one kind of historical record to validate and confirm information from another type. This validation is critical to reducing the bias associated with written texts. I studied planning and municipal documents, tax records, locally-written historical accounts, newspaper articles, archived materials from key firms and institutions, and the personal documents of influential individuals for each case suburb.
- **Archival records** include primarily historical quantitative data such as that from the census, from organizational surveys, or from maps and geographical representations. I relied primarily on the Census since it is difficult to find other data over extended periods of time, but I supplemented Census data with metropolitan area- and suburb-specific information obtained from other documentation. Analyzing census tracts indicated the distribution of poverty

within the case suburbs. Historical maps were useful in verifying boundary changes over time.

- **Direct observations** from site visits allowed me to assess the visible physical and economic conditions of the suburban locations and compare my perceptions with the quantitative data I collected. I spent a week in each of my case suburbs, and field observation provided three types of evidence. First, by driving and walking through each suburb's neighborhoods and taking photographs, I was able to examine the state of the housing stock and physical infrastructure, including roads, parks, and municipal buildings. The extent of deterioration (or alternatively, investment) was an indicator of the impacts of local economic dynamics and provided information to gauge the experience of poverty in the municipality. Second, I assessed the commercial development and the local business mix in the selected suburbs to gain a sense of the number and type of employment opportunities available, and to evaluate the types of businesses attracted to the location. Finally, I was able to observe whether poverty was concentrated in small areas or signs of deterioration and decline pervaded the case suburbs, a nuanced perspective that is difficult to attain using aggregated census place data.
- **Interviews** with key informants were not a major data source given the number of cases and my research goal of identifying long-term historical mechanisms associated with current suburban poverty.
- **Participant observation**, or direct participation in events occurring at the case study locations, was not a primary research method for this study; my focus was not on the current conditions of low-income suburbs but on the trajectories that led to their conditions.
- **Physical artifacts** include objects that reflect the history of the case study location, including but not limited to artwork, tools, or manufactured products. In each location I visited local museums and was exposed to these types of

artifacts. They contributed to my understanding of the sites but were not central to my work.

Yin also notes the importance of triangulation of data sources when constructing the within- and between-case narratives, as data creation and historical documentation is not value neutral. As I collected and analyzed my data, I worked to support my assertions about each case with at least two different types of evidence to address some of the bias implicit in each source.

Case-based Theory Building on the Concept of Suburban Poverty

At this point in its scholarly history, the topic of suburban poverty has had more examination and forecasting of future repercussions than theory development. But a better idea of the “why” behind the shifting metropolitan income distributions that have made the news in the last several years (or at least more possible explanations to consider) can provide a foundation for future policy and planning work. The purpose of this study, then, is theory building. With the case studies, I am not testing existing theories but rather exploring in more detail potential mechanisms by which suburban places that can be considered “poor” develop. Chapter 3 provided the dynamic framework of flows and deposits in which I am working, but the case study analysis adds details and coherence to the layers of existing theory—in Dessler’s words, it starts to “relax” or provide evidence to support some of the simplifying assumptions presented in my theoretical chapter.¹³

In discussing mechanisms I refer to a concept that has become popular in the social sciences as a means of more rigorously discerning causal relationships. Though definitions of the term are abundant, many tend to refer to mechanisms as processes (either observable or unobservable) that link a cause to an effect, a generalized view that corresponds with the theory of places as flows presented earlier.¹⁴ Following Elster, “to explain is to provide a mechanism, to open up the black box and show the nuts and bolts, the cogs and wheels of the internal machinery.”¹⁵ My preference for mechanism-

based research stems from my interest in contingency and a suburb's embeddedness in a metropolitan area. The idea of mechanisms captures the dynamism of places always in flux through movements and settling of labor and capital—the point is to tease out some possible mechanisms through which flows of people and production contribute to suburban poverty.¹⁶

Following Stake and his canonical differentiation between intrinsic, instrumental, and collective case studies, I used my cases collectively as instruments to put forward possible explanations for the development of poor suburbs over time.¹⁷ My cases are historical in nature, and I drew on longstanding and emerging practices in the historical and social sciences disciplines—particularly the construction and comparison of theoretically-oriented narratives—to guide the research process and identify possible interaction effects between specific flows and deposits that may play a role in determining suburban conditions.¹⁸ Using the data I collected, for each case I first pieced together a descriptive historical narrative that chronicled the major events (suburban, metropolitan, and regional) that related to the suburb's current economic status. Then, I used the six questions posed above to investigate in depth the empirical material related to the theoretical concepts defined in Chapter 3 in order to suggest potential causal mechanisms leading to heterogeneity among low-income suburbs.

The similarity in data collected for each case and the method of within-case inquiry gave me an analytical baseline by which to compare my case suburbs, even though they were not formally matched.¹⁹ My results have some analytic generalizability to other suburbs of the same type; however, the historical explanations are highly suburb- and region- specific due to the broad reach of the study. Future research would be useful to study each type of low-income suburb in more detail so as to generate more specific policy applications.

Mapping the locations of low-income suburbs by category reveals distinct regional clusters for each type. The analysis of the case studies selected based on the typology and mapping process illuminates an argument for how and why the spatial patterns

developed and the relationship they have to suburban poverty. In the following chapter, I present a detailed description of each suburban type and the existing conditions in each of the five case suburbs to lay the foundation for that analysis.

CHAPTER 5 ENDNOTES

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¹¹ George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, 11 and Chapter 3.

¹² Robert Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 2nd ed (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), Chapter 4.

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¹⁵ John Elster, *Explaining Technical Change*, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 24

¹⁶ George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, 133.

¹⁷ Robert Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research*, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995).

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6 THE SUBURBAN POVERTY PATCHWORK

The diversity of suburbs in general and low-income suburbs in particular is evident in the history of suburbs and the class differences among and within them, as well as in the current research of scholars of suburbia. In this chapter, I describe the general characteristics of each typological category using cross-sectional Census data and tie each category into the broader scholarly discussion of suburban dynamics to which it belongs.¹ While the type definitions came out of the data, each has connections to existing theoretical and empirical literature that validate the generated constructs. The typology is a simplifying framework used to facilitate an analysis of a complex system of suburban poverty. The suburbs within each type, then, also fall into subcategories with different distinguishing features. I examine some of these nuances in the following descriptions, and also note some of the overlapping elements among the five types.

The following discussion presents the “current state” of each suburban type, that is, in a recent slice in time. The constant evolution of places suggests that these descriptions might be substantially different in a year, or two, or five. The case study narratives that follow the presentation of each typological category are intended to depict the selected suburbs as they are now or have been in the last five years, with some context for better understanding. In the next chapter I analyze the case histories through the lens of the theoretical framework used in the study.

SPILLOVER SUBURBS

Ever since the 1960s and 1970s when middle class and affluent households left central cities en masse for the suburbs, people have predicted large-scale “back to the city” movements that would transform crumbling downtown neighborhoods into wealthy urban paradises, forcing the poor into their own flight to aging inner suburbs.² This narrative has taken hold in the popular press, particularly in relation to the discussion on the suburbanization of poverty.³ The idea has become so dominant that it seems to

crowd out a discussion of other ways suburbs can become poor—through income decline-in-place or “hollowing out” due to the flight of richer households. But the movement of the poor from cities to suburbs is only one possible explanation for growth in suburban poverty, and it is challenging to measure.

Much of the literature on suburban decline in the last two decades has largely focused on “inner-ring” or “first-tier” suburbs—in theory, those in close proximity to city limits, but more generally, those with housing stock constructed between 1940 and 1970 or similar variants on those dates.⁴ In this body of work, there is a subtext that emphasizes the potential association between improvements in the economic conditions of central cities, migration patterns of lower-income households, and increases in poverty in first-tier suburbs.⁵ One major difficulty in understanding the migratory flows between city and suburb and vice versa is the lack of any detailed household mobility level at a fine level of geography. Cooke was one of the few to use individual-level longitudinal data from the PSID to track movements from cities to inner and outer suburbs, but found that when accounting for net migration of the poor and non-poor, movements of poor people had a negligible effect on poverty increases in suburbs.⁶ Since in-migration of poor households can spur out-migration of non-poor residents, this interaction obscures causal relationships. The problem with this analysis is it can only present cities and suburbs in the aggregate; for identification reasons the data cannot be scaled to individual places or even metropolitan areas. Given divergent regional development trends and socioeconomic conditions, specific metropolitan areas likely show different patterns of movement. For example, using data on Chicago HOPE VI voucher recipients that tracked household migration between municipalities, Sink and Ceh found that voucher-receiving households were moving outward from the central city, many into nearby suburbs, leading to rises in poverty levels in some areas. This study is one of very few, though, that has used finer-scale data to track metropolitan area movements.⁷

The places in the category of Spillover suburbs show some of the key socioeconomic and demographic attributes often correlated with poor central city communities. The presence of these attributes could suggest a possible link between the outward

movement of low-income urban households and the low relative income of these suburbs, or it could simply indicate that central cities are no longer the only option for the metropolitan poor. In their study of low-income Chicago neighborhoods, Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls found through a factor analysis that several key poverty-associated variables loaded on the same factor, creating a more parsimonious variable reflecting concentrated disadvantage. In addition to poverty levels, these variables included unemployment, single-female-headed families, receipt of government transfers, numbers of children, and percentage of black individuals.⁸ Data averages for Spillover suburbs show that they have the highest percentages of most of those variables among all of the categories of low-income suburbs profiled. The only exception was the percentage of residents under age 18; Latino suburbs with large Hispanic populations had somewhat more children and also approached Spillover suburbs in numbers of single-parent households and those receiving public assistance.

In addition to the prevalence of the above indicators, most Spillover suburbs would qualify as “inner ring” in terms of proximity to principal cities; 35 percent are immediately adjacent with boundaries touching those of the principal city, while 60 percent lie within five miles. The close distance to central city employment may be a key factor in attracting new, lower-income residents. As some scholars have noted, however, inner-ring suburbs may be more appropriately defined by the age of their housing stock; that is, these suburbs tend to be “middle-aged” post-war communities with housing constructed from the mid-1940s to the 1960s or 1970s.⁹ The suburbs in this category have the largest share of this kind of housing as compared to the other groupings: 60 percent of housing units were built between 1940 and 1979.

A final variable lending support to the “spillover” label comes from the limited mobility data in the Census. ACS respondents are asked if they changed residences in the last year, and then are requested to clarify their origin location, whether outside of or within the destination metropolitan area. Six percent of residents living in Spillover suburbs had moved to their new home from the principal city in their metro, more than twice the share of people living in any other type of low-income suburb. Although this percentage

is small, if that amount of movement is consistent on a yearly basis the number of in-migrants becomes substantial over time. In addition 42 percent of Spillover suburb residents reported working in central cities, also far more than workers in any other category. Unfortunately, there is no way of understanding at this scale the income levels of the individuals who have relocated; it is only speculative to assume that observed poverty rates are linked in any way to in-movements of poor people.

Some suburbs in this typological category are becoming icons in the emerging policy discussion of suburban poverty. Ferguson, Missouri, site of the police shooting of Michael Brown and significant racial tension, is one of the most high profile. In 2000 the poverty rate in the suburb right on the edge of St. Louis was 11 percent, but it now stands at 25 percent. Outside of Chicago, where the number of suburban residents living below the poverty line almost doubled from 2000 to 2011, several municipalities in Cook County, Illinois' south Chicagoland, including Harvey, Markham, Calumet, and Riverdale, have become indistinguishable in key characteristics from some of the most disadvantaged neighborhoods of the major metropolis.¹⁰ Moreover, most are limited in their ability to even apply for public funds like CDBG because of their size and status.¹¹ Tukwila, Washington, outside of Seattle, is another suburb that has experienced changing socioeconomic conditions due to a confluence of factors including large-scale refugee resettlement, gentrification of nearby Seattle neighborhoods, and income losses for incumbent residents. From 2000 to 2010 (ACS 2006-2010) the poor population of Tukwila grew from 13 to 24 percent.¹²

But among all of these, metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia is the poster child for the expansion of suburban poverty. From 2000 to 2010, poverty in Atlanta's suburbs more than doubled, and by 2012 almost 90 percent of greater Atlanta's population lived outside of the city limits.¹³ In a 2011 study, Lee noted that this trend had a decades-long history; poverty declined in census tracts that would be considered "downtown" or "inner city" from 1970 to 2000 while increasing in formerly non-poor tracts near city boundaries.¹⁴ In keeping with this spatial data, Atlanta is one of the few metropolitan areas with low-income suburbs from all five of the typological categories. As is evident

in the maps from the last chapter, it has the second-densest cluster of Spillover suburbs in the country, after the city of St. Louis. Given Atlanta's development story and the fact that the majority of Spillover suburbs are in the South, the metropolitan area was an appropriate context for a case study in this category.

A Fragile Equilibrium in College Park, Georgia

"I love College Park, it is so quiet and friendly," notes Geronimo Garcia, a resident of the suburb's registered historic district on the north side of town. Yvonne Dorsey, who woke up one night to face a masked burglar in her room in the municipality which in 2010 was said to be highest crime area in the region, has a different story. "When I go to work and tell people I live in College Park, they say I live in the 'hood...I feel safe here but I'm always looking around to make sure."¹⁵ Varying resident perceptions point to the study of contrasts that make up the South Fulton suburb that shares the county with the city of Atlanta. At one extreme are the students that attend the prestigious Woodward Academy and their families that foot the bill. With a yearly tuition of \$20,450 for an elementary school student, the Academy is not necessarily for the middle class. At the other extreme were the 36.5 percent of College Park's 14,000 residents that had incomes below the poverty line in 2010.

College Park is one of the three historic suburbs, with East Point and Hapeville, which make up the Tri-Cities area just beyond the border of the City of Atlanta. Founded in the early 1890s, these originally commuter-oriented suburbs maintained their boundaries even under annexation pressure as Atlanta expanded. College Park takes its name from its original function as an educational center, with two sizable institutions active at the turn of the century. Although one closed in the 1940s, Woodward Academy remains a prosperous enterprise. It is located at the northern end of the suburb, within the 867-building historic district approved by the Federal register in 1996 after an extended process undertaken by a community group. Housing prices have been steadily rising in and around the historic district since that time, in some cases doubling from 2000 to

2013, while home values in other parts of College Park rose somewhat prior to the late 2000s recession and then fell back to 2000 levels.¹⁶

The spatial distribution of home prices mirrors that of other socio-economic indicators. Many College Park residents are struggling financially. The most recent American Community Survey recorded unemployment at almost 12 percent in 2013,¹⁷ and of those employed, more than a quarter worked in the service sector. The median income is \$27,152, well under Atlanta's median of more than \$46,000. Single mothers headed 35 percent of the suburb's households, while almost one-third reported collecting food stamps in the twelve months previous. However, in the census tract encompassing Woodward Academy, median income came in at over \$43,000, unemployment was at 9 percent, and almost 40 percent worked in professional/ management jobs.¹⁸ It is likely that school administrators live nearby, but the higher socio-economic levels extend to the tract with the rest of the historic district. That area represents a pocket of affluence in the midst of widespread low incomes.

Figure 6.1: Housing in College Park's historic district.



College Park's population decline and related racial shift over the last 40 years is one of the more dramatic elements of its story. At 13,942 residents, the population sits at less than half of its peak of about 28,000 in the mid-1970s.¹⁹ Fulton County as a whole and adjacent Clayton County have grown over the same period from 1990 to 2010, adding 250,000 and 75,000 people respectively. As with neighboring Atlanta, white flight seems to be a contributing factor: In 1970, the white population in College Park made up 84.6 percent of the total; by 1980, as the population plummeted the white population fell to 50 percent, and in 2010 white residents were 13 percent of the whole. Most of the white population is concentrated in the two census tracts encompassing the historic district and Woodward Academy.

A major contributing factor to both College Park's fortunes and its hardships has been its proximity to Hartsfield International Airport, the busiest passenger airport in the world since 2000.²⁰ College Park and the airport, first built in 1925, easily coexisted during the 1930s; in fact, the airport likely contributed to the suburb's prestige.²¹ But as demand for air travel increased and plane technology advanced, city officials began their efforts to encroach on College Park's land. The push for airport growth has been insatiable in Atlanta, with four major expansions since the first in the 1940s. Each time, the city of Atlanta has used its eminent domain powers to authorize takings, and the suburb over time has lost fifty percent of its land area.²² Apart from the displacement and housing demolition resulting from the takings, airport expansion also brought severe noise and air pollution as the runways moved closer to existing housing and large jets became the predominant vehicle in airline fleets. As a result, some housing stock was devalued to the point where it could not be sold on the open market, leading to abandonment and contributing to the rapid population loss.²³

Despite its negative effects, for College Park residents, the airport is and has long been "the hand that feeds them and the monster at the gates."²⁴ First, and most obvious, is the employment. The City estimates that in 2013 Hartsfield itself directly generated more than 63,000 jobs in 2013, and with visitor spending generated by air passengers and air cargo-related employment, that number rises to almost 250,000. Indirect and

induced multiplier effects add another 200,000 jobs in a variety of fields.²⁵ Second, and more directly applicable to homeowners, is the impact on property taxes. Although the airport itself does not pay taxes to the suburb, College Park does collect significant revenue from airport-related businesses, including hotels. In fact, in 2013 the suburb won a Supreme Court ruling to tax all of the airport retail enterprises inside the airport within the College Park limits, including the lucrative rental car companies, adding to their coffers millions in current and back taxes.²⁶

College Park is not fiscally “poor” in that it does not struggle to meet its budget as do some of the other profiled cases—its poverty is related to the incomes of its residents. The additional tax revenue allowed the suburb to pursue a range of large and small development projects in the early 2000s. The biggest coup was the 400,000 square foot Georgia International Convention Center (GICC), completed in 2003 and owned by College Park. The GICC and surrounding mixed-use development, Gateway Center, were leveraged to attract new restaurants and businesses along the suburb’s Main Street commercial district.²⁷ However, the foreclosure crisis of the late 2000s disproportionately hit the south, slowing economic growth; by 2006, for example, Georgia already had subprime mortgage delinquency rates of more than 12 percent.²⁸ Atlanta’s foreclosures hit 3.26 per 100 housing units in 2008, while the rate for the U.S. as a whole was 1.84.²⁹ Tracking as usual with Atlanta, College Park’s foreclosures were some of the highest in the region, and data on home sales showed that in one of College Park’s lowest-income zipcodes, housing prices fell 50 percent from 2008 to 2009.³⁰ It is not clear, then, that College Park’s budgetary stability provides much benefit to its poorest residents.

DEINDUSTRIALIZING SUBURBS

More than 40 years ago, the US labor market began a process of restructuring in response to increasing global competition that has transformed employment patterns and demand for workers across the country. Rising income inequality, the polarization of employment into high and low-skill compartments, and mounting educational

requirements are some of the many repercussions of these fundamental economic shifts.³¹ Linked to each of these has been the collapse of U.S. manufacturing. It is well-documented that the share of employment held by the goods-producing sector has been declining steadily, from more than 35 percent in 1960 to 16.6 percent in 2007 and 14.2 percent in 2009 after the recession. Although highly volatile construction jobs were hit hardest during the collapse of the housing bubble, the overall decline in goods-producing jobs is primarily linked to marked reductions in manufacturing employment, from a 28.4 percent share of total employment in 1960 to a 9 percent share in 2009. Until 2000, while manufacturing's share of total employment had been decreasing, the absolute number of manufacturing jobs had remained fairly stable at about 17 million since the mid-1960s. At the beginning of this decade, a shift from relative to absolute job loss in manufacturing occurred and swiftly accelerated resulting in a further downturn in the sector that continued throughout the most recent economic crisis. Earlier in the decade, the 2001 recession resulted in an episodic loss of close to three million jobs, but the downward trend continued in almost all manufacturing industries after the economy had recovered in 2004.³² The geographic implications have been devastating to regions dependent on manufacturing especially in the Midwest and the South.

Because of the wide-ranging historical movement of large-scale manufacturing to the urban periphery and the tendency of some production or raw materials-oriented industries to construct housing, and indeed, housing developments, near their production facilities (as described in Chapter 2), the ramifications of manufacturing decline have played out in many US suburbs. As factories have closed or relocated, towns whose livelihoods were based around certain plants or clusters of facilities have found themselves losing not only population but also residential and commercial property tax revenue. Many of these places are barely surviving, failing in their attempts to provide basic services.

These Deindustrializing Suburbs represent the largest cluster in this typology, encompassing 45 percent of low-income suburbs. Predominantly non-Hispanic white in

population (75 percent of the combined population in 2010), these often small suburbs reflect the blue collar middle-class of another era that may be losing ground. Many of the suburbs in this category resemble the “working class,” “industrial,” and “manufacturing” suburbs described by Berger, Taylor, and Lewis.³³ A larger share of residents employed in middle-wage, middle-skill jobs in goods-producing, construction, and transport sectors, along with a higher concentration of manufacturing employment relative to suburbs in other categories suggest that households in these suburbs continue to be sustained by jobs disappearing in the U.S. labor market. While high school drop-out rates are relatively low, almost 40 percent of residents in 2010 reported secondary school graduation as their highest level of educational attainment, and only 14 percent reported having earned at least their bachelor’s degree, compared to almost 30 percent in the U.S.

Housing tenure and characteristics correspond with the stereotypical portrayal of a working class suburb where families own modest, older houses on small, similarly-sized lots. Homeownership is high relative to the other types of low-income suburbs, at just over half of households, and numbers of multifamily units are low. A full 30 percent of housing units in these suburbs were built before 1939, substantially more than in any other category.

In contrast to Spillover locations and following the model of manufacturing towns at the periphery of metropolitan areas, Deindustrializing suburbs are rarely adjacent to principal cities. Only 70 (6 percent) of the almost 1200 low-income Deindustrializing suburbs are immediately adjacent to principal cities, with another 22 within a distance of a mile. Potentially as a result of this spatial distribution, only 15 percent of the population of these suburbs works in a principal city. This information corresponds with the relatively high proportion of manufacturing employment (often suburban) among residents.

While goods-production in general has influenced the developmental paths of these suburbs, some industries have been more significant than others. In the early days of

the industrial revolution, textile mills dominated the landscape of New England, but the shift in the textiles industry first to the southern United States and then overseas left mill towns to redefine themselves. The construction of railroads led to the development or growth of many small towns across the nation for several decades, some more formal and others as the “boxcar” settlements alluded to in an earlier chapter. Industries associated with the extraction of natural resources, including lumber and mining of precious metals and coal, provided an impetus for the creation of still more settlements that evolved into suburbs.

But the industry that perhaps had the greatest impact on the US suburban landscape was steel. Though the industry first emerged in the 1830s, new developments in manufacturing technology led to its rapid growth in the United States after 1860, first concentrated in Ohio and Pennsylvania where key natural resources were plentiful.³⁴ By the turn of the century, when J.P Morgan’s Federal Steel merged with Carnegie Steel to form the mega-conglomerate US Steel, the US was the largest global producer and demand was continually expanding.³⁵ Production of the metal was spreading from large cities to smaller manufacturing-oriented towns throughout the two states and far beyond. Steel’s impact was not limited to its own sector but multiplied because of the industry’s use of inputs (namely coal and iron) and its use as an input (particularly in automobile manufacturing). Towns made up largely of employees from each of these industries developed throughout the Midwest and the South. But by the 1960s the effects of trade policy, changes in technology, globalization and imports, and the costs of pollution-reducing upgrading were converging to severely cripple the steel sector, leading to widespread plant closures and decimated employment. The automobile industry followed a similar path, though years later. Suburbs in the Rustbelt region built around manufacturing employment were left with financially-devastated populations and constrained revenues.

The Cincinnati metropolitan area, given its strategic position on the Ohio River, grew into a major manufacturing center by the late 1800s and is home to a dense concentration of Deindustrializing suburbs. Although Cincinnati itself was not

geographically well-positioned for the initial growth of the steel industry—it was more focused on iron production—two smaller cities in the metropolitan area, Hamilton and Middletown, were centrally situated in the growing industrial powerhouse of the Great Miami River Valley. By 1900, both were considered industrial centers in their own right; Hamilton, for example, boasted no less than 250 different types of goods produced within its limits. But the decline of steel and manufacturing in general have left these cities struggling, taking New Miami, a neighboring suburb, along with them.

“If Armco goes, this village goes back 20 years:” Steel Industry Dominance in New Miami, Ohio³⁶

"There was no money for tires, for gas, for oil changes on the vehicles," explained Paul Stidham, a former council member for the village of New Miami, Ohio, reflecting on the state of the village's budget before the council voted to install traffic cameras at each of the village boundaries along US 127 in August of 2012. "When this money came in, yes, we got new or refurbished equipment. We had never been able to do that for 20 years...we kind of did it all at once because we had the speed camera (money) coming."³⁷ Installing the cameras resulted in the town collecting more than \$1 million in fines from 10,000 motorists and adding \$430,000 to its general fund in 2013, at least half of which went to upgrading police and street management vehicles. After 15 months of use and copious complaints to the county from ticket receivers, some motorists filed a class action lawsuit against New Miami which went to a Butler county judge in February of 2014. He ruled that the cameras ignored drivers' rights to due process, and demanded the equipment's removal.³⁸ Since then, the Ohio Supreme Court upheld municipalities' rights to use traffic cameras, so the question of whether the town will be required to repay the fines, placing it back under severe financial stress, has yet to be decided.³⁹

New Miami fits a stereotype of the quintessential manufacturing suburban landscape. Laid out on a grid, with boxy, vinyl-sided small homes, the town is easy to miss driving along Route 127 from the City of Hamilton, Ohio. The demographics are typical of small

suburbs with failing manufacturing bases, particularly in the Midwest. The population of about 2,250 is mostly white similar to the rest of Butler County; in 2010 only 5 percent of New Miamians were African-American, and fewer than 1 percent of residents had immigrated from another country.⁴⁰ The suburb's history also tracks with the too-common narrative of the devastated manufacturing town in an era of U.S. industrial decline. A product of the rise of the Big Steel in the early 1900s, New Miami thrived with the growth of the American Rolling Mill Company (Armco), a steel corporation in nearby Middletown that owned the blast furnaces within the suburb's boundaries. Restructuring and decline of the industry in the 1970s and 1980s, however, led Armco to shut down its New Miami facilities and cut employment at its Middletown plant, decimating the commercial tax base and slashing incomes for the many residents formerly employed by the company.

In the 30 years since Armco truncated its operations, New Miami has tried to stay on its feet with limited success. The problem is the tax base. Ohio is one of a very few states that allows municipalities to levy their own income taxes on businesses, residents, and even workers.⁴¹ New Miami has about 30 businesses—primarily one-or two-person entities in trade professions, with a couple of taverns, a hamburger joint, and a small grocery store—but these entities do not come close to offering the fiscal stability of the former Armco plant.⁴² The municipality has been trying to attract larger commercial enterprises with one success: the arrival of a new Family Dollar store in 2012, the only chain store in New Miami. This dearth of businesses is feasible in more affluent suburban enclaves with expensive properties, but in New Miami tax revenue does not cover the town's basic needs.

The second stream of revenue, property taxes, is affected by the condition and tenure of the housing stock. The median housing value of about \$80,400 as compared to a metropolitan median of 154,600 reflects not only location but also quality. More than two-thirds of New Miami's housing stock was built between 1940 and 1980, and deterioration is observable. A drive through the most populated area reveals many small, shabby one-story homes built in similar styles from the 60s, 70s, and 80s with

little landscaping, close together but mostly single-family detached, “too much cinder block, not enough paint.”⁴³ Signs of deterioration abound; peeling exteriors, sagging siding, hanging gutters. And until New Miami’s wastewater plant was replaced in 2005, 70 to 75 percent of homes were not connected to a sewer system but instead relied on septic tanks and leech beds. Without staffing to monitor home sewage disposal systems, sewage was becoming a contamination threat.⁴⁴ Using neighborhood stabilization funds from the late 2000s housing crisis, Butler County has demolished some eyesores and rehabilitated other salvageable homes, but housing values are still some of the lowest in the metropolitan area.

Figure 6.2: Typical homes in New Miami.



Taxing residents’ incomes yields low revenues as well. 41 percent of residents are out of the labor force, compared to 36 percent in Ohio as a whole. As manufacturing in the region and in the state of Ohio declined, residents turned to the unpredictable construction industry and the health and education sector to find jobs. Since more than a quarter of New Miami’s adult residents did not finish high school and only 9 percent

have a college degree, opportunities are limited and most work in existing residual manufacturing enterprises or low-skill service occupations. As a result, incomes are low: the median income of \$40,600 (as compared to \$54,397 in the metro area) combines with a poverty rate of 26 percent. The lack of commercial enterprises means few local jobs—on average, New Miami residents commute more than 25 minutes to work.⁴⁵

The perpetually tight budget combined with political infighting contributes to several scenarios replaying over and over in relation to security and education. The town council has dissolved and reinstated the police force twice, first in 1992 and most recently in 2007, due to budgetary constraints. The Butler County Sheriff's Department has filled in the gaps, with notable drops in service and increased crime that resulted in renewed calls for New Miami to have its own police officers. A police department made up of one officer was reestablished in 2010.⁴⁶ New Miami's school system has suffered equally, although the district has made some progress in recent years. Before the suburb consolidated its 800 students into a newly constructed building in 2004, the district repeatedly earned the lowest rating, "academic emergency," on Ohio's education report card. Its reputation was such that when the owners of homes being constructed in a 1999 housing development called Governor's Hill realized their properties were within New Miami school district boundaries, the developer petitioned successfully to Butler County leadership to have the Governor's Hill homes annexed instead into neighboring Hamilton's district to have access to better schools.⁴⁷ Even with improved ratings, New Miami still spends more than the state average per pupil to achieve mediocre to poor outcomes as measured by state testing.⁴⁸

With little change in the surrounding region and little to attract newcomers, it is difficult to imagine any major upswings in New Miami's future.

DIVERGING SUBURBS

The gap between the richest and the poorest has been expanding in the United States at the same time as the proportion of the suburban poor has increased. As discussed,

suburbs in the aggregate have become more diverse over time along a number of parameters, including race, ethnicity, and mix of employment and residential land uses. In reality many individual suburbs are still segregated along those lines, but there are also those places in which pockets of poverty intermingle with pockets of affluence within the same suburban boundaries. In some cases, the pockets of poverty may be so large or so deep that the incomes of the wealthier households fail to obscure their presence. Alexandra Murphy refers to these locations as “overshadowed suburbs,” where the extent of poverty remains somewhat, but not completely, hidden by surrounding prosperity.⁴⁹

The most salient characteristic of residents is that they are highly educated as compared to the populations of other economically disadvantaged suburbs—24 percent had completed at least a bachelor’s degree in 2010, a percentage that approached the national share of college graduates the same year (27 percent). In contrast, the maximum share of those with a bachelor’s degree in the other suburban types was 15 percent. High school dropout rates were also significantly lower than in other categories at only 5 percent.

More advanced educational attainment is reflected in the prevalence of employees in higher-wage, higher-skill occupations. Almost one-third of residents worked in management or professional jobs in 2010, well above the share of about a quarter in the other suburban types. The average income across these suburbs is significantly higher as well at close to \$60,000 as opposed to about \$45,000 in other categories, suggesting that the income spread might be broader. This is indeed the case according to disaggregated income data. Although about one-quarter of the population living in Diverging suburbs has incomes below \$20,000, more than a quarter makes \$100,000 or more a year, as compared to at most 18 percent in low-income suburbs of other types. On the whole then, economic inequality seems more pronounced in this category.

One factor related to inequality at both the high and low ends of the spectrum in Diverging suburbs is a relatively large foreign born population. Immigrants comprise

almost one-fifth of residents, and unlike in Latino suburbs, they are not all from one region. More than half of the foreign-born are from Latin American countries, but about 20 percent have migrated from Asia, and 12 percent from Europe. Immigrants to the U.S. often move into either professional or service employment depending on skill levels, potentially contributing to bifurcating labor markets. Overall, Diverging suburbs are striking in their diversity as compared to national racial and ethnic averages.

High cost housing is the final characteristic that sets these suburbs apart from others. More than 30 percent of Diverging suburbs had median housing values that were greater than those of the surrounding metropolitan area, a proportion that is high for suburbs that can be classified as low-income. With these high costs, it is not surprising that close to 70 percent of homeowners hold a mortgage (the highest proportion in all the clusters), or that the majority of residents rent rather than own.

The racial and ethnic diversity and the higher cost of housing may be in part attributable to the fact that many of the suburbs in this category are larger and denser than the typical suburb in this study. More than one-fifth have populations over 10,000. In that sense, the line between city and suburb may be more blurred for this type of place. More people may increase the likelihood of diversity on a range of parameters, accounting for a broader set of employment and housing options. Yet Diverging suburbs remain separated both demographically and in terms of income distribution from larger Spillover and Latino suburbs that may share that fuzzy distinction between urban and suburban.

The categorization of Diverging suburbs points to a key problem in the measurement of poverty concentrations in suburbs or any smaller municipality: the existence of dense college or university student populations. Even if students come from wealthy families, when they leave home they create their own “households.” Student incomes are generally low and can sometimes place them below the poverty line, where they skew the Census poverty data. In cities with larger populations this is less of an issue, but in smaller suburbs, the numbers can be distorted. Some cases are far more clear-cut than

others, however. The poverty rates of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, Storrs, Connecticut, or Stanford, California are obviously influenced by student earnings. But other suburbs like Ypsilanti, Michigan—also home to a large university—have substantial poor populations apart from the student segment.

College towns represent one subset within the category, but not a majority. There are larger city-like suburbs near booming hubs like Atlanta, Minneapolis, and along the coasts that are home to a diverse set of people with varied demographic and economic backgrounds. Scottdale, Georgia and Spring Valley, New York are good examples. A small but noticeable selection, such as Kaser and New Square, New York, are Orthodox Jewish communities. More prominent in this category are places along a broad spectrum of population size that have significant, but not dominant, concentrations of lower-income immigrants. A number of these are resort-oriented towns like Asbury Park and Seaside Heights, New Jersey or Boyes Hot Springs, California. The tourism industry could be a particular driver of this type of suburban poverty given its simultaneous attraction of a moneyed class to take advantage of amenities and low-income groups to meet the labor needs of the tourism-related service industries.

The New York-New Jersey metropolitan area has concentrations of all of the elements that would contribute to the development of Diverging suburbs: a high-tech and financial hub that is also a locus of educational institutions; an accessible location for streams of immigrants, a range of high- and low-wage employment, and a well-developed coastal tourism sector. The region is a compelling backdrop for a case study of a small but heterogeneous community with a long history.

“It’s like Napa Valley in the 1960s:” From Fishing to Food Culture in Greenport, New York

The bar and restaurant known as First and South sits on the eponymous corner of downtown Greenport, a town of 2,200 on the northeastern tip (the North Fork) of Long Island. Known for its fish entrees and local wines, the upscale farm-to-table restaurant

first opened in 2012 and quickly earned a “worth it” ranking from the hard-to-please New York Times.⁵⁰ First and South is just one of several restaurants in the area contributing to the North Fork’s expanding reputation as a destination for New York “foodies,” prompting the headline “Looking for the Hamptons? Look the other way”.⁵¹ Greenport could be said to straddle two worlds. On one side, an archetypal New England fishing village; despite its location within New York State, it is just a ferry’s ride from New London, CT. On the other side, its location on Long Island, close to New York City, has positioned it to capture not only tourists and young telecommuters from Gotham itself, leading to what some have called the “Manhattanization” of Greenport but also affordability seekers looking for an alternative to the ever advancing real estate prices on Long Island and in the City.⁵²

Tourism is just the most recent in a long line of focus industries for eclectic Greenport, which has reinvented itself several times over its long history. Its East Coast siting and deep waters made it an ideal seaport from its first settlement in the 1640s, when thirteen families from Connecticut’s New Haven colony arrived in eastern Long Island to form what was first known as Winter Harbor. Large farming estates dominated the settlement until after the Revolutionary War, when the whaling industry began in earnest, eventually growing to be the largest port on the North Fork after Sag Harbor with 24 whaling ships. The town soon diversified its maritime activities, adding shipbuilding and establishing a bustling trade center specializing in produce, cotton, and slaves. Fishing and fish processing were, of course, other lucrative industries for Greenport, particularly oysters and a type of herring known as Menhaden. Overfishing and pollution slowed the productivity of some of these economic mainstays in the 1960s, and the village was forced to turn its energies toward attracting visitors as a source of development and jobs.

Figure 6.3: Part of the commercial district in Greenport, New York.



Though lacking the sandy beaches and glamour of the Hamptons in the South Fork, Greenport nonetheless had its walkable waterfront, fishing village charm that avoided kitchiness, colonial and Victorian history, and notable architecture, including historic housing stock, to draw visitors from New York. The seasonal sector began to grow at mid-century, bringing with it an outcry over noxious industrial and fishing-related odors and land uses and pushing them further away. But the tourism industry in Greenport did not expand substantially until changing budget allocations and new state funds facilitated the redevelopment of the waterfront in the 1990s. At the same time, emerging successful vineyards were starting to build the North Fork's reputation as a destination for connoisseurs of food and wine.

Yet despite the appeal and location, Greenport has not transformed into an exclusive haven for the affluent. Yes, second home ownership in the village has risen, and some wealthy Manhattan workers do make the long commute on the Long Island Railroad daily or weekly. 27 percent of residents work in professional or management

occupations, and a whopping 30.7 percent have bachelor's degrees – more than the U.S. average of 29 percent.⁵³ But Greenport also maintains a working waterfront focused on commercial fishing, shipbuilding, repair, and contracting, and former and current maritime workers form a substantial portion of the labor force.⁵⁴ Moreover, the surrounding farms, vineyards, and tourism service industries seek low-wage workers, often from among the documented and undocumented immigrants from Mexico and Central America that have made Long Island their home. One in four Greenport residents are foreign-born, but that share is probably larger given the estimated number of undocumented workers on Long Island.⁵⁵

Greenport is thus a motley assortment; hip restaurants mix with peeling homes, and the quarter of residents making six-figure incomes rub elbows with another fifth barely eking out a living. In 2013 an estimated 18.8 percent of residents had incomes below the poverty line, but just a year earlier the estimate was 29.2 percent. In a location where the historic housing stock draws a median home value of almost \$440,000—still considered quite affordable by Long Island standards—the median income of \$56,000 does not go far.⁵⁶ Greenport leaders are struggling to balance the needs of long-time blue collar residents, seasonal second-home owners, and recent immigrants. Its finances are relatively stable given higher property values and tourism revenues, but those same revenues create upward pressure on housing prices and incentives for non-water-dependent waterfront development that threaten existing maritime businesses and Greenport's diverse character.⁵⁷

SENIOR SUBURBS

The aging of the population has become a growing concern for governments in most developed countries worldwide.⁵⁸ In the United States, the share of the population over 65 stood at 13 percent in 2010 and is projected to increase to more than 20 percent by 2030.⁵⁹ This large-scale demographic change will have the most impact on suburban areas; in 2010 72 percent of the U.S. elderly population lived in the suburbs, while only 28 percent populated central cities.⁶⁰ This distribution is partly because of a tendency

among the elderly to “age in place.” Many of the aging have lived in the suburbs for most of their adult lives and either prefer to remain in their home communities for reasons of attachment or are precluded from moving by the necessity of working into their retirement years. In fact, the AARP recently reported the results of a survey suggesting that 90 percent of seniors would like to remain in their current homes as they age.⁶¹ At the same time, however, there are mobile members of the pre-senior (ages 55-64) and senior populations that are seeking locations in which to spend their retirement and final years.⁶² Suburbs of “newer” Sunbelt metropolitan areas such as Austin, Atlanta, and Las Vegas have seen the largest growth in aging Baby Boomers. Although there is much discussion of “snowbird” migration and the movement of seniors toward warm, amenity-rich locations, most of the Sunbelt growth in the elderly population is due less to migration, however, and more to the aging of current residents.⁶³

Older citizens have the option of moving into formal retirement communities or assisted living situations, but the majority do not select those living situations. The national Administration on Aging calculates that only 4.1 percent of the US elderly population aged 65 and older lived in institutions like nursing homes in 2010, while another 2.4 percent lived in senior housing with one or more specific services. More common are formal retirement communities without services, but a phenomenon receiving increasing attention is the identification of Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC). These are locations that were not originally established as senior living centers but have developed large elderly populations—generally 40 percent of heads of household age 65 and above—over decades.⁶⁴

The places in the category I have identified as senior suburbs would not necessarily qualify as NORCs by the federal definition, but they do show high concentrations of older residents. 37 percent of the total population living in these places were 65 and older in 2010, compared to a range of 9 to 15 percent for the other clusters. Higher ages are reflected across the board in the variables examined in the study. Residents of Senior suburbs have the lowest labor force participation of any of the clusters, at 34

percent, and are the most likely to be collecting social security or some form of retirement income.

Measuring income levels of the elderly population, however, can be misleading. Although census data collected on incomes include contributions from social security, retirement accounts and pensions, and interest and dividends, the elderly may be living off of accumulated wealth in the form of savings or housing investment that is not accounted for when calculating monthly or yearly income. In Senior suburbs, for example, 60 percent of owner-occupied units are owned outright without a mortgage, shares that are 10 to 30 percentage points beyond the proportion of units without a mortgage in other categories. The income versus assets question is the reason this type includes a number of places that contain relatively affluent retirement communities. This discrepancy was particularly noticeable in the low-income suburb dataset; the selection of Senior suburbs delineated by poverty rates rather than relative income showed a lower proportion of residents 65 and older (though still higher than in the other categories) but also left out places with a majority of wealthier older inhabitants.⁶⁵ For clarification, these are low-income/poor suburbs with large numbers of elderly residents, but the poor and elderly populations do not completely or even largely overlap.

It is important to consider that three flow factors contribute to concentrations of elderly in suburbs: older people move in, older residents age in place by desire or necessity, and/or younger individuals move out. Combinations of these dynamics compound the growth of senior populations. The distinct groups within the category of Senior suburbs, then, consist of formal retirement communities (as mentioned), other locations that have experienced an in-migration of older residents, and struggling communities that have lost younger residents as employment opportunities dried up while the rest of their populations grew older over time. While many of those age 55 and older prefer to remain in their towns of residence because of familiarity and to maintain connections with family and friends, others are forced to stay due to difficult housing markets that slow the sales of their homes or lack of monetary resources needed to move. These type of communities represent an overlap between the Senior and Deindustrializing

categories—some of the suburbs falling under the Senior type would also be considered former industrial and manufacturing suburbs, but the in- and out-migration patterns over the years have been different.

Social Security in the U.S. has helped alleviate the problem of poverty among the elderly, resulting in a dramatic drop in poverty rates among those 65 and older from 35 percent in 1960 to 10 percent in 1990, where it has hovered for two decades.⁶⁶ However, longer life expectancies combined with rising costs of healthcare and reductions in employer pensions may make more seniors financially vulnerable. But the pattern of suburban concentration among the aging population is concerning even if the elderly are not living with incomes below the poverty line. Municipal zoning has created separation in suburbs between housing and commercial and institutional uses, but the needs of an aging population require mixing land uses with an effective transportation system.⁶⁷ Often unable to drive in later years, seniors must be able to walk or take transport to stores, health care centers, and other locations. Moreover, a larger aging population requires additional institutional uses such as hospitals and nursing homes within close proximity to residences. Many suburban local authorities are already unprepared to address the extensive needs of their aging populations. Suburbs that are also faced with high concentrations of poverty may struggle to find resources to address both challenges.

The climate and relatively low cost of living in the State of Arizona have made it a high-growth location in general and a particularly attractive retirement destination. In fact, the state's elderly population is projected to increase by 157 percent by 2030 taking into account both in-migration of older groups and the aging-in-place of the large pre-senior population.⁶⁸ Pinal County, situated between Phoenix and Tucson, was the fastest growing county in Arizona and one of the fastest in the country between 2000 and 2010. That level of population expansion has induced a private sector response that has left county planners and policy-makers running to catch up.⁶⁹ Given the frantic nature of development, planning for the suburban aging-in-place of the senior age bracket may not be a priority.

“I didn’t have anyone to help me:” The Aging Population of Superior, Arizona ⁷⁰

When 65-year-old Superior, Arizona resident Barbara Pope’s middle finger swelled alarmingly because of an insect sting, she was not sure where to find medical care. It was 2011, and the clinic in her town of nearly 3,000 people was not open on Thursdays. Concerned and living alone with no family nearby, Ms. Pope asked a friend to drive her 50 miles to the nearest hospital. She eventually lost the finger after six operations, and her biggest difficulties related to finding people to drive her to medical appointments and to help her keep up with day to day activities such as housekeeping. Eventually she mentioned her situation to a waitress in town, who suggested that her daughter might be able to help. “I don’t know what I would have done if it hadn’t been for her,” Ms. Pope later stated.⁷¹ In suburbs in aging states like Arizona, this narrative is not as rare as one might think. And in Superior, where 20 percent of residents are 65 and older, and adding in those aged 55 and above brings the share to 36 percent, local authorities face increasing challenges in addressing the needs of older inhabitants.

Superior, located 60 miles outside of Phoenix, has other battles to fight as well. The suburb still looks like a prototypical mining town of the early 20th century, almost a ghost town, in fact. Film directors have shared that view, featuring Superior in four big screen movie productions. Despite this attention, Superior has an air of neglect from its boarded-up houses and storefronts. Vacant housing units reached more than a quarter of total housing structures in 2013. The small commercial district, once a bustling thoroughfare, now has more vacant properties than open businesses. A new medical clinic offering service during Monday through Saturday business hours opened in 2014, but in years prior the existing clinic was only open a few days a week.⁷²

Figure 6.4: Vacant buildings along the commercial corridor in Superior, Arizona.



As its physical appearance suggests, Superior's history is tied to copper mining, an industry that exploded in Arizona in the early 1900s. The settlement grew up around the wealth of copper stores in a mine run by the Magma Mining Company, a firm that at one point was the eighth largest producer of the metal in the country. But with Magma's growth and expansion came the decline in stability of the Superior mine. Similar to the pattern within the steel industry, a combination of advancing global competition, new environmental regulations, and increasing labor challenges resulted in firm restructuring and mine closures across the industry. The Magma mine, with its lower reserves and older equipment, needed costly upgrades to maintain its production levels, upgrades which the company decided were unfeasible. In 1982 the Magma mine closed, taking with it more than 1,400 jobs.⁷³

At first, residents hoped the mine would reopen, but as time went on without any change many young single workers and young families left to look for employment

elsewhere. Over the years as its population continued to slip, the town never regained its younger population as its existing residents aged. Reflecting this history, the median age in Superior is 45, compared to 36 in both Pinal County and the state of Arizona. Only 48 percent of those 16 and over are in the labor force, and 46 percent of households collect Social Security income.

Arizona still remains the largest producer of copper in the United States, and copper still maintains a strong hold on Superior's economy. In 2004, geologists discovered the existence of the largest undeveloped copper source in North America and the third largest in the world 7000 feet below the surface and directly underneath the former Magma mine. Australian mining company BHP Billiton, the owners of the land, and British mining company Rio Tinto formed a joint venture called Resolution Copper Company (RCC) to redevelop the site and access the new copper reserves, estimated to cover a full quarter of copper demand in the United States. The company claims that the project would create more than 1,000 direct and 2500 indirect jobs along with bringing \$61 billion in economic benefits, but from the beginning opposition has been fierce. Some of the reserve is underneath land protected by the State of Arizona as sacred Native American sites, and the magnitude of the mining operation brings up significant environmental concerns. Resolution owns substantially more undeveloped land throughout the state and has tried for almost a decade to orchestrate a federally-approved land swap, all the while preparing the site for future mining activity with a local payroll of about 400 workers.⁷⁴

The Resolution project has become a major source of controversy in Superior. The initial response to the proposal to reopen the mine was overwhelmingly positive, but in 2013 when a majority of Town Council members, acting on the advice of their newly-hired town manager and attorney, voted to terminate a Mutual Benefits Agreement presented by Resolution back in 2010, town residents found themselves strongly divided.⁷⁵ Tough economic conditions, including poverty rates of at least 20 percent over the last decade, led some to conclude that reopening the mine as quickly as possible was the best option for Superior. A number of town leaders were also

connected to Resolution in some way, whether through employment or investments. Moreover, the town's financial state had reached crisis conditions in 2013, when Resolution funded a consultant to assess Superior's options for meeting its budget, and pressure was high to take what the company was offering.

But other residents and four of the seven Council members, as well as the town manager, were hesitant about unanswered questions from Resolution. "Jobs and our town's economic growth is on all of our wish lists," the Council wrote in a statement, "however, no guarantees or commitments have been legally documented. No training for our community, no commitments to be a U.S. employer or a local (as in town of Superior residents) employer. The best some can hope for is a "trickle-down effect" which only applies if RCM [RCC] doesn't sell." ⁷⁶ In response, mine supporters created the Superior Copper Alliance to advocate for the forward movement of the Resolution project. Their efforts have met with success; in December of 2014, congressional representatives on both sides of the aisle successfully pushed a bill through both the House and the Senate allowing RCC to begin mining operations. This decision removes the town's major source of leverage with Resolution and it is unclear how the company and the Town Council will resolve their differences.⁷⁷

LATINO SUBURBS

The large-scale migration of individuals from Latin American countries to the United States has had a transformative effect on the US economy and society. Mexican migration to the United States has a long history dating back to the mid-nineteenth century, from the gold rush to railroad construction to the post-war guest worker (Bracero) program. However, the bulk of Hispanic and Latino immigration has been in the last fifty years after a confluence of factors from changing political and economic climates in countries south of the US border to shifting US labor and immigration policies dramatically increased the push and pull factors that motivate population movements.⁷⁸ Of the 41 million documented immigrants in the country in 2012, more than half (or almost seven percent of the US population) claimed Hispanic or Latino

origins. And of the nation's almost 12 million undocumented immigrants, the Pew Center estimates that at least half are from Mexico, with a substantial share also coming from Central American countries.⁷⁹

These numbers are well-known and well-documented given the country's current polarized attitudes toward immigration. What is less understood are the geographical implications of the relatively rapid increase in population movements from Latin America. Immigrants clearly do not settle evenly across the country; rather they tend to cluster in particular locations depending on employment, housing availability, and social networks. And trends since the 1980s show immigrants increasingly living in suburbs rather than the central city neighborhoods in which they are often assumed to dwell.⁸⁰ In fact, even in 1990 more than 40 percent of immigrants lived outside of city boundaries, and in Los Angeles, one out of every four suburbanites was Mexican.⁸¹ The trend continued and expanded after that point concurrent with the decentralization of employment, and by 2010 almost 60 percent of immigrants in the largest metropolitan areas lived in suburbs.⁸² It is often the case now that new Latino and Asian immigrants will "leapfrog" over central city destinations to settle immediately in suburban locations.⁸³ The implications of this transition for suburban poverty are suggested by Suro, Wilson, and Singer's findings that low-income immigrants accounted for 17 percent of the growth in suburban poverty from 2000 to 2009, and up to 40 percent in some metros including Washington D.C.⁸⁴

Consistent with these metropolitan trends, Latino suburbs are low-income communities with large Hispanic and Latino populations, mainly situated in the largest metropolitan areas on the coasts or at the Southwestern border with Mexico. On average, 78 percent of the population of these suburbs identifies as Hispanic or Latino, and more than one-third are first generation immigrants from Latin American countries. These suburbs stand apart from other low-income groups because of their economic vulnerability and their youth. At issue are levels of education: in both groups more than 40 percent of the adult population has not completed high school, and only eight to nine percent have college degrees. A relatively large proportion of residents of Latino suburbs as

compared to the other suburban types are engaged in highly seasonal agricultural and construction work requiring long hours for little pay. More than 30 percent of the population is under 18, comparable only to the youth population in Spillover suburbs.

But within this type are groupings that are distinct regardless of their many shared attributes. They can be differentiated by industry specialization, by housing type and tenure, and even by socioeconomic status within the low-income context. The development of *colonias* is a key distinguishable pattern among settlements with large Hispanic or Latino populations. *Colonias* are very low-income self-built housing settlements (also known as informal homestead subdivisions, IFHS) traditionally located in the border states of Texas, California, New Mexico, and Arizona but more recently have begun to develop outside major metropolitan areas in the south such as Charlotte, NC and Atlanta, GA. In contrast to their informal settlement counterparts in other parts of the world that are often established through illegal squatting on untitled land, *colonias* in the US are generally constructed legally on lots platted and sold by developers. However, homes are often self-built using found materials or prefabricated elements and services such as sewerage, water, and electricity are typically inadequate.⁸⁵

As Ward points out, although these settlements are often represented as rural in nature, they are actually mostly urban, or more appropriately in this case, suburban, since many commute substantial distances to large urban centers for service employment.⁸⁶ They tend to vary in terms of jurisdiction, with some incorporated and self-governed, and others under the political control of the county or some shared arrangement between the central city and the county. Texas has by far the most of these type of communities, with more than 2000 areas fitting formal descriptions of *colonias* (HUD). However, many are not in metropolitan areas, are not covered by Census place geography, or contain fewer than 100 people, and therefore do not show up in this typology. About one-third of Latino suburbs, including a large number in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, could be classified as this more informal kind of community.

Of the remaining suburbs in this category, some, like Sweetwater, Florida or Cicero, Illinois are almost exclusively Hispanic or Latino. Among these are a singular subset comprising what Paul Sandul has labeled “agriburbs,” communities mainly in California that were founded by and for middle class horticulturalists in the early 1900s seeking the “urbane but not urban.”⁸⁷

Their agricultural functions have continued even as their populations have transformed, particularly in the Central Valley counties of Tulare and Fresno. Others, such as Passaic, New Jersey and Eloy, Arizona, are somewhat more racially and ethnically diverse. While Passaic is in the heart of a metropolitan area that has long been an immigration destination, Eloy and others form landscapes that Singer, Brettell, and Hardwick have identified as emerging immigrant gateways: dispersed, sprawling metropolitan areas that have received waves of immigrants primarily in the last 25 years.⁸⁸

California, with its long history of immigration from Mexico and Latin America, is home to more than one-third of suburbs in this category, and just under half of those are located in the center of the state. The San Joaquin Valley, encompassing Modesto, Fresno, Visalia, and Bakersfield, provides a distinctive setting for a case study given its rapid urban development over the last decade juxtaposed with its agricultural character, creating settlements that combine elements of rural and urban within a metropolitan context.

Out of Water: Agricultural vulnerability in Orange Cove, California

"My brother and I have farmed citrus in the Orange Cove area since the 1950s. We were recently forced to rip out over 1,500 mature citrus trees due to a lack of water. This is the first year the Bureau of Reclamation hasn't made deliveries from the Friant project to our district," said Lee Bailey, a resident of the California town about 30 minutes from central Fresno whose history and present are tied up in the citrus industry.⁸⁹ Drought has battered California since 2012, with 2014 the driest year of the three. By August, 80

percent of the state was facing extreme drought, including almost all of the agricultural heartland of the Central Valley. With a forecasted state loss of at least \$1.5 billion and more than 17,000 jobs, the towns that are most affected include those that are home to farm owners and workers—most of the Valley, in fact.

In Orange Cove, conditions have become desperate. Almost completely dependent on water from Millerton Lake via the federally-managed Friant-Kern canal, the suburb found itself in dire straits when the Federal Bureau of reclamation denied it an allocation of water earlier in 2014 to manage the drought situation. Growers in Orange Cove and throughout the citrus belt mulched their live and dead trees and fallowed their land to mitigate some of the damage from lack of water, but lost thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars in the process. Jobs picking and processing oranges dried up. Eventually farmers filed suit against the state water authorities. Orange Cove was able to buy some water at high prices using a federal grant to ward off catastrophic conditions and rainwater has eased the anxiety somewhat, but the amount of precipitation needed to replenish groundwater and reservoirs seems unreachable.⁹⁰

This is the reality of a unique type of place - the agricultural suburb. The connection between agriculture and the rural ideal is almost a tautology in American society, but in fact shifts in the structure of the agricultural industry away from small farms and toward large scale production and distribution have resulted in a blurring of the lines among urban, suburban, and rural. In California, a state that provides almost half of all produce for U.S. consumers, agriculture has historically been even less oriented toward single farmers.⁹¹ Certain sectors, such as citrus, have generally lent themselves to mass employment with the need for picking and processing the fruit from large groves spread across the vast landscape. This type of agricultural suburb is unlike sprawling subdivisions of other suburban parts of California. It shares some similarities with manufacturing suburbs in that the economic specialization is focused on production, or supporting production. However, in contrast to the overwhelming whiteness of many of these places, Orange Cove's approximately 9,000 inhabitants are predominantly Hispanic.

This population demographic is quite different from earlier times. A product of orange industry expansion and dust bowl refugees in the first half of the twentieth century, Orange Cove was initially one part gentleman orange ranchers, one part migrant pickers, primarily white with some Mexican, Chinese, and Syrian households. As federally-funded water projects provided irrigation that transformed the Central Valley from fields of wheat to an agricultural powerhouse, growing labor needs attracted large numbers of seasonal workers living in camps across the region. But it was at the same time as immigration laws were loosening between Mexico and the United States in the 1960s that Orange Cove began to add significantly to its population, growing from 2400 in 1950 to more than 4,000 in 1980, and then to more than 9,000 in 2010. Today, Orange Cove's population is 93 percent Hispanic or Latino and 85 percent Mexican or Mexican-American, while 40 percent are first-generation immigrants.

There is no doubt that the citrus industry still rules Orange Cove—although census data indicates that about a third of employed residents work directly in agriculture, some estimate that 90 percent of the city's workers are in the citrus industry.⁹² The seasonal and risk-prone nature of agricultural labor and various agriculture-related industries imperils economic stability, particularly during a drought this prolonged and severe. Incomes are undoubtedly small. Almost half of residents had poverty-level status in 2013, and unemployment stood at 20 percent. The low median income of \$26,799 (compared to 45,563 for the Fresno metropolitan area) is likely tied to education levels—fewer than 40 percent of residents have graduated from high school, and only 4 percent from college. Income levels may also be tied in part to the overall youth of the population, with a median age of 24, and the large proportion of children.

Figure 6.5: A typical residential streetscape in Orange Cove, California.



Yet there is a certain pride of place evident in Orange Cove, from the prominent, brightly colored entrance and direction signs to the nicely-designed City Hall with an adjoining senior center and children's playground. The homes tend to be small, but well-maintained and landscaped, without the same peeling paint and sagging exteriors present in New Miami or Greenport. The housing condition could be a product of good weather, or it could reflect the newness of many of the structures, more than one-third constructed after 2000 and half since 1980. More residents rent than own, which is reasonable given the fairly high median value of housing at almost \$125,000 in contrast with the low income levels. However, reluctance on the part of the community and the City Council to build apartments rather than single-family homes may be contributing to a lack of affordable housing.⁹³

Despite the poverty of the population, Orange Cove has managed, though barely, to stay on its feet financially. It instated a new police department in 2009, and maintains a staff of 30 people. Overspending of about \$1 to \$2 million per year, however, has

depleted reserves and motivated council members to consider new tax revenue options to cover costs.⁹⁴ California's own budget crisis led the state to dissolve all local redevelopment agencies in its municipalities, discontinue related annual funding, and recall previous redevelopment grants in 2010 and 2011. Orange Cove's fire department has approached the community for donations, and infrastructure maintenance has taken a hit from the lack of funds.⁹⁵ Although cost-cutting and revenue generation may help, continuing water problems will make budget-setting tricky to navigate.

CONCLUSIONS

All suburbs with substantial low-income populations do not have the same challenges. And although the places in each of the categories described above are not identical, the types do demonstrate some distinguishable trends. Suburbs that are a destination for large numbers of lower-skilled immigrants function differently than former manufacturing suburbs with declining populations or those with markedly separate wealthy and vulnerable groups. The present situations in each case study location also suggest that concentrated poverty is not always equivalent to fiscal instability, though the two tend to be associated. The overviews in this chapter serve as a foundation for remainder of the dissertation, in which I use historical accounts from different points along the development paths of the selected places to shed light on the roles of region and economic history in shaping the socioeconomic and spatial patterns we observe in poor suburbs.

CHAPTER 6 ENDNOTES

¹ I developed the typology of low-income suburbs using 2010 Census data and 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the most recent data at the time I was conducting the analysis. For consistency I also use 2006-2010 ACS data in my descriptions of the typological categories unless otherwise noted.

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7 ORIGINS AND SPECIALIZATION DURING EARLY INDUSTRIALIZATION

Lifelong Greenport resident Helen Hummel said of her birthplace in 2001, “It isn’t like it used to be, but you expect that—everything’s changing. The people are changing and there’s more people coming in. So I don’t think I want to live anywhere else but—that’s the way.”¹ In the previous chapter, I described the five case study suburbs as they are currently perceived by the residents, planners, and policy-makers that are making decisions about future initiatives to promote the assets of these municipalities and meet the needs of their people. The typological categories reflect a point in time as the Census data allows, one snapshot of socio-economic conditions averaged across an aggregation. These cross-sections are the way we are used to digesting information about places, with at most one to two decades of change over time, because historical data is difficult to wrangle. It is generally how we have seen much of the recent data about suburban poverty, a consolidation of poor people in suburbs across the U.S. or across a metropolitan area, with growth or change in population size or poverty status over the last ten years.

But, as Hummel’s statement suggests, the U.S. suburbs that currently have substantial poor populations are composed of layers that can only be understood by looking back through time. These layers are the generations of residents with origins from different eras and nations, the physical residential, commercial; and industrial edifices from various periods that have been constructed and reconstructed; the economic conditions resulting from decades of investment or disinvestment by one or several firms and different levels of government, and the social structures that emerge out of settlement decisions and economic dynamics.

In the next two chapters, I use detailed historical accounts from the case studies of each type of poor suburb to break down the formation of the layers of social and economic sediment. My intent is to explore the mechanisms by which suburbs that were not always poor, or that cycled through periods of prosperity and stagnation, came into their

current economic states. First, I examine the circumstances around each suburbs' founding, the natural resources and spatial setting that formed the basis for its development. Then I track the factors of initial growth to understand the early attractors of people and businesses, the evolution of economic functions, and the original relationship with the surrounding region, whether metropolitan or multi-state. From early development, I follow each case through decades of stability and upheaval, noting the major economic and population shifts and examining the events that precede and follow them. The historical context for the analysis is structured in loose reference to the three waves of urbanization posited by Allen Scott, corresponding to early industrialization (and westward expansion in the United States), covered in this chapter, and the era of mass production, mediated by the Great Depression and World War II, and the emergence of the knowledge economy concurrent with increasing globalization discussed in the next chapter.²

Through this analysis, I show that the formation of poor suburbs (that is, suburbs with large concentrations of poverty) may be less a linear or predictable process of decline, as urban theorists have proposed about city neighborhoods over several decades, than a dynamic result of attractive or repulsive forces within a network of spatially-oriented flows. This chapter outlines the origins of the case suburbs as industrialization efforts fanned out across the country in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in some cases setting in motion migratory and monetary movements and in others, pushing already occurring movements in certain directions. People and firms caught up in these currents chose to settle in one of the selected suburbs based on the opportunities they saw related to natural endowments or strategic location (both a function of space), and their subsequent investment or advocacy moved each suburb toward developing an economic specialization. In some cases that specialization was aligned with the economic function of the greater region, and in other situations it developed in response to the needs of a diversified metropolitan area.

Woven through the decades of strata are complex interactions of structure and agency, as people with power acted to secure investments for their towns or their own

enterprises and their efforts combined with external shocks set in motion processes of development or decline. The decisions of influential people and companies mattered in the development trajectories of these suburbs, even as larger global forces enabled or constrained their actions.

THE SPATIAL IMPERATIVE: NATURAL RESOURCES AND STRATEGIC LOCATION

At their inceptions, the characteristics of places are defined by their spatially-oriented baseline conditions. The foundational elements of these conditions correspond to what geographers, following Marx, and Hegel before him, have labelled “first nature” and “second nature.”³ These terms refer, respectively, to the physical—natural resources that can be mined or harvested, the suitability of the land for construction, transportation, or agriculture, access to water, or intangibles such as climate—and the societal—the layers of development imposed by humans in order to make use of existing physical features. William Cronon notes of Chicago that a sort of aspirational second nature likely played a greater role in the growth of the city than did first nature advantages; the perceptions of boosters about the potential of Chicago as the next great metropolis had to be strong enough to overcome the obstacles that first nature threw in the path of progress.⁴ The point is that both are tied to space—natural resources were fixed and transportation costs originally prohibitively high, and proximity to urbanized settlements offered built-in markets for goods and services.

Perhaps the first settlers in the United States made location decisions solely on the basis of natural resources, but at the founding of each of these suburbs enough development had already occurred in their regions that strategic location within the already established surrounding urban system became a key factor in site choice. The spatially dependent baseline conditions of each place, then, had first nature and second nature aspects—initial access to natural resources and strategic location in relation to other settlements—that left traces in the succeeding layers, setting the stage for initial occupancy by people and firms and playing roles in early growth. The five cases

demonstrate different combinatory patterns of natural resources and strategic location, all of which influenced the suburbs' foundations.

Baseline Conditions and Powerful Actors

The baseline conditions—resources and location— were the essential first deposit in the creation of the new suburbs. But the flows that were moving around the newly formed settlements did not make their way toward the suburbs without help. The development of each suburb required influential people acting on and manipulating the natural resources and location toward a goal, often profitable in intent. This process took place, however, under different conditions in each location—in some cases pushed forward by one particular “father figure,” in others activated by multiple people acting together or separately. The primary figures involved were not responsible for the commodification of a particular natural resource – that was done long before they arrived on the scene. But they all did, in a sense, put their resources toward creating and selling a location, and it was their efforts that made the settlement “stick” when others faded away.

Founding Fathers

Several places had a key promoter whose vision was in large part responsible for the early development of the suburb. These advocates lived on the site and took on broad leadership roles to ensure its survival. They invested their own money, sought out other capital streams which they directed toward the suburb's growth, and in many cases recruited residents to populate the settlements. These leaders remained active in this type of “boosterism” even after the suburbs were well-established, and their legacies have been memorialized in historical accounts.

By 1905, orange ranches were emerging as a valuable economic concern in San Joaquin Valley, and their success drew others in the next decade with the potential of lucrative livelihoods. One of these investors was Elmer M. Sheridan, a lawyer, banker, and jack-of-all-trades born in Jackson County, Ohio, who in 1912 purchased 6000 acres

of land about six miles outside of the existing town of Orosi, California and incorporated with his business partners as the Orosi Orange Land Company. Selling land with good terms at \$150 to \$200 per acre and promising that by planting orange groves the land would be worth \$1000 an acre in two to three years, the company sold almost all acreage in 10 and 20 acre tracts to 103 prospective orange ranchers by the end of 1913. Sheridan managed the company until 1919, but prior to that in 1914 bought 160 acres from the company to plat into town lots and organized his own real estate firm to build Orange Cove.⁵

Sheridan was not only instrumental in the founding of the town, but also in its economic growth. His personal advocacy was a primary driver in attracting initial flows of capital investment that were necessary to future development. As the town lots sold, the Land Company under Sheridan's direction invested an estimated \$100,000 into grading and compacting roads, developing a town water system and associated company, and creating parks, which would attract residents and businesses. In keeping with his apparently untiring nature, Mr. Sheridan also founded the First National bank of Orange Cove, serving as its president for 33 years.⁶

But flows of money were not Sheridan's only point of influence. He also recruited many of the original pioneers to the townsite. A newspaper tribute at the time of his marriage in 1913 proclaimed, "...through his (M. Sheridan's) management...more actual seetlers [sic] have been satisfactorily located in this area than through the efforts of any party of men in the history of Dinuba..."⁷ He continued his advocacy until the end of his life; in 1946, then in his 80s, Sheridan was a vocal proponent for the incorporation of Orange Cove against numerous detractors, arguing that the people of the town were paying taxes that did not directly benefit them. Orange Cove was incorporated in 1948.⁸ Sheridan was memorialized as the "father of Orange Cove" numerous times throughout his life and at his death.⁹

College Park's founding was similarly influenced by a man of means with a vision for the suburb. The founders of the Manchester Land Company quickly saw that their

aspirations to combine industrial and residential uses on their new site were ill-conceived. Companies had little interest in building factories in Manchester (named for the eponymous English city of industrial fame), despite the “splendid offers” promised by the landowners to attract manufacturing development.¹⁰ But William Stanton, an Atlanta wholesale business owner who was serving as Mayor of Manchester when it was first incorporated, had different plans.¹¹

Several years earlier, Stanton, upon the death of his first wife, had sent his two daughters to Southern Female Seminary in LaGrange, Georgia. After numerous visits, he fell in love with and married schoolteacher Sallie Cox, daughter of Dr. Charles Cox, the school’s founder. His experiences with Southern Female Seminary inspired Stanton to start a women’s school outside of Atlanta, and after their failure to draw industrial investment capital to Manchester the partners of the Manchester Land Company were willing to donate 25 acres of land and \$55,000 in stock for Stanton’s Southern Baptist College. The value of the stock collapsed due to the panic of 1893 and Stanton was obliged to sell all of his assets to shore up the school, a move from which he barely recovered financially.¹² The college’s finances remained shaky, however, and Stanton eventually sought assistance from his wife’s family. Southern Baptist College soon came under the control of Charles Cox, who moved his Southern Female Seminary from LaGrange to Manchester—with much grumbling from LaGrange notables about “institutions built by ‘syndicates’...for speculative purposes”—in 1895.¹³ A year into the suburb’s growth, it became evident that education rather than industry would be the functional specialization of the town. An 1892 competition had yielded the name College Park as it would “be suggestive to everyone of colleges and culture and at the same time of green trees, flowers, and fresh air.” This name change occurred in 1896.¹⁴

Stanton was a vocal proponent of College Park, so much so that one journalist with the *Atlanta Constitution* remarked that he seemed “to have implicit faith in the future of [his] new educational suburb.” He also managed to sell others on his vision, recruiting “the culture[d] and elite” to build homes in the neighborhood.¹⁵ As plans for Southern Baptist College moved forward, the Manchester Land Company has promised to endow a new

entity called the Georgia Military Institute, later the Manchester Military and Chataqua Company, constructed at the same time as Stanton's women's college and opening with it in 1894. This school also struggled financially. In collaboration with Stanton, George Looney, former president of Southern Baptist College prior to Cox's control, took over the Military Institute, renaming it the Southern Military Academy. It continued to limp along for a number of years under different administrations, until residents of College Park persuaded Colonel J.C. Woodward, superintendent of schools in Newnan Georgia to relocate to the suburb to found the Georgia Military Academy in 1900, which later became the prestigious private school, Woodward Academy.¹⁶ By this point an aging Stanton, disillusioned with the outcome of his school project, seemed to have withdrawn somewhat from College Park's leadership, and would move to Los Angeles in 1904 because of his health.¹⁷

Father figures played important, though somewhat less influential, parts in the creation of Superior and Greenport. As the silver ore at the Silver King and Queen mines dwindled, George Lobb, an area resident and manager at the Silver King, saw future potential for copper and purchased several other local mining claims years before copper was a viable interest. His vision proved correct when Michigan-based Lake Superior and Arizona Mining Company (L.S. & A.) eventually bought the property from him. Lobb used his savings to build a general store and plat a townsite in 1902, naming it Superior after the mining firm.¹⁸ Greenport, with its longer history, had been sparsely settled in some form for almost two centuries: first as a colony, then as Winter Harbor, and finally as Sterling, all within the larger, more dispersed town of Southold. The Harbor had been a busy port for whaling vessels starting in the mid 18th century. But the area where Greenport now stands was predominantly one farm in the early 1800s. It was Silas Webb's speculation on the growing importance of Long Island's North Fork that led him and two friends to purchase his uncle David Webb's farm for \$2,300 in the 1820, two years after Captain Webb's death. Webb and his partners platted the land into lots and quickly sold them for a profit, and the village was soon "commenced by a few spirited individuals" in 1827. Eleven years later it would be a bustling settlement of about 600 people, the only incorporated village in the town of Southold.¹⁹

Even with key natural resources and a strategic location, the founding and earliest development of these suburbs depended on the efforts of men with means and influence interested in directing streams of settlers and investment toward a specific location with a specific end in mind. The goals of these boosters were to make a living and a vibrant hometown for themselves. For some of the other cases in this study, influential actors with different motivations had similar effects.

The Investor

A second type of power broker was less interested in the suburb itself than in the investment opportunity provided by resources and location, but his actions in creating a viable enterprise contributed to bringing the stable flows of capital and people that allowed each settlement to be initially successful. These men did not always live on the townsites or advocate for their well-being, but instead set up and promoted their companies, inadvertently benefiting the connected suburbs.

The area around Superior was caught up in the fever inspired by the discovery of gold and silver in the west. Settlements were constantly being set up and abandoned based on the productivity of particular mines. The promise of wealth drew flows of population and capital to the western United States, and Arizona was a key destination. Superior was already somewhat established, as mentioned above, but it wasn't until the Montana-bred and New York-based investment mogul William Boyce Thompson began to assess the potential of copper stores in the adjacent Silver Queen mine that Superior began to grow.²⁰

Raised in the mining town of Butte, Montana, Thompson had been educated in the East and decided that trading stock in mines would be more lucrative than owning and running one. By 1910, he had successfully made a fortune promoting stock in several mining companies and was on the lookout for other opportunities. In the process of developing another copper mine 20 miles east of Superior, Thompson commissioned

mining engineers to assess the value of other mining properties in the area. After confirming substantial copper deposits in the Silver Queen mine, Thompson purchased the site, renamed it the Magma mine and set up Magma Copper Corporation with his business partner, George Gunn, employing 50 men by 1913.²¹

With significant money and experience behind them, the Magma Corporation's leaders continued to invest in infrastructure to grow their operations, encouraged by the ore they discovered as they moved deeper into the mine. Other key early improvements included constructing a narrow gauge railroad to carry product, supplies, and passengers to the nearby Phoenix & Eastern Railroad, and building a smelter at Superior to directly work with the ores from the mine. Magma was thus well-positioned to respond to heightened demand for copper at the start of World War I.²²

New Miami's growth was similarly based on a large-scale investment to create one company. As the steel industry began to take over the rustbelt states of Pennsylvania and Ohio, magnates of the industry had capital to spare for interesting possibilities. "Expert coke and gas man" Warren E. Howell, having moved from managing New York Coal and Gas Company to managing Pittsburgh Gas and Coke Company between 1900 and 1901, was on the lookout for new opportunities in his home state of Ohio. In the context of a growing, industry-heavy region, Howell observed the potential demand for a product already in use: coke, or purified, hot-burning coal.²³

Howell was not necessarily a wealthy man himself, but he secured the funds to contract with the West Virginia-based United Coke and Gas Company to build 50 of their patented Otto Hoffman ovens on a site three miles outside of Hamilton in 1900, starting production with his business partners as Hamilton Otto Coke Company. Small homes on lots began to sell for \$10 down near the coke plant and a village of sorts was established by the name of "Coke Otto," later known as New Miami. A consummate entrepreneur and promoter, Howell parlayed the small coke plant into a second company for gas and electricity, the byproducts of the coke-making process, organizing the Hamilton Gas and Electric Company as the distributing arm of Hamilton Otto Coke.

The company offered to fully cover the city's gas needs at a much lower price than that of the current supplier. By 1907 several newspapers around the country were lauding Hamilton as "an example for others to follow" in the provision of cheap gas, highlighting Howell's role.²⁴

The coke plant's success gave Howell the creditability to approach his Pittsburgh contacts—particularly millionaire Edwin N. Oehl, President of both the United Iron and Steel Company and the Pittsburgh Iron Ore Company—and draw in several Cincinnati investors to expand his operations. With capitalization of \$1 million, the partners incorporated the Hamilton Iron and Steel Co., designed to use the onsite coke production with a new blast furnace to smelt iron ore into pig iron, one of the main inputs to steel. The site, adjacent to the coke ovens, "has been pronounced by old blast furnace men from the Pennsylvania regions as an ideal location on account not only of the fine railroad facilities, but also on account of...the proximity of the Miami River, which will furnish an inexhaustible supply [of energy]."²⁵ Given the local demand for pig iron, this project promised continued employment opportunities for the households in Coke Otto.

Greenport was an established village by the 1840s, long before the other suburbs in this study were conceived. The area's whaling industry began in 1795 with Captain Fowler's *Minerva*, the first whaling ship to use the Harbor as his homeport.²⁶ Whaling and shipbuilding were the village's original bread and butter; the first industry propelled the initial growth, and the second was attracted from surrounding Southold as Greenport's prosperity increased. However, whaling in the U.S. was destined for collapse. A combination of falling prices for whale oil, the lure of the California Gold rush that led captains to repurpose their whaling vessels, and international competition shuttered Greenport's industry as early as 1859.²⁷ In nearby Sag Harbor, the change was stark: "The decline of the whale fishing was sudden and rapid, and, from being one of the most prosperous villages on Long Island, Sag Harbor became the poorest. The fall in real estate value was immediate and disastrous."²⁸ Arguably ship-building and other smaller maritime ventures would have preserved Greenport, but Daniel Wells had given

the village another industry to fall back on: menhaden, or bunker, a small fish whose oil could be used in applications from burning to painting.

The use of menhaden as an effective fertilizer had been practiced by the Manhasset Indians, the earliest dwellers of the area, and by 1800 Southold residents were realizing that these small fish, useless as food, could be used to replenish the soil. But as whale oil became less accessible in the mid nineteenth century, the oil that could be obtained by steaming and squeezing the seemingly inexhaustible supply of “mossbunker” fish grew in value. Other New England entrepreneurs had been testing this process, but Daniel Wells, one of the descendants of William Wells, an original settler of Southold in the 1600s, brought the industry to Long Island. Using the factory plans of some successful oil producers in Rhode Island, Wells and his son set up a steam plant on Shelter Island in the vicinity of Greenport and began to process the fish.²⁹ Their initial method involved only partially boiling and then fermenting the bunker, creating a stench so putrid that the factory was forced by residents to change location. As they refined their approach, competition quickly arose, and by 1873, another seven companies had joined Wells to form a cluster of oil works on the North Fork.³⁰

Wells did not have the money or connections of William Boyce Thompson or Warren Howell, but his actions were no less influential for Greenport’s development. Menhaden processing did not require the extensive capital needed for copper mining or coke production—the raw materials easily caught, the oil extraction fairly simple. But his risk-taking on a new industry demonstrated to other area businessmen the feasibility of earning a profit on an abundant natural resource, and many followed his lead. Bunker would become one of the mainstays of Greenport’s economy and would remain so for a century, saving Greenport “from the same fate as other whaling towns.”³¹

The process of suburban settlement and development has intrascalar layers that are evident in this analysis. At the local level, proximity to transportation avenues or economic markets, access to abundant raw materials, and the human actions that integrated the two into a new node within a wider socioeconomic network formed the

basis for fixing each suburb in space. But the flows and deposits of people and money that undergirded the initial settlement and early growth were connected to larger national and global shifts that pushed the streams in different directions resulting in new cross-country development patterns. These waves of urbanization united changing economic dynamics with widespread migrations of differentiated population groups and rapid changes in the physical landscape.

EARLY WAVES OF DEVELOPMENT AND FUNCTIONAL SPECIALIZATION

The fact that these waves were set in motion by global and national dynamics suggests that all of the suburbs profiled in this study could have been affected equally. But instead, the waves affected each of the suburbs differently depending on its location and past events. During these periods interconnected flows of people and production moved through networks of settlements and left sediment in places with attractive conditions and influential people.

After each of the suburbs was founded, the early years—generally until about the 1950s and early 1960s—tended to be decades of growth. Industry, employment, amenities, and/or boosterism attracted new residents who brought or formed families and often invested in home construction; businesses expanded with good local labor forces and demand for goods and services, offering more jobs, drawing more people. While each place, given its small size, was economically specialized to some degree, the cases fall along a continuum of specialization and diversification that is also linked to the economic function and focus of the surrounding regions. The extent of both regional and local specialization had ramifications for the suburbs' economic conditions in later years.

Regional and Suburban Specialization and Diversification

Economic specialization and diversity is a broadly addressed topic among urban and regional economists and geographers. Some regions, and at a smaller scale, some cities, are home to a range of economic activities, while others host one or two major exporting industries that provide employment and revenue. Systems composed of large

and small cities develop out of the tension between forces of agglomeration and forces of dispersal.³² Firms are continually trading off between the benefits of distance and the benefits of proximity in the pursuit of economic growth. The economic benefits of agglomeration—reduced transport expenses, sharing a large labor pool, and possible knowledge spillovers—draw firms to locate together to minimize production costs. These advantages may occur in clusters of firms of the same type (localization economies à la Alfred Marshall) or different but complementary types (Jane Jacobs' urbanization economies).³³ Yet colocation brings with it the economic negatives associated with congestion and competition, and technological advances have reduced the costs of distance. As such, Fujita and Krugman theorize that hierarchical systems of cities emerge as workers and firms make location decisions based on their own costs and constraints. In their model, different shipping costs among sectors indicate that the larger cities will maintain a diversity of sectors while smaller cities will develop at the periphery, specializing in products with higher transport costs.³⁴

These studies and models suggest that smaller urbanized places are more likely to specialize, channeling their economic activities into one or two sectors. This approach is highly efficient in that it takes advantage of agglomeration economies and follows rules of basic comparative advantage: funneling resources toward one type of production for which a location is best suited in terms of endowments or amenities. However, there is also a significant risk in building only one or two key industry sectors. Highly specialized cities can be much more susceptible to economic downturns and major industry shifts to the extent that base sectors may disappear entirely.³⁵ Since specialization may also put a damper on entrepreneurship and innovation, cities with a collapsing economic function may be left without the resources to reinvent themselves.³⁶

This specialization can also happen at the regional scale. Endowments of raw materials have in the past played some role, lending comparative advantage and inducing certain regions to focus on the production of the small number of goods for which they have the greatest capacity. But the formation of "territorial production complexes," as Storper and Walker theorize, has occurred as firms and workers collocated around existing

resources and shared inputs and information, endogenously increasing locational advantages. At first, these complexes create environments for surplus profits, but as time passes these specialized regions may lose their power to innovate and compete with newly emerging firms using alternative technologies.³⁷

By and large, however, the urban economists creating some of the more recent models of hierarchical urban systems are not adding the complexity of suburbs to their analyses. In fact, much of the above research applies to cities of 50,000 or more, and those with 50,000 are considered “small.” Given that 90 percent of all Census-defined suburbs in the United States have populations under 20,000, it is difficult to extend these conclusions to suburban places.

Luckily, the topic of specialization in suburbs has its own adherents in the academic literature. As early as 1922, urban ecologists proposed a theory of metropolitan dominance specifying, among other things, that the growth of population and certain activities—namely finance, wholesale trade, office/commercial, and transportation,—in a central city combined with the population expansion of its hinterland would generally result in an integrated metropolitan economic system with increasingly specialized suburbs controlled by the economic demand and markets in the city, ultimately creating a “territorial division of labor.”³⁸ This specialization could include a range of different residential, economic, and combined functions but was thought to be clearly associated with the types of sectors concentrated in the city.³⁹

This theory took as its starting point larger cities with more diversified commerce and service activities, but as Duncan noted, many U.S. cities are decidedly specialized.⁴⁰ This is particularly the case with smaller, manufacturing-oriented and resource-extracting centers. What is more, industrial specializations have typically transcended metropolitan areas bringing cities and suburbs together into broader production regions exporting to national or even international markets, not just local urban centers.

If suburbs were generally functionally specialized before mid-century, large-scale decentralization of employment over the last three to four decades has made those patterns less distinct in the suburban aggregate, contributing to the sprawling edge development we now see that concentrates a broad range of activities.⁴¹ As early as the 1980s, Logan and Golden demonstrated the existence of wealthier suburban trading centers, sites mixing industrial, commercial, and residential uses but still attracting residents with higher socio-economic status.⁴² But because the wave of decentralization builds upon layers of development left in previous eras, early suburbs may maintain their distinct economic functions even as new or rapidly growing suburbs developed in a more diversified manner.

There are two main generalized points to make about economic specialization in suburbs relating to decades of past research on urban and metropolitan systems. The first is that the relative size of suburbs and their historical relationship with their central cities makes it more likely that their primary functions will be specialized, particularly if they were established prior to post-war suburbanization. That is, if they are on the smaller side, which the majority of suburbs are, they will tend to be primarily residential or have a small number of dominant economic activities.⁴³ The risks of specialization will then also be particularly relevant. The type of economic function and its stability and productivity in the current market will affect its socio-economic status.

The second point is that, again given their size and role, the embedded nature of suburbs in regional economies is perhaps more salient than for cities. As epitomized in the U.S. rust belt, specialized suburbs within specialized regions have no support if the dominant industry fails. A specialized suburb in a diversified metropolitan area or larger region might be able to build on the economic activities of the central city or surrounding municipalities, or at least attract financial assistance from county or state authorities. The competition for aid in a specialized region results in meager funding for all.

Interaction Between Resources and Location

In Superior and Orange Cove, access to natural resources drove the formation of settlements. Superior's predecessors were several mining camp iterations based around the large Silver King and Silver Queen mines in Pinal County, Arizona, east of Phoenix, a large draw for migrants seeking mining fortunes. After the ore from the mine began to yield less silver and prices for the metal dropped, the first settlement, known as Hastings, evaporated in the 1890s as miners sought livelihoods elsewhere. Superior in its current location did not thrive until a substantial store of copper was discovered in a shaft of the Silver Queen mine in 1910, years after its silver operations had ceased. Copper was already far surpassing silver and gold as the mineral of fortune-making in Arizona, and the extent of the copper stores in the former silver mine was enough to maintain continuous work for a critical mass of miners.⁴⁴

Long before Orange Cove was founded, California had become, with Florida, an "Orange Empire", a dream world with a citrus scent and a lush landscape. But production had been centered in what became known as Orange County, in the south of the state around Los Angeles. Development pressure around Los Angeles drove up the price of land pushing out the agriculturalists, and investors who understood the continued demand for oranges began to look around for new places to site their groves. The Great Central Valley of California, a wide expanse of relatively flat land with enough year-round sun and the right temperature for agricultural development, offered alternative locations for orange cultivation. After prominent Riverside, California orange grower George Frost experimented in 1890 by planting 100 acres of orange groves in Tulare County, an 1894 article in the Los Angeles Herald made the point that "The fruit productions of Fresno County [adjacent to Tulare] are the same as those of Southern California...Fresno county's citrus fruits come into market a month earlier than those of Los Angeles County. This fact is demonstrated every month at Porterville, in Tulare County."⁴⁵ The site of Orange Cove in Fresno County was particularly well-suited for citrus growth because it was located within one of the eponymous "coves" – sites between mountains and valley that provided much needed protection from damaging

frosts. As one writer proclaimed, “It is these elevated and protected coves where the most perfect conditions for successful citrus culture prevail...Here the quality of the fruit attains nearest perfection, the production is the most dependable...”⁴⁶

In both of these situations, the emerging suburbs were part of a region defined and developed by their key resources. The relative locations of Orange Cove and Superior were important, but only in relation to their first nature geography. In contrast, College Park, New Miami, and Greenport were originally settled in large part due to second nature considerations, because their sites were strategically located within a growing and changing region.

The founding and growth of College Park, Georgia was tied from the beginning to Atlanta’s emerging role as the cultural and economic capital of the Deep South. After the Civil War, residents and leaders worked rapidly to rebuild the ruined city—by 1865 the destroyed railroads were running, restoring the city to its former position as a transportation hub and center of commerce and earning it the designation of state capital by 1868. That economic expansion would only continue during the rest of the century and would include some industrial development as well, focused primarily on the textile industry. At the same time, rapid population growth contributed to a burgeoning residential real estate market, and as new streetcar lines and commuter trains entered the scene, speculating developers began to buy up and plat farmland on the urban periphery into “garden suburbs” beginning in the late 1880s.⁴⁷ Several Atlanta businessmen followed the trend by organizing the Manchester Land Company, in 1890 purchasing 900 rural acres south of the city in close proximity to a newly-laid side track of the Atlanta and West Point Railroad. The founders initially intended to combine industrial and residential development to create “one of the prettiest and most attractive suburbs in the neighborhood of the City,” and the location’s proximity to Atlanta and excellent transport connections for both people and goods were paramount. The land’s physical amenities, including scenic features and a pleasant microclimate, came into play later in marketing the suburb to potential residents and investors.⁴⁸

New Miami became a small cog in the growth of the large industrial wheel of the Great Miami River Valley. The suburb was situated between the two rising industrial centers of Hamilton and Middletown as the steel industry began its ascendance in the United States. The City of Hamilton, just three miles away, had for decades built its reputation for industrial diversity; by 1900 the city produced 250 products in 140 different manufacturing plants.⁴⁹ Middletown was already a center for the manufacture of paper and tobacco, and its Industrial Commission was in the process of courting the American Rolling Mill Company, a steel business which would play a transformative role in Middletown's history and that of New Miami. The Miami-Erie Canal and two major railroad lines connected the Valley to the resources and industries in eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania. New Miami's siting on the Miami River provided energy and transportation options, but its position within the region made it a potentially profitable site for a coal and iron processing plant.

Greenport's access to the Peconic Bay has played a significant role in its history and growth, but its initial settlement was related primarily to location. The New Haven colony across the bay in Connecticut was formed just one year earlier, in 1637, and though historical authors have differing accounts, there is evidence that some residents connected to the colony planned to expand its claims by settling a short distance away on Long Island's North Fork. Although the Manhassetts, the Native American tribe living on the land prior to the colonists' arrival were accomplished whalers, the main occupation of the English settlers was farming. It was not until at least 100 years later that maritime industries and trade became the mainstay of the local economy.⁵⁰ Greenport's origins are somewhat different from College Park and New Miami, however, in that although its original founding was location-centric, the more rapid settlement that occurred a century or more later was oriented toward the water and its uses.

The foundations of each suburb were based on both physical assets and location within a network of regions, cities, and suburbs connected, at the time, by transport systems. Natural resources and links to other places interacted with each other to form an attractive destination for flows of people and money. This description sounds passive; it

is actually the case that influential people with profit-oriented intentions saw the potential in the combination of resources and location and used their sway and wealth to direct flows of people and capital toward each of the suburbs.

Early Industrialization and the Emergence of Suburban Specializations

Despite their different founding dates from 1838 to 1913, each of the case study suburbs were shaped by the technological and economic advances of the industrial revolution. From railroad development to the ramping up of dominant industries that would construct the landscape of the 20th century, these small places were the product of forces that were also responsible for the foundation of the American economy. Individual residents and firm owners took actions that directed investments and people toward these evolving settlements.

Laying the Foundation: Building the National Rail System

Major technological leaps in transportation—namely the nationwide expansion of the railroad network and related improvements to the transportation of goods—made up the driving wave pushing associated streams of labor and capital from east to west and from north to south. From the first tracks laid in the 1820s, the railways and the increasingly consolidated corporations that capitalized their construction transformed the country's economic system and laid the foundation for the industrial development that characterized the Gilded Age. Railroads facilitated the transportation of people and goods, but their construction drove movements unassociated with their transport functions.

In essence, the wave of railroad expansion moved over the existing sparse settlement pattern in the country, leaving deposits that sometimes built on what was already there and adding bases for new settlements in specific locations. Laborers moved with the tracks, forming temporary or permanent communities across the country as they worked. Furthermore, each station constructed was a key deposit that served as an

attraction point for new residents and industries. By the end of the nineteenth century, “no community of any size in the United States could afford to be out of range of a locomotive’s whistle,” but station sites were not chosen at random—they were selected most often based on strategic location for the movement of goods as determined by railroad executives or as a result of advocacy campaigns from town residents or the leaders of larger firms. Whether the station site was chosen before or after a settlement had begun, the connection to the larger railroad system was always a key growth stimulator that set development in motion.⁵¹

Station Siting Based on Strategic Location

Railroad companies in the early 1800s were primarily local initiatives, in contrast to the transcontinentals that would define the industry later in the century. These smaller companies often had tumultuous histories as they tried to sustain themselves and connect to other lines to extend their reach. In later years they were often bought out by larger and more successful rail corporations. The extent of their reach may have even been constrained by regulation; In the South, for example, originally railroad tracks did not cross state lines to ensure each jurisdiction could adequately oversee its own network.⁵²

The Long Island Railroad was one such small company, chartered in 1834 with the ambitious intent to link New York City to Boston. At the time, Long Island was perfectly situated for this endeavor; findings from an engineering survey completed in the early 1830s indicated that building a rail line across Connecticut’s difficult terrain was unfeasible. A line across flat and relatively uninhabited Long Island would connect to a ferry to Stonington, Connecticut, where passengers would pick up the Old Colony Railroad to Providence and Boston. As early as 1832, the primary engineer on the project, Major D.B. Douglas, had chosen Greenport for the Long Island Terminus and had solicited capital from rich New Yorkers and Bostonians to found the company.⁵³ Although Greenport had been platted and settlers were beginning to build homes in the late 1820s, news of the railroad spurred a level of population and economic growth that

motivated Greenport's leaders to begin the process of incorporation.⁵⁴ In 1838 it became the only incorporated village within the much larger town of Southold. Six years later, in 1844, the LIRR was completed, allowing for much faster transportation, with the LIRR as a major employer.⁵⁵ Greenport subsequently became a railroad hub for passengers and freight.⁵⁶

Founded in 1797, Hamilton, Ohio was already the seat of Butler County and a textile and paper manufacturing center by the time the Baltimore & Ohio, widely thought to be the country's first railroad company, began track construction in the Baltimore area in 1828. Nearby Middletown was well on its way to having a similar industry concentration when business leaders from both cities and neighboring Cincinnati and Dayton met in 1835 to discuss the development of a track between Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton. Start-up funding came almost completely from Butler County and Cincinnati stockholders, and the CH&D was an anomaly in that it didn't require any local or state government funding. With so much local support within a strong and growing industrial region, the project quickly attracted additional capital from big New York investors. Final construction was completed in 1851, and by 1869 CH&D had linked itself to the Erie railroad to connect to New York and had acquired the Eaton and Hamilton railroad with connections as far as Chicago. Its central location and outward links earned the line attention from such major players as J. P. Morgan. This infrastructure was in place and vetted long before steel came to the Miami River Valley, and W.E. Howell's selection of a site for a coke plant just outside of Hamilton and immediately adjacent to CH&D and Eaton and Hamilton tracks was certainly not random.

Advocacy for Stations

College Park's connection to suburban track service for its residents required a bit more action behind the scenes. In 1854, the LaGrange Railroad, an 80-mile route central to Atlanta's initial development as a transportation center, was completed and renamed as the Atlanta and West Point Railroad by 1857. Its origin was in East Point, a suburb six miles south of Atlanta.⁵⁷ When the A&WP added a spur track two miles south of East

Point in the late 1880s to accommodate nearby farmers in bringing their goods to market, the real estate investors comprising the Manchester Land Company saw a speculative opportunity. They bought the site that would become College Park as well as the two miles of land along both sides of new track, informally arranging with the railroad company to extend a double track from East Point to the new suburb to increase the regularity of transport service between College Park and the city. This arrangement, however, may have been less solid than the investors imagined – it would be seven years of requests and cajoling from residents and promoters before the double track would be laid and a new depot constructed in College Park in 1897, though the railroad would occasionally run a “theater train” allowing suburban dwellers to catch a late train home after a night on the town in Atlanta.⁵⁸

As Elmer Sheridan was selling land to prospective orange ranchers around Orange Cove in 1912, “a most favorable coincident occurred when the new Minkler Southern railroad fixed its survey through this section just at a time when the Southern California citrus growers, frozen out at home, discovered that this east side belt of the San Joaquin Valley was nearer a frostless section than the Southland. This brought a veritable influx to the San Joaquin Valley.”⁵⁹ The Minkler Southern was under the oversight of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway Company, and Sheridan led a group of ranchers in persuading company leaders to construct a station at Orange Cove. The construction of the railroad branch track between Minkler and Exeter, California, passing through Orange Cove was underway in the fall of 1913, and a new depot was one of the first buildings to be completed in the town a year later.

William Boyce Thompson of the Magma Copper Company realized in 1914 that Superior would not be connected to the larger railroad system unless his firm built the line. Despite a flurry of railroad development by the Southern Pacific and Atchison, Santa Fe, and Topeka (just called the Santa Fe) Railway Companies in the late 1800s, tracks had only been laid as far as Florence, still 35 miles from Superior and the surrounding mining district. The mineral output of the district at the time didn’t justify the construction of a spur track. Although Magma had been operating since 1910, much of

the initial work involved preparing the mine for extraction. Transportation of goods and workers had been handled by three wagon trains pulled by teams of 32 horses. But as mining began in earnest by April of 1914, the wagons were inadequate. In hopes of reducing costs, Magma's president, Walter Aldridge, approached a subsidiary of the Southern Pacific Company—Arizona Eastern—to request a 15-mile spur track toward Superior from Southern Pacific's main line in Webster, Arizona. Arizona Eastern eventually rejected this idea for cost reasons, forcing Magma to construct its own narrow-gauge, and therefore less expensive, line from Superior to Webster under a new railroad company Magma formed to comply with state regulations. The railroad's main purpose was to carry ore to the nearest smelter, but it also served as Superior's passenger line to the Southern Pacific, in the beginning carrying only 2-3 people per trip.⁶⁰

In-migration of Railroad Workers

Initially unrelated flows of people and capital bundled within each development wave, leaving layered deposits of settlers and investment. The beginnings of the transnational railroad coincided with a massive stream of Irish immigrants starting after about 1815 and accelerating in the 1840s as the potato famine-related crop failures intensified. In contrast to the large population of skilled German workers migrating to the US at about the same time, those coming from Ireland were more often than not poor, unable to buy land and seeking low-skill work. The Irish had already proven their willingness to tackle the least desirable jobs in constructing the canals that preceded the railroads, so much so that contractors for the rail companies would sometimes advertise for workers in Irish towns to encourage migration.⁶¹ Representing one half of immigrants to the United States in 1840 and one-third in 1850, the Irish became one of the key labor forces driving forward the vast iron road network.

At some points when laborers would finish construction on a line, some would settle near the terminus. New York was far and away the main entry point for most immigrants at the time, including the Irish, but in Greenport, "The lively sons of Erin were a rarity till

the grading of the railroad,” remembered a writer for the *Long Island Traveler* in 1877. After the LIRR track was completed, many of the primarily Irish construction crew settled next to both sides of the tracks in a railroad town that is still known as West Dublin, taking jobs as farm or household laborers or marrying “Greenport girls” and buying their own land.⁶²

Until the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, that immigrant group had supplied another large labor force for rail construction. Indeed, Irish and Chinese railwaymen are remembered in history as the builders of the transcontinental railroad based on sheer numbers, and their dominant presence was certainly in force through the 1800s.⁶³ But by the turn of the century, Mexican railroad workers, known as *traqueros*, had started to make up a sizable proportion of track labor, particularly in the southwest with the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific Railway Companies. By 1910, the Santa Fe was one of the largest employers of Mexican workers, and between 1880 and 1930, these laborers represented an estimated two-thirds of those laying tracks in the Southwest, Midwest, and Plains states. Mexican workers certainly formed part of the teams that constructed the connector lines to Orange Cove and Superior. In fact, the first Mexican residents of Orange Cove were section workers for the Santa Fe Railroad Company. As the townsite was being developed, the company constructed three houses near the tracks for its workers in 1914. Mrs. Robert Boss, one of the first residents of Orange Cove and the wife of its General Store owner, kept a diary in which she noted that the three Mexican families in town had moved into the Santa Fe houses.⁶⁴

Specialized Suburbs within Specialized Regions

Railways and industrial development, including industrialized agriculture, went hand in hand. A similar process of cumulative causation that created specializations in a unit as small as a municipality was replicated in territories as large as regions. The raw materials forming the basis for the manufacturing, mining, and farming sectors—coal, metals, and arable land—attracted numerous entrepreneurs and investors to locations that would provide the easiest access to the best quality inputs. The development of

three of the case study suburbs—New Miami, Orange Cove, and Superior—was predicated on the expansion of industries with strong spatial ties, rather than, as more traditional suburban theory would suggest, on the economic and population growth of a central city. The markets for the products these suburbs would export were national and even global, and each formed part of a regional machine with a narrow scope of production.

The Growth of Steel in the Great Miami River Valley

Rail and steel were intertwined, at least after railroad companies shifted their key materials from iron to Bessemer steel rails. The construction of cross-country tracks used almost the entire supply of U.S. produced steel before 1880. Some have argued that the corporate structure of consolidation developed by the rail industry shaped the later creation of the larger steel companies.⁶⁵ And indeed, as the use of steel as a construction material spread across the nation and the industry developed, the capital generated by the increasingly massive steel companies was invested in ventures from shore to shore. Unlike rail, however, the spatial distribution of the mills actually producing the steel was fairly bounded by proximity to the raw materials—iron and coal—that were necessary for the production process. Steel plants and associated residential settlements or company towns concentrated predominantly in Pennsylvania, Ohio and around the Great Lakes, radiating out from Pittsburgh where the United States Steel Corporation, J.P. Morgan's and Andrew Carnegie's conglomerate, was located.

But even as U.S. Steel embarked on its domination of industrial America in 1901, the growth of steel's importance was facilitating the development of smaller, niche-oriented steel companies and sectors related to key production inputs. Warren Howell's blast furnace at Coke Otto (later New Miami) was one of these small ventures, but another, more influential company was forming at the same time 11 miles away in the city of Middletown. In 1900, George Verity of the American Steel Roofing Co. of Cincinnati was scoping out sites for a new venture, the American Rolling Mill Company, or Armco. Citing the beauty of the river valley, the industrial development of the Miami River

Valley, and the cooperation of the city's diligent Industrial Commission, Verity proudly announced the groundbreaking of the first steel mill in the Valley. Securing the company's location was indeed a coup for Middletown's promoters and they paid dearly; an investment of \$100,000 in local improvements was required before Verity's company would relocate.⁶⁶

The steel industry to that point was characterized by numerous short boom and bust cycles—the demand for the product brought in new firms during strong economic times, and these companies then struggled, failed, and were bought up by larger, more successful firms during the busts.⁶⁷ Smaller companies that survived and thrived pursued overlooked areas in the market as well as the holy grail of vertical integration. In its earliest years, Armco worked gradually and quietly to innovate around new techniques larger companies were missing. To that end, the firm established a research and development arm, and became known for specialized products. Ultimately, it was this investment in research combined with the needs not of the rail industry, but of the newly expanding automobile sector, that propelled Armco to the status of major player in steel circles. After more than 15 years of work, in the early 1920s Armco became the first company to create a continuous rolling sheet mill that would dramatically increase production from 540 sheets to 40,000 sheets of steel per month.⁶⁸

As Armco solidified its position, the Great Miami River Valley, nearby Cincinnati, and indeed the Rustbelt region continued to develop their industrial prowess, focusing mainly on assembly line factory work. Hamilton built a reputation as the “greatest small industrial city in America,” with factories manufacturing safes, paper, tools, and hundreds of other goods. Nearby Dayton had a similar concentration of varied firms and later attracted the automobile industry, eventually having the largest population of General Motors workers outside of Michigan.⁶⁹ Middletown had started with paper mills but became dominated by Armco's steel works. Cincinnati, with its size and position in the region, developed strong iron, meatpacking, and textile industries but also diversified its offerings, serving as a transportation hub and center of commerce.

Despite the region's growth, Hamilton Iron and Steel in Coke Otto, which had become Hamilton Furnace Company, had been struggling to stay in business during the post-World War I depression, and had largely stopped its operations by 1921.⁷⁰ Armco's Verity and his partners were seeking ways to integrate the company's operations, acquiring coal mines, additional mills, coke plants, and blast furnaces. Hamilton seemed to be a promising location, and Armco entered into a partnership with The Koppers Company of Pittsburg in 1927 to acquire the defunct Hamilton Furnace Company, renaming it Hamilton Coke and Iron.⁷¹ This was Armco's first connection to Coke Otto, and the company would shape the suburb's development for the next 50 years.

As part of a dynamic region, the small Coke Otto had been growing on its own. The coke plant provided jobs during the first War, and new immigrant waves were changing the ethnic make-up of the steel industry workforce. Once dominated by Irish and German laborers, eastern and southern Europeans now constituted the majority of people in the streams of foreign-born workers to states east of the Mississippi as difficult economic conditions propelled many out of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. By 1907, for example, more than 80 percent of the least skilled "common" laborers in U.S. Steel's Pittsburgh plants were from Eastern Europe. While many of the residents of St. Clair Township, Ohio, where Coke Otto was located, were native Ohioans in 1920, the Census showed not only large numbers of Slovaks, Hungarians, and Italians working as laborers in the steel-related plants, but also a significant group with German and Irish parentage, the layers evident from years of immigrant settlement related to abundant manufacturing work. In fact, in 1920 when the Rural Extension Secretary of the Hamilton Red Cross chapter hired a worker to engage towns on the outskirts of the City in improvement efforts, she noted that Coke Otto was "represented by every race and color from every foreign country in Europe; from Kentucky and the Tennessee Mountains, Georgia and the Alabama plains,"

Appalled at the lack of sanitation and trash collection in this community, this social worker initiated community meetings among Coke Otto's 900 residents to discuss the importance of clean streets and sanitary systems.⁷² Three years later, Coke Otto had

clean streets, electric street lighting, landscaping, and a playground. In the course of this process, the active, 300 member Coke Otto Improvement Association decided that incorporation as a separate village would better serve the town's interests. Armco's investment in the village's industrial facilities spurred excitement and dreams that Coke Otto would be "the Pittsburgh of the Lower Ohio and Miami Valleys," and the idea of incorporation faced little resistance with almost unanimous support from residents and the company. The new suburb was called "New Miami," in praise of the resources of the Miami River Valley.⁷³

Citrus Production in California's Central Valley

The Homestead Act of May 1862 sent pioneers across the country as the Federal Government directed monumental flows of capital westward in the form of "free" land for homesteading families. But these were generally small, one family farms for subsistence, not export. It was mechanization of farm implements that kicked off the transformation of American agriculture from family enterprise into big business, resulting in the United States' continuing role as the world's largest food exporter. As the population expanded westward, the number and land area of farms increased from two million and 160 million hectares in 1860 to 6 million and 352 million hectares in 1900. While many of these were still small operations, technological advances were allowing farmers to expand their planting and harvest areas.⁷⁴ The vast expanses of the Great Plains certainly saw some of this early shift toward industrialized agriculture, but as Alan Olmstead has alleged, nowhere was export-oriented, large-scale farming more pronounced than in California. The migratory stream spurred by the Gold Rush in the 1860s brought with it a new demand for food, and as prospectors became discouraged by lessening yields, some turned to farming as a new wealth generator. The state's unique climate and economic organization lent themselves to bigger tracts and mechanistic innovation.⁷⁵

Initially this innovation was applied to grain farming, and much of California agricultural acreage was devoted to varieties of wheat. Poor, short-sighted farming techniques

resulted in loss of soil and seed quality at the same time as competition from international exporting regions drove down the price of the crop, though, and by the late nineteenth century wheat had all but collapsed to be replaced by a burgeoning business in fruit, nuts, and other specialty produce. Grapes, almonds, olives, and deciduous fruits like peaches and plums were among the many choice crops produced, but it was citrus, particularly oranges, that captured the national imagination.

Citrus required a particular climate—substantial sun, moisture, permeable soil, very little cold or frost—to thrive, and southern California at the periphery of Los Angeles promised that. After citrus rancher Joseph Wolfskill sent a railroad car full of undamaged navel oranges to the Midwest, citrus groves grew exponentially, eventually taking up more than 13,000 acres of land in Los Angeles County.⁷⁶ In a sense, the profitability of orange cultivation around LA may have contributed to its eventual demise in that location: the promise of wealth, sun, and leisure promised by the enticing orange exports drew thousands of immigrants to California, adding to a real estate boom that eventually pushed orange growers out of the outskirts of Los Angeles.⁷⁷

But the demand for oranges across the United States had already been cultivated, especially in the urban markets of the East, and risk-taking investors had begun to consider the Central Valley as a prime location for citrus horticulture. By 1906, *Sunset* magazine was talking about the “third epoch” in the history of orange ranching in California: “...the extensive planting of the navel tree in Kern, Tulare, Fresno, Merced and Madera counties, where fully 400,000 trees are being planted in the central foothill district.” The writer went on to proclaim, “This is the gold that brings safe and sure returns for labor and time expended—a young orange grove in the Porterville District.”⁷⁸

The benefits of orange ranching to the new Central Valley resident were not merely financial. In his book *Trees in Paradise*, Farmer notes, “...citriculture promised agriculture with amenities. Orange ranchers didn’t work all day in the field; managing a grove required more business acumen than heavy labor...Best of all, growers acquired social capital when they invested in citrus. As one Orange County resident recalled,

‘Father was a farmer when he started out but when he got an orange grove, well, then he became a rancher.’”⁷⁹ Elmer Sheridan certainly had this vision in mind as he was selling ten to twenty acre tracts to prospective orange growers; his advertisement for the land proclaimed “We own 6,000 acres of the best citrus land in the state...where oranges are ripe and ready for Thanksgiving trade, and in a rich and prosperous community where 20 acres, well cared for, will make the owner rich.”⁸⁰ This statement was borne out in the profits of Southern California growers who earned a total of \$40 million in return on investment in 1913.⁸¹

The government and large landholding companies like the Southern Pacific Railway used the caché and profitability of citrus to entice investors from the opposite coast and the Midwest to purchase land for orange groves. Pamphlets and promotional literature guaranteed, “fruits, including oranges, limes, lemons, berries, etc., grow to perfection and in great abundance.”⁸² Readers were clearly swayed by these enticing images; from only 30,000 in 1870, the number of orange trees in all of California grew to ten million in 1930. Orange Cove primarily attracted buyers who were already in California, some of whom were experienced orange cultivators from Whittier, Los Angeles, and Dinuba, impressed by the quality of the land and climate.⁸³

“Citrus suburbs” as Sheridan likely envisioned Orange Cove, had an established historical precedent in Southern California. A group of investors would buy a large plot of land, divide it into 10 acre farms, sell these to orange growers, then level and develop a planned townsite complete with desirable amenities, creating an attractive juxtaposition of urban and rural characteristics.⁸⁴ Orange Cove followed a similar trajectory. By May of 1914 when the town was officially founded, more than 100 people resided on the site in varying forms of permanence including tents, shacks, houses and barns as landowners gradually established themselves. But despite the varied living conditions, Orange Cove was created for landed and affluent ranchers and the middle class business owners who provided them with services—not for the workers picking and packing the fruit. Lots had to be purchased from Sheridan’s real estate company and homes then constructed using wood from the local lumber yard, a process that

required an income greater than the minimal wages farm workers received.⁸⁵ Moreover, farm workers in the Central Valley were mostly migratory, following the crops as they matured and living in camps or worker housing along the way.⁸⁶

Copper and the Southern Arizona Mining Districts

With agriculture and transportation, mining quickly became one of the country's foundational sectors, supplying both fuel to power other industries and metal to produce goods. Coal and copper led as the key industrial inputs extracted from the ground, although gold and silver received more attention for their quick riches. Demand for copper inspired forays into copper mining in the United States as early as the colonial period in a number of settlements along the East Coast, but it wasn't until just before and during the Civil War that U.S. ventures became successful enough to result in a significant drop of copper imports. Michigan was the first flagstone state for the copper industry in the US – between 1867 and 1869 alone the famous Calumet and Hecla mines in the Michigan copper district went from producing 675 to 6,150 tons of the metal per year, transforming the sector. The state produced about 75 percent of the nation's copper during the majority of years from 1847 to 1880.⁸⁷

At the same time, the process of industrialization in the U.S. had transformed the U.S. market for the metal. As rapid technological advances in electricity were widely adopted and new inventions created, copper's capability as a semi-conductor led to substantial growth in demand for products like copper wire and cable.⁸⁸ U.S. consumption of copper subsequently grew from 12,000 tons in 1870 to 95,000 tons in 1890.⁸⁹ And in an upward cycle, advances in electricity technology made possible new extraction techniques that increased copper yields. But Michigan's supply was finite; as it showed signs of waning, investors began to focus on new mining sites.

Arizona was the new mining frontier for those most precious of metals, gold and silver. It was, in fact, large-scale silver rushes during the 1860s and 1870s that eventually brought attention to the rich copper resources that came to dominate the mining

industry in the state. Four major districts were the main sources of the mineral until three others were added in 1890. By 1900, Arizona's copper claims were third in production after Michigan and Butte, Montana, and became the first after 1910, producing almost half of all copper output in the U.S.⁹⁰

The 1910s were opportune years for growing a copper mining company. Although William Boyce Thompson had purchased the Magma mine early in the decade, it was not until the beginning of World War I generated high demand for copper to use in European arms manufacturing that he became serious about mining operations.⁹¹ Over the decade Magma invested in rail and power lines and continued to deepen the mineshaft, gaining more access to the rich copper veins. Interestingly, the Magma Copper Company was expanding in the early 1920s just when Charles Hyde, copper historian, suggests in hindsight that the copper industry overall in the United States was starting a slow decline that would take decades.⁹² Emerging from the post-war recession of 1921, Magma upgraded its railroad to a standard gauge and made the decision to further integrate operations by adding a smelter, a move that provided the company with a substantial return on investment.⁹³

Thompson by that point had made millions "bringing eastern money to western mines," and although his interests were in mining, his schemes were more of the Wall Street variety.⁹⁴ To manage his stock trading activities, he set up his own investment house in 1916 that acted much like a mutual fund. He named the company Newmont, after his New York success and his Montana roots, but its origins were relatively small with capital of about \$500,000. Five years later, he reincorporated Newmont as a corporation capitalized at \$8 million, and then in 1925, dissatisfied with its status as a holding company, Thompson went public with the Newmont Mining Corporation, with a portfolio of \$20 million in six oil and mining firms, selling shares in an IPO starting at \$40. Newmont had diverse ties and remained somewhat independent from Magma until mid-century, not adding Magma shares to its portfolio until 1928, and only fifteen percent of its shares at that.⁹⁵

The upgrade of the railroad and construction of the smelter ushered in a period of growth for Superior. From 50 in the early 1910s, Magma employed hundreds of men as bosses, miners, smelters, and railroad workers. Other mines were being discovered throughout the area, and entrepreneurs established hotels, general stores, blacksmith shops and taverns in Superior to meet the needs of the growing number of miners.⁹⁶ As the town's population increased, the Magma Company contributed to its physical development in ways that created immediate class distinctions. Houses were generally built for supervisors and bosses, while lower level employees lived in tents or shacks. Mine or "jigger" bosses, as they were known, lived in the northeast part of town, a neighborhood that became known as "Jiggerville," while smelter foremen had homes around the smelter to the west. Magma also invested in a hospital and recreational club as amenities for its employees.⁹⁷

But the townspeople were not just physically separated by type of mine employment. Copper mining was expanding with railroads across Arizona, and like the railroads, mining companies sought low-wage workers among the Mexican immigrant population. In the earlier days of the 1860s, miners from Mexico worked in skilled positions given their knowledge of mining practices, but white workers from the U.S. and Europe dominated those jobs by the 1880s. The need for workers was so great that firms would contract with *enganchadores*, labor companies who recruited displaced rural farmers from Mexico to travel by rail through El Paso and then on to the southern Arizona copper mines. Mexican workers made up most of the labor forces of the various mines and subsequently also substantial shares of the population in many mining towns. In Superior, as in most other settlements, Mexican and Anglo residents were segregated "into two communities--the upper east end called 'American Town,' and the western end called 'Mexican Town,'" a practice initiated and enforced in housing and community activities by the mining companies themselves.⁹⁸

Specialized Suburbs within Diversified Regions

The remaining two suburbs in the study also demonstrated patterns of specialization, but they did not form a part of a regional system associated with a particular industry. Rather, College Park and Greenport were largely products of the expansion of a nearby metropolis and as such their specializations formed in relation to the needs of the city and in tandem with its growth. Both of the metropolitan areas encircling these suburbs have been growth poles for decades with highly diversified urban centers. College Park sits close to Atlanta's border while Greenport is much farther from New York, but their siting within the metropolitan area has been less important than the influence of the city on their development.

A Taste of Atlanta: College Park as an "Educational Suburb"

As an interior city in the south, Atlanta was a product of railroads. The convergence by 1854 of four separate lines linking the city to all parts of the United States started Atlanta on its path as a transportation hub. Although the destruction of the Civil War required a massive reconstruction effort, Atlanta quickly reestablished itself as the commercial and transportation center for the entire southern region, fixing its rail connections and adding new rail lines. When industrial activity in the cotton and textile sectors was added to the economic mix in the 1880s, the confluence of transport, commerce, and industry provided a foundation for rapid population growth at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁹⁹

From 1900 to 1930 Atlanta residents tripled in number from 90,000 to 270,000. Landlocked and with no natural features to constrain its development, the metropolitan area expanded spatially as well, as the city annexed land and residential suburbs emerged, first along railway and streetcar lines and then farther out with the advance of the automobile. Long before the suburban exodus of the 1950s, middle and upper class Atlantans were streaming to enclaves outside of the city, pushed out by extensive commercial development in formerly residential downtown neighborhoods, a housing

shortage related to the population influx and rising costs during World War I, and, in many cases, resistance to a growing black community. By 1930, the populations of Fulton and DeKalb counties surrounding Atlanta had also almost tripled in size from 1900.

In the Jim Crow South, discrimination against African-Americans was always a contributing factor to the trajectories of urban spatial development. Faced with untenable conditions in the rural south, millions of blacks were making their way north as part of the Great Migration, and Atlanta was one destination city. Atlanta's Black population almost tripled from 1900 to 1930, rising from 26,000 to 90,000. But particularly after the race riots of 1906 when dozens of African-Americans were killed by white mobs, blacks were generally not among the current moving to the new Atlanta suburbs, with the exception of servants.¹⁰⁰

The growth of Atlanta's early suburbs was closely tied to the development of the city, and College Park was no different. Over the same three decades, College Park's population change outpaced Atlanta's, rising from 450 to 6,600, although without the African-American presence. Cox College and Georgia Military Academy were strong attractors, and College Park's boosters focused on presenting it as an "educational suburb"—cultured and sophisticated, but not exorbitantly wealthy.¹⁰¹ Charles Cox even renamed the east-west streets after Ivy League colleges in the United States to reinforce the cultured air the suburb desired to present. An 1897 promotional pamphlet proclaimed,

"But the social life of the town is its especial charm. Everybody belongs to the *four hundred*, nobody is a 'purse-proud plutocrat,' and nobody the victim of 'dire poverty.' No invidious social distinctions are drawn, and none will be, as long as the present high personnel of the community continues, with every man a gentleman and every woman a lady. Indiscriminate immigration is not encouraged, and only desirable families are welcomed. No efforts are being made to 'encourage enterprises.' College park is strictly a residence place, and iridescent offers are not being held out to promoters by the town."¹⁰²

Sentiments were similar in the 1930s, when the suburb's civic association promoted the town by lauding itself as home to some of the "choicest individuals of the state as well as men of national importance" and celebrating its lack of manufacturing enterprises.¹⁰³ Although College Park always had a small downtown, the town focused on building its educational and residential reputation and relied on Atlanta for employment and commercial needs, increasing its dependence on the city over time.¹⁰⁴

Rum and Oysters for New York City

The expansion of New York from Manhattan to the boroughs to the broader metropolitan area was momentous enough to almost constitute its own development wave. Port, center of finance, industry, commerce, immigration destination; New York's location and assets made it a repository for every type of migrant and capital flow. Every location within reasonable traveling distance from New York was drawn into its network, whether as a residential district or an interconnected economic market. The development of Long Island, and Greenport by extension, was bound up in the economic and spatial expansion of the City.

Although the trunk line of the Long Island Railroad, following on the original intent to link New York to Boston, had been short-sightedly laid straight through the sparsely inhabited center of the Island and away from the coastal settlements, and although it was ultimately obsolete as a transportation passage to Boston, the LIRR did serve the purpose of connecting the whole of the Island to Manhattan. As the railroad added branch lines, new neighborhoods across the Island opened up as commuter suburbs, at first more densely closer to the city, but then spreading east. In addition, the agricultural and marine products of Long Island now had a new easily accessible and vast urban market.¹⁰⁵

Greenport, as one of the few settlements on the Island to have an LIRR station when the line was completed in 1844, quickly took advantage of the new opportunities transport provided. With its accessible harbor and proximity to Connecticut, Greenport

continued to develop as both a center for maritime industry as well as a key trading hub. Population followed suit. From 600 in the 1840s, Greenport's population rose to 2000 in the late 1860s and then 2300 in 1880, while more than 5,000 ships per year were visiting the harbor and 97 fish processing plants employed 2,800 workers.¹⁰⁶ The turn of the century brought more prosperity to Greenport. Shipbuilding and fishing were thriving, and the coastal freight trade out of this port town remained robust.

Menhaden was still a staple industry buoying up Greenport's economy. But two markets directly connected to New York City drove the village's development in early twentieth century: oysters and liquor. In the 1800s, New York and oysters were almost synonymous; people traveled to the city just to sample the tasty bivalve. Cheap and abundant, oysters were enjoyed by the poor and the rich alike as street food or succulent entrees, making New York City "for an entire century the world's oyster capital."¹⁰⁷ Early on the city supplied itself out of the ample oyster beds in the New York Harbor, but as demand grew and the natural beds were stripped, the increasingly voracious market supplemented itself with oyster supplies from Long Island and Connecticut. Greenport entered the oyster industry relatively late, in 1884 after the Suffolk County Oyster Commission won the deed for the land under the Peconic Bay from New York State. Captain James Monroe Monsell was Greenport's first oyster entrepreneur, planting them first at Pipe's Neck and then organizing the Greenport Oyster Company before 1885.¹⁰⁸ The sector was lauded as "the 'backbone' of Greenport's future" and would provide employment until the mid-1900s.¹⁰⁹ Eventually, 14 oyster companies were operating out of Greenport, shipping two and a half million oysters a year at a value of \$4 million in 1936. Harvesting oysters also required a host of other supporting industries including specialized equipment, boats, and ice.¹¹⁰

The Prohibition era put Greenport on the map and led to wide scale good fortune. With its plentiful bays and inlets and reputation as a transport hub, from 1920 to 1933 bootlegging became an easy way for residents to increase their incomes. Greenport rum-runners had no lack of demand with one of the largest liquor markets in the country at its back door. About one-third of the illegal alcohol that entered the U.S. during this

time did so through “Rum Row,” a series of ships anchored near the maritime limit, three miles off the coast. The New Jersey section of the row, considered the most active, was just south of Long Island, and Greenport was a popular entry point for the contraband given its connection to the main road through Long Island direct to the City. The participation in the illegal activities was so widespread that during the 1920s there was almost no unemployment in the town.¹¹¹

CONCLUSIONS

By the early 1920s, each of these suburbs was well established around a primary function related to its spatial setting either within a highly specialized region or in a large, diversified metropolitan area, and had begun to attract residents interested in the maintenance of its function. Each place presented a business prospect, and entrepreneurial individuals, most often with influence and means, took advantage of those opportunities for profit-making, sometimes but not always with the intent of founding a town. It was the success of these risk-taking activities that lured more people and more capital in a cumulative progression that cemented the suburbs’ specializations, which in turn contributed to further economic development. Global and national economic trends supported rather than undermined these processes as the U.S. economy expanded and integrated.

The suburbs tended to grow fairly continually in population in their early decades, either in response to employment opportunities or amenities associated with their primary functions. These opportunities and amenities, along with regional location, were determinants of the sub-populations that made the suburbs their homes and also of the levels of affluence of each place. New Miami and Superior were industrial towns with economic hierarchies influenced by race and ethnic background. Greenport’s hierarchy was broader, as commercial trade to the New York and international markets offered numerous opportunities for economic advancement but new low-income immigrants maintained the existence of a lower class. College Park and Orange Cove were initially

relatively affluent, although Orange Cove was also home to a number of poorer farm workers in addition to its wealthy orange ranchers.

Each suburb currently bears visible traces of its origins and early history, but within new contexts. This reality points to the durability of the impact of baseline conditions and the subsequent deposits left by early population and investment flows into and out of suburbs, but also suggests that these effects do not infinitely reproduce themselves over time. That is, these places were not “locked in” to an upward economic trajectory based on the fruitful ventures occurring early in their development. The following chapter demonstrates how succeeding waves of urbanization and technological change shifted the centers of balance for the case suburbs, setting flows in motion that altered their socioeconomic paths.

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8 THE SEEDS OF DISEQUILIBRIUM

The five suburbs of the previous chapter moved through the 1920s in relative stability, each with a primary specialization supported by continuing investment and population growth—Superior with its copper mine, Orange Cove and citrus ranching, Greenport and maritime ventures, College park as a residential center with an educational flavor, New Miami with its coke and steel activities. But the wave of early industrialization was ending, and a new wave—one characterized by the widespread application of mass production techniques, the effects of the Depression and World War II, and the post-war boom—was setting in motion new flows which would again reshape the American landscape. In general, the streams of money and people generated by this wave tended to reinforce the previous economic patterns that had developed in the individual suburb and in the region in which it was embedded, while also leaving layers of settlement and investment that would affect the direction of flows in the future.

In every suburb discussed, however, the global reorienting starting in the 1960s and 1970s, characterized by expanding trade patterns and a shift toward a knowledge-oriented economy, led to a pronounced shift in its socioeconomic trajectory. This disruption took one of two main forms: either the industries that formed the economic base of the suburbs contracted, eliminating steady employment, affecting incomes, and jeopardizing the tax base; or low-income residents moved in while those with higher incomes moved out, with similar effects. In both cases, as the years progressed the suburbs developed larger concentrations of poor households, reaching the income or poverty cut-offs that qualified them for inclusion in this study.

In this chapter, I continue to disaggregate the population and capital flows into and out of each suburb throughout the two long waves in question, tracing their demographic, economic, and physical impacts as people and businesses settle and uproot. The findings suggest that separate from poverty concentrations, the fiscal capacity and future growth potential of each suburb is related to the level of specialization or diversification of its surroundings. In addition, the typological categories of poor suburbs

appear to be fairly fluid; the unbundling and diversion of a sub-flow of people or capital was the only dividing line between one type of poor suburb and another.

SOLIDIFYING SPECIALIZATIONS IN THE ERA OF MASS PRODUCTION

The years from the late 1920s to the 1960s were a period of great upheaval followed by a decade or more of stable economic growth. Both the Depression and World War II challenged the US financial and production systems and spurred some spatial reorganization of the labor market, raising competition among places for scarce resources and heightening the potential for uneven regional and local development.

Paramount during this period was the capital that poured from the Federal government launching or supporting a range of projects. These public investments were in tandem with and compounded by the economic stimulus of the War, which strengthened major manufacturing and extractive industries and allowed them to emerge in the late 1940s with increased profit-making capabilities. At the same time, the principles of efficiency embodied in the mass production model were being broadly applied across industries, lowering costs, facilitating industry growth, and maintaining opportunities for middle-skilled workers. Each case benefited during this era from the outcomes of government-funded projects or the effects of corporate expansion, or in some circumstances, both.

Flows of Government Capital

The hand of the Federal Government in the early establishment of the national economy was clear in the construction of the transcontinental railroads and other transport infrastructure such as canals and riverways, and in support for major industries during World War I. In the succeeding era, however, public investment became a more prevalent tool for advancement as different administrations responded to the needs of the Depression, demand for resources during the Second World War, and the subsequent revitalization of the U.S. economy. For the five case suburbs, if government investment through railroads and industry financing had been important in their origins, it was equally important for their development and stabilization.

As a number of scholars have pointed out, the imprint of federal spending from 1930 to 1960 is clear in the Western United States, with the legacy of projects like the Hoover Dam and investments in the defense aircraft industry and other military installations along the Pacific Coast.¹ But over this period the government also made massive expenditures, either directly or through financing, on nation-wide schemes such as the highway system, lower-cost suburban housing, and commercial aviation. Defense contracts during World War II, the Korean War, and the build up to the Cold War, while often directed toward the West, were also distributed to other businesses throughout the country, resulting in benefits for the companies' hometowns.

Public funds were plentiful, though finite; the question was how to secure or benefit from them. Government agencies made decisions on funding allocations based on a range of priorities and sources of information, but they were not immune to public pressure. Suburbs succeeded in attracting public flows of capital for several interlinked reasons: their locations were strategically optimal; previous development had created conditions ripe for new investment; and/or influential leaders successfully advocated for funds for projects related to their interests. In some cases, drawing government capital was a short-term boon, while in others it represented the difference between growth and decline.

Irrigation and the Central Valley Project

The Central Valley, with its open land, fertile soil, and abundant sunshine, had been the perfect region for the expansion of California industrial agriculture except for one major factor: water. The level of annual precipitation, while not altogether negligible, was more suited for maintaining grass and rangelands than for water-intensive farming. It was, after all, a semi-desert.² Early valley agriculturalists had managed to overcome that particular struggle by pumping the seemingly infinite stores of unregulated groundwater after the centrifugal pump was invented—the number of pump wells in the San Joaquin Valley rose from 5,000 in 1910 to 23,500 in 1930. But by the 1930s, the aquifer was

diminishing rapidly. In Tulare County, for example, farmers used about 800,000 acre-feet per year, while only 300,000 acre-feet were replenished by precipitation.³

At the beginning of the Depression, the thought of losing the wealth that was California agriculture was unimaginable. First proposed by the California legislature and then taken over by the Federal Bureau of Reclamation, the Central Valley Project—ultimately one of the biggest public works projects in the world—was intended to bring irrigation water from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers to at least two million acres of farmland while presumably providing jobs to those desolated by the Depression.⁴ The Project directed massive government subsidies to the Central Valley. Not only did it cost \$3.6 billion to construct, farmers were given contracts allowing them to purchase water at artificially low prices that would not support operation costs, let alone part of the construction costs that farmers had contracted to repay over 50 years. Moreover, this slow repayment has happened without interest charges for the agricultural water users.⁵ This financing scheme may have been a reasonable approach to take with smaller farmers during the Depression, and in fact originally water users were to be limited to irrigation for 160 acres of land under Federal regulations. President Roosevelt and his Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes were committed, at least by 1943, to enforcing the acreage limit, but upon the start of the Truman administration and the resignation of Ickes, large landowners were allowed to skirt the limit through a number of loopholes supported by the Reclamation Bureau.⁶

The fear of running out of groundwater was palpable in Orange Cove. As one local historian noted, the level of the “subterranean lake” that once allowed the agriburb some of the cheapest irrigation water in the area had fallen substantially, leaving orange ranchers dependent on small underground flows. Digging deeper wells was problematic because of a granite ledge 100 to 200 feet below ground level that made drilling prohibitively expensive.⁷ The news of the water project thrilled Orange Cove ranchers, not least because the 1933 plans indicated that a major aqueduct channeling water from the proposed Friant Dam to Tulare, Fresno, and Kern counties was aligned through a corner of the townsite.⁸

Orange Cove growers sought inclusion immediately. Until that point growers in the area had been affiliated through the Orange Cove Citrus Association established in 1916, but water issues had not yet led them to set up one of the state-controlled cooperative irrigation districts that so many other California farmers had developed.⁹ However, Elmer Sheridan and other growers had connections with James Burke, a lawyer in Visalia who was on the Governor's Water Commission. Burke urged Sheridan to set up an irrigation district in order to contract with the Water Authority of the CVP, and offered his services in setting up the entity. Sheridan was appointed chairman, and the district boundaries were determined in 1935.¹⁰ The members of the district would engage in frequent meetings with the Reclamation Bureau over the years as the project's timeline extended, first because of the difficulty of negotiating land takings and then because of a shortage of money and labor during the war years.¹¹ Although the Friant Dam was completed in 1942, construction on the canal did not start until 1946, finishing in 1951.

From its founding the town had grown slowly by intention; in one interview Sheridan noted "We don't anticipate any great big boom in Orange Cove town lots, nor would we welcome such a condition...we will gladly do anything in our power to promote Orange Cove's growth along sane lines, but are not disposed to try to force its growth..." Indeed, by 1931 it was home to just over 200 people, 117 identified as farmers, ranchers, or orange growers, 35 holding jobs as laborers, and the remainder employed in middle-class service jobs from teacher to blacksmith.¹² But news of the canal kick-started Orange Cove's rapid growth that would continue to today. Even Sheridan began to use the Central Valley project to draw new residents in the 1940s, proclaiming in a newspaper ad for his real estate company, "It seems the work in progress on the Fifteen Million Dollar Friant Dam, and apparent certainty of the construction of the Friant-Kern Canal through Orange Cove, should stimulate a desire to own property here while it can be had for very low cost and at YOUR terms."¹³ Growth inspired housing construction, community improvements and a push for incorporation, and by the time the town formally incorporated in 1948, the population was estimated at about 2,500.¹⁴

Aviation and the Atlanta Airport

As with every other countrywide transportation system, the federal government had its hands in the development of national aviation. First a function of the U.S. Postal Service intended to facilitate mail carriage, the commercial airline industry expanded with the technological developments of World War I. Initially the federal government's main role was in safety regulations through the Air Commerce Act of 1926 and development and maintenance of airports was left to local authorities, but by the Depression years Roosevelt's administration was establishing federal funding programs, like the Development of Civil Landing Areas Program, that would create employment opportunities for those out of work. The administration formalized and expanded these types of aviation initiatives through the 1938 Civil Aeronautics Act, which set up the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA) to control air transportation regulation and authorized spending federal funds on airport construction projects that would increase landing areas.

The Second World War provided the impetus for continued federally-supported expansion of the U.S. airline industry and the airport system, and the technological advances during the war allowed air travel to become a mainstream travel mode. As demand increased once the war was over, Congress and the Truman administration passed the Federal Airport Act of 1946, which created a National Airport Plan and instituted a program of Federal Aid to Airports (FAAP). Under this Act, the federal government would provide close to \$1.2 billion to build new runways at facilities across the country before 1970.¹⁵

The Atlanta airport, now the busiest in the world, was one of the first facilities in the national system. As the push for air travel intensified after the successful use of aviation during World War I, Atlanta's leaders began the process of selecting their first airfield site to enhance the city's role as the South's transportation hub. The old Atlanta speedway, built in 1909 by Coca-Cola mogul Asa Candler, was one of the flattest sites near the city and already somewhat developed. It also happened to be almost adjacent

to College Park. By 1925 the 287 acre site was under a five year lease to the city and received its first airmail flight in 1926 on one of the first nationally approved routes.¹⁶ The Atlanta airport struggled for financing through its early years but was one of the first to benefit from WPA money after Roosevelt came into office, receiving close to \$1 million in investment by the end of 1933 and another half a million by 1935 through the persistent efforts of airport manager Jack Gray. But it was the election of Mayor William Hartsfield in 1937 that would push forward future airport expansion with the assistance of government funds. Hartsfield made it his mission to grow Atlanta's position as a transportation center through air travel. In his first year as Mayor, he doggedly lobbied Congress to pass the Civil Aeronautics Act that would facilitate government expenditure on airport expansion, eventually enacted in 1938. As one observer noted, "[Hartsfield] had the biggest ears and fastest feet I've ever seen. If he heard that there was some money that Atlanta might get for the airport, or some other project, he would get himself or someone else up to Washington and convince them that the money should come here."¹⁷

The suburb of College Park and the adjacent airport remained separate through the 1930s, but at the beginning of World War II, when it was first named "the nation's busiest airport in terms of flight operations," city officials including Hartsfield, responding to pressure to expand the airport or face flight restrictions from the CAA, began to push College Park's boundaries. Taking their request for eminent domain powers to the Georgia Supreme Court in 1940, the City was allowed to purchase 140 acres of land from College Park, and then went on in 1943 and 1944 to acquire almost 800 more acres of other surrounding land to double the size of the airport.¹⁸ Although this encroachment did not have an immediate negative effect on the suburb, it was only one of many such takings. Through the 1940s and 1950s, demand for air travel through the country's busiest airport grew so quickly that the city could barely keep up; in 1948 flights were moved to a temporary terminal constructed from a surplus war hangar to continue operations. College Park was growing as well, and it would not be long before the airport's needs would begin to overshadow the well-being of the suburb.

Shipbuilding Contracts for Greenport

The WPA program sent Federal capital in various forms to specific locations around the country, but it was World War II defense spending that would stimulate the economy into full recovery and, by some accounts, contribute to reshaping the American regional landscape. The Federal government contributed about 65 percent of the \$26 billion expansion in national industrial capacity during the war years, largely in the industries of aircraft, shipbuilding, and arms. Deploying this capital toward the West and the Southeast resulted in transformative and well-documented growth in those regions that continued through the arms race of the Cold War, but the Northeast was also a recipient of significant defense spending in the early 1940s. In fact, New York received 11 percent of prime defense contracts during World War II, beating out California at eight percent. And the New York City region was second in investments only to San Francisco's metropolitan area in shipbuilding and the Chicago area in aircraft parts.¹⁹

In part because of its links to New York, prosperity in Greenport had continued through the Depression. When most of the country was in desperate straits, Greenport's production and commerce in oysters and other commercial fishing endeavors peaked. Federal defense spending strengthened another key maritime sector in Greenport's economy: shipbuilding. Since the whaling era, the village had been a center for ship construction and repair, and by the 1930s five active shipyards were providing these services for Long Island businesses.²⁰ But World War II defense contracts expanded that reach. Its location, reputation as a ship-building center, and railroad links made Greenport an employment hub for defense workers during World War II. Shipyards in the village began accepting Navy shipbuilding contracts as early as December of 1940 and expanding their facilities to meet demand. Most famously, because of a small contract it fulfilled for the Army in 1938 and 1939 and a winning design it submitted to a Navy ship prototype competition, the Greenport Basin and Construction Company was one of the first shipyards to receive wartime contracts from the Navy, and built a fleet of

135-foot YMS minesweepers excluding metal from their hulls in order to circumvent magnetic mines. GB & C became one of the largest shipbuilding firms on the eastern seaboard, ultimately constructing more than 450 warships from 1941 to 1945 including smaller minesweepers and harbor tugs.²¹

Workers began to flow in from other parts of Long Island and beyond. From about 150 in 1939, GB & C alone grew to more than 1,200 employees over the war period.²² The New York Times warned that Suffolk County “would face a real emergency if any large importation of defense workers to man the rapidly expanding industrial plants in the Bethpage-Farmingdale and Greenport areas should occur,” and in response Federal defense capital moved private housing development flows.²³ As early as December 1941 the Federal Housing Administration was insuring loans on a new development—called “Fleetfield” after sponsor Clarence Fleet of Fleet Lumber Company—in anticipation of future population growth. More of these developments followed throughout the war.²⁴ The village also became one of the first to receive 50 temporary “demountable” housing units under Roosevelt’s Federal Work Agency program.²⁵

Growth of Manufacturing and Extractive Industries

Industrial agriculture in California had been shored up by major federal expenditures, most notably on an irrigation system that would add millions of acres into productive use. But two other major sectors—steel and mining—had also dealt with contraction during the Depression. Smaller ventures succumbed to the economic pressure, whereas some of the more powerful or more successful corporations faced substantial losses but managed to remain intact through the 1930s. Those that survived became the main suppliers for the wartime demand for raw materials to be used in shipbuilding, aircraft, and armaments, among other products.

Indirectly, the Federal Government became the steel and mining industries’ biggest customer during the war. To grow production capacity, it created financing mechanisms to increase manufacturing of military equipment. Almost a decade earlier, Congress had

approved the creation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) to make business loans during the Depression. Prior to the U.S. entrance into the Second World War, the Defense Plant Corporation (DPC) was established under the RFC to facilitate constructing new plants and upgrading older ones. By 1945 when it was dissolved, the DPC was responsible for financing 2,300 projects across the country for a total of \$9 billion in industries ranging from basic inputs like steel to aircraft construction.²⁶

The post-war economic expansion offered some opportunities for growth and expansion in these sectors. The automotive and construction industries, spurred by the growing highway system and the boom and formation of suburbs themselves, emerged as major consumers of steel and its associated inputs of coal and iron. Copper mining hit a prosperous period after the war until the early 1960s when prices and supply were high, demand spurred by the start of the Korean War and then the Cold War. Continuing subsidies by the RFC allowed for the development of new mines that would have been too risky for traditional financing options.²⁷

“We all Grow with Armco:” Steel Stability in New Miami

Armco’s investment in research and subsequent innovations in the 1920s had served the company well. By 1930 it had tripled its steel production from a decade before through improved technology and strategic mergers and was in a good position to face down the coming Depression, actually increasing its market share and expanding its production during some of the leanest years of the downturn. In its continuing quest to integrate operations, Armco bought out the shares in the Hamilton blast furnaces in New Miami owned by its partner, the Kopper Company, bringing all of the steel-related enterprises in the suburb under its ownership by 1936 and leading Hamilton’s mayor to proclaim that “something of great consequence had happened in connection with the future business development of not only our city but this region.”²⁸ A subsequent \$1 million expansion of the New Miami blast furnaces just a year later supported this prediction.²⁹

In addition to incorporation in 1929, Armco's interest in New Miami propelled other development. By 1930 the population was almost 1,300, and new homes were being constructed to house workers. Supporting commercial enterprises including five general stores, filling stations, a concrete block plant and a gravel company met the needs of residents and industry alike. And the additional tax revenue allowed for a community improvement plan including the installation of a water system.³⁰

In general, the years that Armco ran the coke plant and blast furnaces in New Miami were stable and prosperous, if dominated by company patriarchy. Jobs were plentiful; in the 1940s and 1950s, Armco employed about 6,000 workers, and in conjunction with other steel-related industries created half of the jobs in the Middletown, New Miami, and Hamilton area.³¹ During the Second World War, the demand for steel for shipbuilding, aircraft, and arms was so intense that the company could barely keep up, but with funds from the Federal DPC it did build a new plant in Houston. After the war, however, Armco began upgrading its facilities across the board. An investment in New Miami's coke ovens in 1946 brought employment at the plant to more than 600 people, while a major expansion to the Middletown Works in the late 1960s bumped all local employment up to 8,000.³² The company also continued aggressively integrating its operations, purchasing shares in coal and iron mines as well as manufacturers of other steel inputs. As a result, its market share rose from four to six percent from 1950 to 1970, and it became the sixth largest U.S. steel producer.³³

The company's 1950's slogan, "We all grow with Armco," reflected its stated intent to treat workers fairly and invest in its local communities. As the first steel company to implement the eight-hour day, Armco was generally viewed as a magnanimous employer. Its leadership poured some of the company's abundance into Middletown, Hamilton, and New Miami, making large donations to fund civic improvements such as libraries and hospitals, helping to promote social and recreational programs like the Boy Scouts, and providing public parks.³⁴

Copper risk-taking and Steadiness in Superior

The Magma Copper Company came out of the 1920s as an established, respected mining firm. But on top of the woes of low copper prices during the Depression, Newmont's leaders were unsure of Magma's value. Newmont was pursuing the more profitable gold sector, and Colonel Thompson had died in 1930—Magma had always been his pet project; he had built a home outside of Superior and set up an expansive arboretum. But even Thompson had indicated before his death that his family should sell Magma, thinking the copper veins were nearing exhaustion. Alexander McNab, a metallurgist who had started running production at Magma in 1914 and had risen to become Vice President, sat on Newmont's board, had always felt that Magma held more potential, and by keeping costs low, the company managed to avoid a complete shut down through the Depression, idling workers for months at a time but always restarting operations.³⁵

Copper prices rose and production soared for the war effort, pushing off any decisions on Magma's future. But as the war ended and copper production costs began to increase, the age of the mine's equipment began to show. McNab authorized capital investments for upgrades and also commissioned new studies of ore concentrations taken up by John Gustafson, one of Newmont's contracted geologists. This investigation yielded findings of new ore reserves around the Superior mine that would help to accelerate production.³⁶

Gustafson played an even larger role in the explosive post war growth of Magma that would solidify the company's position but would eventually negatively shift Superior's fortunes. Just after McNab brought him to Superior in 1944, he came across a report on a nearby prospective copper mining property, the San Manuel claims, that had several times been offered to and rejected by Magma since 1941 on the basis of inadequate appraisal by an engineer rather than a geologist. On a hunch, he toured the property, and upon finding it to be "one of the best raw prospects I ever encountered," he contacted McNab for permission to acquire the claims for Magma.³⁷ Securing the land

was relatively easy, but finding the \$100 million in financing necessary for exploration and preparation of the mine took eight more years, during which time McNab became president of Magma. Eventually, exhausting a number of other options, in 1952 the company negotiated a \$94 million federal loan from the RFC—the largest loan it had given to date—to develop the mine and construct a mill and smelter.³⁸

Once mining began, the San Manuel claim proved itself to be a major asset to Magma, producing 60,000 tons of copper per year—more than twice the amount Superior offered.³⁹ This fact was not lost on the president of the Newmont Corporation, who now looked at the Magma as an asset in the company's portfolio with significant growth potential. Overriding some concerns from members of the Board, Newmont acquired more than 80 percent of shares in Magma in 1962. Exploration leading to the effective doubling of the San Manuel orebody several years later motivated Newmont to purchase the remaining Magma stock, making it a wholly owned subsidiary by 1968.⁴⁰ These actions would result in decades of prosperity for Newmont and Magma, but future difficulties for Superior. At the time, however, the town had a stable population of about 5,000, and Magma's continuing success meant that jobs were secure.

Large-scale Domestic Migratory Movements

Even as the functional specializations of each of the suburbs remained relatively steady through the decades of this development wave, their populations were increasing and changing. In three cases—College Park, Orange Cove, and New Miami—residential growth was continuous from 1930 to 1960, and each doubled or even tripled its population. Greenport and Superior grew during the war period but leveled off in later years. All of the suburbs, however, were affected by one of two major domestic population shifts during this time: the mass movement from the Great Plains states to the West during the 1930s, and the Great Migration of African-Americans from the rural south to southern and northern cities which was already in motion before 1930 but picked up in pace as the War commenced.

Dust Bowl Refugees and Mexican Laborers

Severe droughts swept across the Great Plains throughout the 1930s, stirring up the earth loosened by decades of intensively farming land formerly anchored by grasses in a semiarid climate. Dust storms plagued the Plains states starting in 1933, centering on the Oklahoma and Texas panhandles and surrounding areas, but the effects of the drought and the Depression were much broader. Falling crop prices combined with environmental calamities to create powerful push factors for a stream of migrants living largely outside of the Dust Bowl itself from Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. By 1940, more than 2.5 million people born in those states had left the area, some of them abandoning their property for life in the West.⁴¹

Immigration from Mexico, bringing in only 13,000 new U.S. residents from 1850 to 1900, dramatically picked up after immigration from Japan was effectively cut off as a result of an agreement with that country in 1907. The railroad, agriculture, mining, and construction industries needed workers to drive their expansion, and private *enganchadores* were willing to fill this void by traveling to Mexico to recruit migrants seeking refuge from collapsing rural employment and, later, violent revolution. U.S. industrial growth through the 1920s fueled continued demand for immigrant labor, and from 1900 to 1930 total migration from Mexico to the U.S. reached 728,000. But with the Depression came a new domestic workforce clamoring for jobs they had once refused, and the Federal government embarked on a campaign to forcibly repatriate Mexican residents. More than 450,000 Mexicans were arrested and deported from 1929 to 1937, and annual immigration dropped precipitously in response to the increasing antagonism.

For those living on the Plains, in the 1930s the potential of sunny, green California stood out against the bleak backdrop of the Depression and drought on the plains. At the very least, work in the fields picking crops seemed plentiful. For the desperate, this was enough, even if in their prior lives they had been doctors, lawyers, merchants. The agricultural San Joaquin Valley, in particular, held appeal for those migrating from rural areas and was the second major destination for newcomers after Los Angeles – more

than 70,000 migrants from the four southwestern states settled in the Valley between 1935 and 1940.⁴² As Dorothea Lange and Paul Taylor documented, international and domestic migrants would generally settle in primitive and ethnically separate “citrus camps”, where living conditions were harsh and housing ranged from cars to tents to small shacks.⁴³ Their presence of those perjoratively named “Okies” in already difficult economic times was unwelcome for many Valley residents, some of whom perceived the newcomers as “uneducated and ignorant” and “degenerate.”⁴⁴

Tiny Orange Cove was struggling as a diminishing water supply led some growers to abandon their fields to look for opportunities elsewhere.⁴⁵ Migrants from the Plains states certainly made their way to the town looking for work, sometimes settling in Orange Cove itself. One local’s perception of these “refugees” as a homogeneous and undesirable group likely reflected a prevailing sentiment:

“Other than dustbowl refugees, the town was made up of one Slavic, three Syrian, one Chinese, and two Mexican families, the Pantojas and the Valenzualas. In those days, only Main Street was paved and the general populace, which was probably 500 people, lived in tent houses and shanties...Outside of local kids, most of the students [in the grammar school] were a coalition of Oakies and Arkies whose families had blown out of the dust bowl of the Midwest and had come to pick the crops. Most of these students were hardscrabble kids a lot of whom smoked, chewed tobacco and could run faster with their shoes off.”⁴⁶

A census enumerator counted 555 residents of Orange Cove in 1940, about 400 of which were listed in the City Directory of the time. About 20 percent of those listed were employed as “laborers,” with a strong possibility of undercounting, giving a sense of the proportion of the town’s population that worked in the fields or in other lower-skill jobs. It is likely, however, given patterns documented by historians, that separate worker camps existed outside of the town that were not included in any counts.⁴⁷

With the advent of World War II, the configuration of the agricultural labor force in the West took a decided turn. The same domestic refugees that had fled from the Plains to the California now left for war or for one of the many higher-paying defense jobs springing up in cities across the country. Headlines in the *Orange Cove News* predicted

by March of 1942, “Farm labor outlook for ’42 serious” and “Farm labor shortage of 100,000?” for California as a whole, noting that “Consideration is also being given by the farm bureau to the possibility of securing additional white labor from other states...if sufficient domestic labor cannot be obtained, thought is being given to the possibility of bringing in Mexican labor for the harvest period...”⁴⁸ By August of the same year, the federal government had responded to the cries of agriculturalists by inaugurating the temporary guest worker act known as the Bracero program, which brought in more than four million Mexican laborers from 1942 to 1964. Yet the population of Orange Cove proper (excluding worker camps on the outskirts), even as it quadrupled to 2,395 by 1950 and then 2,885 in 1960, still remained majority Caucasian—21.4 percent of residents had a Spanish surname in 1960, and nine percent were counted as foreign born.⁴⁹

Dust Bowl migrants also ended up in Southern Arizona during the 1930s, some planning a temporary money-making stop on the way to California that became permanent. Because of the backgrounds in agriculture of many of the Great Plains refugees and the lack of mining employment due to the Depression, however, most gravitated toward seasonal work in the region’s cotton fields.⁵⁰ Even with few jobs available, however, Superior managed to grow in population from about 4,000 to about 5,000 from the early 1930s to the early 1940s, so it is possible that some of this migrant stream may have settled permanently in the town, although much of this growth may have been due to the 1937 upswing in copper prices and the extra employees needed for wartime production.

The Depression pummeled the copper industry as it did other sectors, and Arizona’s heavily Mexican mining labor force felt the same hostility from white workers that precipitated the deportations and repatriations of the decade. In the early 1930s, more than 18,000 Mexican residents were “voluntarily” repatriated from Arizona, assisted by the efforts of copper mining companies who arranged transport back to Mexico by bus or rail.⁵¹ Fifteen miles from Superior in Miami, Arizona, the management of the Inspiration Copper Company, another mine owned by Newmont Corporation, and the

neighboring Miami Copper Company paid for the return trips of at least 1,000 Mexican residents in 1931 and 1932, including workers who had lost jobs and their families.⁵²

As the copper industry picked up, the mines reopened, and the wartime need for labor eased the hostilities against non-white labor, mining companies resumed hiring Mexican workers. By 1942, Magma employed 1,053 men, half of whom were of Mexican descent.⁵³ Magma was said to be the only copper mine in the West that gave equal wages to all of its workers, Anglo or Mexican,⁵⁴ but Bustamente, drawing on an article in the *Arizona Labor Journal*, portrayed a different narrative:

“Here Mexican workers are hired underground and at an average rate of pay lower than other underground miners in the state. Anglo miners are given contracts and they in turn employ Spanish-speaking workers to fill the contract. The contractor may take as much as 50 percent and divide the remainder among several men. The Magma mines are the hottest mines in the U.S.A., which perhaps explains why Anglo workers are given the preference. Anglo miners and muckers do not consider the conditions attractive enough to go to work in the mines except as contractors or shift bosses.”⁵⁵

This discriminatory treatment was further institutionalized in the segregation of Mexican and Anglo employees in social and recreational activities sponsored by the company.⁵⁶

African Americans and the Great Migration

The movement of black southerners from rural to urban areas more generally and to northern cities specifically during the twentieth century had been in process for more than a decade as the US entered the Depression. Fleeing the sharecropping poverty of southern agriculture and the violence of southern white discrimination, African-Americans began leaving the south at higher rates partly in response to the opportunities offered by demand for workers in World War I. But the migration began to accelerate during and after World War II as new jobs became available in defense industries. By several estimates, close to 1.5 million African-Americans moved from the south from the 1910s to the 1930s, while another five million left from the 1940s to the 1970s.⁵⁷

As James Gregory notes, the Great Lakes states, including Ohio and Illinois, were a primary destination for black migrants, as was the New York City area.⁵⁸ But for some African-Americans at the time, escaping the south was not as necessary as leaving poverty-stricken rural areas for urban centers. As such, the city of Atlanta, always home to a relatively large black population and with a number of prestigious black universities, became a vibrant hub for African-American culture and education. From the early 1900s about one-third of Atlanta's population was black, but the city had already begun to create mechanisms to establish and maintain segregation, including zoning ordinances and physical barriers. In 1922 the newly developed comprehensive zoning plan maintained separation between white and black blocks and restricted African-Americans to the West Side areas they already largely inhabited. Although these ordinances were deemed unconstitutional, they informally governed the growth of black neighborhoods for decades.⁵⁹

By the 1940s, blacks represented almost 35 percent of Atlanta's population, a share that had grown steadily since 1920. As soldiers returned from war and the U.S. began to experience a massive housing shortage, the residential situation for the city's African-Americans became more dire. They were kept from moving into newly developing suburban areas by federally supported mortgage restrictions, and new highway and urban renewal projects were eliminating some existing black housing units. More and more, city blocks on the west side became contested spaces as African-American households, backed by increasing political power in city government, sought improved residential opportunities.

The tensions between the races reached such a pitch that the efforts to "keep neighborhoods white" resulted in violent confrontations. White residents formed "defensive organizations" to protest sales of local property to black households, but, as was the case with the racial transition of the community of Mozley Park in the early 1950s, white owners realized that black purchasers were willing to pay well above expected home prices and were incentivized to sell for profit-making and discriminatory reasons. Once black residents bought a certain number of homes on a block, white

households then rushed to sell. In his telling of the Mozley Park story, Kevin Kruse quotes one white homeowner as saying, “Well, they had committees come down and suggest that we stay down there and be on the fence and let the colored live there...they said they didn’t blame me, but that they wished that I wouldn’t sell, being down there, and stay and protect them.”⁶⁰

Some of these white households moved to other neighborhoods within the city limits, but others may have relocated to nearby suburbs like College Park. The suburb was indeed experiencing rapid growth almost doubling from 8,000 to 15,000 residents from 1940 to 1950, then adding more than 8,000 more people by 1960 to reach 23,469. Although College Park maintained a fairly sizable black community of almost 1,500, equaling almost 25 percent of the population in 1930, by 1960 that share had fallen to 16.5 percent, with far fewer incoming black than white residents.

THE COST OF EXPANDING THE NETWORK OF FLOWS

The latter part of the 20th century ushered in a third technological revolution that not only shifted the direction and magnitude of flows of people and money already in motion, but initiated new movements within a greatly expanded and globalized network. The increasing permeability of borders in this new era coupled with transportation and communications innovations that minimized the costs of distance both allowed the US to reach into the markets and societies of other countries and opened it further than before to competition in production and transnational immigration.

In all five case suburbs, the transformative dynamics of this new urbanization wave destabilized the status quo, but in different ways based on spatial location and economic history. We can split the cases into two broad groupings based on the chief drivers of the transitions. The first is the collapse of a base industry and major employment source. In New Miami, Superior, and Greenport, companies undergoing significant restructuring due to changing industry conditions either entirely failed or were forced to close facilities in the case suburbs, leading to employment, income, and tax revenue losses. In Orange Cove and College Park, the shift had more to do with inflows

of people. Lower-income households, in both cases populations of color, began to relocate to the suburbs in larger numbers. More affluent residents, often white, moved out, following patterns repeated in cities and towns nationwide for decades.

While one of these two factors—collapse of economic specialization and demographic shift—precipitated the growth of larger concentrations of people living below the poverty line in each suburb, they did so in an environment of moving parts. That is, in the first case, the outward flow of income and capital stemming from industrial retrenchment stimulated new subpopulation movements, and in the second case, the in-migration of different groups of people influenced the direction and type of capital streams reaching and leaving the suburbs. The motion of specific subflows was guided by spatial considerations, as well as by previous settlements of ethnic or social groups and public or business investments, so a similar pattern of, for example, industrial decline, in two suburbs could lead each in a different direction. Strong leaders with specific agendas and considerable influence—or the absence of those players—also played a role in attracting or repelling new residents or new investments.

The economic outcomes of each of the suburbs—how we see them in their current state and the short-term predictions for their futures—have been affected, however, not just by the changes wrought by this most recent wave of development but also by the relative specialization or diversification of their regional surroundings. Prospective trajectories are less promising in suburbs in highly specialized regions where the main industry is endangered, while places that are closer to more varied labor markets are privy to more opportunities for revitalization.

Death of Main Economic Function

Steel Collapse in New Miami

The steel industry's successful expansion during the post-war years obscured the coming crisis starting in the 1970s. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact factors contributing

to steel's collapse and their individual magnitudes, but increasing global competition and rising imports, necessary but late upgrades in technology that mechanized previously manual processes, changes in demand from connected sectors, and increasing labor and equipment costs converged to create an industry slowdown. From 1970 to 1989, steel production declined by 25 percent and employment in the industry plummeted by 59 percent. Rapid technological advances resulted in higher labor productivity but dramatically fewer workers.⁶¹ Major manufacturers went out of business entirely, while others, including U.S. Steel, closed plants at an alarming rate.

At the beginning of the decline, Armco had progressed to become the fifth largest steel company and showed record profits through the early part of the 1970s as steel production increased to its peak in US history. The company had pursued diversification earlier in its history, expanding into oil drilling and titanium, and as a result it maintained its earnings through the 1970s even as the steel industry began its collapse.⁶² But it also began a move toward restructuring in response to new industry conditions, a process that continued in earnest as the 1980s recession hit both its oil and steel interests. Armco reduced its steel production from twelve to six million tons between 1973 and 1985, shutting down numerous facilities from Texas to Kentucky.⁶³

One of its first moves was to initiate the closing of the aging and heavily polluting coke production facilities in New Miami, announcing the move as early as 1974. The coke ovens did not shut down entirely until April of 1982, but that year brought more bad news for the town; in September Armco also closed one of two New Miami blast furnaces, reducing the number of workers at the facility from 550 to 180 over the span of six months. Some were laid off, while others were moved to the Middletown plant, which had also slashed capacity.⁶⁴

The repercussions of Armco's retrenchment were devastating for New Miami. The town had struggled since the mid-1970s to meet its budget in the face of inflation, the rising costs of services, and Armco's property and employment decisions, but now it was staring at circumstances that would dramatically reduce fiscal stability. "I'm afraid to

even look at Armco. I'm afraid to say anything as far as in the future for Armco," lamented Mayor Claude Shepherd in 1982, and his fears proved justified over the next several years.⁶⁵ New Miami's revenue structure was based on property taxes and a municipal income tax levied on those who lived and worked in the town, and Armco's decline affected each stream. As the company's physical structures depreciated in value and were eventually shut down, maintaining a functional school district became a struggle. The declining income tax was equally disastrous; the budget went from a fairly healthy \$950,000 in 1983 with residual Armco and Federal CDBG monies to about \$540,000 in 1984. Most income-tax funds historically came from Armco employees living and working in New Miami; in 1981, for example, only \$60,000 of the \$333,000 collected came from non-Armco residents. The hits just kept coming; in 1984 a large contracting company left the town, followed by Southern Ohio Trucking, Inc. a year later.

Residents and businesses alike began to leave the suburb as fortunes continued to decline. "They got scared," said another business owner of three taverns that closed down in 1983. "They used to have this built-in business, and when it went, they just ran."⁶⁶ New Miami's population dropped from 3,273 to 2,555 from 1970 to 1990, but more difficulties were ahead. Armco continued to struggle through the 1990s, accepting a buy-out by A.K. Steel in 1994. It closed the New Miami facilities permanently in 1991, and that same year the Village Council had budgeted \$600,000 only to receive \$480,000.⁶⁷ The population continued to trickle out, falling to 2,469 in 2000 and 2,249 in 2010, but options nearby were limited as the surrounding region was not faring much better economically. The Miami River Valley was hurt by the same forces that hit New Miami, and even Cincinnati's relatively diversified economy could not provide enough low- or middle-skill jobs for this large contingent of former manufacturing workers. The ongoing migration out of the Midwest has likewise left fewer opportunities for low-income households who cannot afford a cross-country move for better opportunities.

Copper Decline in Superior

The copper industry in the United States had peaked in the 1920s and 1930s, and since then had entered a slow decline characterized by exhausted supplies and falling production. But as with other major staple U.S. industries like steel, the decline accelerated in the 1960s as global production and export began to surge, with Chile, Peru, Mexico, and Zambia as emerging leaders. Recognizing their positions, the governments of these countries began to nationalize U.S.-owned mines, offering compensation to the foreign companies but changing the structural distribution of the industry.⁶⁸

With increased competition came volatile global copper pricing, but prices were also affected by the new availability of copper substitutions and a move away from manufacturing toward technological development that generally lowered demand. At the same time, production costs were rising. Rachel Carson's 1962 *Silent Spring* had ignited unprecedented environmental concern that manifested itself in increasing pollution regulations aimed at large manufacturing firms, with smelters among the worst contributors of sulfur dioxide. The costs of renovating existing structures to meet new environmental standards were often prohibitive. More far-reaching, however, were the impacts of antagonistic labor-company relationships. The demand for higher wages from a coalition of unions led to a nationwide copper mining strike in 1967-1968 that lasted more than 8 months and left 60,000 workers idle. Agreements were eventually reached but strikes were unavoidable at every three-year contract renewal after that point, culminating in the extended 1983-1986 dispute between Phelps-Dodge and its workers during the most painful copper industry contraction of the 1980s.

After the difficulties of the 1950s, the Newmont Mining Corporation's fortunes surged as it continued a process of diversification in the 1960s and 1970s. The investment in Magma's San Manuel Mine had paid off and about half of their profits during the latter decade were from Magma and holdings in Southern Peru copper, but Newmont also quickly invested in more modern metals and alloys, and even made a foray into gold

which would pay off richly in the 1980s. When copper prices plummeted in the 1980s, however, Newmont was forced to reconsider its connections to the Magma Company, eventually establishing it as a separate entity by giving its shares to Newmont stockholders and forgiving some of its debt. By the late 1980s when copper prices had more than recovered, Magma was back on its feet.

Unfortunately, Superior would not recover from Magma's restructuring in the 1980s. In fact, the 1967 strike was the beginning of a downward spiral for Superior miners. Magma's San Manuel mine was a much larger producer, and the company had been sinking resources into that site, including the construction of a newer smelter. Given the prohibitive costs of modernizing Superior's equipment to new environmental standards, when the Superior smelter was shut down during a 1971 strike the company did not reopen it, deciding to concentrate operations at the San Manuel site since the costs to upgrade that smelter were lower.

The resulting loss of 100 jobs was a blow, but 1400 people still maintained jobs in the Superior mine and mill.⁶⁹ The smelter closing also went relatively unnoticed as it was overshadowed by the confirmation months before that Magma would invest \$55 million into modernizing mining operations in Superior after the discovery of new deposits of copper ore, a project they had announced in 1969.⁷⁰ This announcement bolstered hopes among Superior residents for Magma's continued stability to such a point that a group began a push for the town's incorporation in 1974 to have more control over services such as policing. The move was controversial and divided the town, half of which preferred the county governance system, but in 1976 Superior incorporated by a narrow margin, with 676 "yes" and 609 "no" votes.⁷¹

Despite the 1970s investments in the Superior mine, in the end it could not compete with the productivity of the San Manuel site. When copper prices fell to Great Depression levels with the 1980s recession, it was too expensive for Magma to keep both operations running. The company cut Superior employee's hours to 35 per week in early 1982, but no one predicted the blow that would come— in August, the Superior

mine closed, taking with it more than 1,400 jobs.⁷² “It was a shocker,” said a union president at the time. “We were under the impression that San Manuel would go down before we did. It just flipped around on us.”⁷³

Superior entered a stand-still, then a decline. Businesses closed as residents could no longer afford to shop. The housing market ground to a halt, and some residents were forced to abandon their homes when they could not sell them. Even worse, most health care in the town of 4,600 was tied to the Magma Company, who withdrew health services when it closed the mine.⁷⁴ “I’d hate to leave here,” said former mine supervisor Ralph Magana after the shutdown, “but I can’t just lay down and die. I’ve got to support my family.”⁷⁵ Many residents shared those sentiments. From a peak of about 5,000 in 1970, Superior’s population slipped to 3,500 in 1990, and then to 2800 in 2010, while surrounding Pinal County became one of the fastest growing counties in the country. But unlike the outward movement from New Miami, Superior’s loss was disproportionately of young people. From 1980 to 1990, the share of the population 25 and under dropped from 48 percent to 32 percent, while in Pinal County (which included other mining towns) the same group only fell from 45 percent to 40 percent. Many of those who left were young workers between 20 and 24, but Superior also lost a substantial proportion of children under 10, suggesting that many young families were also forced to relocate. School district officials expressed concern in 1982 over future enrollment and they were right to worry—the district now has 410 students compared to 1,100 three decades ago.

Also unlike New Miami, while the copper region immediately surrounding Superior was struggling against the vagaries of the copper industry, the Phoenix metropolitan area was expanding and diversifying rapidly. As the Arizona economy picked back up since the late 2000s recession, the area’s growth reinvigorated its construction and tourism industries, suggesting the presence of jobs in the city for workers previously employed in mining.

Overfishing and Environmental Change in Greenport

The decades after the shipbuilding boom of World War II marked a turnaround in the base sectors of Greenport. Environmental shocks related to the growth and development of the New York metropolitan area drastically reduced the fish supply on which many Long Island businesses depended. Menhaden were the first to begin their decline. An insatiable market for the fish—which were used in everything from animal feed to linoleum to soap—spurred massive overfishing in the 1950s facilitated by the use of airplanes to identify schools of bunker offshore. The fish could not reproduce fast enough to keep up with their capture. From 712,000 metric tons in 1956, the haul of Atlantic Menhaden had dropped to only 193,000 tons in 1967. And around the Northeast U.S. the numbers were more telling: 98,500 tons of bunker in 1956 fell to 1,800 tons in 1966.⁷⁶ The Menhaden industry in Greenport was decimated and disappeared before the 1960s.

Oysters followed suit. The massive hurricane that hit Long Island in 1938 covered existing beds with sand and weakened an industry that was already beginning to show signs of exhaustion. Pollution from the development of the Connecticut and Long Island shorelines compounded the problem of overharvesting to meet the overwhelming market demand of both Boston and New York. Rising labor and shipping costs also likely contributed to driving most Greenport oyster houses out of business by the mid-1950s.⁷⁷ The final blow was the damaging “brown tide” of 1985, an algae bloom that killed most of the remaining shellfish in and around the Peconic Bay.⁷⁸

“It’s a lost income,” one long-time Greenport resident remembered. “You had to have the ice to ice them down, so the ice companies were in business with ice, the trucking companies that trucked stuff to New York, the shipyards to the repair the boats, the blacksmiths for making the dredges, the hardware stores for the paint, and the lumber material you needed to repair—it was a continuous circle—one helping the other.”⁷⁹ The interrelated industries like shipbuilding, already in trouble after World War II, were

further damaged as demand dried up with the shellfish and bunker, leaving agriculture and some commercial fishing as the remaining insufficient sources of employment. Middle and higher-income households left the area in an exodus that brought the population from 3,000 in 1950 to 2,500 in 1970, while population in the surrounding town of Southold increased. By the early part of the decade, unemployment and crumbling buildings plagued Greenport, leading a Suffolk County planner to label it as “a trouble spot, with serious substandard housing problems and deep poverty pockets.” Coming full circle from its heyday in the 1920s, unemployment hit 18 percent in the early 1980s.⁸⁰

But Greenport still had a unique location, an attractive waterfront, a long history, and connections to New York to use to its advantage, the latter perhaps the most influential. Tourism had always been an element of Greenport’s economy since City-dwellers rode the first LIRR passenger train in 1844, but the smell associated with Menhaden processing, a distinctly industrial environment, and a lack of sandy beaches had limited its expansion. It was not until the 1990s that Greenport embarked on an active development strategy based on tourism. Led by new Mayor David Kapell, the town intentionally shut down its police force and sold most of its water works, cutting the budget by 35 percent, reducing tax rates by 50 percent, and bringing in money for future investment. Kapell was labelled “ruthless” in his pursuit of change in Greenport: one former colleague noted that “he will stop at nothing to promote his interests: concocting sex scandals and lawsuits, housing and harassing people with phone calls at home, anything against people who are not 100 percent supportive.” Yet he continued to win elections, even running unopposed in 1995. As part of his agenda, Kapell aggressively pursued \$3.1 million in state funds to initiate a redevelopment project that transformed the industrial waterfront into a park with a marina, ice rink, and carousel. With the completion of the project came an estimated increase in property prices of 60 to 80 percent and new worries about gentrification and displacement.⁸¹

Concurrent with the growth of the tourist industry came the rise of the North Fork’s Vineyards. One couple’s success growing grapes on a 66 acre farm in the 1970s

brought an influx of entrepreneurs eager to try their hands at winemaking. The acreage devoted to vineyards in the area grew to 1,300 in 1989, 1,700 in 1999, and then to more than 3,000 by 2013, with an annual production of 500,000 cases. David Page, owner of one of the vineyards, compares the area to Napa Valley in the 1970s: “So it’s the wine of the region, and then the food that gives us cuisine, and from that can grow culture. That’s what’s happening here.”⁸² The abundance of vineyards and farmstands selling fresh local produce from surrounding agricultural land offer an appealing and nearby escape for city dwellers.

These and other elements of the tourism industry also draw workers from among the surge of documented and undocumented immigrants from Mexico and Central America to Long Island since 1990. The upswing in immigration and Greenport’s service-industry focus has changed the demographic profile of the town as the Hispanic population has increased from 4 percent in 1990 to 34 percent in 2013.⁸³ Foreign-born residents now make up a quarter of Greenport’s population according to the Census, but it is likely that this number is higher—the Pew Hispanic Center estimated in 2007 that one in five immigrants on Long Island is undocumented.⁸⁴

Population and demographic shifts

Aviation and White Flight in College Park

The 1960s brought two major development trends to Atlanta and specifically College Park: large-scale suburbanization that included African-Americans to some extent, and the Jet Age of commercial aviation. Despite the land takings of the 1940s, until the 1960s the airport’s proximity to College Park was more beneficial than negative for the suburb. But the two intersecting shifts in technology and demand for air travel would drive four more expansions of Atlanta’s airport between 1957 and 2011. The jet engine, in use in combat aircraft since World War II, was approved for commercial travel in 1951 and was in most passenger planes a decade later, allowing them to fly higher and faster than propeller craft. Concurrently, during the decade of the 1950s the number of

passengers boarding commercial flights surged from 17 million to 40 million.⁸⁵ Already a hub for air travel, Atlanta's airport hosted more than two million passengers each day in 1955, and planning began for a new "Jet Age" terminal. Work on the \$20 million state-of-the-art addition began in 1957 and required bulldozing 100 homes in College Park to use the land for "clear zones" at the end of each runway. Construction was completed in 1961 but in the first year of its usage the airport surpassed its new six million passenger capacity by 3.5 million.⁸⁶

Atlanta began planning for more new airport construction starting in 1967, considering building a second facility but eventually deciding to expand on the current site. This decision led to the eventual opening of the Midfield Terminal and the renamed Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport in 1980, with devastating effects on College Park.⁸⁷ Starting in 1968, the City took 1000 acres of the suburb's land by 1970, resulting in a loss of 2000 homes and one-third of the city's land area. By this time the land area of the airport had gone from about 2100 acres to almost 3,750, and a fourth runway in 1984 continued the expansion. Demand for air travel had only increased after the deregulation of the airline industry in 1978, and at this point the facility was the second busiest airport in the world after Chicago's O'Hare. In preparation for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, the City approved another \$300 million expansion to construct Concourse E, a new international gate complex that opened in 1994.⁸⁸ The final project, a fifth runway, was undertaken to increase the number and operation of takeoffs and landings.

The fourth and fifth runway required more acres, further decreasing College Park's land area and population. The fifth runway alone took 250 homes and about 13 percent of the population. In the course of the expansions, whole subdivisions and neighborhoods were wiped out, the owners bought out and the houses demolished or relocated. In addition, other key transportation projects including highway expansion to improve transport from the airport in the mid-1960s and the development of Atlanta's public transportation system, MARTA, in the 1980s required land and changed the suburb's character by rerouting major avenues and relocating businesses.⁸⁹

Staggering noise and air pollution combined with the land takings to rapidly deplete housing values. Residents complained of the noise from hundreds of takeoffs and landings per day that were loud enough to drown out face-to-face conversations. Vibrations from the sound cracked walls and ceilings and rattled windows. The noise became such a problem that in the early 1980s the FAA agreed to a program to spend millions soundproofing every home in College Park. Eventually the suburb began to use Community Development Block Grant and FAA funds to compensate and relocate residents with the most severe noise problems whose housing units had lost so much value that they were being abandoned.⁹⁰

At the same time that the airport was orchestrating its growth, the city's population was flocking to suburbs. Like most large cities in the country, Atlanta experienced a suburbanization wave starting in the 1950s that became more pronounced in magnitude and distance from the center in the 1970s. Unlike some other large urban areas, however, the Gate City of the South was relatively unconstrained by natural features and had freedom to expand in all directions. But Atlanta's sprawling spread was not necessarily the product of chaotic, unregulated growth; As Basmajian has suggested, the extensive low-density development that effectively urbanized most of northern Georgia was guided by calculated regional planning efforts throughout the final decades of the twentieth century, as the Atlanta Regional Commission created policies and invested resources to maximize growth and direct its outflow.⁹¹ From 1960 to 1980, while the City of Atlanta showed a net loss of more than 50,000 people, the inner ring suburbs in Fulton and DeKalb counties almost doubled from 326,000 to 648,000. Population in the 13 second-tier suburban counties surrounding the city grew 175 percent, from 334,000 to 917,000. By 2000, the city was home to less than ten percent of the metro population, with the counties holding the nearest suburbs—Fulton itself and DeKalb—accounting for 36 percent.⁹²

At first College Park seemed to follow the suburban growth trend despite its major losses of land in 1968, reaching a high of about 28,000 in the mid-1970s, but the 1980s

brought a precipitous population decline. By 1990 the number of residents had diminished to 20,000, where it stayed until 2000, but since then numbers have dropped starkly to about 14,000 in 2010—less than half of its peak population. “The airport changed the character of College Park...Expansion had a major impact,” stated the suburb’s development director in 1996, reflecting a sentiment shared by many College Park officials and residents.⁹³ Certainly the loss of land, devalued housing, and excessive noise have contributed to the population outflows of the last three decades, but the drivers of the dramatic losses are more complex.

As described in an earlier section, racial tensions in the City of Atlanta spurred many white supporters of segregation to abandon the city altogether in favor of the whiter suburbs, in large part to the north of the city. From just over 300,000 in 1960, the white population declined by more than half to 141,000 in 1980 while the black population added 100,000, resulting in a jump in the black share from 38 to 67 percent of Atlanta residents over the period. In general, African-Americans inhabited the central and southern parts of the city, while whites dominated the northern neighborhoods and suburbs. As in so many other trends, College Park, at Atlanta’s southern border, paralleled the city in its racial transition about a decade later. In 1970, the white population in College Park made up 84.6 percent of the total; by 1980, as the population plummeted the proportion of white residents fell to 50 percent, by 1990, 21 percent, and by 2000, 12.4 percent.

Farm Labor and Mexican Immigration in Orange Cove

“If one defines an industrial revolution as a dramatic increase...in full-sector productivity during a single generation,” Paul Conklin wrote in 2008, “then American agriculture has attained the most important industrial revolution in American history” over the period from 1950 to 1970. In those twenty years, he notes, the sector reduced its labor needs by about fifty percent while increasing the value of its product by forty percent.⁹⁴ The stage was set earlier in the century for this transformation by New Deal programs that supported modernization of tools and techniques and encouraged crop specialization,

but it was the rapid technological innovations in equipment and storage, fertilizer and pest control, and genetic breeding of new crops and livestock that both facilitated production and encouraged the consolidation of small farms into larger operations for better economies of scale.⁹⁵

As noted earlier, California in particular moved quickly into agribusiness—a label invented in Fresno in the 1940s— as the predominant mode of farm production.⁹⁶ Population pressure in Southern California due to increased domestic migration to the West pushed agricultural production to the Central Valley, where the newly completed massive irrigation structure was bringing vast expanses of land into cultivation in the late 1950s. Policies providing incentives to larger farmers—in allocation of water, price support subsidies, and importation of cheap labor—made it difficult for family farms to compete and contributed to consolidation. From 1950 to 1970, the number of farms in California dropped by more than half, from 144,000 to 64,000, while the amount of land under cultivation only fell from 37.5 to 36.6 million acres. Though the number of small farms has risen since 1970—the Census of Agriculture counted 77,857 in 2012—more telling is the fact that farms with sales of more than \$500,000, the largest farms in production value, if not in size, accounted for 92 percent of the total market value of production for all California agriculture in 2012.⁹⁷

The state's innovations in labor-saving equipment and ongoing growth of agribusiness, however, have not lessened the California agriculture industry's need for low-cost workers because of a shift to highly labor intensive crops in the fruit, vegetable, and horticultural sector (FVH). This is particularly the case in the San Joaquin Valley, where specialized crops requiring care in picking have come to dominate the landscape. From 1950 to 2000, the land devoted to growing fruit and nuts increased by one million to 2.5 million acres, and the San Joaquin Valley's share of that acreage grew from 42 to 68 percent.⁹⁸ For oranges, the share rose from 19 to 82 percent over the same period. The promise of work draws laborers, while an abundance of laborers allows for agribusiness expansion. There is, however, some evidence that the nature of the work has changed over time; seasonal workers who would have physically followed crops across the

Central Valley or even across California in the 1950s are now choosing settlement over more migratory lifestyles. The close to year round growing season and larger farms, thanks to the two huge irrigation projects of the century, result in work opportunities in different crops at the same location. Alternatively, laborers can move into related jobs in packing and processing during slower times.⁹⁹

Even as California agribusiness was expanding, patterns of Mexican migration to the United States in general, and California in particular, were shifting dramatically. The *Bracero* program, which ended in 1964, had laid a foundation of reliance on low-cost, temporary labor in several sectors, including agriculture, and the transformation of U.S. immigration policy in 1965 allowed for an influx of more permanent settlers and their families while imposing a limit on legal immigration that may have spurred illegal border crossings. Worldwide economic changes related to globalization, events such as natural disasters in Mexico, and additional U.S. moves to restrict international labor immigration while leaving borders loose for trade (e.g., NAFTA) further contributed to the magnitude and type of immigration flows. Legal migration from Mexico jumped from 759,700 in 1970 to 2,199,200 in 1980, and then doubled in 1990 and again in 2000. Undocumented migrants are far harder to track, but estimates suggest that unauthorized immigration increased from 3.5 million in 1990 to 12.2 million in 2007 before the global recession, and Mexican immigrants have typically made up at least half of these flows.¹⁰⁰

California received a large proportion of these new residents. From 1960 to 2005, estimates suggest that California had a net increase of four million immigrants between the ages of 18 to 65 from Mexico and Central America, about one-third of the total number the state added to its adult population in the same period (although the undocumented population is likely underestimated).¹⁰¹ And while Latino immigrants are settled across the state, many have followed agricultural employment to the San Joaquin Valley. The top three most productive agricultural counties in the United States are in Central California—Fresno, Tulare, and Kern—and in each one at least 20 percent of the population is foreign-born. The share of foreign-born residents who are

also of Hispanic origin ranges from 70 percent in Fresno to 87 percent in Tulare. And these numbers do not consider undocumented immigrants—the Department of Homeland Security estimated that in 2011 California alone was home to 2.6 million residents without legal documentation. One think tank estimated that Fresno and Kern counties each had close to 50,000 unauthorized immigrants in 2008, while the smaller Tulare County was home to about 30,000.¹⁰²

Growers' demand for low-income labor interacts with the mobility patterns of Latino immigrants to draw this particular group into farm work and keep their wages low.¹⁰³ A number of national sources estimate that farms hire more than a million full-time equivalent workers per year, about 80 percent of Hispanic origins and about half undocumented immigrants. Contributing to these trends are the efforts of Farm Labor Contractors (FLCs), firms that recruit and supply agricultural workers. While this practice is certainly not new, the use of FLCs by California agribusiness has increased substantially since the 1960s. These entities, often run or managed by Mexican or Mexican-American individuals, facilitate the migration process both by directly connecting to transnational networks and by lowering the costs of immigration by helping with settlement and employment, effectively creating a “revolving door” of new immigrant workers.¹⁰⁴

The combination of changing immigration patterns, corporatization of agriculture, and some year round growing capacity has led to a demographic transformation in many of the Central Valley's longstanding agricultural communities.¹⁰⁵ Juan Vincente Palerm began to document the growth of Chicano and Mexican enclaves inhabited mainly by low-income farmworkers and their families in the 1980s, identifying 148 communities—one of which was Orange Cove—that were in the process of a significant population shift related to in-migration of Hispanic residents. In their study of eight San Joaquin Valley towns, Allensworth and Rochin extended Palerm's research to show that even as immigrant farmworkers settled in agricultural communities and began to participate in community life, non-Latino residents moved out, opening up more housing for Latino workers and making it less likely that non-Latinos would choose what have been

labelled as “Mexican Towns” as their places of residence. At the same time, the population growth and concentration of a specific ethnic group have created more business opportunities for new immigrants, increasing the incentives for migration and settlement.¹⁰⁶

In essence, Orange Cove and similar nearby agriburbs have transitioned from housing farm owners and farmworkers at a range of incomes to housing mostly low-income Latino residents, many of whom are farm laborers and/or working in packing houses, and those who provide services to the workers.¹⁰⁷ The Hispanic population, at 21 percent in 1960,¹⁰⁸ grew from 37 percent to 72 percent between 1970 and 1980 and then to 92 percent by 2010, even while the total number of people increased from 2,885 in 1960 to 9,078 in 2010. At the same time, the percent of individuals with incomes below the poverty line doubled from 21 percent in 1970¹⁰⁹ to 42 percent in 1990, and then to 47 percent in 2010. The demographic shift was not painless. A 1971 comprehensive plan prepared by the Center for Urban and Regional Studies at Fresno State College proclaimed that “the problem of visible racial discrimination is virtually absent in Orange Cove,” However, the attitude survey conducted as part of the plan, with responses from 35 Anglos and 19 non-white individuals, told a somewhat different story, with a number of respondents feeling that minorities received poor treatment from public services and were potentially mistreated by police. The writers of the plan also described a schism between the low-income farmworkers and the growers or other professionals, noting the prevailing perception that “spokesmen for the “haves” are leaders; spokesmen for the “have-nots” are troublemakers.”¹¹⁰

This divide would become more pronounced as the decade progressed. In the late 1970s, after decades of primarily Anglo dominance in the town leadership positions, Latino residents swept the elections for Mayor and City Council, with new Mayor Victor Lopez winning a total number of votes that was more than those for the other two candidates combined.¹¹¹ Lopez would hold on the position for more than three decades, until being ousted in 2010 and voted in once again as a 71-year old in November of 2014.¹¹² The man has been a controversial figure in Orange Cove,

weathering accusations of corruption throughout his tenure. As a vocal and visible advocate for farmworkers' rights, however, Lopez has been undeniably successful at bringing funding, both public and private, to the town, funding that may have helped Orange Cove avoid major decline. "He was California's most powerful small-town mayor," noted a political science professor from Cal State Fresno in 2013. "He has a demagoguery and showmanship that in some ways makes P.T. Barnum look like an amateur." Lopez has liaised with Presidents and congresspersons, brought in grants to build infrastructure and community buildings, and turned national attention to the plight of low-income laborers, particularly during poor climatic conditions.¹¹³ Most recently, he turned his advocacy efforts toward securing an extra allocation of water for Orange Cove during the worst drought in years.¹¹⁴

But despite the Mayor's best efforts, the times may be changing for the town. There is some question of California's future agricultural viability as water resources continue to decline. Moreover, development pressure in the fastest growing region in California, expected to add about 5 million people by 2060, will lead to continuing urbanization of agricultural land.¹¹⁵ With that growth may come a possibility of moving away from an economy almost entirely based on agriculture.

CONCLUSIONS

The shift from an era characterized by industrial growth fueled by wars, federal government investment, and conservative trade policies to one driven by information technology, global exchange, and open borders shook the core identities of the case study places, identities developed during the first years of settlement and crystallized in the succeeding decades. Each suburb faced sets of circumstances that radically altered its economic trajectory, related either to sectoral transformations leading to massive employment losses or the inflows and outflows of specific demographic groups. But regional location shaped the subsequent unfolding of each place's development path in a variety of ways, both negatively and positively. Industry collapse in a highly specialized region, for example, was difficult to overcome when the need became so widespread and the resources so limited. In more diversified regional or metropolitan

contexts, however, suburbs had more opportunities for reinvention in the face of these types of losses. In the final chapter, I summarize my findings and examine these variations across space as well as the cumulative nature of economic change in all five suburbs in more detail.

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9 CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY DISCUSSION

The plight of the suburban poor blasted into popular consciousness over the last five years, seemingly out of the blue. In the wake of the Great Recession, representations of individual struggle—the unemployed scrimping to stay in their homes and the underemployed spending hours commuting using inadequate transport systems—proliferated in the media. These individual narratives have been powerfully contextualized by stories of communities and local governments scrambling against falling tax revenue and non-profits and service agencies trying to meet the needs of a growing, dispersed client base without the commensurate resources to do so.

Although poverty has always existed in suburbs in the United States in various forms, and although suburbs themselves have been investigated in an extensive body of literature, suburban poverty—as an explicit research theme—is an underdeveloped area of study. We must understand suburban poverty in the 21st century not as a simple extension of poverty elsewhere, reaching for solutions out of our existing knowledge from decades of research in urban and rural communities; rather, as I have set to do in here, we must use this moment as an opportunity to reconceptualize the particular intersections of poverty, people, and place that have constructed today's metropolitan landscape. Academics, policy-makers, and planners recognize that the difficulties facing suburban poor populations are distinct in certain ways from challenges in city neighborhoods or rural counties. They point to the lack of social services, the necessity of car ownership, and the hiddenness of poverty in suburbs, and acknowledge that urban and rural anti-poverty strategies may not be directly applicable.¹ As Kneebone and Berube argue in the most comprehensive overview of suburban poverty to date, we cannot “fight today's poverty with yesterday's policies.”²

Despite what seem like blurring geographic lines on the continuum from urban to rural, suburbs *are* distinct. Most metropolitan areas no longer fit a picture of the domineering central city surrounded by economically inert peripheral settlements or successful suburban enclaves, but even with the rise of polycentric development and exurban employment centers, suburbs in the U.S. are generally smaller and less dense than

their associated primary cities while remaining integrated into the metropolitan labor and housing markets. If they are incorporated, they have their own responsibilities, often fiercely guarded over decades, for providing local services unlike urban neighborhoods or rural areas under county governments. Since ninety percent of suburbs across the country had fewer than 20,000 people in 2010, it is safe to say that in many cases their size inhibits the development of economic diversity that could provide a safeguard against external shocks, making some more vulnerable to national and global structural changes. Many suburbs are tiny nodes in an interdependent system facing the same challenges as cities with far more leverage.

Media hype and urgent localized crises offer opportunities to create policies and programs specifically responding to suburban poverty. But while we are slowly accruing data on the impacts of income changes on suburban households, services, and local governments, we have done relatively little theorizing on the processes by which suburban places develop concentrations of poverty or the drivers behind the economic decline. In this dissertation, I argue that bound up in the socioeconomic status of individual suburbs are the historical roots of those conditions—the reasonably straightforward but easily ignored idea that history importantly shapes the economic outcomes of places. But more specifically, those historical roots are spatialized. The variables contributing to change in suburbs do not simply move through time, but through space-time among a network of connected places, meaning that the economic development history of a suburb interweaves with its spatial location nested in different geographical scales to create its defining characteristics at any point in time.

Policies and plans to assist public agencies and community organizations to effectively address suburban poverty, then, need to be contextualized as well as backward and forward-looking. Recognizing the diversity of poor suburbs and eschewing one-size-fits-all policy-making in the suburban sphere is the most basic proposition emerging from this study, but it is only the first step. We must design new strategies steeped in historical analysis to improve the social and economic well-being of the suburban poor—not just the history of suburbs or suburbanization in general, but of the specific

locations that are now home to concentrated low-income populations. Equally important is an interscalar approach to developing suburban anti-poverty programs. Suburbs are part of symbiotic metropolitan, regional, and national systems, and interventions at one geographic level can be undone at another. In this chapter, I examine each of these recommendations—recognizing diversity, attention to localized history, and coordination across scales—in more detail.

THE VARIAGATED LANDSCAPE OF SUBURBAN POVERTY

The extended and periodized processes of suburbanization in the United States have created significant heterogeneity in the urban periphery. Ann Forsyth lamented in 2012 the lack of precision in the definition of the term “suburb” and suggested two courses of action. The first was to discontinue the use of the word altogether, instead using different concepts to depict in more detail the phenomena that occur in metropolitan areas without differentiating between suburbs and cities—an increasingly challenging task. “Alternatively,” Forsyth continues, “it may be possible to keep the term. One way to do this is to better distinguish between types of suburbs—so that all references to suburbs are qualified by an adjective. This makes sense because different types of suburbs will have different problems and different planning needs...if such suburbs are defined with some precision, then they could be the bases of conceptual models, larger theories, and thoughtful practice.”³ Although Forsyth discussed differentiating suburbs more generally, the same imperative applies in particular to suburbs with concentrated poor populations: they have different problems and different planning needs.

My goal in creating a typology of low-income suburbs was to expose the patterns in the panorama of suburban poverty in the twenty-first century. Using a combined principal components and cluster analysis, I classified more than 2,000 suburbs (defined as Census places within metropolitan area boundaries but not including Census-defined principal cities) with median incomes at 75 percent or less than the metropolitan area median and/or 20 percent or more of the population living below the poverty line into five categories based on 27 employment, demographic, housing, and education

variables. The types that emerged from the analysis included Spillover suburbs, which demonstrate similar characteristics to declining central city neighborhoods; Deindustrializing suburbs, with a history of dependence on now-troubled manufacturing industries; Diverging suburbs, which bring together wealthy and poor populations in a sometimes-uneasy union; Senior suburbs, facing the unique needs of aging populations; and Latino suburbs, shaped by specific immigrant movements.

Typologies are difficult tools in that they flatten complex entities, objects, or interactions into mutually exclusive categories, but that weakness is also a strength—they provide a simplifying framework through which to analyze the complexity. While the information in a classification scheme is descriptive, not causal—in this case, the key characteristics of each suburb do not describe the reasons behind their high poverty rates—instead the types synthesize observable, measurable data to quickly inform and shape policy development.

Given the many existing suburban classification schemes discussed in Chapter 2, why add yet another typology to the literature? While several of the typological analyses only acknowledge the presence of poverty in suburbs without delving into its diversity, three studies already deal specifically with the suburban poor of this century. Murphy, in her analysis of the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh metropolitan areas, differentiated among three types of suburban places with high or growing poverty rates: symbiotic (similar in characteristics to poor urban neighborhoods), skeletal (hollowed out by manufacturing collapse), and overshadowed (wealthy but with pockets of poverty). Hexter and her colleagues at Cleveland State University selected 168 suburbs scoring high on an economic distress index including poverty, unemployment, and foreclosure rates, then categorized them by their location in regions with fast or slow growing populations and GDP. Finally, Kneebone and Berube examined suburbs in the largest 100 metropolitan areas that experienced rising poverty from 2000 to 2010, also classifying them in high and low growth regions.⁴

The typology in this dissertation complements previous research first by expanding and shifting the geographical scope. Murphy's categories overlap with my Spillover, Deindustrializing, and Diverging suburban types, but this work analyzes these patterns in metropolitan areas across the country. Similarly, the research of Hexter and her co-authors is limited to only the fewer than 200 most distressed suburbs and only examines in detail those places with large minority populations that lost population from 1980 to 2000. Many suburbs with higher poverty rates do not meet those criteria. Kneebone and Berube's analysis is much broader but has a different emphasis. They identify suburbs with rising poverty rates and separate them by levels of population and employment growth, pointing out areas that are facing new challenges but by design leaving out those suburbs that have had larger concentrations of poverty over longer periods.

My classification scheme's most important contribution is additional policy-relevant detail that leaders can quickly absorb. The typologies described above all point out some suburbs that require additional social services and policy interventions for their economically distressed populations, but don't give adequate clues as to *what kinds* of services and policies would be most beneficial. Using a wide variety of variables combined into key components highlights the economic and demographic *characteristics* of places—who the residents are, what jobs they hold, what kinds of housing they inhabit—as necessary starting points for establishing policy and planning priorities against a backdrop of limited resources. Some places that fall into the Senior and Deindustrializing suburb categories may have falling populations and fading manufacturing employment and may be situated in regions facing the same constraints, but Senior suburbs have disproportionately aging populations. Similarly, economic inequality may feature prominently in some Spillover and Diverging suburbs, but with different consequences for racial and ethnic discrimination and segregation. Latino and Deindustrializing suburbs may both benefit from skills-training programs, but with different curricula structured around language and culture. The type of suburb does not, of course, definitively set the appropriate course of action, but it immediately provides a direction to consider among the myriad possible policy responses.

Despite their utility, typologies offer ultimately incomplete information for policy and planning efforts. Mapping the suburbs within each of the types and analyzing their spatial distribution, as I did in Chapter 5, revealed identifiable regional connections—Deindustrializing suburbs in the manufacturing-heavy Rust Belt, for example, and a majority of Latino suburbs in California and Texas. These patterns support the idea of a link between major historical development processes and the present-day spatial arrangement of poor suburbs. But even within the categories, suburbs tied together by dominant features vary across space: Latino agriburbs in California, for instance, are not identical to the *colonias* of South Texas. Policy-makers can maximize the usefulness of this classification of low-income suburbs by considering it in specific metropolitan and regional contexts.

CONCEPTUALIZING SUBURBAN CHANGE

In part to compensate for the statistical difficulty of tracking suburban socioeconomic status over time, I draw on insights from my typology and embed this understanding into a time-space continuum for my second major contribution to our understanding of suburban poverty: conceptualizing suburban change. In its current state, the literature specifically addressing suburban poverty is necessarily heavy on the “what”—the existence and descriptive qualities of poor populations in suburbs—and the “now what”—how individuals and communities are navigating the increasingly complex consequences of this geographic shift in income distribution, and the possible public and private responses to those consequences. Less common at this point are analyses of the “how”: the mechanisms driving the growth of poverty in suburbs in general, and those driving the development of concentrations of poor individuals in particular suburbs.

These questions of mechanisms are concerned with change over time, not in the sense of before-and-after comparative statics, but of dynamic adjustment processes. In other words, history matters: a pithy refrain repeated more and more often in disciplines like economics that once gave little credence to the effects of the past.⁵ Studying the

evolution of systems or institutions—generalized notions of path-dependence posited across natural and social science disciplines— is critical to policy-making because it illuminates the ways in which the past influences the present, and specifically how earlier actions or conditions set the stage for or even directly affect current outcomes.⁶ Leaders make policy and planning decisions within contexts shaped by earlier policy choices in a contingent process.⁷

But when we are discussing suburban poverty, or any phenomenon implicitly associated with a geographical unit, we are now moving into the realm of spatialized systems and institutions. People individually and collectively inhabit and move within time-space paths, meaning that even the most intentionally aspatial strategies when applied across a region or a nation will have different, and in some cases unpredictable, localized effects.⁸ In that sense, as Barca, McCann, and Rodríguez-Pose contend, there are no “place-neutral” development approaches.⁹

At its core, this work is concerned with how places change and develop. More specifically, it is about the spatio-historical mechanisms by which places become poor, and in particular, by which *suburbs* become poor and stay poor. This focus brings it within range of a series of influential, dynamic theories of urban neighborhood change, ideas that continue to shape current thinking on suburban development. I briefly discuss these theories below and their applications to studies of suburbs, then contrast them with the theoretical framework for this study, which draws heavily from a set of geography-based concepts that are too infrequently applied at the scale of the local community or in the field of urban planning.

Neighborhood Change and Regional Path Dependence

In the discipline of urban studies, scholars have organized the dominant local change theories into three thematic categories.¹⁰ Ecological theories use as a foundation the Chicago School’s organic conception of the city as a human community interacting through “invasion and succession;” that is, in- and out-migration stimulate perpetual and

inevitable stages of neighborhood growth, change, and ultimately, decline.¹¹ Political-economy theorists, drawing on different assumptions, tend to describe neighborhood trajectories in terms of economic and political power plays centered on urban land, or more generally, the impacts of the profit-maximizing actions of economic and political agents in the allocation of urban resources, often at the expense of low-income or otherwise marginalized urban residents.¹² The theories in both of these categories focused on describing largely exogenous structural forces. Socio-cultural conceptions, in contrast, protested deterministic views of neighborhood deterioration, instead emphasizing individual decision-making and the character of neighborhood social interactions as the fundamental drivers of neighborhood decline or improvement.¹³ Locally-based social movements collectivized individual decisions and place attachments into protests successfully preserving neighborhoods from destruction, integrating the roles of structure and agency in neighborhood change.¹⁴ But these approaches were largely aspatial in terms of comparisons.

As early as the 1960s, enough time had passed from the peak of the first wave of the postwar suburban expansion that scholars began to consider change in suburbs in light of these theories. The question of interest was one of constancy—did suburbs reproduce their socioeconomic status over decades, maintaining concentrations of affluence or poverty? Advocates of persistence contended that suburbs would continue to attract residents with the same levels of income over time depending on the economic or residential nature of the suburb.¹⁵ Drawing on scientific conceptions of change in place over time, proponents of ecology theories countered that suburbs encountered the same downward cycles as urban neighborhoods—as the physical structures of suburbs age, they attract members of a lower economic class.¹⁶ Still others argued, in line with the urban political economy theories, that persistence or change in suburbs, and the resulting socioeconomic stratification, was a function not only of the economics of land use but of political and social decision-making, including zoning and housing policies or taxation. Hence this view asserted that the dynamic of actors working through institutions could precipitate the development of hierarchical class differences among suburbs.¹⁷

Recent analyses continue to couch discussions of suburban distress in the language of these same theories of ecology or political economy, both inherently exogenous in source. Some studies, often but not always of first-tier or more mature suburbs, explicitly assume the accuracy of human ecology/filtering models in describing the processes of change acting on these metropolitan places.¹⁸ Hudnut, for example, explained,

Human communities come into being, usually on raw land, with low vacancy rates and single-family dwellings predominating. They then grow through adolescence to maturity, becoming built out. In their mature phase, they start to age. Growth stabilizes, households grow older, property turnover increases, maintenance costs rise, land use controls become rigorous, and one place becomes less competitive compared with other rapidly growing communities. Gradually, values drop and uncertainty about the future escalates...this is what we have in many inner-ring suburbs.¹⁹

In contrast, in much of the literature on regional equity that has emerged in the last decade we hear echoes of the political economy or suburban stratification framework emphasizing inequality associated with metropolitan fragmentation, jurisdictional competition, and exclusionary zoning practices.²⁰

Yet, despite the inherent spatiality assumed in any thinking about urban and suburban places, these theories are curiously ahistorical and aspatial. That is, one might consider spatial and dynamic elements within an abstract metropolitan context—central city and the distance from the center, whether inner or outer suburbs, and movement of people over time—but specific locations and their histories are rarely examined in a systematic manner as contributing factors to urban and suburban change at the level of the neighborhood or suburb. Certainly, researchers have conducted studies investigating the local economic conditions of one or a few cases and the specific impact of those locations over time, but the objectives have not necessarily been to identify larger spatio-historical patterns.

Part of the problem is that, as Storper notes, any locality is “shaped by an almost infinite range of forces.”²¹ Planners and policy-makers find themselves in the midst of a tension

between speed and efficiency along with the potential for ineffective and wasteful programs, and the resource limitations that prohibit starting from scratch in every unique location.²² The challenge, as Martin suggests, is to identify patterns of variation across time and space and attempt to account for them in both theory and strategy.²³

The burgeoning literature on regional path dependency and its importance to understanding economic development is establishing just such a framework. In a recent paper, Martin describes the application of the “canonical model” of path dependence (popularized in economics by Paul David and Brian Arthur in the 1980s) to the spatial development of industrial regions as follows: 1) Firms first choose sites based on “historical accidents” related to natural resources, locational advantages or other more random pull factors; 2) Agglomeration economies quickly come into play, attracting other firms to form an industrial cluster or region in a cumulative process characterized by increasing returns to scale; 3) These cumulative processes create a pattern of “lock-in” that binds the region in a particular economic trajectory; until 4) Some powerful “exogenous shock” disrupts the path and sets the region on a different course. Researchers continue to refine the more ambiguous points of this theoretical approach, and within economic geography it has largely been applied to at the regional scale with attention to industrial development.²⁴

Ideas about spatial path dependence, however, have rarely made their way into applied analyses of granulated urban and suburban spaces.²⁵ Part of the reason is that scholars and policy-makers have become accustomed to thinking about suburbs as residential in nature, despite much evidence to the contrary, that they have been hesitant to refer to them in the language of economic development. But path dependence concepts are a broadly applicable way to incorporate spatial and historical analysis into policy discussions. I use these ideas and other key theories in economic geography to develop a theoretical framework for thinking about the economic arcs of suburbs, reconceptualizing the formation of concentrations of suburban poverty in the geological language of flows, deposits, and waves and expanding on the framework using a selection of case study suburbs.

Drawing on the geographical thinking of Torsten Hagerstrand, Allen Pred, Doreen Massey, and Manuel Castells, among others, I defined suburbs, and all places, not as sedentary settlements but rather as combinations of flows: movements of people and streams of capital or consumption and production. Rather than being simply a cog in the wheel of an outward moving metropolitan system, each bundle of flows is joined to others in a global network of places. Because each place is embedded in a larger context, from the neighborhood up to the global region, the links in this network of flows are not limited to one scale but move among all levels of geography.

The direction of flows from one place to another is not random, nor is it entirely determined by remote and abstracted structural factors. Rather it is a function of three other theoretical elements. First, much like waterways, these different streams pick up and leave deposits in response to rates of exogenous change as they move through the web of places, in the form of such defining components as ethnic groups or industrial facilities. The type, magnitude, and durability of the deposit is dependent on prior conditions and rate of change; that is, the deposits left by previous flows are related to future development of a place in a contingent process that begins with the initial deposits that provide the foundation for its origins: the presence of natural resources and strategic location in relation to other places or advantages.

Second, the motion of flows in this network occurs within long waves of socioeconomic change that are characterized by technological advances, industry transformations, economic fluctuations, and mass migratory movements. The undercurrent of the waves drives the flows in various directions, to “eddy out,” catch on, or bypass existing deposits. For example, during the industrial revolution railroads expanded across the nation bringing with them investment capital from rail conglomerates, laborers to install the tracks, and residents of the new cities and suburbs that grew up around railway stops. Stations were most often selected based on location-oriented deposits of resource endowments or proximity to larger centers.

This point brings us to the final reason that the circulation of these flows is not random: people can manipulate and redirect them. But some individuals and groups have more power and influence to control movements of people and production than others. Those with influence or wealth can successfully advocate for investment or draw certain subgroups and exclude others, through a range of tools from political maneuvering to networking with other power brokers. A wealthy entrepreneur selects a site for his company headquarters, a well-known Mayor reaches out to acquaintances at higher levels of government, or a local residents' group advocates for investment. In the end the bundle of flows that characterizes a place at a particular time is subject to exogenous conditions generated by development waves, existing configurations of people and investment, and the actions of those with influence and ties to that place.

This conceptual framework unites the past with the present for a more nuanced understanding of spatialized history and its effects on current economic conditions. It acknowledges the transformative impacts of global structural forces while highlighting the actions of individuals in place formation. Both of these elements are foundational for policy-making that is sensitive to a variety of plausible futures. With this theoretical frame as a lens, I proceeded to analyze case studies of archetypal sites emerging from the classification of poor suburbs while considering how this conceptualization would allow me to read policy options off of the underlying historical and evolutionary basis of suburban poverty formation.

Extending the theoretical framework with case study narratives

The typology of poor suburbs I developed earlier in the study provided a scheme for selecting five case studies that I would use to both substantiate and extend the processes indicated in the theoretical framework. I chose the case studies based on the spatial clusters shown in the mapping analysis, and analyzed the history of each suburb from their foundations through three periods of massive change in U.S. and world history: the Industrial Revolution, the Depression and two World Wars, and the rise of

the information economy. I summarize these case studies here by suburb rather than by theme to offer a more comprehensive view of the development paths.

College Park, Georgia

Initially envisioned by a consortium of Atlanta entrepreneurs as a manufacturing suburb, College Park, Georgia lacked the access to natural resources to attract industrial flows of capital. What the suburb did have, however, was proximity to Atlanta as well as a pleasing landscape and climate. These spatial amenities inspired the investors, led by William Stanton, to establish a women's college using some of their own funds and influence. The relative success of this venture and dedicated promotion by College Park's founders attracted a military academy that contributed to the suburb's reputation as a center for culture and education. This prestige in turn drew affluent and middle class residents, predominantly white because of the segregationist policies and practices in Atlanta.

The same access to the city that spurred College Park's early development also led city officials to choose a nearby site for Atlanta's fledgling airport. As the possibilities for commercial air travel advanced with the Second World War and the creation of the jet, successive runway expansions funded in part by federal assistance encroached on College Park's land, and excessive noise and pollution lowered housing values disproportionately to the age of the housing stock. At the same time, racial tensions were rising with the growth of Atlanta's African-American population, some of whom had left the rural south as part of the Great Migration. Areas of the city with mostly black residents enlarged from the west to the south, reaching College Park as an adjacent southerly suburb, and this movement triggered a concurrent flight of white residents. Falling housing prices and service jobs related to the airport, among other factors, drew an increasing proportion of lower-income residents of both races, while some affluent families continued to move to College Park because of Woodward Academy, the suburb's enduring prestigious private school.

New Miami, Ohio

The suburb of New Miami began with entrepreneur Warren Howell's vision for a coke production facility to supply the nearby burgeoning industrial powerhouses of Hamilton and Middletown, Ohio. The facility and the population grew with demand for the local product, and soon new investors in the Hamilton Iron and Steel Company financed adding a blast furnace to the coke ovens on the site. Simultaneously in nearby Middletown, George Verity was expanding the operations of the American Rolling Mill Company, eventually a major player in the steel industry. Looking to integrate its supply chain, Armco bought substantial shares in Hamilton Iron and Steel and eventually purchased it outright in the mid-1930s. Solid employment opportunities brought new residents from across the U.S. and Eastern Europe, and Armco's investment inspired major physical improvements in the suburb as well as a push to incorporate in 1929.

New Miami grew with Armco as the company rose to become the 6th largest U.S. steel producer by 1970. Most heads of household were employed by Armco or in one of the other large industrial facilities in Hamilton, three miles away. The global reorganizing and contracting of the steel industry, however, was disastrous for New Miami as it was for many other cities and suburbs across the region. To maintain financial solvency, Armco shut down the New Miami blast furnace in the early 1980s and cut jobs at the Middletown plant while keeping it in operation. Population began to trickle out of the suburb in search of other opportunities. Since that period, New Miami has struggled for decades to fund services for its remaining residents without the inflow of tax revenue from Armco and its underemployed population.

Greenport, New York

Greenport, New York quickly became a center of maritime industry—first as a whaling port, then as a shipbuilding, fishing, and trading hub—because of its proximity to the Peconic Bay, and, with the construction of the Long Island Railroad in the 1840s, its strong connection to the New York City commercial market. The period from 1920 to

1950 was a prosperous time for Greenport, as traders made their fortunes rum running through Prohibition, the oyster industry was running at full capacity, and local shipbuilders received large defense contracts during the war.

But by the 1960s and 70s, the Peconic Bay was so overfished and polluted that Greenport's major industries had ground to a halt. Unemployment rose to unseen levels, the waterfront infrastructure crumbled, and residents started to move out. This decline continued until the early 1990s when new Mayor David Kapell began to seek out state and local funds for developments intended to build Greenport's attractiveness to tourists. The success of the new projects along the waterfront increased tourism, attracted wealthier residents, and also encouraged additional private investments in restaurants and shops in the small commercial district. Although Greenport still has waterfront employment, the jobs distribution has shifted toward tourism-related service and retail. This economic reconfiguration coincided with an influx of documented and undocumented immigrants from Mexico and Central American countries from 1990 to 2010 that once again shifted the demographic and income structure of the suburb.

Superior, Arizona

Rich mineral stores, first silver, and then copper, motivated George Lobb to found the town of Superior, Arizona and drew its first settlers. But it was the interest and persistence of mining magnate William Boyce Thompson that led to its sustained growth. He purchased a mining claim near Superior in 1910 and set up the Magma Mining Company, but it took more than a decade and substantial investment of his own funds to prepare the mine for operations, even requiring the firm to construct its own railroad line to ship the ore. Workers from Mexico joined others from different parts of the US taking advantage of abundant mining work throughout the Arizona copper region.

Like New Miami and Armco, Superior's growth and well-being was tied to the prosperity of the Magma Company. High copper demand during World War II and substantial

government loans allowed the company to purchase an additional mining claim in nearby San Manuel. Although the new mine created stability for Magma and by extension for Superior for several more decades, the success of San Manuel eventually doomed the Superior mine. When global copper prices tanked in the early 1980s, Magma's leadership chose to keep the newer mine running, shutting down Superior's operations in 1982 and pulling 1,400 jobs. The outmigration of residents over time has been disproportionately young, leaving Superior with an aging population and few services to meet the needs of seniors. However, a new copper conglomerate, Resolution Copper, has discovered additional stores of copper near Superior and is embroiled in a politically sensitive process of accessing the rights to the land to restart mining operations. Residents of Superior are divided on whether to support this new venture.

Orange Cove, California

Orange Cove was founded in 1913 as one of a distinctive group of "agricultural suburbs," a town with a population of gentlemen orange ranchers and providers of local services. Urban development around the Los Angeles area in Orange County was pushing the eponymous industry up to California's Central Valley, where vast expanses of land and abundant sun were drawing farmers of all types of fruits and vegetables. What the Valley did not have, however, was adequate precipitation, leading to the depletion of the aquifer supplying Orange Cove by the 1930s. Orange ranchers began to abandon their land, and the suburb's already small population shrank. Agriculture in Orange Cove, and indeed throughout central California, was saved by one of the world's largest public works endeavors: the Central Valley Project, which diverted water from two California Rivers to the Valley for irrigation purposes using generous streams of federal funding.

News of the irrigation canals combined with the Dust Bowl migration to increase Orange Cove's population, though it was still home to mostly Caucasian middle class or more affluent households. However, by the 1960s California's agricultural industry was

accelerating its trend toward farm consolidation, with larger companies holding more land and employing more low-wage workers. At the same time, Mexican immigration to the United States increased precipitously and laborers migrated to the Central Valley for farm employment. As lower-income Latino residents moved in, white residents moved out in a pattern repeated across dozens of farm suburbs in the region. The seasonality and low pay associated with farm labor contribute to Orange Cove's high poverty rate, one of the highest in the state. The town's charismatic mayor, Victor Lopez, has succeeded in capturing national attention and funds, supporting Orange Cove through the most difficult periods of drought and crop failure.

Intersections of Poverty, People, and Place

By weaving together ideas about the movement of people and money among embedded and networked places, the agency of individual actors, and the effects of exogenous global forces, this dissertation adds new insights as scholars, policy-makers, and planners focus attention on the formation and repercussions of suburban poverty. Rebecca Blank writes of anti-poverty policy-making, "Effective causal stories focus on the simultaneous role of multiple and interactive causal factors, and effective policy solutions require multiple strategies." Thinking about poor suburbs alternatively as combinations of flows leaving deposits of settlement and structures *and* cohesive single entities allows us to first separate out and analyze each migratory and monetary stream and the resulting layers of development, then consider how the interactions of the flows shaped the suburb's economic path. This analytical process provides a foundation to formulate multi-pronged strategies that more accurately respond to existing conditions in all of their complexity by responding to each flow and its links to other flows. As an example, the struggles of Greenport's low-income population in the 1970s and 1980s related to the disintegration of its oyster, menhaden, and shipbuilding industries. But as the suburb redeveloped around tourism, poverty in Greenport is more a reflection of the in-migration of low-skilled immigrants engaged in service employment. The relative stability in the poverty rate over decades obscures these shifts.

But the power of this reconceptualization is not primarily about understanding suburbs in their current states. Both policy development and urban regional planning come down to predicting the future as accurately as possible in an environment of uncertainty. Planners often do this by forecasting key growth variables and developing alternative scenarios, but the approaches—population projections and the like—tend to be too simplistic, particularly if they disregard the ongoing impact of location.

The current demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of suburbs, and arguably, their future development paths, are connected to conditional processes of place formation that start with and are consistently affected by spatial location, including the availability of resources useful to a particular industry and strategic placement within a metropolitan area or region. College Park, for example, despite its founders' visions, was not endowed with the necessary elements to successfully engage manufacturing capital. Yet it was close enough to Atlanta to make it attractive to middle or upper middle class commuters. Although these initial conditions by themselves do not determine whether a suburb will become poor at some point in the future, they are not inconsequential. Orange Cove, approaching a population of 10,000 primarily Latino residents, is decidedly different today than in the 1920s when residents were mainly bourgeois white farmers and their families, but the orange ranches and the agricultural function around which it was built remain central. The Central Valley's land and sun were key ingredients in the development of the citrus industry that led to Orange Cove's founding. But California, along with Texas and Florida, have also historically been key entry points for immigrants from Latin America, predominantly Mexico, enhancing the strength of that future flow into the suburb.

Initial conditions were associated not only with the functional specializations of each suburb, but also with the relative specialization or diversification of the region or metropolitan area in which the suburb was anchored. New Miami, Superior, and Orange Cove formed in relation to industries with distinct spatial ties to larger multi-county—and in the case of steel, multi-state—regional agglomerations (and ultimately global forces), and the income struggles of these suburbs' residents are associated with changes in

the respective industries. Although Greenport's position on the coast linked it to other villages dependent on maritime activities, its location relative to New York, despite the distance from the City, likely affected Greenport's economic path more than its industrial associations. And College Park, while it had a function as an educational hub, was always linked to the mosaic of commercial and industrial activities that made up Atlanta, not least because of the city's ascendancy as a transport center.

Why do these narratives matter? They provide the context for decision-makers to increase the probability of proposing effective planning and anti-poverty strategies while minimizing the possibility of negative unintended consequences. Take, for example, the three suburbs of Greenport, New Miami, and Superior. Each was destabilized by the failure of an economic sector, but Greenport's economy has moved in a new direction with the development of a tourism base connected to New York City, while New Miami is economically stagnant and Superior is in a holding pattern. In contrast, the demographics of both College Park and Orange Cove were altered by the flight of their white populations, but the suburbs themselves now face dramatically different socio-economic conditions with diverging planning implications. These examples indicate that the understanding of a blanket concept or force like "deindustrialization" or "white flight" inadequately prepares a policy maker with the tools to take the nuanced approach necessitated by the underlying similar but distinct experiences confronting several locations.

The proposed theoretical framework accounts for a number of outcomes in suburbs that other neighborhood change theories fail to bring together. The linear progression from stability to decline to redevelopment theorized by life-cycle models can be conceptualized in the language of flows and deposits—for example, the deterioration of housing is a flow of capital out of a suburb, while the in-migration of lower-income populations taking advantage of falling housing prices is a concurrent inflow of a subgroup of people. But we can also interpret the persistent poverty of some suburbs in terms of existing and continuing deposits of culture, human capital, and types of

investment, deposits which by their properties consistently facilitate the reproduction of specific kinds of inward and outward flows.

Using a spatio-historical lens based on flows and deposits changes the frame of reference for the perennial debate on the advantages of people-based or place-based policies that arises in discussions of enduring place-based poverty. No specifically people-oriented strategy avoids place effects; even Glaeser's 2005 appeal to give New Orleans residents \$200,000 each instead of rebuilding the city was grounded in a place-specific argument that reconstructing infrastructure in New Orleans in particular would be a bad investment given its economic structure and standing. As Davidson notes, "to an extent the conventional discourse significantly obscures, people are place, and place is people, and it is important to focus on the interaction between these foci of policymaking." It is not about a general decision between the concepts of mobility and local economic development, but rather choosing the best approach in a particular location. In fact, in certain cases the solutions are the same: an intervention such as skills training intended to improve individual employment options also builds a local labor market attractive for future firm location.

Finally, this framework accounts for the roles of individual and corporate decision-making in conjunction with structural factors in the unfolding economic paths of suburbs. Suburbs that currently have large concentrations of poverty were not doomed at their inception to that outcome; that is, their initial conditions did not inevitably lead to future poverty. Certainly they were subject to external economic and social forces outside of the control of their residents, but the actions of founders and boosters, industry entrepreneurs, and political figures with some degree of influence lured certain migratory and monetary streams or drove others away. Developing dynamic leaders and strong coalitions should then be key elements in larger initiatives to reorient the economic paths of poor suburbs.

CONSIDERING REGIONS AND ECONOMIC SECTORS IN COORDINATING INTERSCALAR STRATEGIES

In the previous section I emphasized the utility of envisioning suburbs as constructions of separate but intermeshed flows in order to more fully incorporate place-specific historical analysis into policy development. The purpose of this reconceptualization is not only to respond to poor suburbs' immediate challenges, but to more accurately tailor responses to forecasted trends. I now highlight the logical extension of the movement of flows: they must come *from* somewhere. Suburbs are integrated into a global network of places.²⁶ These networks are *interscalar*, composed of geographies from the supranational to the local; *relational*, in that the connected places are interdependent; and *asymmetric* in their interactions among different geographical levels.²⁷

Thinking across scale is critical to addressing suburban poverty because of the very interdependency of the networks shaping suburbs' economic paths. Strategies at one level of government may be undermined or reinforced at another, so anti-poverty planning should intentionally encompass as many of these connections as possible for reasons of efficiency and equity. However, within this network suburbs are also embedded in metropolitan and regional systems that vary across space by past development patterns and resource availability. Some of these regions have been shaped by the ascendance and, in some cases, demise, of dominant industrial sectors. As such, both scale and sector should be central elements of new policy approaches.

Current Thinking on Suburban Anti-poverty Policy

The current assortment of policy recommendations in response to suburban poverty differ in some details, but they are decidedly consistent in their overarching focus: establishing some form of regional (as in "city-region") collaboration. From the first concerted efforts toward metropolitan regionalism embodied in early 1900s plans for New York and Chicago to Rusk's and Down's 1990s appeals for consolidated metropolitan government structures, attempts at regional planning and governance are

nothing new.²⁸ What is more recent is the focus on metropolitan strategies as a means of bolstering suburban rather than urban economies.

In the early 2000s as scholars and policy-makers debated the benefits of metropolitan cooperation, Myron Orfield pointed out the income diversity of suburbs, suggesting that regional cooperation would be advantageous not only for poor urban neighborhoods or the lowest-income first-tier suburbs, but also for newer “affluent job centers” farther out seeking strategies to manage their frenetic pace of growth and resulting problems of congestion and sprawl. Rather than formal metropolitan governments, Orfield advocated for regional coalitions. He suggested that older, lower-income suburbs come together in associations to more effectively lobby state government for funding and policy changes. He also recommended that states crack down on sprawl to direct growth at already developed areas, and that city and suburban non-profits and advocacy groups band together to fight housing discrimination across their areas of influence.²⁹ Calls for interjurisdictional collaboration were repeated in Lucy and Philips’ proposal for a Sustainable Region Incentive Fund that would reward local governments working together to successfully combat inequity and disinvestment, and in Hudnut’s survey of various forms of efficacious suburban cooperation.³⁰

Newer recommendations over the last decade from research on suburban vulnerability and redevelopment fall into four categories emphasizing different aspects of improving economic conditions in suburbs through regional approaches. First is the need for federal funding specifically targeted toward distressed suburbs. Most commentary on suburban poverty strategies emphasizes this point at least in general terms. Some analysts do offer specific suggestions for Federal programs that would offer more than a token amount of assistance. Allard and Roth recommend the development of a “Promise Regions” program similar in nature to the Promise Neighborhoods grants, focusing on new approaches to metropolitan service delivery.³¹ Kneebone and Berube, taking another angle, propose that five percent of the federal dollars set aside for place-based redevelopment programs (equaling \$4 billion) be shifted to a new “Metropolitan Opportunity Challenge” to incentivize metropolitan collaboration in antipoverty efforts.³²

Most importantly, though, is a call for increasing flexibility in how and to whom the federal government distributes funds from existing programs, allowing coalitions in addition to individual municipalities to receive allocations.

Although heavily advocated for by Rusk and Downs, most scholars and policy-makers interested in alleviating suburban economic disadvantage have acknowledged that setting up formal metropolitan governments, either through county-city consolidation or other means, is rarely politically feasible.³³ Recent recommendations for broader city-suburb connections typically refer back to tax revenue sharing agreements such as that implemented in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area starting in the 1970s which has yet to be replicated at the same scale. Vicino references the relative effectiveness of Baltimore's strong county government in distributing funds to target the county's struggling suburbs, but points out the singularity of Baltimore's structure as compared to the fragmentation of most metropolitan areas. Other cities and suburbs have also set up smaller scale revenue sharing initiatives, but these have been more illustrative than transformative.³⁴

A number of recommendations also push for state level participation in—and sometimes control of—regional solutions to suburban decline. Often mentioned in relation to inner suburbs is a state's role in limiting metropolitan growth using boundaries or similar legislation following the example of Oregon's statewide planning program and its effects on Portland, theorizing that these restrictions will force development and resources back into lower-income areas.³⁵ Proposals for statewide affordable housing initiatives like Massachusetts' Chapter 40B follow a somewhat different logic of opening up high-cost suburbs to lower-income populations to deconcentrate poverty and offer greater proximity to the higher-wage employment opportunities in these locations.³⁶ Kneebone and Berube go a step farther regarding state control, arguing that the federal government should fund states to support metropolitan collaboration given their already vital role in overseeing regional transportation and education.³⁷

By far the largest number and variety of recommendations falls under the category of coalition-building among the suburbs themselves. These connections may take a number of different forms, whether among suburban local governments, service providers, or other non-profits. With regard to local governments, most suggestions call for the formation of suburban municipal alliances that serve multiple purposes, including raising awareness of suburban poverty in the metropolitan area, consolidating influence to lobby effectively for attention and resources, and more efficiently coordinating responses across a larger area in order to reach economies of scale.³⁸ Researchers point frequently to the work of the Ohio First Suburbs Consortium (FSC) in creating cross-jurisdictional housing and economic development programs and working to influence state legislation, and suggest similar networks based on that model, potentially acting at a range of scales across metropolitan boundaries or even state lines.³⁹ To deal with the problem of inadequate social services for smaller municipalities experiencing rising poverty, policy advocates propose building networks of non-profit and for-profit providers that can band together to reach a wider area and avoid costly duplication of services.⁴⁰ Reckow and Weir recommend connecting such networks to state agencies.

Combining Sector and Scale

Reviewing the range of disparate policy proposals together makes clear what most do not explicitly say: deliberately interscalar strategies are necessary for improving the economic conditions of poor suburban residents and increasing suburbs' capacity to respond to new demands for infrastructure and services, sometimes in the face of decreasing budgets. An ideal approach would coordinate vertically integrated federal, state, and local policies with horizontal connections among metropolitan or regional local authorities, the private sector, and nonprofits.⁴¹ Interscalar is not the same as multi-scale; disconnected policies and regional coalitions are counterproductive if they are at odds with one other. Nesting policies is particularly important for poor suburbs with fewer people and resources than their urban counterparts, and forming cross-jurisdiction alliances gives suburbs opportunities for more influence within fragmented

and competitive metropolitan systems. Recommendations for different forms of regional cooperation fall within the category of interscalar governance but do not always go far enough to ensure that national and state-level policies undergird local initiatives.

But while the most recent policy ideas for poor suburbs at least nod to the significance of multilevel coordination, they fail to systematically consider the connections between geographic scales and economic sectors. I contend that this oversight is a legacy from the long-term view of suburbs as residential appendages to primary cities, when in reality many were self-sustaining employment centers tied to specific industrial regions. These base industries and their related spatial configurations shaped certain suburbs' socioeconomic trajectories and continue to influence suburban outcomes. In essence, even strategies that successfully combine vertically coordinated policies with horizontal cross-suburban coalitions need to be situated in spatial contexts, paying special attention to the effects of regional economic history on the present. I raise three implications from the findings of this dissertation for considering sector and scale in suburban poverty policies.

Spatio-temporal Data Analysis

At the most basic level, the goal of better predicting movements of people and capital into and out of suburbs within a network of places calls for new forms of data collection and analysis. Census data is the main choice for the analyses that often form some basis for planning decisions, but the Census is best at providing cross-sectional data portraits of places at moments in time. The IRS has migration data that researchers can access for finer-grained geographies, but it undercounts low-income populations that do not file income taxes. Data confidentiality issues make it difficult to obtain information for different socioeconomic groups at smaller geographies. As a result tracking intra-metropolitan movements is challenging. Future research is needed to identify creative avenues for manipulating currently available data to understand migratory flows.

Acquiring data on capital streams is easier because of reduced privacy concerns, but policy-makers need better access to indicators already publicly and privately collected. Housing sales and mortgage data are available (even if proprietary) for local jurisdictions, as is information about government grant streams such as CDBG. Data from the Economic Census and workforce indicators offers approximations of employment and firm movements. Organizing and offering this data at the municipal level would give planners a more dynamic picture of economic conditions.

Defining the Region

In policy recommendations related to suburban poverty, “regional” has become interchangeable with “metropolitan.” This trend is in keeping with the scholarly shift to focusing on the city-region as the analytical center of the new global economy.⁴² But it virtually ignores the continuing effects of sector-centric regions, economic spaces that typically cross county and even state lines. Although by definition all of the case suburbs in this study have some present-day connection with their central cities, their historical development paths demonstrate varying degrees of interdependence with the city. This analysis reveals two guiding principles: that the appropriate combination of policy and programmatic scales for intervention is a place-specific and policy-specific construction, and past and present sectoral analysis should be a key element of selecting the correct scales at which to work.

The housing, labor, and commercial markets of the New York and Atlanta metropolitan areas clearly buttressed the economies of both Greenport and College Park, despite the difference in distance from their urban centers. In certain ways, College Park is an extension of Atlanta, the archetype of an inner-ring suburb. Yet because of the vast economic contribution of the airport and related businesses, College Park has the influence to compete with Atlanta for people, firms, and funds, giving the suburb an edge in negotiating planning initiatives across the metropolitan area. Where College Park and Atlanta must act in concert is in responding to racial inequality stemming from more than a century of discrimination and segregation. Greenport, once anchored to the

New York City commercial market through its seafood exporting, is now similarly linked through its tourism industry. Collaboration with the city on infrastructure and marketing initiatives would contribute to growth in that sector, as would formalized partnerships among Long-Island's tourism and food culture-oriented suburbs. Greenport's challenge, which it shares with the city, is to create interventions that support its lower-wage service workers.

Orange Cove and Superior, in contrast, because of their locations and natural resources, evolved in relation to specific industries and therefore to other nearby smaller communities also engaged in the same type of production. Their original markets were not the cities of Fresno and Phoenix, but first national and later global economies. The citrus belt where Orange Cove is situated, for example, runs through three California counties and several metropolitan areas. Orange Cove may benefit from better integration into the Fresno metropolitan area, through affordable housing initiatives or revenue-sharing agreements if politically feasible. However, strategies to alleviate poverty in Orange Cove should also promote alliances across the citrus region for purposes other than supporting the orange industry.

Long-Term and Short-Term Goals at Different Scales

Creating complementary vertical and horizontal strategies that account for the influence of economic sectors may require reconciling short-term and long-term goals at different scales that appear to be contradictory. This idea is best illustrated with examples from Superior and New Miami. Both are struggling against the effects of disappearing industries that formed the economic base of the surrounding region. But changes in their regional contexts over time warrant different approaches in each case.

New Miami is a suburb within a declining metropolitan area embedded in an industrially specialized and now economically vulnerable region. Once supported by its own coal processing plant, it has become a severely underresourced bedroom community for the two nearby cities of Hamilton and Middletown, both lacking employment and losing

population for similar reasons. Butler County is situated in the middle of a larger region encompassing Cincinnati and Dayton, which despite Cincinnati's glimmers of revitalization, is not the image of North American economic prosperity. And the greater Cincinnati region is itself nested in the former center of steel production across Ohio and Western Pennsylvania, an area that has never fully recovered from steel's collapse.

Addressing these issues of severe underemployment and economic stagnation requires taking a hard look at the real potential to change these conditions in the short term. New Miami itself is unlikely to attract any significant capital investment on its own, and its residents are stuck in place, with limited local options and few means to move out of state. Economically revitalizing the smaller suburbs of the Ohio-Pennsylvania steel region would entail a multi-county, multi-state transformation creating a new diversified economy. This is a process over decades, not years, that would require a massive, intentional infusion of federal resources to foster economic and infrastructure development, paralleling those national investment streams that helped to build the Southern and Western regions of the U.S. Federal funds would need to be allocated through coordinated state and local coalitions with well-defined goals as part of a multi-level regional planning process. In the meantime, and with little indication of federal support for such a broad initiative, New Miami's poor residents need interventions to increase their economic and physical mobility so they can support themselves and their families. In the short-term, they need the option to leave.

Superior, devastated by the closure of its copper mining operations, finds itself at a crossroads as a new corporation lobbies to reopen the nearby mine. Unlike New Miami, however, Superior falls within the economically diverse and rapidly growing Phoenix metropolitan area, and it has to address the specific needs of its senior population. In the short term, copper's resurgence is a windfall that may quickly bring younger families to shore up the suburb's fiscal capacity and provide opportunities to invest in smaller projects to provide for the elderly. In the long run, though, relying on copper is a path to decline.

Instead, the Greater Phoenix area should include Superior in a long-term strategy focused on creating stronger connections to the metropolitan economy. Larger-scale infrastructure and service improvements for aging residents require coordination with existing transport and health care delivery systems. These types of investments would increase Superior's attractiveness to other seniors both in and out-of-state, a population that brings with it social security income and accumulated wealth. The town's location at the foot of the mountains and mining history give it some leverage to build a tourism industry, bolstered by projects in the works to renovate a historic hotel and provide economic incentives to craft and artisanal retail outlets.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Across the United States, people with poverty-level incomes are moving to suburbs, and current suburban dwellers are losing assets as a result of job losses and declines in property value. These movements of people and diversions of income streams have contributed to shifting the geography of poverty so that for the first time, a larger share of the metropolitan poor population lives in suburbs than in cities. Yet, despite the stir this statistic has provoked, poverty has been present through the history of suburbia in a variety of forms, from small enclaves within larger municipalities to communities of low-wage workers and their families barely subsisting. And it is only through recovering the spatio-historical contexts of these communities that we can begin to chart the way toward economic viability.

In this dissertation, I engaged the question of how concentrations of poor households have developed in certain suburbs across the United States. Specifically, I examined the spatial and historical roots of the landscape of suburban poverty we now observe. Using a theoretical framework integrating space and time, I contend that today's poor suburbs are composite processes in motion. Their present economic conditions are connected to their past development and their physical location, not in a linear pattern of rise or decline, but as an integrated element of an ever-expanding interscalar network of places. The nature of suburbs and their position within metropolitan, national, and global

economic systems suggests that policies and programs to address suburban poverty may be more effective at a larger scale than that of the individual suburb. However, those strategies should be informed by regional and local historical analyses that recognize regional location as a critical element in development.

CHAPTER 9 ENDNOTES

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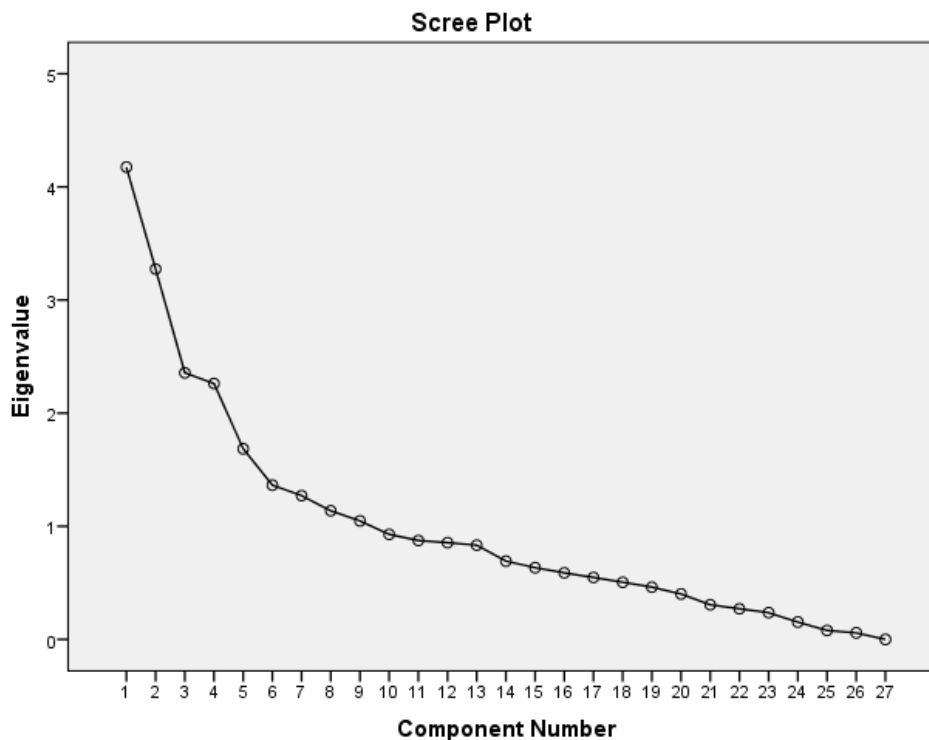
APPENDIX

To test the robustness of my typological categories, I ran the combined principal components/cluster analysis on a dataset of suburban census places with poverty rates of 20 percent or more. The following tables, not included in Chapter 4, show the variance explained by the first seven principal components, the scree plot, the component loadings, and the mean component values for the analysis of this dataset.

Appendix Table 1: Variance explained by selected principal components
20% poverty dataset

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.427	12.691	12.691
2	2.673	9.899	22.590
3	2.320	8.591	31.181
4	2.116	7.836	39.017
5	2.036	7.542	46.560
6	1.804	6.682	53.242
7	1.712	6.342	59.584

Appendix Figure 1: Scree plot graphing the initial eigenvalues of the principal components
20% poverty dataset



Appendix Table 2: Component loadings for the selected principal components
20% poverty dataset

	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
% 65 and older	-.309	-.033	-.555	-.374	-.073	.101	-.059	.042
% White	-.651	.019	.028	-.422	.014	-.139	-.321	.266
% Black or African American	-.227	-.005	-.137	.467	.147	.040	.387	-.435
% Hispanic or Latino	.923	-.042	.101	-.002	-.093	.069	.069	.052
% Single Parent Families	.122	-.130	.087	.691	.075	-.013	.078	-.081
% Less than high school	.789	-.296	-.168	.167	-.053	-.074	-.005	.029
% in Labor Force	-.047	.012	.943	.125	.051	.012	.040	.096
% in Labor Force: Employed	-.043	.034	.927	-.213	.052	-.003	.083	.000
% in Labor Force: Unemployed	-.011	-.048	.106	.726	.002	.034	-.088	.212
% Completed Bachelor's	-.242	.706	.099	-.183	.185	.261	.020	-.058
% Employed in Manufacturing	-.231	-.170	.047	-.034	.075	-.715	.011	.097
% Owner Occupied Housing	-.103	-.127	-.050	-.186	-.846	-.019	-.070	.032
% Vacant Housing Units	-.171	-.082	-.280	-.081	-.028	.274	.004	-.078
Median year structure built	.371	.245	.006	.237	-.396	.119	.051	-.073
Median value of housing units	.217	.722	.047	-.077	.229	.008	.044	.204
% Foreign born	.888	.059	.133	-.022	.105	.045	.101	.091
% Moved from principal city	.037	.050	.056	.060	.167	-.010	.776	.102
% Moved from suburbs	-.129	-.017	.086	.133	.489	-.040	-.404	.021
% Received Food Stamps	.187	-.334	-.192	.548	.067	.032	-.054	-.102
Relative median housing value	.049	.736	-.021	-.136	.099	-.027	.057	.134
% Worked in a principal city	.189	.005	.130	-.028	-.147	.042	.766	-.045
% High-wage high-skill emp.	-.325	.700	-.005	-.025	-.113	.172	-.069	-.129
% Med-wage, med-skill emp (1)	-.011	-.148	-.053	-.033	.051	.109	-.061	-.809
% Med-wage, med-skill emp (2)	-.181	-.021	.021	-.022	.055	.154	.145	-.001
% Med-wage, med-skill emp (3)	.071	-.324	-.005	-.039	-.096	-.776	-.014	.176
% Low-wage, low-skill emp	.034	-.268	-.012	.056	.199	.636	.131	.354
% Multifamily housing units	-.032	.282	.060	-.028	.800	.118	.068	-.080

Appendix Table 3: Mean component values for cluster analysis
20% poverty dataset

	Cluster				
	1	2	3	4	5
Principal Component 1	-.28798	-.47736	-.25787	-.07071	1.93337
Principal Component 2	-.14949	-.20859	-.11464	2.18284	-.19581
Principal Component 3	.04567	.43998	-1.25241	.24130	.27165
Principal Component 4	.82008	-.21291	-.22611	-.41152	.03506
Principal Component 5	.29698	.00887	-.37472	.70532	-.25375
Principal Component 6	.10192	-.26122	.09042	.62547	.13064
Principal Component 7	1.27251	-.45453	-.18356	-.18501	-.05657

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