

The Cultures of the Suburbs International Research Network: Second Symposium

Out of Control Suburbs? Comparing Representations of Order, Disorder and Sprawl

Hofstra University 27-28 June 2013

PROGRAMME

Day 1 (Thursday 27 June 2013)

9.00 – 10.15: Registration and coffee

10.15 – 11.30: Welcome and Keynote Presentation by Dolores Hayden, Professor of Architecture and Professor of American Studies, Yale University.

Response: Chris Niedt, Hofstra University

11.30 – 12.55: Panel A: Design and Influence in Cities / Suburbs: Chair: Paul Burton, Griffith University

Kristen Gagnon, Carleton University, Ottawa: *(Semi)Urbanism: Creating a Hybrid Through Slippage*

Lorenza Pavesi, University of São Paulo, Brazil: *The Campaign against “Subtopia” and the Suburban Sprawl in Post-War England*

James McArdle, Deakin University: *The Liminal Wilderness of Railway Margins* (via Skype)

Yannis Tzaninis, University of Amsterdam: *“This is the Melting Pot!”: Changes of the Expectations and Aspirations of Almere’s Newcomers*

Stacey Hunter, Edinburgh University: *Regional Specificity: The New Urbanism in Scotland*

Soumya Manjunath Chavan, Jain University: *The Suburban Cultural Identity in a Rapidly Developing City: Rajarajeshwari Nagar of Bangalore – A Case Study*

12.55 – 2.15: Lunch

2.15 – 3.20: Panel B: Social and Spatial Order / Disorder: Chair: Chris Niedt, Hofstra University

Alexandra K. Murphy, University of Michigan: *“Litterers”:* How Objects of Physical Disorder are used to Construct Subjects of Social Disorder in a Poor Suburb

João Pedro Nunes, University Institute of Lisbon: *Suburbanization, Spatial Disorder and Placemaking in a Lisbon Suburb (Amadora, 1960-1974)*

Shibboleth Shechter, University of the Arts, London: *A Mosaic of Gardens*

Scott E. Silsbe, New York University: *“Developing” The ‘Greenleaf Trail’: Changing Perceptions of Green-space in Suffolk County, New York*

3.20 – 3.35: Break

3.35 – 4.50: Panel C: Planning: Chair: Mary Corcoran, National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Paul Burton, Griffith University: *The Right to an Unsustainable Suburban Life: Australian Politics, Policy and Practice*

Carlos A. Reimers, The Catholic University of America: *Informal Suburbia*

Maroun Kassab, University of Sydney: *Suburban Sprawl in Lebanon*

Keith Wilhite, Siena College: *Imagining a Community of Readers in the Era of Suburban Sprawl*

Carol Hager, Bryn Mawr: *Community Planning in Ecologically Sensitive Landscapes: the New Jersey Pinelands*

Day 2 (Friday 28 June 2013)

9.00 – 10.00: Keynote Presentation: Dr Choodamani Nandagopal, Professor of History and Cultural Studies, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Jain University.

Response: Jo Gill, University of Exeter

10.00 – 11.15: Panel D: Perceptions of Home / Defining the Suburbs: Chair: Jo Gill, University of Exeter

Ellen Avitts, Central Washington University: *Subversion in Suburbia? Presentations and Practices of Living in Suburban Homes at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century*

Lisa Choi, York University, Toronto: *Of Pirate Ships and Bookshelves of Toys: In-between (Un)homeliness in the In-between City*

Lael Leslie, CUNY: *Residents Speak Out: The Politics of Place in a Sprawling Space*

Miriam Gusevich, The Catholic University of America: *Corporate Fashions: Shaping the Suburban Work Order*

Bridget McFadden, New York University: *O₂ pIONeers! When Science Claimed the "Frontier" and the "Pioneer" Donned a Lab Coat: Examining a Shift in Post-war American Residential Patterns in Response to Atomic Discovery*

11.15 – 11.30: Break

11.30 – 1.05: Panel E: Segregation / Integration and the Suburbs: Chair: Paul Burton, Griffith University

Hannah Ewence, University of Chester: *Disorderly Minorities and the Battle for the British Suburbs*

Michan Andrew Connor, Emory University: *Privatopia and Color-blind Racial Politics in North Fulton County Suburbs*

Gregory Smithsimon, Brooklyn College, CUNY: *African American Suburbs: Wealth, Security, and Punctuated Equilibrium*

Llana Barber, SUNY College at Old Westbury: *Debating "Savage Inequalities" in Massachusetts: Suburban Politics and the Crisis in Urban Education*

Whitten Overby, Cornell University: *Suburban Evangelicals: the Megachurch Movement and Orlando's Holy Land Experience*

Tim Keogh, CUNY: *Suburban Order, Suburban Disorder: Jobs, Integration, and the Perceived Divide Between New York City and its Suburbs*

Katrina B. Anacker, George Mason University & Christopher Niedt, Hofstra University: *Immigrant Segregation Across Suburban Typologies: Findings from the 2010 Census*

1.05 – 2.15: Lunch

2.15 – 3.20: Panel F: The Suburbs in Fiction / Poetry/ Film & TV: Chair: Martin Dines, Kingston University

Gareth Millington, University of York, UK: *Darkness on the Edge of Town: London, Essex and the Noir Imagination*

Paul Thifault, Lindsey Wilson College: *The Neighborly Mr. Ripley: Patricia Highsmith and the Murderous Suburb*

Jo Gill, University of Exeter: "Ever-widening Gaps: Post-War Poetry and Suburban Sprawl"

Andrew Byler, Hampshire College: *Policy, Privilege, and the Persistent Narrative of Suburban Discontent: From Post-war Trope to Contemporary Misconception*

3.20 – 3.30: Break

3.30 – 4.00: Roundtable / Close

Speakers:

Professor Dolores Hayden, Yale University: *Borderlands, Buildouts, and Big Boxes: Shaping American Suburban Landscapes, 1820-2000*



Dolores Hayden, Professor of Architecture, Urbanism, and American Studies at Yale University, is the author of many books about American landscape history including *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820-2000* (Pantheon, 2003) and *A Field Guide to Sprawl* (with aerial photographs by Jim Wark, W.W. Norton, 2004). Both were selected as Planetizen top ten books on urban studies. *Discover* magazine chose *A Field Guide to Sprawl* (also the subject of a Yale architecture exhibit) as one of their top twenty books in science. Her earlier book on suburbanization, *Redesigning the American Dream: Gender, Housing, and Family Life* (1984, W.W. Norton rev. ed. 2002), won an NEA award for Excellence in Design Research, the Davidoff Award in Urban Planning, and an American Library Association Notable Book Award.

Professor Hayden, an urban historian and architect, and a former president of the Urban History Association, has taught at MIT, UCLA, and UC Berkeley. She has been a fellow of the Lincoln Institute, the Radcliffe Institute, Guggenheim Foundation, and the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford. Her work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Boston Globe*, CNN and The Diane Rehm Show, and translated into many languages. Also a widely-published poet who often writes about the landscape, Professor Hayden recently created a new class at Yale on "Poets' Landscapes." Her web site is www.DoloresHayden.com

More Americans live in suburbs than in centers of cities, but how do we understand and define diverse suburban landscapes? Professor Hayden analyzes patterns of land use and building since 1820 to document seven common types of suburbs: borderlands, picturesque enclaves, streetcar buildouts, mail-order suburbs, sitcom suburbs, edge nodes, and rural fringes. She looks at the scale of development to distinguish between older patterns of suburbanization and more recent sprawl

supported by federal subsidies for growth. She will consider the implications of these historic layers in the landscape for both new construction and the preservation of older suburbs.

Dr Choodamani Nandagopal, Jain University, Bangalore: *Changing Dynamics of the Suburban Culture. Bangalore – A Case Study*



Dr Choodamani Nandagopal, Professor of History and Cultural Studies, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Jain University, Bangalore India is the recipient of four International prestigious Fellowships, namely, UK Visiting Nehru Fellow (1992) at Victoria & Albert Museum London, UNESCO Hirayama Fellow (1995) for Art History, UNSW Visiting Research Fellow (2009), and Exeter International Academic Fellow (2012), and supervises PhD students in Cultural Studies. Her research focuses on the socio-cultural approaches of art, society, culture and contemporary studies, and she has published eighteen books and fifty papers. Dr Nandagopal is widely travelled with academic assignments, on national and international committees and boards. At present she is heading a research team, at Jain University, on 'The Changing Scenario of Bangalore City – Urban and Suburban' with a focus on the factors of rapid urban development and the changing nature of the suburban culture.

Bangalore, the most happening city of the world of 21st century has a shocking impact on its suburbs. This paper focuses on - Defining 'Suburb' from an Indian context; the emergence of Metro, connecting the suburbs to city central resulting in socio-cultural changes, with people of different age groups responding to new change in the process of making Bangalore an international city. To explore the suburbs in relation to economic dynamics, cultural mix, intangible and negative effects on urban land-use pattern, the factors of acculturation, globalization, IT industries, and the shift in civic activities; its impact on children and the elderly creating disorder in their lifestyle or accounting for a changing dynamics of suburban culture.

Kristen Gagnon, Carleton University, Ottawa: *(Semi)Urbanism: Creating a Hybrid Through Slippage*



Having completed a Bachelor of Architectural Studies and Masters of Architecture, Kristen Gagnon is currently pursuing a PhD in Architecture at Carleton University's Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism, in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, where she is focusing on ways to consciously look at the city as we move through it. This is a shift from her Master's thesis, entitled *(Semi)Urbanism: Creating a Hybrid Through Slippage*, which focused on the potentials of translating suburban ideals into more urban, sustainable and imaginative densities. Kristen, a Toronto native, now calls Ottawa home where she lives with her husband and their dog Pumpkin.

(Semi)Urbanism: Suburban ideals within an urban context; a hybrid understanding of residential/community design that meets the needs of the suburban homeowner by pulling from the memory of the suburbs and setting it in a more thoughtful, dense, urban environment. Looking at alternatives to suburban development and stacked-housing, (Semi)Urbanism reverses the argument by bringing the suburbs to the city, rather than the urban to the suburban, and is thus the hybrid needed to mediate between the centrally-densified core and the sprawling suburb.

A methodology for the transformation and creation of this liminal space, slippage – a shift in perception from the familiar to the unfamiliar – is the act through which one place becomes another through the sliding, stacking, layering and superimposing of it onto itself, allowing memories of an older order to create new, mediating spaces. And it is this shifting of perceptions that is significant within a suburban context, one that is paralyzed in stagnant nostalgia, mundane imagination and repetitive neutrality. Yet it would be ignorant to discredit suburbia completely, and slippage allows these specific, meaningful ideals to be the remnants that remain.

Through the methodology of slippage, at the levels of both literal architecture and speculative art, and through suburbia's ability to act on itself through mediums such as experimental film and architectural intervention, including my own explorations, a product is realized that allows for the suburbanite to be satisfied and for the place of the in-between of the urban/suburban to become blurred and beautiful.

This is not your grandmother's suburban house.

Lorenza Pavesi, University of San Paulo, Brazil: *The Campaign against "Subtopia" and the Suburban Sprawl in Post-War England*



Lorenza Pavesi was born in Italy and graduated in Graphic Design in the UK. She holds a master degree in Theory and History of Architecture and Town Planning from the University of São Paulo (EESC-USP), Brazil. She is currently a PhD student at the School of Architecture and Urbanism of the University of São Paulo (FAU-USP), Brazil. Her research focuses on the history of the

Townscape movement and its diffusion in the UK, its country of origin, and in the United States, Italy and Brazil from the 1950s to the 1980s.

The expansion of the railway in Great Britain turned the suburb into an alternative to the industrial city for an emerging middle class in search of social ascension and, at the end of the nineteenth century, the solution to housing problems for the lower classes was generally considered the introduction of cheap train fares, a factor that contributed to the growth of the suburbs.

Since the 1920s, Transport for London developed a distinctive visual identity and successful advertising strategy in order to market the suburb as an alternative to the city and introduced posters that, by emphasising the contrast between town and country, promoted the suburb to a mixed population. This paper discusses a twentieth-century suburb prototype, a low-density estate consisting of isolated bungalows inspired by the aristocratic country houses. From this imaginary, in fact, evolved a more modest suburb composed of semi-detached houses on small plots. Suburbia detractors, however, despised what they considered mediocrity and observed apprehensively the growth of ribbon developments along the railways.

By the 1950s, suburbs and garden cities became the mainstay of British official planning policy, a dogma from which the New Towns originated. In order to elucidate the rise of an anti-suburb culture in the years after the Second World War, this paper discusses the visual identity developed by British transport companies and, by analysing some literary works of the period, considers the variety of perceptions ascribed to suburbia. Finally, the paper examines the campaign articulated in 1955 by *The Architectural Review* against a landscape they termed subtopia: “the universalization and idealization of our town fringes” (I. Nairn, *Outrage* (The Architectural Press, 1955) p.365.

Llana Barber, SUNY College at Old Westbury: *Debating “Savage Inequalities” in Massachusetts: Suburban Politics and the Crisis in Urban Education*

Llana Barber is an Assistant Professor in the American Studies department at SUNY College at Old Westbury where she teaches courses in immigration and urban history. She completed her PhD in History at Boston College in 2010, and is currently revising her dissertation into a book on the transition of Lawrence, Massachusetts to a Latino-majority city (tentatively titled “Latino City: Urban Crisis, Ethnic Succession, and Suburban Politics in Greater Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1945-2000”).

This paper explores the idea of a distinctly suburban political culture in Massachusetts in the late 1980s and early 1990s with regard to education. Urban public schools desegregated relatively late in Massachusetts cities, and the resulting white flight has been well documented. Without a critical mass of white students to integrate with students of color in urban public schools, and with metropolitan desegregation off the table thanks to the 1974 Supreme Court ruling in *Milliken v. Bradley*, desegregation, as a movement, lost its steam in the state in the 1980s. At the same time, decades of white flight, de-industrialization, and economic decline had devastated urban tax bases (and thus urban public schools), while the state’s suburbs (and schools) had flourished. By the 1980s, massive inequality and segregation existed *between* urban and suburban districts (rather than *within* an urban district, which could conceivably be addressed via specifically urban governance).

In response to this new metropolitan reality, activists began working to pressure the state to equalize educational funding between urban and suburban districts. As the state, and ultimately the nation, came to debate the roots of the crisis in urban education, suburban residents (and the politicians that represented them) were compelled to develop narratives of the crisis that exempted them from responsibility. Massachusetts' suburbs worked to articulate explanations of the crisis that were distinctly urban, and to foreclose possible solutions to the crisis that would entail redistribution of suburban resources.

Yannis Tzaninis, University of Amsterdam: *"This is the Melting Pot!": Changes of the Expectations and Aspirations of Almere's Newcomers*



In 1998 I studied Political Science (BSc) at the University of Athens in Greece, having specialized in political analysis. In 2006 I moved to Amsterdam and started an MSc in Migration and Ethnic Studies at the University of Amsterdam, changing later to the Research MSc in Human Geography, Planning and International Development. After my graduation in 2009 I worked on a couple of research projects (Fieri, Geitonies), before I started a PhD in March 2011 at the University of Amsterdam. In my research I focus on the relationship between the transformation of the Dutch new town Almere (outside Amsterdam) and its residents' accessibility to social resources during the town's different phases. With a focus on the geographical-historical conditions which produce this 'new town', I explore the expectations and aspirations of newly settled residents.

Suburbanization has been a prevalent process in advanced capitalist economies especially since the 1960s. Its continuity however is challenged by radical changes both in the built environment as well as the demography of metropolitan areas. This paper focuses on the lived experiences of this dynamic process, while restricting the attention to Almere, a constantly growing Dutch new town close to Amsterdam. In particular, I inquire into the changes of the motives and aspirations of persons who have been moving into this town at different periods.

Almere was planned in the 1970s and started as a utopian family community, but the town expanded quickly in a conventional western suburban manner. Nowadays the city center fashions a World Trade Center, shopping malls and post-modern aesthetics. Parallel to such development, Almere has radically different new settlers, changing from former Amsterdam families to, increasingly, single people often moving from abroad. To bring the discourse of this shifting demography to the fore, interviews were conducted with the two generations of Almere's settlers. Ideas about pioneering and utopias have shifted towards more pragmatic aspirations such as work and studies, reflecting the shift from the western "prosperity" of the 1960s-70s to the current precariousness of neoliberal economies. People with limited resources often try to negotiate their living-space demands via mobility to Almere, which comes with its own scarcities. The suburban-urban dichotomy is put into question, while the concepts of urbanism and suburbanism are problematized, with particular emphasis laid on wider historical-geographical developments.

Alexandra K. Murphy, University of Michigan: *“Litterers”*: How Objects of Physical Disorder are used to Construct Subjects of Social Disorder in a Poor Suburb



Alexandra K Murphy is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the National Poverty Center at the University of Michigan. She received her PhD from Princeton University in Sociology and Social Policy in 2012. Murphy is currently completing a book on suburban poverty that draws on four years of participant observation of residents and community institutions in a Pittsburgh suburb. She has published articles on suburban poverty and the role of antipoverty organizations in cities and suburbs. This work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Atlantic Cities* and *The Pittsburgh Tribune Review*. *The Urban Ethnography Reader* (co-edited with Mitch Duneier and Philip Kasinitz) is forthcoming (Oxford University Press, Fall 2013).

Middle- and working-class white and black homeowners of the Pittsburgh suburb under ethnographic study, Penn Hills, believe that litter is a significant problem in their community. Despite rarely seeing anyone actually litter, they develop folk theories that blame this problem on black, poor renters moving into the suburb. Drawing on three and a half years of fieldwork, this paper documents the structural features that sustain litter accumulation unequally across different spaces. I show that litter accumulates in spaces that people occupy publicly, like the bus stop or in front of businesses. Bus ridership is higher in neighborhoods where the black poor tend to live than in white neighborhoods. As a bedroom suburb, Penn Hills was built for cars and not pedestrians or people who wait outdoors for the bus. Little accommodation of such public space usage is provided by, for example, the public or private provision of trash cans. This contributes to litter. So too does the presence of vacant homes and businesses that have sprouted up in this declining suburb; property owners are not present to clean up the litter that may blow onto their property. In such scarce times, there is no money for the provision of public services that might clean up litter systematically across Penn Hills. There is also little money for code enforcement to aggressively tackle the problem. When litter is cleaned up, it is done by a volunteer group in a largely white neighborhood. When these people pick up litter in their own neighborhood, and not elsewhere, this contributes to the perception that black poor people litter while whites do not. The paper examines how long-time residents interpret these ecological patterns and use their own behavior toward litter (picking it up) to claim a moral status for themselves as community insiders while constructing those they perceive as outsiders as disreputable litterers. I consider the relationship between physical and social disorder as these suburban residents construe it. I also consider the consequences of this process for theories of ecological contamination and the reproduction of the stigmatization and denigration the black poor experience in the city, in the suburbs.

João Pedro Nunes, University Institute of Lisbon: *Suburbanization, Spatial Disorder and Placemaking in a Lisbon Suburb (Amadora, 1960-1974)*



João Pedro Nunes, Research Fellow at University Institute of Lisbon and DINÂMIA'CET, Centre for Socioeconomic Change and Territorial Studies. PhD in Urban Sociology (New University of Lisbon, 2007) on the Lisbon's

suburbanization and accounting for the changes engendered by the high-rise housing projects in the metropolitan condition of residents and suburban spaces. My ongoing research project is on the history of a mid-nineteenth century Lisbon's first ring suburb, from its industrial and residential rise and fall to its new urban features such as economic activities, sociability patterns, and memory.

Between 1900 and 1950 the town of Amadora emerged as an important residential and industrial suburb of Lisbon (Portugal). With the electrification of the nearby Sintra's railway line (1957), its urban and social position changed with cheaper and faster commuting conditions and an increased housing demand. Rapidly, land-developers and owner-building housing production changed the town's center and its outskirts' landscapes. In the 1960s the town acquired a significant weight in Lisbon's demographic structure (8%). Its population grew from 9.760 in 1940 to 47.300 in 1960 and 112.200 inhabitants in 1970. Heterogeneity in the social composition of Amadora increased (48% working-class and 29% middle-class residents). A close study of newspaper articles published on the national and local press between 1960 and 1974 on Amadora's urban life reveals a set of disordering effects engendered by urbanization and growth. Despite the existing censorship under the New State authoritarian regime (1933-1974), press sources give a clear picture on issues like spatial disorder and public services (in)efficiency (e.g. litter and garbage recollection, postal service, public telephones, police, and street life). Moreover, the examination of letters sent by Amadora's residents to newspapers reveals aspects of their suburban experience and their claims for more urbane place-making conditions. The Amadora case casts some light on Lisbon's working and middle-class suburbanization. A clearer picture on the ways by which urban growth, spatial disorder, and urban nuisances' management influenced the social construction of a suburban space is thus obtained, along with the reconstruction of the suburbanites' experience.

James McArdle, Deakin University: *The Liminal Wilderness of Railway Margins* (via Skype)



James McArdle is a practice-based researcher, who investigates the metaphoric uses of focal effects and the differences between human and camera vision. Findings from this research have been the subject of exhibitions and papers published for international conferences with a range of focus and themes including anthropology, social sciences, Australian studies, scientific photography, poetics and aesthetics. My current research employs multiple and overlapping, converging viewpoints to create a contour moire in images of the landscape; and rotational imagery of motion perspective in the passing landscape as seen by a moving observer. I exhibit the findings of this research regularly at venues that have included the AGNSW, Horsham Regional Art Gallery, Bendigo Art Gallery, Castlemaine Visual Arts Biennial, View St Arts Centre Bendigo, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Smyrnios Gallery, Prahran, Melbourne, Albury City Art Gallery and the work is held in a number of private and public national and international collections. I contribute to research in the history of Australian photography, for example through curatorship of Phiction:Lies, Illusion and the Phantasm in Photography which toured eleven galleries across Victoria

(December 2001 to October 2003) and, most recently, a chapter 'Shifting Ground in some Australian Photography' In Mehigan, T. (Ed.) *Frameworks, Artworks, Place: The Space of Perception in the Modern World*, Amsterdam (New York: Rodopi, 2008)

On the margins of railway corridors exists a liminal wilderness. Migrating from suburban gardens, this biota and vegetation succession is uncultivated, but rich; in fact the ecological value of such sites improves after a few decades of neglect and dereliction, mainly determined by the spontaneous development of biotopes, leading to biodiversity of flora and fauna. Yet it exists so close to the crowds fleeing by in the carriages of trains, commuters going out and travelling home. These human occupants are also “in the wild”. Their relationships in this setting are wary. What does a contemplation of the relationships between the people and what becomes temporarily their environment bring to bear on the idea of wilderness in a social and ecological sense?

Michel de Certeau’s idea of the static-in-motion of the train traveller adapts Merleau-Ponty’s figure of the Chiasm, manifested as the glass of the carriage window and the steel rail, to account for the way immobility crosses between near and far, between speed and stasis. How does art manifest and contribute to these ideas?

The paper will refer to imagery by Daniel Crooks and to ‘Im/mobile’ (James McArdle 2011/12) in which the author uses a technique that ‘dissolves’ the vehicle and reveals the temporary human interactions in the state of transit amid reflections and glimpses of the railside vegetation. With time it became clear this method opens a window into the “wild” social relations of passengers amid the wilderness associated with particular urban lines.

Shibboleth Shechter, University of the Arts, London: *A Mosaic of Gardens*



Shibboleth is a lecturer, design studio leader and first year co-ordinator on the BA Interior and Spatial Design at Chelsea College of Art and Design (<http://baisd.wordpress.com/>) and a visiting lecturer at Central Saint Martins, where she is part of the Spatial Practices research cluster and collaborates with MA Narrative Environments on live projects with an emphasis on community engagement, cultural sustainability and co-design (<http://www.narrative-environments.com/>). Shibboleth studied architecture at the Architectural Association and recently completed an AHRC funded MA by Research in Landscape Urbanism at Kingston University. Prior to concentrating on an academic career, Shibboleth has many years experience in practice as an urban designer, first with Arup’s environmental team and then as a senior urban designer at Colin Buchanan.

The British suburban landscape is a “mosaic of gardens”. Britain is a “Nation of Gardeners”. Domestic suburban gardens permeate the discourse of UK suburbs, in terms of their origin, development, theory and popular appeal. Each domestic garden is individually crafted by its owners. As owners change, as the life-style of owners change, as gardening fashion changes, the gardens

gradually change. The “mosaic of gardens” is continuously transformed; reflecting social, cultural and economic shifts in the life of suburban residents.

The paper proposes that an understanding of the impact of individual gardener decisions on this mosaic is crucial in any discussion of land use and sustainability. Domestic gardens are at the heart of new research challenging the long-held view that suburban neighbourhoods are less sustainable than a compact urban form. To increase the potential suburban gardens have to enhance biodiversity, ecosystem services, health and well-being, social sustainability and urban agriculture, it is important to understand the crafting of individual gardens and how to manage gardens across spatial scales; important to link the individual vision of millions of gardeners, crafting their garden space, into a vision for the sustainable future of UK suburban neighborhoods.

Scott E. Silsbe, New York University: “Developing” The ‘Greenleaf Trail’: Changing Perceptions of Green-space in Suffolk County, New York



Scott Silsbe is studying human evolutionary biology and ecology, economics, and philosophy of mind at NYU’s John W. Draper Interdisciplinary Master’s Program in Humanities and Social Thought. He received his BA from Stony Brook University in 2008, where he specialized in the history of military contractors in contemporary sub-Saharan Africa. His hobbies include many outdoor activities including road biking on Long Island and hiking throughout the north-eastern United States. At NYU Scott heads the Draper Student Organization. He is also the Web Editor for *Anamesa*, the Draper Program’s interdisciplinary journal.

The *Greenleaf Trail* is a proposal to transform areas of undeveloped, protected land (including some power company right-of-ways) into a maintained greenbelt extending between Holtsville and Sayville. What is the difference between protected, undeveloped land and a greenbelt? As evidenced by the Greenleaf proposal, I will argue, it is in large part mere individual perceptions—particularly expectations of order / disorder in their “backyards”. Ongoing public discourse on the Greenleaf proposal represents a unique opportunity to examine order / disorder in suburban green-spaces from the ground-level.

Currently, within the officially maintained boundaries of these space there exists—relative to surrounding suburbia—a state-of-nature. Accessible via modestly dynamic, interlaced networks of trails, they are not only venues for naturalist exploration, but also refuges for those who benefit from areas of relative disorder in the midst of suburban sprawl: notably motor-sports enthusiasts, underage drinkers, and the homeless. Modest changes in perception and management may significantly change how locals use these areas.

I will examine how these spaces will change—or rather, how physically *little* the spaces will change—should their status be modified. Of interest will be disconnects between the local expectations and the proposal itself, likely due to negative associations with “development”. Strictly speaking, the proposal develops the spaces, increasing order within their boundaries. Insofar as this development entails only minimal installation of infrastructure (mostly signage), “development” is misleading.

Concluding, I will consider the prospects of the proposal, and whether changes in perceptions will suitably transform use of the spaces in the long-term.

Paul Burton, Griffith University: *The Right to an Unsustainable Suburban Life: Australian Politics, Policy and Practice*



Paul Burton is Professor of Urban Management and Planning and Deputy Director of the Urban Research Program at Griffith University in Australia. His research interests include public participation in planning and policy making, food security in cities, and planning for emergencies and natural disasters. Paul has recently completed an edited collection on climate change adaptation in Australia and is writing a book about the development of the City of Gold Coast as an example of ‘adolescent urbanism’. Paul is a member of the Gold Coast Committee of Regional Development Australia and is a director of Partners for Liveable Communities, Australia.

In the words of Australian urban historian, Graeme Davison, “Australia was born urban but quickly became suburban”. This shapes the expectations of many contemporary Australians who aspire to own their own detached home in a residential suburb that offers security, respectability and the prospect of capital accumulation. Renting and apartment dwelling are often portrayed as inferior options, to be avoided or to be treated as stages to be passed through as quickly as possible. However, despite an apparent abundance of land, it is becoming increasingly difficult to supply this type of housing in a form that is affordable at the point of purchase and in its long term running costs. While the market is responding with a more varied product in terms of size, location and price, governments – especially at the local level – often struggle to appreciate the demand for “unconventional” housing and to plan accordingly. This presentation explores the origins of the Australian suburban fixation and reviews current debates in planning for a more variegated urban and suburban landscape. The paper presents examples of planning debates and development proposals from within and around the City of the Gold Coast in South East Queensland, a place that has recently reasserted its neo-liberal credentials in proclaiming that it is both “open for business” and committed to preserving those environmental features that attract holiday makers and permanent residents.

Stacey Hunter, Edinburgh University: *Regional Specificity: The New Urbanism in Scotland*



Stacey Hunter trained as a designer and is currently a researcher at the University of Edinburgh’s architecture school where she is completing a PhD primarily concerned with transnational New Urbanism. Stacey formerly held a curatorial position at The Lighthouse, Scotland’s Centre for Architecture, Design and the City where she helped to deliver the Six Cities Design Festival in 2007. She lives in Edinburgh where she writes about architecture and design, teaches and has recently co-founded a design business which manufactures bespoke bicycle accessories. Her research interest lie mainly

in the examination of contemporary urban life, including the suburbs, gentrification and discourses of power.

My paper would discuss how “place” is theorised in New Urbanist literature paying particular attention to how historical precedents and patterns and form-based codes are utilised as a “frame” to create places that are described as coherent and ordered: critics claim that aesthetic codes may inscribe a moral order (Al-Hindi and Staddon, 1997).

I am interested in the New Urbanist perception of “order” and “disorder” in suburbia. The suburbs represent an aesthetic of *disorder* in the Charter of the new urbanism (Arendt et al., 1999); suburban patterns are not seen as part of an organic social process, but as an imposed, disjointed problem to be resolved by the reintroduction of the orderly grid of the traditional city plan. “The suburban pattern of alternating strip malls and circuitous street systems may be visually seductive, but they suggest an underlying lack of order, an endlessly repetitive, piecemeal approach to development” (Bothwell, 1999, 49).

A section through Scotland’s architecture and planning history reveals a diverse variety of approaches from the ambitious two-street plan of the medieval burgh of St. Andrews (*circa* 1150), the imposed, classical “civility” of Edinburgh’s New Town (1820), the humane modernism of Sir Basil Spence’s “Fisherman’s” social housing in Dunbar (1949), the bombastic megastructure of Cumbernauld’s centre (1956), and of course, the contemporary developer-led suburban sprawl at the edge of Scotland’s six cities that has led to calls for a “new approach”. New Urbanism offers a stable, predictable approach, but how might Scotland’s *regional specificity* and attendant ancient and complex modes of development intersect with applications of New Urbanist theory? What might be edited out when using a prescribed pattern for Scotland’s suburban growth?

Soumya Manjunath Chavan, Jain University, Bangalore: *The Suburban Cultural Identity in a Rapidly Developing City: Rajarajeshwari Nagar of Bangalore – A Case Study*



Dr Soumya Manjunath Chavan, born in 1969, is an artist and art researcher. She has a Master’s in painting and a PhD in fine arts. Her area of research focuses on drawing comparisons between the ancient and contemporary Indian philosophical and ritual ideologies. She has presented and published five research papers at national and international levels. Also to her credit are about six solo and many group shows of paintings at national and international levels. Collections of her paintings are in India and abroad. Presently she heads the department of Visual Arts at the Jain University, Bangalore.

Suburb, necessarily a cultural entity, evolved around the socio-cultural human organism not merely the functional entity to cater the needs of modern life though accommodating the socio-economic needs of a growing city like Bangalore. Insight into cultural context which is integral to the parameters that govern the suburban space and how the urban space pulls the suburbs to its

centrality is crucial. The temple rituals and fairs sustain the cultural networking between urban and suburban. In this context, this paper investigates the ritual culture of Rajarajeshwari Nagar, a changing suburb of Bangalore and its status in the 'Karaga' festival of urban Bangalore.

Carlos A. Reimers, The Catholic University of America: *Informal Suburbia*



Dr Reimers is a faculty member at The Catholic University of America. He has done extensive research in peri-urban informal environments. His interests include the growth and development of low income urban communities, the impact of planning regulations in sustainable housing approaches, the future of suburbia, incremental housing, residential planning and housing design in rapidly developing contexts, and formal and informal housing in North America, Latin America and Asia. He has served as senior advisor of several NGOs and low-income community organizations working in housing, and as consultant in social and low-income housing for the Inter-American Development Bank.

A relevant number of American cities have been expanding in an unconventional way for a few decades now. Incremental construction of low-income housing built on subdivided rural land in the outskirts of suburban areas is becoming a common sight. Since these developments usually occur in peri-urban areas at a certain distance away from roads and highways coming into the cities, construction has now been going on for a relevant time. For a country like the US, it has been difficult to accept that suburban informal development very much like the one observed in countries of the developing world is going on within their boundaries. As in developing countries, this informal suburban development is less a regional phenomenon than a mechanism used by people to deal with increasing poverty that, stimulated by global phenomena, transcends political boundaries and involves different cultures and societies, as well as economic and political systems. While the practices, methods, and processes that we see in these low-income neighborhoods are similar to those that operate in other geographies of the globe, the issues that they raise and impose on American cities remain unaddressed by rigid zoning, policy controls, and technical approaches to address this kind of "unconventional" development.

This paper is based in studies made to several of these settlements using data that spans almost three decades. The study provides a clear picture of the phenomenon and discusses the particular characteristics that informal suburban environments have adopted in the American context. The paper discusses opportunities for effective public and private participation in these areas.

Maroun Kassab, University of Sydney: *Suburban Sprawl in Lebanon*



Maroun Kassab holds a Master's Degree in architecture from the University of Cincinnati in the USA, and he is currently pursuing his PhD degree in architecture at the University of Sydney in Australia. His research focuses on modernist Lebanese architecture that emerged in Lebanon between 1945

and 1975, as well as on the consequences of this period on the current urban and suburban scene in Lebanon. Maroun is also a practicing architect with projects in both Lebanon and the USA.

This paper explores suburban sprawl in Lebanon by analyzing zoning and building codes, topography and geography, urban composition, building types, social factors and building methods. Today, Lebanon is witnessing a severe case of suburban sprawl that has reached an unprecedented scale in the history of its urban development. During the past twenty five years, the perpetuation of a specific building type into the Lebanese suburb: the multi-storey residential/commercial building, ranging from three to five stories high, has had a severely devastating effect on the natural environment as well as on the suburban aesthetic image. As Hanna Alamuddine puts it “the development taking place since the end of the civil war has produced a very poor environment both in cities and in rural areas”. Elie Haddad states that today we are observing a total collapse of the values of modern architecture in Lebanon, and sees this collapse as a possible reflection on a corrupt intellectual and political system. Even though we are witnessing some attempts at municipal levels to counter this rapid and frantic expansion, these attempts remain idiosyncratic, scattered and lacking an appropriate vision as to how the current situation should be handled. In this article, I will discuss a little bit of the financial history that played a part in advancing suburban sprawl in Lebanon, as well as look at a few other major contributing factors that led to the current situation. I will also try to project a logical outline for a strategy that might address this phenomenon.

Keith Wilhite, Siena College: *Imagining a Community of Readers in the Era of Suburban Sprawl*



Keith Wilhite is an Assistant Professor of English at Siena College in upstate New York. His research focuses primarily on the “literature of place” and broader questions concerning regionalism and environmental sustainability, links between race, gender and place, and the evolving relationship between cities and their suburbs. His essay on contemporary suburban fiction and regional writing appeared in the September 2012 issue of *American Literature*, and he is currently working on a book-length manuscript entitled *Contested Terrain: The Suburbs, U.S. Literature, and the Ends of Regionalism*.

“You’re stuck in traffic again”. This is the opening line to the popular New Urbanist text *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream* (2010, ix), recently reissued with a new preface to commemorate its tenth anniversary. This paper proposes to examine *Suburban Nation* as a cultural text that offers unique insights into how writers imagine a community of readers in the suburban age. *Suburban Nation* provides a touchstone for considering how the spatial effects of sprawl and the increased emphasis on privatism have shifted our expectations about community and readership. As Jonathan Franzen notes in his essay “Why Bother?”: “In a suburban age, when the rising waters of electronic culture have made each reader and each writer an island, it may be that we need to be more active in assuring ourselves that a community still exists” (88). Although Franzen here singles out “electronic culture” (as opposed to, say, highway systems), he and the authors of *Suburban Nation* share similar suppositions about the atomistic nature of the “suburban age”, assumptions that invite a more rigorous examination of how America’s predominant

residential geography might shape our understanding of writing, reading and community. In the space of this brief paper, I will show how *Suburban Nation* “constructs” a reader for the era of suburban sprawl, and then offer some tentative thoughts and questions about how the suburbs are written for diverse communities and individuals in the contemporary era.

Carol Hager, Bryn Mawr: *Community Planning in Ecologically Sensitive Landscapes: the New Jersey Pinelands*



Carol Hager received her B.A. in German from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and her Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, San Diego. She is Associate Professor in comparative politics at Bryn Mawr College. Her research explores the ways in which ordinary people participate in issue areas with high technical content, particularly energy politics and land use planning. She is author of *Technological Democracy: Bureaucracy and Citizenry in the German Energy Debate* (1995) and is currently working on an edited volume, entitled *NIMBY is Beautiful: Cases of Local Activism and Environmental Innovation Around the World*.

My paper has to do with community planning and community integrity in a protected watershed. Encompassing much of south-central New Jersey, the Pinelands National Reserve consists of about 1.1 million acres, or 22% of the total land area of the state. It is home to cranberry and blueberry growers, a number of endangered animal and plant species, and fifty-six municipalities, from the outer Philadelphia suburbs in the west to the Jersey Shore in the east. It was also an early experiment in collaborative institutional design. Created by both a 1978 federal statute and the state Pinelands Protection Act of 1979, its administration takes the form of a combination of municipal, county, state, and federal governments. Pinelands communities have their own unique identity based partly on the landscape in which they are embedded. At the same time, they face similar pressures for growth as in other areas of the nation's most densely populated state. I am interested in the way that Pinelands communities negotiate their ecologically sensitive physical surroundings and their complex political environment. I use GIS mapping to illustrate the development pattern over time in the Pines, and to show how this pattern differs from the pattern in adjacent areas. I then explore, through interviews with different participants in Pinelands planning, how collaborative governance works to balance regional environmental integrity and local community integrity.

Ellen Avitts, Central Washington University: *Subversion in Suburbia? Presentations and Practices of Living in Suburban Homes at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century*



Ellen Avitts is an Art Historian who specializes in American Art, Architectural History and Material Culture. She received her MA from Rice University and her PhD from the University of Delaware where her work focused on the narratives embedded in developers' furnished model homes. Her recent focus is on idealized presentations of ways of living

presented in advertising and popular media. She lived and worked in Baltimore, Maryland, for many years but recently accepted the position of Assistant Professor of Art History at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington.

My study is about presentations of lifestyle in house merchandising and the extent of human agency in shaping home. It began with a question: To what degree and in what ways does the home-dweller conform to or move away from prescribed ways of living? My focus is middle-class, single-family housing built by speculative developers, the most common form of dwelling in the United States.

Between 1998 and 2004 I conducted field-work analysis of the walk-through model home and its accompanying literature. I explored the marketing of social identity to clarify how these spaces are used as symbols of social identity and the ways in which artifacts shape, and are shaped by, communally driven perceptions of middle-class values. I also examined the hierarchical division of domestic space and the gendering of spaces in the constructed spectacle of the walk-through furnished model home.

This paper builds on that study by considering the ways families negotiate the space in which they live. Based on ethnographic field-work and oral histories of persons now living in the homes analyzed in my initial research, this is a comparative analysis of the house as commodity and the house as lived experience that reveals how home-dwellers utilize space in their practices of everyday living and how these practices ascribe to or challenge overarching ideas of domesticity. It addresses the theme of order and disorder through consideration of ways in which these staged spaces support culturally perceived norms while denying actual social, cultural, and economic realities.

Lisa Choi, York University, Toronto: *Of Pirate Ships and Bookshelves of Toys: In-between (Un)homeliness in the In-between City*



Lisa Choi is an MA student at York University in Toronto, Canada where she works within the disciplines of cultural and suburban geography. Her current research is situated in Scarborough, an inner suburb of the Greater Toronto Area, and looks at the intersections between theories of home, place-making, landscape (re)production, memory and imagination. Her research uses visual methods including photo re-collection and image-elicitation interviewing in addition to participatory art that contributes to the community where this work takes place. Lisa will be pursuing PhD studies at Oxford in 2013 on the topic of socio-spatial practices within the context of airport (sub)urbanization.

Narratives and visual representations of the remembered past and imagined future paradoxically challenge and reproduce normative socio-spatial relationships between the suburban home and the spaces that exist external to it. To illustrate these complex relationships, this research compares and contrasts the narratives of two research participants who grew up in Scarborough, an inner suburb

within the Greater Toronto Area. These two participants in their late 20s look back at their childhood in 1990s post-war suburbia and ahead to the ideal future. Through the use of a four-phased visual methodology, suburbia is re-collected through the gathering of family photographs while the landscapes of the ideal future are represented through a creative art piece using various mediums. Exploring concepts of home, memory, imagination and place, this research draws on suburbanites' visual representations and storytelling to illustrate the complex relationship between memory and imagination. Furthermore, the orderliness of traditional representations of the suburban dream is also juxtaposed with actual lived experience. In doing so, the past and future are blurred together within both narratives and act as interventions in the normative social and planned landscape of suburbia. This paper is part of a larger research project that explores nine narratives from the suburb of Scarborough and culminates in a co-curated group exhibition where the creative work of all participants is showcased. This exhibition translates suburbanites' memories and aspirations into multiple mediums to (re)create a cross-temporal sensory experience of home that aims to further challenge stereotypical suburban discourses.

Lael Leslie, CUNY: *Residents Speak Out: The Politics of Place in a Sprawling Space*



I studied with the anthropologist R. Birdwhistell in the School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and received my Ph.D. in Sociology at the Graduate Center, City University of New York. My current research employs sociological and anthropological perspectives in an analysis of how place is constituted by people living in so-called sprawling regions. One focal point of this research is the question of how versions of the suburban ideal play out in the spatial politics of residents of the early suburban and late suburban periods, and the implications their conflicting positions have for future planning. I am particularly interested in the multiple meanings and uses of middle class housing in the constitution of place, part of an ongoing project to identify distinctions within the white suburban middle class, so often represented in the media as a blanket category.

Views from the highway treat so-called sprawl as a placeless space, a problem that has to be solved. But how do residents view sprawl? Our data comes from a longitudinal interview study carried out with white middle-class residents of South Brunswick Township, a municipality straddling Central New Jersey's Route 1 Corridor. In this venture off the highway, we find that this spatially fragmented, highly decentered space is not a problem for these residents. They do not miss a Main Street and they do not experience sprawl as placeless. They like where they live. What is problematic for them, and what finds them bitterly divided, is the question of how best to use (or zone) dwindling open space in the service of their visions of place.

In New Jersey, a system of local "home rule," requiring that each of the 566 municipalities pays for its services, residents are accorded considerable latitude in making zoning and planning board decisions. As interviewees say, those who "get involved and speak out" can make a difference. A prolonged zoning board case that we examine shows middle-class homeowners, so often treated as

a homogeneous block, starkly opposed to one another. For each group of homeowners, the way in which a small parcel of land should be zoned, for whose and for what benefit, is essential to the perpetuation of their world view.

Space and place are closely intertwined in this politically-charged debate. While a “harmonious” use of space, projecting the appearance of social homogeneity, is a desirable outcome for one group of homeowners, it is anathema to others. Conversely, a “mixed”-use space, projecting images of social heterogeneity, which is the sought-after outcome for a second group of homeowners, is regarded by their opponents as a most “inharmonious” use of space.

Residents’ arguments show that sprawl is not a blank slate and it is not placeless, but is very much a work in progress.

Miriam Gusevich, The Catholic University of America: *Corporate Fashions: Shaping the Suburban Work Order*

Miriam Gusevich has integrated theory and practice of Urban Design. She has built projects and award-winning master plans and design competitions. She has written and lectured on the theoretical implications of her own practice and of the discipline. She is currently at the School of Architecture and Planning at the Catholic University of America, in Washington, DC. Dr Gusevich received a B Arch (1975) and M Arch in Urban Design (1979) from Cornell University and was a Loeb Fellow 1997 at Harvard University. She was born and raised in Havana, Cuba, and emigrated to New York City in 1968.

This paper examines the role of fashion in shaping the social and spatial order of the suburban environment; here we will concentrate on the business park as a suburban typology.

Fashion is a social process for the production and reproduction of ideas, products and environments, thus it transcends apparel to encompass all dimensions of material culture. Fashion is a social figuration through which agents act in different institutional capacities to invent, adopt, promote, diffuse, transform and codify fashions as patterns.

Suburban business parks started as “collegiate fashions” with Bell Labs as a research campus in a pastoral setting; it used the typology of the quadrangle to recreate the American college experience. Soon after WWII, the corporate campus was transformed by “haute-couture” into corporate palaces designed by star architects for powerful patrons. Local and national trade magazines promoted and diffused it as an ideal. This physical pattern was soon translated into new zoning. A new breed of developers adopted and reproduced this pattern as “ready-to wear”, transforming it into the ubiquitous “Office Park”. More recently, this fashion has been exported globally, to China, Singapore and India.

Fashion can help us understand the social and spatial order of the suburb. Understanding the roles of powerful elites in creating and consuming fashions demystify the claims by market

fundamentalists that suburban sprawl is a natural outcome of market forces. Discerning among various fashions as large-scale patterns allows more nuanced critique of the spatial consequences of suburban growth.

Bridget McFadden, New York University: *O₂ pIONeers! When Science Claimed the “Frontier” and the “Pioneer” Donned a Lab Coat: Examining a Shift in Post-war American Residential Patterns in Response to Atomic Discovery*



Bridget McFadden’s interest in the connection between the first atomic chain reaction and American suburban housing patterns stemmed from a post-college stint selling new construction homes for a tract builder just outside of Naperville, Illinois. Intrigued by the concentration of well-educated, white collar professionals purchasing property in the area, she sought to investigate the forces luring this particular segment of the population sixty miles outside Chicago. Bridget is a recent graduate of the John W. Draper Interdisciplinary Master’s Program in Humanities and Social Thought at New York University. She has a B.A. in English from the University of Notre Dame, and resides in Brooklyn.

On 2 December 1942 on an abandoned squash court at the University of Chicago, Enrico Fermi, Nobel Prize-winning physicist, achieved the first self-sustaining chain reaction, initiating the controlled release of nuclear energy. Soon after this first reaction, Fermi’s pile, a lattice-like structure composed of uranium, graphite and strips of cadmium was removed from the University to a large plot of forest thirty miles west of Chicago. After this relocation, two different laboratories, Argonne National Laboratory and Femilab were built in the vicinity to house atomic research and innovation. This migration of scientific research facilities prompted the relocation of the scientists who worked in the labs, leading to the development of particular type of suburban enclave, the “technoburb.” This paper privileges Naperville, Illinois as a prime example of this type of suburban “edge city,” one that experienced massive growth in the decades following WWI when atomic research began receiving national funding, and continues to attract a particular type of highly-educated populace whose nucleus of activity is in relation to the pursuit of scientific discovery.

In order to analyze the character of this strain of westward migration, this paper examines the evolution of the words “pioneer” and “frontier” in relation to dialogue surrounding atomic research and the suburban sprawl that it provoked. It analyzes the words’ original definitions in which physical space and national identity is central to their meaning, and compares this to how they came to be defined and used during the age of nuclear development in the mid-1940s, when the words take on meanings more closely related to the cultivation of new ideas and scientific breakthroughs. American identity shifted in the years following the war as émigré scientists found amnesty on American soil, and science was coined as the new frontier. Those advancing scientific boundaries became the new pioneers, who expanded their own geographic limits in order to investigate the limits of the universe.

Katrina B. Anacker, George Mason University & Christopher Niedt, Hofstra University: *Immigrant Segregation Across Suburban Typologies: Findings from the 2010 Census*



Katrin B. Anacker is currently an Assistant Professor at the School of Public Policy at George Mason University in Arlington, VA. She is the editor of the forthcoming book *The New American Suburb: Poverty, Race and the Economic Crisis*, to be published by Ashgate in 2014. Her work has been published in *Housing Policy Debate*, the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, the *Journal of Urban Affairs*, *Housing Studies*, the *International Journal of Housing Policy*, and *Urban Geography*, among others. She obtained a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning from the Ohio State University.



Christopher Niedt is the academic director of the National Center for Suburban Studies and an assistant professor of Sociology at Hofstra University. His research has examined the political history of inner-ring suburbs, the anti- eminent domain activism of the property-rights movement, and the effects of the foreclosure crisis. He is the editor of *Social Justice in Diverse Suburbs: History, Politics, and Prospects* (Temple University Press, 2013).

While racial, ethnic, and class segregation has been analyzed extensively in the past, not many have analyzed immigrant segregation, especially across suburban typologies. Early analysis of Census 2010 data revealed slight declines in Black-White segregation across US metropolitan areas, with mixed results for Asian-White and Latino-White segregation (Denton, forthcoming; Frey, 2011; Logan, 2011). While illuminating, these racially- and ethnically-based works tell us little about place-level diversity and segregation at the local level, a topic that has gained considerable attention from social scientists and historians over the past ten years (Anacker, forthcoming; Nicolaidis, 2002; Singer et al., 2008; Singer, 2009, 2010; Wise, 2004). Metro-wide racial and ethnic segregation indices mask great variation among immigrant gateway suburbs. Using Decennial and ACS data, and building on past attempts at suburban typologization (Hanlon et al., 2009; Hayden, 2003; Mikelbank, 2004) and recent works by Lee, Iceland, and Sharp (2012), our analysis examines the advantages, disadvantages and methodological challenges of integrating place-level typologies into the measurement of immigrant segregation in the U.S.

Hannah Ewence, University of Chester: *Disorderly Minorities and the Battle for the British Suburbs*



Hannah Ewence is a lecturer in Modern History at the University of Chester, UK. She is a cultural historian specialising in modern British-Jewish history and the history of race and immigration in Britain more broadly, with a particular interest in the spatial dynamics of the immigrant experience, and the 'racialization' of urban space. Her current project explores the suburbanisation of Jews in twentieth century Britain.

From the principally Jewish districts of North West London to the broadly Asian quarters of numerous cities in the Midlands and the North of England, migrants to Britain and their descendants have become integral to the cultural fabric and architectural landscape of suburban Britain. Yet, as a recent publication has pointed out, the idea of the British suburbs as a “repository of pure Englishness” as, essentially, a “white” space, remains potent within popular thinking and academia alike. For many researchers, the inner city remains unquestionably synonymous with “race” and “races” whilst the suburbs appear strangely de-racialised. This myth of the racially homogenous suburbs is unhelpful. However, it has been used to account for episodes of hostility expressed by the “white” majority towards the various spatial practices of minority communities accused of encroaching upon suburbia.

This paper will argue that such an interpretation is only a partial explanation. To do so, it will explore some contemporary debates that have evolved in response to the perceived “visibility” of racial and religious difference in Britain’s suburbs. This will include an examination of the decade-long dispute surrounding the construction of an *eruv* – a symbolic enclosure which allows Orthodox Jews to move freely on *Shabbat* – in North West London, as well as localised consternation about the “spawning” of mosques and the inclusion of “extraneous” minarets within the capital and elsewhere, which apparently exacerbate rather than alleviate the “exoticisation” and foreignness of the Muslim community. This paper will suggest that many of these anxieties about the “disorderly” racialization of suburban space come not from mainstream sources or majority voices but originates from within the very communities under discussion.

Michan Andrew Connor, Emory University: *Privatopia and Color-blind Racial Politics in North Fulton County Suburbs*



Michan Andrew Connor is an Assistant Professor of Urban and Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington, and a 2012-2013 visiting scholar at the James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference at Emory University. His current research investigates the historical roots, contemporary politics, and social equity implications of the movement to split the affluent and white-majority portion of Fulton County, Georgia that lies north of the Atlanta city limits from the remainder of the county. He earned his doctorate in American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California in 2008 and his work on metropolitan Los Angeles has appeared in the *Journal of Urban History* and the *Southern California Quarterly*.

Fulton County, Georgia, part of the Atlanta metropolitan area, is among the most economically and racially polarized counties in the United States. Residents of the affluent and majority-white northern suburbs now seek to secede from the southern portion of the county. Outside observers including residents of Atlanta and south Fulton interpret the move as motivated by rejection of financial and social obligation toward the poor and of a Fulton County government that provides employment and social services to a significant number of African Americans. While race and social class are significant social facts relevant to the secession movement, north Fulton residents prefer to

interpret the secession movement in terms of another significant social fact: the nearly complete privatization of services in the municipalities of north Fulton, all of which have incorporated since 2005 and which are largely populated by affluent, professional, recent arrivals to the region. Looking to the suburb of Sandy Springs, I will examine privatism as a public narrative that counterposes a rational order of the market against contentious interest group politics, and an individualist narrative deployed to insulate north Fulton, a space defined by contemporary neoliberal cultural politics, from equity demands shaped by the larger region's longer histories of segregation and racial subordination.

Gregory Smithsimon, Brooklyn College, CUNY: *African American Suburbs: Wealth, Security, and Punctuated Equilibrium*



Gregory Smithsimon is Associate Professor of Sociology at Brooklyn College, CUNY. He is the author of *September 12: Community and Neighborhood Recovery at Ground Zero* (NYU Press), about the role of public space in community conflicts around Lower Manhattan after September 11th. He is also author, with Benjamin Shepard, of *The Beach Beneath the Streets: Contesting New York City's Public Spaces* (SUNY Press), on protest movements and New York's privately owned public spaces. He is currently working on *Liberty Road: African American Middle-Class Suburbs Between Civil Rights and Neoliberalism*, on how suburban space reframes political conflicts for middle-class African Americans.

Recent studies have shown that middle-class status is more precarious for African American families than others. This study, part of a larger project on African American suburbs, uses ethnographic and interview data to understand some of the micro-level causes of economic catastrophe in middle-class African American families. It concludes that the African American middle class put at risk through a model of "punctuated equilibrium", in which long periods of relative stability can be upended by acute crisis. The study concludes that African American families are more likely to suffer such crises for two reasons. First, there are numerous crises that are more likely to affect African Americans than other middle-class suburban families, such as: mortgage fraud, neighborhood deterioration, crime victimization, and job loss. Second, and no less important, the maintenance of the middle class in general requires public rescue from periodic crises (such as natural disasters, the cost of higher education, and recession), but crises that are specific to African Americans, rather than shared among all of the middle class, are less likely to invoke adequate state response. The model of punctuated equilibrium helps explain the simultaneous existence of a significant, growing Black middle class, and significant ongoing disadvantage, even for middle-class African Americans, compared to whites.

Whitten Overby, Cornell University: *Suburban Evangelicals: the Megachurch Movement and Orlando's Holy Land Experience*



Whitten Overby is enrolled in Cornell University's History of Architecture and Urbanism MA/Ph.D. program. His research interests include the convergence of architectural history with popular culture (especially theme parks and the sets of working woman sitcoms), ethnography, tourism, yoga, and corporate power structures.

Megachurches appear along highways in most American suburbs, adjacent to and as prevalent as big box stores. These structures blend into the surrounding landscape and foreground patrons' devotional and revelatory communion with a Christian God. This emphasis on the experiential rather than the structural and liturgical functions traditionally housed in churches stems, in part, from postmodern suburbia's homogenizing tendency. As these built environments have cultivated an increasingly flattened look, its citizens have turned inward and developed far more abstract relations to conventionally concrete sources of power. Evangelical megachurches have, at the same time, taken on the qualities of a mass-produced commodity that aims to entertain the laity through hyperreal clerical performances incorporating film, song, and dance.

The Holy Land Experience, a Christian theme park in Orlando, Florida, plays off and expands these characteristics of the megachurch. Its reconstruction of key monuments from first-century CE Jerusalem and significant biblical narratives—Christ is crucified daily in front of a live audience—augments services with tangible evidence while emphasizing the same sensorial belief system stressed in sermons. Beginning with an analysis of several megachurches in the central Florida region and then connecting as well as comparing the experiences and architecture of these sects to the pilgrimage destination, this paper intends to construct a hopeful rather than critical history of recent evangelical beliefs by focusing on the relationships between the suburban evangelical, postmodern architectural and urban aesthetics, and phenomenology.

Tim Keogh, CUNY: *Suburban Order, Suburban Disorder: Jobs, Integration, and the Perceived Divide Between New York City and its Suburbs*



Tim Keogh is a doctoral candidate at the CUNY Graduate Center and a substitute lecturer at Queensborough Community College. He is currently completing his dissertation, 'Suburbs in Black and White: Race, Suburban Labor Markets and the Fight for Jobs on Long Island, 1941-1980', which explores the relationship between suburban African Americans and shifting job opportunities on Long Island from World War II through the 1970s. His research interests include suburban, African American, and social policy history. He lives with his wife in Queens, New York.

My presentation explores how the post-1945 cultural divide between American cities and suburbs emerged from the struggle to racially and socioeconomically integrate suburbs in the late 1960s and

early 1970s. The paper examines a 1969 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People lawsuit against the Town of Oyster Bay, Long Island's 'exclusionary' zoning ordinance. Amidst massive job loss in New York City, the NAACP viewed zoning as the main obstacle to suburban jobs for the urban poor, but this viewpoint neglected the suburban (and national) decline of unskilled work and rise of highly skilled jobs in the aerospace industry or growing white-collar service sector. The NAACP and their liberal allies galvanized opposition among local politicians and their suburban constituencies who viewed the city's problems, which the NAACP intended to spread to their communities, in non-economic terms, a result of a failed welfare state and deficient culture among the minority poor. What developed were opposing ideologies centered around space, one blaming discriminatory spatial barriers for inequality and poverty, and another defending what they increasingly saw as a fundamentally different and threatened suburban 'way of life.' Both overlooked the national job crisis for unskilled workers, and historians continue to ignore this central fact when studying the suburbs. Through an examination of the debates surrounding the lawsuit, this presentation illustrates how ideas about suburban order and urban disorder emerged from the assumptions of activists, despite the reality that both city and suburb shared in the repercussions of a transforming economy.

Gareth Millington, University of York, UK: *Darkness on the Edge of Town: London, Essex and the Noir Imagination*



Dr Gareth Millington is Lecturer in Sociology at the University of York and a member of CURB (Centre for Urban Research). He is author of *'Race', Culture and the Right to the City: Centres, Peripheries, Margins*, published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2011. Gareth's research interests are the relationships between cities, urban life, urbanization and social divisions. He is also interested in how urban transformations are represented in film noir, neo-noir and urban crime literature.

Whereas once the inner city unsettled post-imperial London, with its suburbs and new towns viewed as 'brave' new visions of the orderly metropolis, this relation seems to have reversed somewhat. London has discovered a new 'dark place' in the flat, watery suburban and exurban milieu of south Essex: a large region extending along the Thames and encompassing towns such as Grays, Thurrock, Basildon and Southend-on-Sea. This brooding, mysterious landscape of the imagination is understood as the reverse of today's London: un-cosmopolitan, working class, brash and dangerous. Essex always represented an extension of the 'awful East', yet in the deregulated, corrupt capitalist era it is transformed—via a series of 'neo noir' films, true crime books and psycho-geographic novels into something far more unpleasant, a toxic terrain resonant with existential dilemma. This paper considers how Essex is represented stylistically through these mediums to expose the darker, chaotic, and nightmarish side to the suburban and Thatcherite consumer dream. The noir imagination angles a dark mirror to 'sunnier' portrayals of Essex (such as the reality TV show *The Only Way Is Essex*) and transforms aspirations of upward social mobility and personal security into its antithesis, a place where 'there is an implied risk in wide skies [and] undefined criminous business occurring at the horizon' (Sinclair 2005: 225).

Paul Thifault, Lindsey Wilson College: *The Neighborly Mr. Ripley: Patricia Highsmith and the Murderous Suburb*



Paul Thifault is Assistant Professor of English at Lindsey Wilson College, a liberal arts institution in central Kentucky. He received his Ph.D. from Fordham University in 2012. His current research project investigates the ways anti-Catholicism shaped foundational representations of Native Americans in colonial and antebellum writing. He has also served on the editorial staff for publications including *The Cambridge History of the American Novel* (2011) and *The Cambridge Companion to Baseball* (2011).

When most people think of Tom Ripley, the eponymous protagonist of Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1955), they imagine a young con-man killing and scheming his way around the globe in style. Such images were crystallized for many by Anthony Minghella's lush 1999 filmic adaptation of the novel, which found Matt Damon ducking around the corners of sun-drenched Venice, Rome, and Manhattan. Yet following *Talented Mr. Ripley*, Highsmith wrote four other Ripley novels, all of which find Tom willingly domesticated in suburban France (*Ripley Under Ground* [1970], *Ripley's Game* [1974], *The Boy Who Followed Ripley* [1984], and *Ripley Under Water* [1991]). As Ripley goes about his risky global criminal activities, he now must do so under the gazes of a wife, in-laws, a housekeeper, a gardener, right-leaning shopkeepers, gossiping neighbors, local police, and the occasional houseguest. Indeed, Tom's mini-mansion "Belle Ombre" (Beautiful Shadow) could be said to refer to the suburbs themselves and the sinister activities they mask with the air of respectability.

This essay explores the role of the suburbs in Ripley sequels – both the novels and to a lesser extent the recent BBC radio dramatizations of the "Ripley Mysteries." Reading these texts against suburbanization trends in post-War America, I argue that Highsmith's aesthetic reveals the poignancy of the threat of suburban humiliation, as this fear – more so than the threat of imprisonment – stands at the center of Highsmith's much-lauded skill of convincing readers to sympathize with her murderous protagonist. I am also particularly focused on the ways that suburban settings help constitute texts as "genre fiction," especially as the metropolitan *Talented Mr. Ripley* becomes increasingly recognized as high art, while the suburban Ripley sequels remain roundly ignored by academics.

Andrew Byler, Hampshire College: *Policy, Privilege, and the Persistent Narrative of Suburban Discontent: From Post-war Trope to Contemporary Misconception*



Andrew Byler received his B.A. in Suburban Studies from Hampshire College. His panel material draws from an unpublished book, *Policy, Privilege, and the Persistent Narrative of Suburban Discontent*, which describes the ascension of a narrative of white suburban oppression within the genre of suburban criticism and shows how current popular representations of "the suburbs" remain influenced by this narrative despite its historical and contemporary inaccuracies. Andrew's current research interests range from

gender discrimination in the mortgage market, to the histories of non-white suburban communities, to a continuation of Donna Gaines' writing on "suburbia's dead-end kids" that connects heavy metal music, convenience stores, and young musicians' "dull" suburban neighborhoods. He plays drums in a two-piece sludge metal band. Andrew lives in Northampton, Massachusetts and will begin a position as a writing tutor for Hampshire College in the fall. His mother grew up a few miles east of Hofstra University in Floral Park, NY.

Scholars have investigated the century-old genre of suburban criticism, and literature exists on the role of private investment and public policy in disproportionately privileging white, middle-class suburbs; however, the dynamic between this social inequality and a cultural rejection of suburbia that ignores such inequality has drawn scarce academic attention. Through a multidisciplinary analysis that qualifies suburban criticism with suburban history, I show how the racially-bounded narrative of 'suburban discontent' connotes an oppressive place for white suburbanites and distorts history in two significant ways: by obscuring the many advantages awarded to white, middle-class suburban communities, and by ignoring the suburban demographic of other racial groups that has grown despite institutional discrimination.

My cultural selection includes fiction, film, and photography from the postwar decades while my primary and secondary historical sources highlight the range of white suburban advantages and the persistence of nonwhite suburban communities. While this paper focuses on suburbanization from 1945-1965, I discuss the prewar roots of this socio-cultural dynamic and its impact in the 21st century. As the American suburban majority grows in size and diversity, its cultural criticism retains a white, middle-class subject. This paper opens a discussion of how popular suburban representations misinform accurate, critical suburban histories.

Dr Jo Gill, University of Exeter: *"Ever-Widening Gaps": Post-War Poetry and Suburban Sprawl*



Jo Gill is Senior Lecturer in Twentieth-Century Literature and Director of Education at the University of Exeter, UK. Her interests are in the poetry of the suburbs, and suburban life-writing. She is the author of *Anne Sexton's Confessional Poetics* (UP Florida 2007), *Women's Poetry* (Edinburgh UP 2007) and *The Cambridge Introduction to Sylvia Plath* (Cambridge UP 2008). She has also edited or co-edited several books including *Modern Confessional Writing* (Routledge 2006) and *The Cambridge Companion to Sylvia Plath* (CUP 2006). She has recently completed a new book on *The Poetics of the American Suburbs* and will shortly publish several journal articles based on this research including an essay on Josephine Miles in *Western American Literature* and on Phyllis McGinley in *Women's History Review*.

This paper takes as its starting point the understanding that post-war suburban growth in the US is predicated, at least in part, on changes in transportation and communication technologies, such as the installation of home telephones, and the proliferation of domestic flight. As several observers have noted, these have had the simultaneous and contradictory effect of causing families and communities to disperse, and enabling them to remain in contact. By turning to the work of post-war poet, John Updike, I seek a better understanding both of the larger effects and the detailed consequences of these processes. This paper is part of a wider project (my forthcoming book, *The Poetics of the American Suburbs*) which argues, inter alia, that in order to arrive at a full understanding of the felt experience of post-war suburban life, one might look carefully at the nuances and depths of that experience as evidenced in contemporary poetry. By examining several examples from Updike's oeuvre (including poems from this early collection, *Telephone Poles* and later poems, including those from *Americana*, which often take a vantage point on suburban sprawl from a domestic flight), I seek to illuminate poetry's critical, observational and discursive role in the establishment of a suburban domain.

Panel Chairs:

Mary Corcoran, National University of Ireland, Maynooth



Mary P. Corcoran is Professor of Sociology, at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, where she is also a research associate at the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA). She is a graduate of the University of Dublin, Trinity College and Columbia University, New York. Her research and teaching interests lie primarily in the fields of urban sociology, public culture and the sociology of migration. Corcoran is the co-author with Jane Gray and Michel Peillon of *Suburban Affiliations: social relations in the Greater Dublin Area* (Syracuse University Press/UCD Press, 2010).

Martin Dines, Kingston University



Dr Martin Dines is Senior Lecturer in English Literature at Kingston University London. His research focuses on the place of the suburbs in Anglo-American writing, queer domesticities, and the interconnections between national identity, space and sexuality. He is the author of *Gay Suburban Narratives in American Literature and Culture: Homecoming Queens* (Palgrave 2010) and co-editor of *New Suburban Stories* (Bloomsbury, 2013). Recent and forthcoming articles and book chapters focus on a number of American and British writers, including Jeffrey Eugenides, the children's writer Pam Conrad, John Barth and Alan Hollinghurst. He is a partner of the Leverhulme funded Suburban Cultures Interdisciplinary Network (2011-14) and a founder member of the Literary London Society.