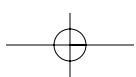
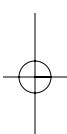
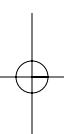

Suburb, Slum, Urban Village



Carolyn Whitzman

Suburb, Slum, Urban Village

Transformations in Toronto's
Parkdale Neighbourhood,
1875-2002



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Preface

The streetcar emerged from the underpass, and we entered a new world.

On this sunny afternoon in July 1986, we were newcomers to Toronto. I had come to undertake a master's degree at University of Toronto; my husband was looking for work as a journalist. "Don't bother looking for an apartment in Parkdale – it's a real slum," said our host, a friend of my brother's, who lived on a street that seemed none too savoury. But Parkdale was the only central neighbourhood that had a range of apartments cheap enough for us to rent.

I had no clear idea of what a slum was supposed to look like. To the extent that I had thought about the term, I would have associated it with a public housing project like Benny Farm, near where I had grown up in Montreal. Benny Farm was a visually barren set of low-rise apartments that looked like army barracks – indeed, it had been built for veterans of World War Two. There seemed to be no reason to enter the pedestrianized vicinity unless you lived there or were about to do something illicit, since there were no licit businesses there.

Instead, beyond the Dufferin Street underpass we saw a lively and bustling section of Queen Street West, one of Toronto's main commercial arteries. A multicultural crush of people of all ages were strolling, shopping at grocery stores, hanging out on the few benches provided in front of the library. As we walked down Jameson Avenue, an imposing corridor of eight-to-twelve-storey apartment buildings, "farm fresh" bananas and mangoes were being sold off the backs of trucks. It looked like a good place to live.

We rented an apartment on the southernmost street of Parkdale, Springhurst Avenue. It was a one-bedroom unit on the second floor of a once-grand three-storey detached villa. The rent was \$650, double what we had paid for our last apartment, a considerably larger and more pleasant flat in Montreal. But we had looked around enough to realize that the

Toronto rental market was superheated, with a low vacancy rate and dozens of applicants for each apartment. And the living room and tiny kitchen had a grand view of Lake Ontario, if you ignored the expressway in the foreground. Besides, our landlord, “call me Andy,” seemed friendly enough.

My husband started work, but I had the month of August with nothing to do and no money with which I could pass the time. I spent my days exploring every block of my new neighbourhood. Unlike much of Toronto, locked in a tight street grid, Parkdale was a place of hidden alley-ways and cul-de-sacs, tree-lined avenues that never quite joined up, glimpses of history. It also featured daily in the newspapers, in stories of street prostitution, drug dealing, ex-psychiatric patients burning down their buildings, and casual violence. All accounts agreed that Parkdale had been developed as a middle-class neighbourhood in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and had somehow gone terribly wrong in recent years. But my eyes registered a different story. Yes, Queen Street in the evenings had street prostitutes and people engaged in loud conversations with invisible partners (this was before mobile phones made this occurrence commonplace). But there were also many other people walking the streets after dark and I did not feel particularly unsafe. On my travels, I would see tiny wood-framed cottages behind grand villas, factories next to houses, a few middle-class cafés next to the dollar stores. Historical Parkdale did not seem to have been all middle-class, nor was modern-day Parkdale entirely poverty-stricken. Perhaps I would do some historical research on Parkdale for my master’s thesis.

But by the end of 1986 I wanted to forget Parkdale. The trouble had begun almost immediately. We noticed the day we moved in that the quite solid-looking lock on our apartment door had been replaced by a flimsy bathroom doorknob some time after we had viewed the unit. Our landlord explained that he changed the locks every time tenants moved. He had temporarily run out of “real” doorknobs, and would replace it within the week. The bathroom doorknob stayed, and we were never given a key to the front door of the building, which was never locked anyhow. We are not nervous people, but there did seem to be a lot of coming and going in the hallway beyond our apartment at all hours. With flimsy drywall between us and our neighbours, we could hear everything. The good news was that we did not hear the door-knocking and financial negotiations we might associate with drug deals. Instead, the middle of the night noises consisted of drilling and hammering. We would almost have preferred a quiet drug deal or two. A few days later, there would be battered suitcases and cartons in the hallway as someone moved in. Then the drilling and hammering would start again. There were six apartments in

the building when we arrived in August. By October, three more units had been created.

We tracked down the previous tenants of our apartment, to give them some mail. We discovered that they had paid \$400 for the apartment in 1985, but when Andy had bought the apartment in January 1986, he told them that the new rent was \$450, payable immediately. They had refused, and threatened to take him to the Rent Review Board. "Have you met Cousin Frank?" they asked, referring to the man with the physique and expression of a sumo wrestler with a wedgie, who lived downstairs from us and helped Andy with the renovations. "He's a really scary guy. Watch out for him."

Despite the warning about Cousin Frank, we called on Parkdale Community Legal Services. As we suspected, Andy did not have the right to a 62 percent rent increase, and he was also obligated to provide us with a secure apartment door. Two weeks later, we returned home one evening with a paralegal friend and an armload of flyers from the Parkdale Tenants Association. We began knocking on doors. Andy must have received correspondence from the Rent Review Board, because he and Frank appeared at the bottom of the staircase and yelled at us that we were evicted, effective immediately. When we did not scurry to our apartment to pack, Cousin Frank decided to include us in his renovation plans, picking up my husband by the shirt and pounding him into the wall. I screamed, ran into our apartment, and called the police, while our paralegal friend, who probably weighed a third of Cousin Frank dripping wet, tried to pull him off my husband. The police officers, when they eventually arrived, did not lay charges, and to our eternal regret, we took their advice to let the matter rest. "You should move out of this neighbourhood," one officer advised. "It really isn't safe." The paralegal would have stayed to argue, but he had to run off and visit another client, whose altercation with his landlord the same night had led to his admission into hospital.

The next month was hell. I still did not think that we lived in a slum, but we had certainly met a slumlord. Andy followed up his terrorizing opening gambit with a series of slightly more subtle moves. We received an eviction notice under our door the morning after the assault. Apparently, Andy's mother, not currently resident in Canada, wanted to move in. Then our hot water was turned off. One evening, I returned home to find that someone had been in the apartment. Although nothing was taken, the bathroom window had been broken and there was glass all over. We now had the building inspection office on speed dial. When we moved out, there were seventeen outstanding work orders on our unit alone.

But finding a new place in a 0.01 percent rental market was no easy

task. We applied to move into non-profit housing in Parkdale, but there was a three-year waiting list. A friend told us about a new non-profit housing co-operative just east of downtown that was having trouble attracting tenants who could pay market rent, since it was located across the street from Regent Park, Canada's largest public housing project. We viewed an apartment. "The previous tenant had some cleanliness issues," said the maintenance worker, as she unscrewed an overhead vent in the kitchen, and hundreds of dead cockroaches tumbled out. "We'll take it," we said.

We were very lucky, then and afterwards. Our parents loaned us first and last month's rent. My brother helped us move. When our case finally came before the Rent Review Board, six months after we moved out, Andy presented some receipts from Cousin Frank's "construction service" indicating that the improvements justifying the rent increase consisted of drywalling a hundred-year-old stained-glass window. Nothing could have outraged our judge's yuppie sensibilities more, and she awarded us the full amount of the rent increase, along with our last month's rent and moving costs. Remarkably, after we pursued Andy in small claims court, we finally got a cheque. We learned later that Andy had sold the building to an overseas investor who wanted all outstanding claims settled before taking over.

Seven years later, in 1993, we returned to Parkdale. Our material circumstances were now quite different. Now I worked as a senior policy planner at City Hall, and my husband was a lobbyist for the Canadian book publishing industry. We had a one-year-old son and were ready to move into a neighbourhood with mature trees, less traffic, and real front yards. We also did not want to pay more on a mortgage than we were paying for rent, which was becoming a tricky proposition in central Toronto. Some of my work colleagues raved about Parkdale. It was a different world north of Queen Street, they insisted. The schools were good and there were a growing number of young families, but it was still "colourful." We found a tiny old three-bedroom semi-detached house, behind a tangled garden and a big porch. The wiring and the roof needed work, but with a 10 percent down payment, the mortgage would carry like rent.

I am not arrogant enough to fancy myself Everywoman, but it was easy to see that we were part of a demographic trend. Within a month, the house next door had a couple with a young child, and by the end of the year, six more houses on our block had sold to families with young children. In the majority of cases, an older, first-generation Canadian household, originally from Eastern Europe, had been replaced by a younger,

second- or third-generation household. We got to know our neighbours, the old-timers as well as the newcomers. We felt safe in the knowledge that the older woman across the street, whose family had owned that house since it was first built in 1912, kept an eye on our house during the day. In late summer, the Hindu temple on the corner had a harvest festival procession down the street, and the neighbours gathered to watch the “parade.” I found grocery stores, a pharmacy, banks, parks, and a library on Roncesvalles, one block away. High Park, the largest green space in the central city, was a short stroll from our house. My son went to the childcare centre at our local public school, and then to the school itself. When my second child was born, I stayed at home with her for a year and took full advantage of the parent-child drop-in at the school, the newly renovated playground and wading pool around the corner, informal parents’ get-togethers at neighbourhood coffee shops, swimming lessons at the new community centre, story time at the library. One afternoon, a couple of months after she was born, I took the streetcar downtown with my daughter to meet my work colleagues at lunch. I was appalled at the noise, the traffic, the tall buildings that seemed to block out light, the grit sailing through the air. I could not wait to return to my clean, green, safe, quiet enclave. I had become a suburbanite, living in the central city.

This personal story is only one of the millions of stories of home in a big city like Toronto. It is about a place that simultaneously contained elements of “suburb,” “slum,” and “village,” which we had experienced as both a place of fear and (temporary) poverty, and a place of safety and affluence. The story of Parkdale similarly seemed more complex than simplistic narratives of a stable, middle-class neighbourhood gone terribly wrong in the post-World War Two era, or of an inexorably gentrifying neighbourhood returning to its former status as a stable, middle-class “good place to live.”

In the rest of this book, I explore the relationships between discourses, social conditions, and planning policy over time in Parkdale, as a way of illuminating these relationships in other English-speaking large cities since the late nineteenth century. But in this preface, I would like to remain personal and thank some of the people who helped me in the writing of a doctoral thesis on this topic, and then supported me in writing this book.

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the excellent supervision and advice of Professor Richard Harris of McMaster University’s School of Geography and Geology, whose timely, lively, and supportive assistance

made the process of research and writing the thesis on which this book is based such a pleasant learning experience. I would also like to acknowledge the thoughtful contributions of Professors Beth Milroy, John Weaver, Gunter Gad, and Vera Chouinard, my ideal supervisory committee. At the University of Melbourne, Professors Ruth Fincher and Kevin O'Connor have been extremely helpful in the process of revising my thesis into a book. Discussions with U.K. gentrification researcher Tom Slater and Melbourne historian Seamus O'Hanlon also gave me insight into my topic.

The staff at many archival collections went above and beyond the call of duty to lend a hand in research. I would especially like to thank the gang at the City of Toronto Archives, where I spent many a happy day calling up hundreds of boxes of City Council reports and correspondence from their huge collection. Thanks are also due to the staff at the Parkdale, High Park, Toronto Reference, and Urban Affairs branches of the Toronto Public Library system; Mills Memorial Library at McMaster University; Robarts Library at the University of Toronto; Archives of Ontario; Ontario Land Registry Office; City of Toronto Assessment Office; and the Toronto office of Statistics Canada, for their cheerful and expert assistance.

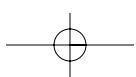
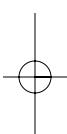
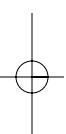
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The journey from thesis into book has been long and sometimes frustrating, complicated by my move to Australia immediately upon completion of the thesis in 2003. I would like to thank Melissa Pitts of UBC Press for her constant encouragement, Sarah Wight for excellent copy-editing, Anna Eberhard Friedlander for ably overseeing the production of the book, and two anonymous reviewers, whose contributions were constructive and helpful. Research assistants Jana Perkovic and Tranh Nha Nguyen assisted with copyrights and getting my bibliography in order.

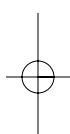
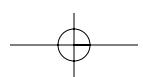
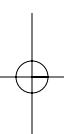
As the daughter of a real estate agent, I must thank my mother, Sheila Whitzman, for teaching me all about "location, location, location" as a child. Without her, I would not have developed my fascination with cities as a good place to live. I would also like to thank my father, Earl Whitzman, for his constant encouragement and support, particularly when he muttered curses at my examiners during my thesis defence.

Last and certainly not least, I would like to acknowledge the emotional support of my immediate family and friends. David Hunt, my husband,

is always a source of inspiration, a thoughtful editor, and a friend whose faith in my abilities has carried me through many a rough period. My children, Simon Hunt and Molly Hunt, who grow more remarkable every day, were also sources of encouragement, support, and enjoyable breaks from three years spent in the basement. Jennifer Ramsay, Deborah Hierlihy, Elisabeth Szanto, Deborah Hasler, and many other friends kept me from being a dull dog. My love and thanks to all of you.



Suburb, Slum, Urban Village



Introduction

Cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears, even if the discourse is secret, their rules are absurd, their perspectives deceitful, and everything conceals something else.

— Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

Today, the central Toronto neighbourhood of Parkdale, like many older neighbourhoods in North American, Australian, and British cities, simultaneously evokes images of a revitalizing urban village and a declining slum (Beauregard 2003, vii). As early as 1970, Parkdale, with its charming hundred-year-old houses, streets lined with mature trees, and history as a well-to-do suburb, was being promoted by urban redevelopers eager to attract middle-class homebuyers (*Toronto Star*, 8 August 1970). At the same time, newspapers began to report some residents' concerns about the growing number of "boisterous welfare recipients, drunks and drug addicts" inhabiting cheap apartments and rooming houses in the community (*Globe and Mail*, 7 April 1972). A two-page 1980 feature in Canada's national newspaper, the *Globe and Mail*, described Parkdale as "shaped by city trends, but outpacing them" in a growing division between "costly enclave" and "dumping ground" for the poor (13 September 1980). In 1997, the *Toronto Star* triumphantly proclaimed the "bowery to bohemia conversion" of the neighbourhood (16 January 1997). Three years later, however, the *Globe and Mail* ran another two-page feature on growing disparities within Toronto neighbourhoods, and used Parkdale, with its repeated juxtaposition of "an elegant reno next to a rundown rooming house" as an example of a place that was simultaneously bowery and bohemia, ghetto and gentrified urban village (5 August 2000).

I use the term *image* here to mean a description or representation. This book focuses mostly on representation in written sources, such as newspapers, government reports, real estate advertisements, and literature (both fiction and non-fiction), but I also include visual materials, predominantly photographs. Often images evoke something else, as when Van Gogh paints a field with crows or a poet uses metaphor. In this book, I use *dream* to mean a series of images that are intended to evoke certain desires or

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fears, as in the words of Italo Calvino above. The three main dreams I will be discussing are the suburban dream of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the slum nightmare, particularly as it pertained to so-called declining neighbourhoods in the early twentieth century, and the urban village dream, closely linked to gentrification, of the late twentieth century. In each case, the image of Parkdale may have had more to do with changing ideas of "a good place to live" than the more concrete socio-demographic qualities of its residents and houses.

The importance of dreams in defining certain types of places – cities, suburbs, neighbourhoods, housing projects – and in shaping public consciousness and influencing policy has been a common theme in much recent writing on cities, including US planning historian Christine Boyer's *Dreaming the Rational City: The Myth of American Planning* (1983), Australian geographer Louise Johnson's edited collection *Suburban Dreaming: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Australian Cities* (1994), and Canadian historical geographer James Lemon's *Liberal Dreams and Nature's Limits: Great Cities of North America since 1600* (1996). These works deal in the broad strokes of urban history. Few studies, however, focus on the succession of images in a local place such as a neighbourhood, the extent to which these successive images reflect or conceal social conditions, the relationships between past and present, and the impacts particular dreams of place might have on policy.

What are the relationships between images of place, social conditions, and planning policy in Anglo-American cities? When, how, and why are some neighbourhoods labelled as suburbs, slums, and gentrifying areas? When, how, and why, in the continual process of conflict over neighbourhood change, does the perception of a neighbourhood alter decisively? Which voices are most influential in creating and disseminating these labels? Do changing labels simply reflect the reality of local economic and social conditions, as objectively reported by newspapers and government documents? Are changing evaluations of neighbourhoods based on evolving social norms and understandings of "a good place to live"? Or are they responses to structural economic forces, such as the availability or withdrawal of development capital? What impact do changing discourses of the "good neighbourhood" have on government policies, particularly planning policy? And what impact do planning policies, in turn, have on social conditions in these neighbourhoods? In short, how are dreams attached to urban places, and do these dreams matter?

This book is not about a unique place, except in the sense that all neighbourhoods, like all people, are unique. Parkdale is not a fabled neighbourhood of literature or film. It is not Hollywood or Whitechapel, the

Upper West Side of Manhattan or Back of the Yards in Chicago, Westmount in Montreal or the Downtown Eastside in Vancouver. What interests me is how Parkdale is a typical place, like many other places I have visited and read about in the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom, places that were supposedly developed as middle-class suburbs, then seemed to decline to the point where they were called slums. Now they are reportedly being revitalized as gentrifying neighbourhoods, or urban villages. But coexistent with this new wealth there is often poverty that appears to be worsening. These places include Jamaica Plain in Boston, Clifton in Cincinnati, St. Kilda in Melbourne, and, of course, the mostly commonly cited examples, Greenwich Village in New York City and London's Islington (see, respectively, Von Hoffman 1994; Miller 2001; Howe 1994; McFarland 2001; P. Williams 1978).

However, as the studies of these places suggest, the neighbourhood trajectories were not so clear-cut as is generally assumed. Alexander Von Hoffman, for instance, takes a part of Boston whose development as a middle-class residential suburb was documented in Sam Bass Warner's classic 1962 urban history *Streetcar Suburbs* (1978) and contends that "although it contained suburban elements, Jamaica Plain never conformed to the usual notions of a suburban community" (Von Hoffman 1994, 24). Similarly, Renate Howe (1994, 149) maintains that inner suburbs in Melbourne labelled slums in the early twentieth century did not have particularly dangerous or unhealthy housing or social conditions. Instead, the slum "label was freely applied to those areas which did not meet the criteria of the suburban ethos as it was defined in the later part of the nineteenth century." In the latter part of the twentieth century, as the supposed "'dysfunctions' of city life [were] reconstructed as advantages ... what was once termed slum housing now became 'heritage' property" (155-57). In other words, the evolving image of a neighbourhood is as related to changing societal norms as it is to actual housing or social conditions.

The Chicago School and Development of the Suburb/Slum Dichotomy

This proposition is intriguing given the continuing impact of the Chicago school of sociology and, particularly, Ernest Burgess' 1925 mapping of "concentric zones" in that city (Burgess 1974). According to the Chicago school's paradigm of city structure and growth, cities sorted themselves into a moral and social order of concentric rings, which expanded outwards as the city grew. The laws of human ecology dictated the natural inclination of families to move to the outer edges of the expanding city, where there was space for children to grow up healthy. There too, women

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and children would be far from urban hazards such as polluting industries, crime and greed associated with capitalism, and the underclass engendered by the dense and close-grained mix of land uses and social classes in the central city. Surrounding the central business and industrial district lay a “zone of transition,” where once-grand houses were being converted into multiple units for new immigrants and down-and-outers as part of those buildings’ inexorable decline into obsolescence and inevitable absorption into the central district. Peripheral rings contained progressively lower densities, newer houses, and richer and more nativized families. Burgess was explicit about the norms that informed this model, taking American suburban family life as the apogee of social evolution. But the Chicago school and its successors did not doubt that they were describing real, measurable, and inexorable changes in social and economic conditions within these zones, despite a reliance on ethnographic qualitative research over statistical comparisons (Park 1974; Zorbaugh 1976).

The Chicago school drew upon an Anglo-American tradition of distrust and dislike of urban life that led many middle- and upper-class families in Britain, the United States, Australia, and Canada to establish suburban residences at the outskirts of rapidly expanding industrial cities in the nineteenth century (Jackson 1985; Fishman 1987; Rybczynski 1995). As Peter Goheen (1970), David Harvey (1973), and others have pointed out, Burgess was merely elaborating on a structure first described in Manchester by Frederick Engels (1969), and expanded upon in Charles Booth’s accounts of London’s slums (1971) and Jacob Riis’ similar accounts from New York City (1957). Burgess and his contemporaries codified a consensus on suburbs and slums that had emerged by the early twentieth century.

The Burgess concentric ring model bore no relation at all to the largest non-English-speaking cities of the time, such as Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Buenos Aires, and Tokyo, where the poor and immigrants were generally found in the outskirts (Jackson 1985, 7-10; Hall 1998). The model also did very little to explain the structure and growth of what were then the world’s two largest cities, New York City and London, where large sections of the central city were dominated by the housing of the affluent and middle class. Burgess’ assumptions and findings were attacked in detail as early as 1948, when Walter Firey pointed out that slums had been transformed into middle-class areas in Boston, and that the land use pattern had little to do with concentric rings. But despite being a simplistic model that became even more simplified over the years, the Chicago school’s explanation of why suburbs were middle-class and white, while central cities were poor and ethnic minority, underlay endeavours as disparate as American and Canadian “red-lining” mortgage patterns (Jackson 1985,

197-207; Harris and Ragonetti 1998) and the study of urban history (Harris and Lewis 1998, 2001). The Chicago school was the dominant mode of urban sociological thought until the mid-1980s (Gottdiener 1985, 12). And the dichotomy between the poor and diverse central city and the socio-economically homogenous middle-class suburb continues to inform urban theory, planning discourse, and popular opinion in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia (on the United States, see Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom 2001; Duany, Plater-Zyberk, and Speck 2000; on Canada, see Leo and Shaw 2002).

Since the 1980s, the dominant discourse has shifted to an equally simplistic dichotomy. Now the contrast is made between densely populated, multicultural, and vibrant central cities, and sprawling, boring, car-dependent suburbs. Whether advocating for environmental sustainability or promoting “creative capital” as economic development, the notion of concentric zones has been turned on its head. Living in the central city connotes progress, moral and physical health, and social responsibility. As households move further out into the suburbs, they are considered to lose access to once-despised and now sought-after attributes: land-use and social mix, and proximity to the new non-polluting industries of information technology and finance. Living, working, and playing in the central city is now lauded the way that strict separation of land uses in the suburbs used to be (Newman and Kenworthy 1999; Florida 2002).

Of course, most cities do not have simplistic gradients between distance from the central city and car dependence, cultural mix, or economic innovation. Many new migrants gravitate to cheaper housing in outer suburbs, many central city residents drive their cars as much as those in lower-density or more peripheral areas, and economic innovation happens in a variety of settings. There have always been, and continue to be, counter-voices to the dominant discourse. Suburbs and suburbanites were mocked by many in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, just as downtown “latte liberals” and “chardonnay socialists” are mocked today in the central city/suburb culture wars that have erupted in the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom.¹ The changing dichotomous relationship between suburbs and slums over the past 150 years forms a backdrop to this study.

Suburb, Slum, and Urban Village in Parkdale

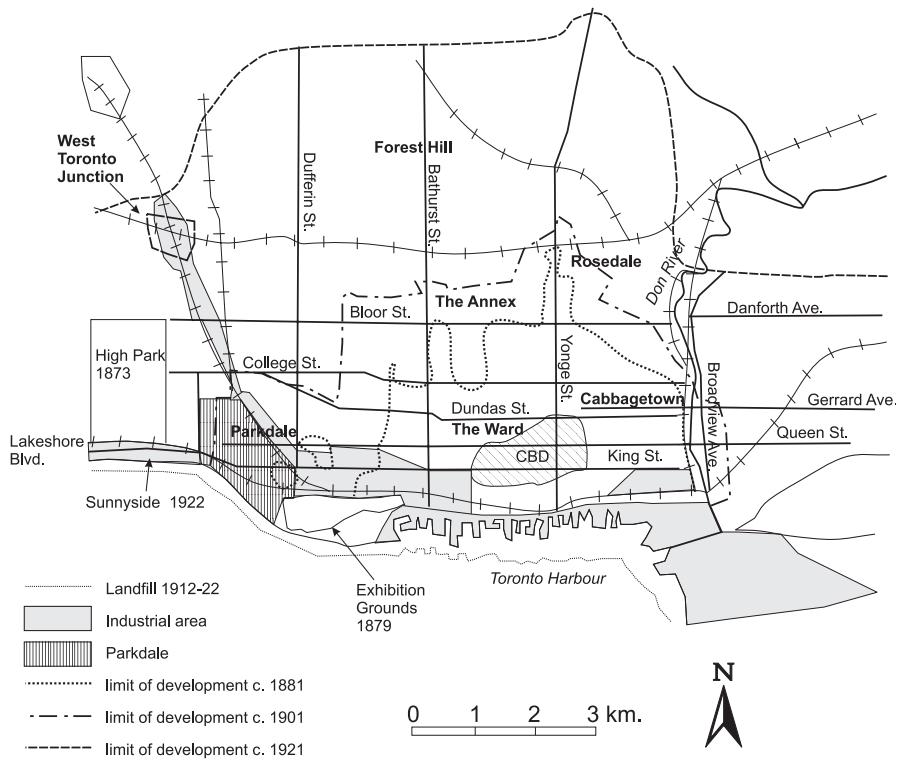
The changing image of Parkdale in newspapers and magazines, planning reports, and books about Toronto has been inextricably linked to the notion of concentric rings. From the first promotion of Parkdale as a place for “those whose avocations require them to spend much of their time

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amid the bustle of Toronto [yet desire] a quiet home in an agreeable locality" (Scott 1881), the westernmost edge of the city (as it was then) continued to be portrayed as a stable, wealthy, residential outer-zone suburb during the twenty years of its initial development. The "fact" of Parkdale's well-to-do beginnings is taken for granted today. The current standard two-volume scholarly history of Toronto describes Parkdale as a "well to do residential retreat" in the 1880s (Careless 1984, 124), while an article in *City Planning* magazine, the Toronto Planning Department house organ, contains this thumbnail sketch: "Developed at the turn of the century, South Parkdale was originally an upper middle class residential suburb" (summer 1987).

By the mid-twentieth century, when the growth of Toronto had left Parkdale closer to the centre than the periphery (Map 1; Harris and Luymes 1990), the neighbourhood was attracting very different descriptions. The 1934 report of the Lieutenant-Governor's Committee on Housing Conditions in Toronto, known as the Bruce Report, was considered Canada's "bible for social housing" and urban redevelopment (Bacher 1993, 10). It said Parkdale was "becoming a serious slum," due to the influx of immigrants and industry into a "formerly prosperous district" (Bruce 1934, 23). In 1959, the proposed metropolitan region master plan used a concentric ring model to determine that Parkdale, simply because it was in Toronto's "inner ring," needed significant urban renewal (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, 23). The second volume of Toronto's standard history agrees that by the 1930s, "in a very real sense, Cabbagetown [a part of Toronto traditionally considered a slum] was moving up to South Rosedale, to the Annex, and out to South Parkdale," and that by the 1980s, Parkdale was a "notable poor area" (Lemon 1985, 65, 177). Michael Dear and Jennifer Wolch, in their 1987 book on "institutional service ghettos," credit Parkdale's remarkable concentration of rooming houses (48 percent of Toronto's total beds in the early 1980s) to its location in the "zone of transition," close to the city centre and near psychiatric services.

Parkdale's initial attraction as a well-to-do suburb, and its deterioration from suburb to slum, has thus been seen as an inevitable outcome of its location within the larger city, reflecting an uncritical reading of concentric ring theory. The explanations of its rise and fall parallel famous North American studies of urban development and change, from Homer Hoyt's 1933 *One Hundred Years of Land Values in Chicago* (1970) and Sam Bass Warner's 1962 *Streetcar Suburbs* (1978), to Larry Bourne's *Internal Structure of the City* (1971) and John Stilgoe's *Borderland* (1988). Although Marxists criticized the human ecology explanations and liberal positivist perspectives of the Chicago school and its followers, Marxist explanations of



urban structure also applied the concentric ring model, at least until the 1980s (Harvey 1973; Castells 1977; Dear and Wolch 1987). But to return to the Toronto example for the moment, the Annex and South Rosedale, two neighbourhoods roughly the same distance from downtown as Parkdale, had successfully resisted decline by the 1980s. Similar examples of central neighbourhoods that resisted decline could be found in the cities described by the classic writers: Chicago, Boston, and New York City.²

Why did Parkdale get an expressway and high-rise apartment corridors while similar projects were successfully opposed in other parts of Toronto's "zone of transition"? Jon Caulfield, in his book on gentrification in Toronto (1994, 33), contends that Parkdale was a "less fortunate middle class area," somehow unluckier than other districts that were able to turn back the tide of urban renewal. But are there explanations for neighbourhood decline that fit somewhere between the inexorable structuralism of concentric rings and the pure agency of luck and the acts of key individuals?

Parkdale, like so many older districts, is now in a new phase of transition. It is no longer simply called a suburb or a slum, but is something else, a place where decline seemingly coincides with revitalization. The binary view (declining/revitalizing) of neighbourhood transition no longer suffices, which raises the question: did a binary view of neighbourhood transition ever suffice? Can a comparison of Parkdale's images and social conditions over time lead to reconsideration, not only of one neighbourhood's history, but of the way we generally look at neighbourhood transition over time?

The Study of Neighbourhood Transitions

There have been many excellent case studies of neighbourhood transitions, both in the tradition of the Chicago school and critical of it. Since the early-1960s work of H.J. Dyos (1961) in the United Kingdom and Sam Bass Warner (1978) in the United States, neighbourhood case studies have been commonly used to elaborate on an increasing understanding of how cities grew and became more complex in form and structure. Dyos and Warner described the development of two very different kinds of late-nineteenth-century suburbs. Whereas Dyos focused on the mixed-use, mixed-income neighbourhood of Camberwell, South London, Warner provided a case study of the "weave of small decisions" that created a middle-class residential streetcar suburb in Boston. During the subsequent twenty years, Warner's work was more influential, at least in North America. Scholars tended to emphasize the origins of what they saw as the greatest issue facing cities: the divide between the poor, visible-minority inner city and the white, middle-class suburb (Wright 1980; Edel, Sclar, and Luria 1984; Hayden 1984; Jackson 1985; Teaford 1986; Fishman 1987; Weiss 1987). In the last decade, as the pricing out of poor and even middle-class households from many central city housing markets and the decline of many post-World War Two suburbs became apparent, a more nuanced portrait has emerged. This approach includes revisiting the past to challenge the simplistic opposition of rich suburb and poor central city, by paying attention to the development of working-class, ethnic-minority, and heterogeneous suburbs (Von Hoffman 1994; Harris 1996).

The years between 1960 and 1990 saw many historical case studies of middle-class suburbs declining into slums: Richard Sennett (1974) described the decline of Union Park, Chicago, in the late nineteenth century, and Jerry White (1986) wrote about *The Worst Street in North London* in the mid-twentieth century. In the past decade, some urban historians' research has turned to a critical analysis of how the slum label got attached to what were often viable and vital communities (Mayne 1993; Metzger

2000; Beauregard 2003). Other urban historians have turned to the hitherto neglected stories of working-class and ethnic-minority suburbs, including Suzanne Morton's study (1995) of domestic life in working-class Richmond Hill, Halifax, in the 1920s, Richard Harris' work (1996) on the self-built housing and the development of Earlscourt, Toronto, Becky Nicolaides' examination (2002) of Los Angeles' blue-collar suburbs 1920-1965, Robert Lewis' edited volume (2004) on industrial suburbs from the mid-nineteenth century to World War Two, Mark Peel's history (1995a) of Elizabeth, Adelaide, from its development in the 1950s to the current day, and Andrew Wiese's history (2003) of African American suburbanization since the early twentieth century.

After the 1960s, two warring streams of research on contemporary redevelopment of the central city became common: one celebratory (Rapkin and Grigsby 1960; Ahlbrandt and Brophy 1975; James T. Little and Associates 1975; Teaford 1990) and the other highly critical (Smith and Williams 1986; Zukin 1989; Smith 1996). As was the case with suburban histories, recent years have seen case studies that explore both positive and negative outcomes of central city gentrification, along with those that seek to complicate the trajectories of gentrification and to extend analysis of gentrification beyond the central city (D. Rose 1984, 1989; Beauregard 1986, 1990; Bondi 1991; Caulfield 1994; Ley 1996; Lees 2000; Robson and Butler 2001). In general, these re-examinations of gentrification have come from Canadian, British, and Australian writers, as opposed to those writing on American cities, perhaps because the gentrification of central cities is close to complete in Toronto, Vancouver, London, Sydney, and Melbourne (Ley 1996, 81). There, the battle between gentrification and inner city decay seems to be over, at least for now, with "islands of decay" retaining a precarious hold within "seas of renewal" (Wyly and Hammel 1999, commenting on Berry 1985).

Despite this plethora of historical and contemporary case studies, few recent case studies of neighbourhood transition cover the life of a community from development to the present. This seems odd to me, since a study of the development, decline, and redevelopment of Beacon Hill was the centrepiece of Firey's 1948 attack on the Chicago school. Yet few followed in his footsteps, at least not for the next forty years. Howe, in her article "Inner Suburbs: From Slums to Gentrification" (1994) provides an overview of changing images of Melbourne's central city. Richard Rodger, in "Suburbs and Slums" (2000), gives a broad-brush history of British urban development in the nineteenth century that focuses on the evolving meanings of these two terms; in doing so, he elaborates on an influential study by H.J. Dyos and D.A. Reeder, similarly entitled "Slums and

Suburbs" (1973). Michael Doucet and John Weaver (1991) offer many case studies of suburban development and changing cultural attitudes towards the city within their history of North American housing from 1880 to 1980, but without much material on gentrification or long-term change within neighbourhoods. Rosalyn Baxandall and Elizabeth Ewen (2000) provide a history of neighbourhood succession in Long Island, New York, that takes the reader from the development of a wealthy outer suburb in the late nineteenth century to a far more mixed community, in terms of income, race/ethnicity, and land use, in the late twentieth century. Christopher Mele (2000b) describes a century of characterizations of New York's Lower East Side as it moved from slum to gentrification. Of all the recent works that I draw upon, only two take a neighbourhood from development through decline and into gentrification while paying equal attention to changing images and social conditions: veteran urban historian Zane Miller's book (2001) on Cincinnati's Clifton, and an article by Marian Morton on Cleveland Heights (2002).

In short, there appears to be that situation so beloved by academics, a research gap. Moreover, this research gap matters. Sharon Zukin (1989), Neil Smith (1996), and Gerald McFarland (2001) all show how the past of a neighbourhood can be reimagined to justify present and future urban policy. The revisionist histories of Alan Mayne (1993), Richard Harris (1996), Alexander von Hoffman (1994), and Andrew Wiese (2003) give us new models of viable communities that, in their opinion, were unjustly condemned, forgotten, or misrepresented by others. The simplicities of an earlier era of research on industrial cities are being revised to reflect a more complex understanding of cities in the developed world as they face the post-industrial twenty-first century. Of course, urban studies may be in a period of transition towards new and equally simplistic paradigms (Dear 2002). As E.H. Carr (1961) has pointed out, it is arrogant enough to presume to know the reality of the past, let alone to predict the future based on one's understanding of the past. The most anyone can expect from history is greater understanding of the past in light of the present, and perhaps, greater understanding of the present in light of the past.

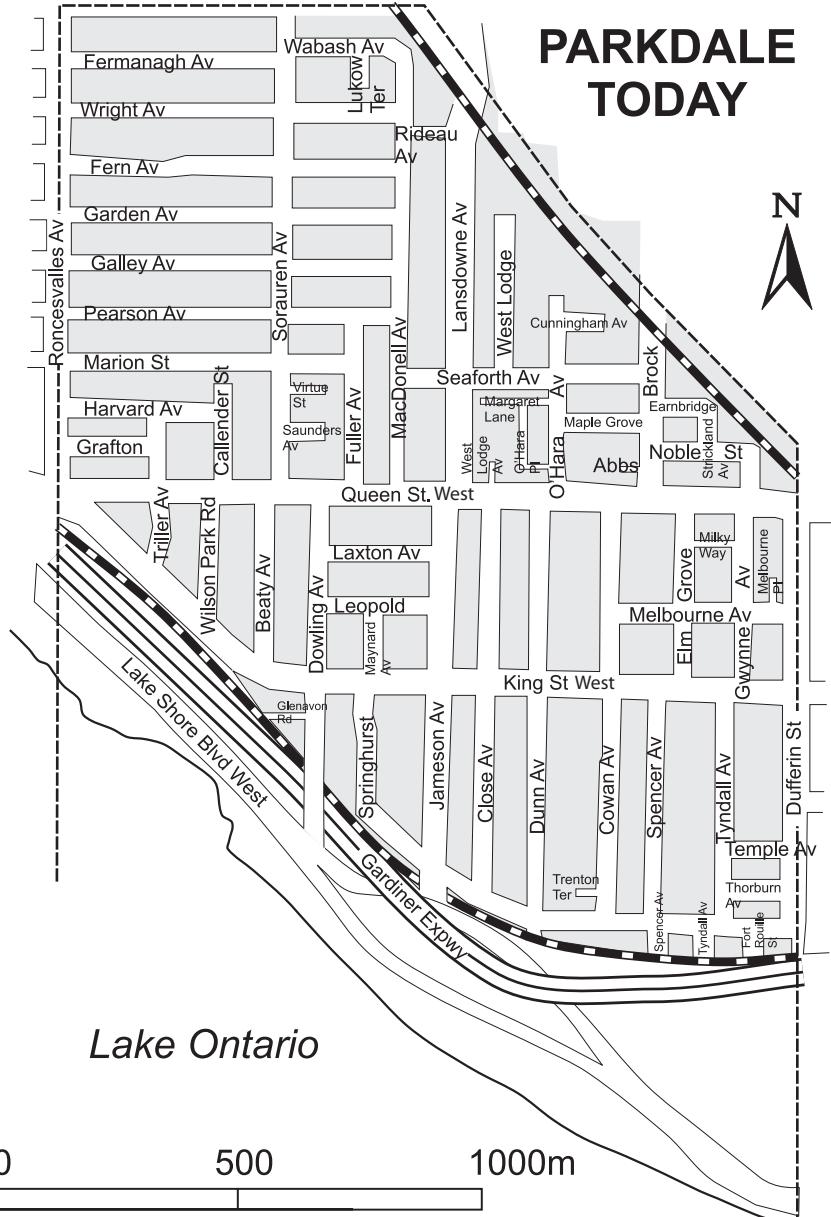
Parkdale as a Case Study of Neighbourhood Transition over 125 Years

Although now considered part of downtown Toronto, from 1879 to 1889 Parkdale was a politically independent suburb five kilometres (three miles) due west of City Hall. Parkdale continues to have a strong sense of neighbourhood identity, partly because of its clear boundaries (Map 2). The historical boundaries of Parkdale are identical to the present North Parkdale

and South Parkdale planning districts. The lake to the south provides one clear limit, as does the industrial district east of Dufferin, whose existence predates Parkdale's development. North of the intersection of Dufferin and Queen Streets, the neighbourhood's boundary curves westward along the tracks of what were once four mighty railroads. Parkdale's western boundary is only a little less clear: starting at a complicated intersection where King, Queen, Roncesvalles, and the Queensway intersect, it follows Roncesvalles Avenue northward. Roncesvalles has long been a fifty-cent street on its Parkdale east side and a dollar street on its High Park west side, with cheap commercial properties facing upscale residential ones. Parkdale's northern boundary along Wabash and Fermanagh Avenues, a jumble of small industries and semi-detached homes, is perhaps the most difficult for the casual observer to discern. Queen Street, Parkdale's major commercial artery, divides the neighbourhood into two roughly equal halves, South and North, each with its own distinct character.

According to the 2001 census, the 35,663 residents within Parkdale's boundaries are, on average, among the poorest in Toronto: the median annual household income of the neighbourhood was approximately \$34,000, 58 percent of the median income for households within Toronto's census metropolitan area (CMA).³ There are large and growing disparities within the neighbourhood: one census tract in the relatively gentrified area north of Queen Street had a median household income of \$55,814, close to the Toronto CMA average, while another census tract south of Queen Street had a median household income of \$23,070, with 45 percent of households defined as low income in the census.

In South Parkdale in 2001, 93 percent of the housing stock was rented. The majority of rental units are one-bedroom and bachelor apartments in approximately forty post-World War Two apartment buildings, ranging from eight to eighteen storeys, which line the wide north-south avenues of Jameson, Dowling, Spencer, Dunn, and Triller. There are an equal number of small three-to-five-storey apartment buildings, dating from the early twentieth century, along the east-west arteries of Queen and King and on some of the smaller side streets. Approximately 150 of the larger houses in South Parkdale have been converted into small apartments. The casual observer of South Parkdale can thus see a cluster of high-density housing, much of it visibly poorly maintained, and a preponderance of dollar stores, social service agencies, doughnut shops, and cheque-cashing establishments along King and Queen Streets east of Jameson. But, depending on the street you visit, you can also view more than five hundred detached, semi-detached, and row houses with single-family owners, including the grandest Victorian architecture in Toronto. Some of these houses command



Map 2. The streets of Parkdale, 2002

Source: MapArt Publishing, Map 119 (West Toronto), 2002. Map created by Ric Hamilton, McMaster University.

prices well beyond \$800,000, while the greater Toronto median house price hovers around \$400,000.

North Parkdale, in contrast, has a 60/40 mix of rental and owned housing units. With the exception of the eighteen-storey, 720-unit behemoth that is West Lodge Apartments and a handful of other high-rise apartment buildings, the housing stock north of Queen consists of detached, semi-detached, and row houses, along with duplexes and low-rise apartment buildings. Quite often, all these house forms are found on a single street. Along the rail lines, there are also several dozen small industrial buildings that have recently been converted into loft-style condominiums. The visitor alert to the signs of gentrification might see them by walking west of Jameson along Queen Street and then north: the well-designed cafes and art galleries in the "Antique Alley" stretch of Queen Street east of Roncesvalles, elaborate gardens and expensive cars in front of some of the houses, a gourmet shop or two, the Film Buff video store on Roncesvalles, as opposed to the Blockbuster on Queen Street. According to a regular report distributed by a local real estate agent, house prices just east of Roncesvalles doubled between 1996 and 2002 (Chaddah 2002).

The resultant situation bears some resemblance to the "dual city" model proposed by John Mollenkopf and Manuel Castells (1991), with rich and poor living in close proximity but in different perceptual worlds. More precisely, it resembles two of the four sectors of the "quartered city" in Peter Marcuse's modification (1989) of the dual city metaphor: the "gentrified" alongside the "tenement" city.

Using the case study of Parkdale within a context of other theories and studies of neighbourhood change, with a particular focus on the Anglo-American societies of Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, this book has two purposes. First, at an empirical level, I wish to compare the changing images of a single neighbourhood with social and housing conditions over time, in order to ascertain (for instance) whether Parkdale was a residential upper-middle-class suburb at the time it was being so described, and whether Parkdale predominantly contained poor people who were poorly housed when it was being described as a slum. Second, at a theoretical level, I wish to explore the relationships among perceptions of a place's past, present, and future, its evolving social and physical conditions, and planning policy, and thus contribute to the literature on neighbourhood transition and urban social policy.

Case studies are a common form of urban historical research. At best, a neighbourhood case study allows a "deep understanding of one place which is transferable, with modifications, to others" (Harris 1996, 4). At worst, case studies can become local history, interesting in its details, but

resistant to generalization. Longitudinal case studies can run into difficulties in finding comparative data over time.

The temporal scope of this book begins with Parkdale's initial marketing and development as a suburb in 1875, and extends to the present day. The starting date of 1875 is when the name Parkdale was first used by the Toronto House Building Association to distinguish its fifty-acre subdivision from the adjacent Irish working-class suburb of Brockton. Parkdale was developed during a period, 1875 to 1912, when Canadian urbanization and industrialization began to resemble trends in Great Britain, the United States, and Australia. Parallels will be made between these four societies, although Britain had a stronger tradition of government intervention in the housing market (Fishman 1987), and Canadian suburbs seem to have had a higher level of homeownership than in the United States, with more reliance on affordability strategies such as self-building and taking in lodgers (Harris 1996). Parkdale was also an early product of a change in house production and marketing in North America, the transition from small-scale individual developers to corporate involvement (Doucet and Weaver 1991, chap. 2).

I divide Parkdale's history into three distinct eras. These eras are based on changing perceptions of the neighbourhood, as shown in newspapers and magazines, government reports, academic studies, and marketing materials. Parkdale was initially marketed and generally described as a middle-class residential suburb, although its land use and income mix was diverse. A turning point for Parkdale can be detected from the second decade of the twentieth century, when the rhetoric of decline began to be applied to the neighbourhood. In 1912, a Toronto City Council debate over a bylaw to ban apartment buildings, which were described by local politicians as "breeders of slums," drew the newspaper spotlight to Parkdale, which contained a third of Toronto's larger (twenty or more unit) apartment buildings by 1915 (Dennis 1989, 1998). By the end of World War One, housing demand had begun to shift to smaller units, lower densities, and, for the upper middle class, more exclusive districts than Parkdale. This was true not only in Toronto, but across Canada (Sendbuehler and Gilliland 1998), the United States (Fishman 1987), and Britain (Rodger 2001). The largest residential developer in Toronto, Home Smith, planned to eradicate houses in lakeside Parkdale for a highway leading to his new suburban developments, according to the Toronto Harbour Commission's master plan for the waterfront, released in 1913 (Reeves 1993). As planning interventions in North American societies increased after World War Two (Doucet and Weaver 1991), Parkdale became a target for the urban renewal experiments characteristic of the time (Bacher 1993; Metzger 2000;

Beauregard 2003). Parkdale's status as a declining area was by then taken for granted in planning documents and in newspaper coverage.

The third era for Parkdale's image, that of becoming an urban village, began in the late 1960s. This period has seen the neighbourhood described, in local government reports and in news coverage, as simultaneously gentrifying and becoming a social service ghetto. There has been considerable reinvestment, both by private developers and by local and senior government. Unlike the urban renewal of the 1950s and 1960s, the emphasis of both private and public investors has been on renovating existing housing stock, rather than tearing down and replacing buildings. Therefore, I use a starting date of 1967, when community opposition led City Council to reject a neighbourhood plan recommending further destruction of the housing stock. The 1967-2002 period has been marked by increasing disparities within the neighbourhood. The number of poor people has rapidly increased in relation to the Toronto average, while local house prices have increased to exceed the Toronto average and the proportion of business and professional workers has risen to just below the Toronto average.⁴

Data Sources

One of the chief methods I use in comparing social conditions with images in Parkdale over 125 years is the construction of a set of indicators to measure population, residential tenure (renters as opposed to owners), income, occupation, and number of housing units per building. In gathering indicators, I have been guided by popular stereotypes of suburbs and slums as they have evolved over the years. Suburbs were generally represented as places with relatively high homeownership and low population turnover, predominantly residential, and far from industries and other workplaces. They were considered to offer lower densities and more privacy than the city. Suburbs were seen as relatively well-to-do, homogeneous in terms of class, race, and ethnicity ("the middle class suburb of privilege," as Fishman calls the stereotype), healthy, with lots of green space, and lived in by nuclear families with young children and unwaged mothers. Suburbs were described as modern in design but old-fashioned in values and virtues (Dyos and Reeder 1973, 369; Jackson 1985, 5-10; Fishman 1987, 5-6). Slums, in contrast, were considered crowded, with high-density rental housing. They were characterized by a transient, non-English-speaking and immigrant racial/ethnic-minority, and generally outcast society, with little privacy and much street activity, and consequent crime, violence, and morality concerns. Furthermore, slum inhabitants were of a low social and economic class, unhealthy and possibly genetically

inferior, backward in social norms. They suffered from abnormal family life, such as adult men not in the paid labour force and mothers or children working for wages (Dyos and Reeder 1973, 364; J. White 1986, 2; Mayne 1993, 2-12). Above all, I have been guided by Dyos and Reeder's dictum (1973, 363) that suburbs and slums were defined in relation and in contrast to one another (see also Howe 1994 and Rodger 2001). I therefore compare Parkdale with similar neighbourhoods in Toronto and other North American cities, and with Toronto as a whole.

In 1939, Hoyt set out nine sources for studying urban growth and change, which resemble the sources I use to describe Parkdale's changing social and housing conditions in relation to the rest of Toronto. These sources are survey maps, city atlases, development maps showing locations of structures, early photographs, city histories and newspaper accounts, testimony of older inhabitants, building permits, property surveys such as assessment rolls, and appearance and style of remaining buildings. Fortunately, all of these primary sources of information are readily available. Fire insurance atlases indicating building footprints, materials, and number of storeys exist for the entire period of the study. Late-nineteenth-century street directories give householders' workplaces, providing valuable information about their journeys to work. And the city archives have an excellent collection of early photographs of houses and streets. Council minutes, reports, and correspondence for York Township (Parkdale was an unincorporated part of York Township until its incorporation as a village in 1879), the independent municipality of Parkdale, and the City of Toronto have been used to illuminate local government policy responses to perceived problems.

Toronto daily newspapers (eight in the late nineteenth century) extensively covered the suburb of Parkdale, especially during the years of its development and battles over amalgamation with the City of Toronto. In the early years of Parkdale, several newspapers had resident reporters in Parkdale who provided daily updates on the development of the new suburb. A relative lull in coverage from the early 1910s to the late 1960s was succeeded by another flurry of almost daily articles since the early 1970s. The three newspapers that continue to the present day, the *Toronto Star*, the *Telegram/Sun*, and the *Globe and Mail*, have searchable computer databases.

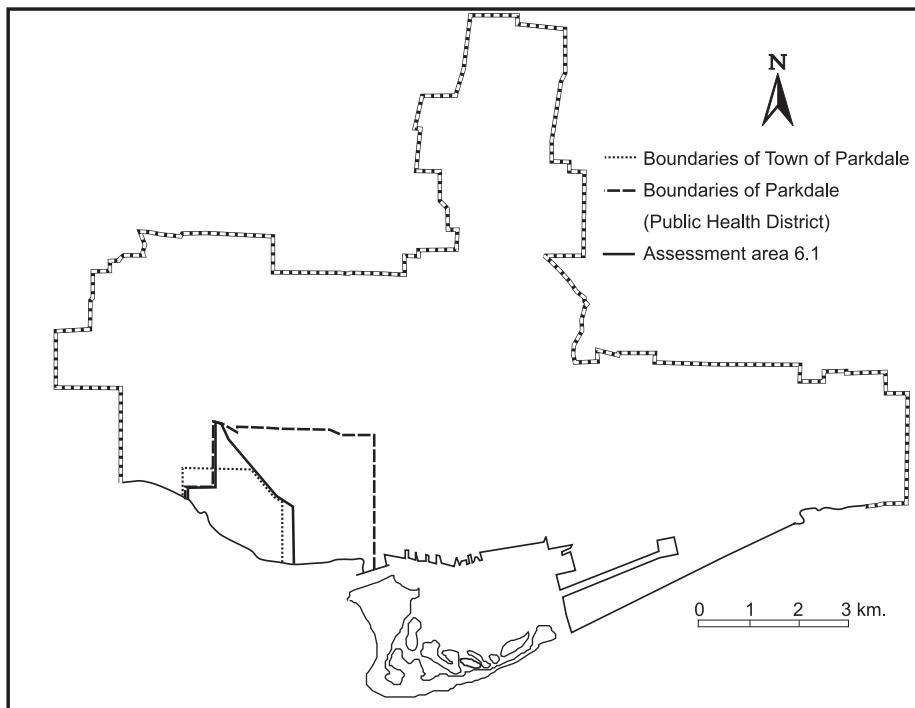
Oral histories were preserved in several 1970s projects, with audiotapes available of interviews with several early inhabitants of Parkdale, and a considerable number of reminiscences published in community newspapers and memoirs. While I have made particular efforts to search out and use the narratives of as wide a variety of residents as possible, in terms of gender, class, and ethnicity, the quotations from memoirs, oral histories, and newspaper articles are of necessity selective and unrepresentative. Be-

cause of the relative wealth of existing oral history sources, I did not carry out my own interviews with older inhabitants.

In the case of assessment records, I have been particularly fortunate. Richard Harris (1992) has developed a Toronto database comprising a one-in-twenty sample for the 1901 and 1913 assessment records, and a one-in-thirty sample for the 1921, 1931, 1941, and 1951 assessment records, broken down by subdivision. This database provides information and comparison of Parkdale's population density, occupational class of household head, tenure, subdivision of single-family housing, and multiple occupancy of buildings. I have supplemented this database with the entire assessment roll for Parkdale in 1881 and a one-in-ten sample for 1891, and can compare my data to similar information for Toronto during the late nineteenth century (Goheen 1970; Harris 1996).

Assessment rolls, and samples based on them, are not unproblematic. Assessments tend to underestimate the number of mobile and low-income transients, especially lodgers and other tenants (Harris 1996, appendix 2). The "class" of household heads is based on simplistic categories. The occupations of other members of the household are not taken into account, and no occupation is listed for female household heads, who were simply labelled by their marital status (single, married, or widowed) until 1951, regardless of whether they had paid employment. There are also some flaws in terms of the completeness of my assessment data. From 1891 to 1951, the majority of the study area was covered by the southern portion of Ward 6, and assessment area 6.1 is used as the equivalent of Parkdale for social and housing statistics from 1901 to 1951. Unfortunately, this assessment area deletes eight blocks in North Parkdale, west of Sorauren Avenue and north of Galley Avenue, approximately one-eighth of the study area (Map 3). This results in population figures being slightly underestimated from 1901 to 1951. The omission also may skew the occupational classification somewhat, underestimating the number of lower-middle-class salespeople, clerks, and skilled industrial workers in the suburb.

From the 1951 census onwards, when data are available by census tract, assessment roll information can be replaced with more accurate census tract information, which covers a wider range of factors: not only population density, tenure, subdivision of single-family housing, and multiple occupancy of buildings, but occupational class of all household members in the workforce, unemployment, residential stability (proportion of households that have lived in their dwelling for over five years), ethnic background, education, median household income and number of households living in relative poverty/wealth, average house prices and rents, and substandard houses.



Map 3. Boundaries of data sources: Village of Parkdale 1879-1889, assessment area 6.1, and Parkdale public health district

Sources: Laycock and Myrvold 1991; City of Toronto Assessment Rolls 1891-1961; City of Toronto Public Health Department 1921-1975. Map created by Ric Hamilton, McMaster University.

A particularly rich source of data is land registry records, which provide sale prices and mortgage amounts, sources, and repayments. Because local area information on changing house prices and mortgage availability is so difficult to access before the 1951 census, I have gathered land transaction histories for all the buildings on six block faces in Parkdale. (A block face is one side of a street between two intersecting streets.) There were both practical and empirical reasons for sampling block faces, as opposed to random properties. Land registry records in Toronto were, until they were computerized in 2003 (after my research was finished), archaic and difficult to use. Sales, mortgages, leases, and liens were hand-recorded in huge and heavy books using the number of the original plan of subdivision, undifferentiated by street name or address until the 1980s. Consequently, information on dozens of properties on a number of streets was

recorded together, sorted simply by the date on which a transaction was formally registered, which could be years after the actual sale or mortgage. I was given permission to use the land registry records free of charge for a six-week period, but this meant I had to focus on a small number of subdivision plans, ignore the actual deeds for the most part, and gather all information about owners beforehand using assessment records, so I could track which property was being referenced. A positive effect of sampling block faces was that it allowed me to understand how the occupancy of streets changed dramatically at certain points in time: for instance, the influx of Eastern European immigrant families on Galley Avenue between 1949 and 1959.

I chose the six block faces to represent the diversity of housing and land-use types, development eras, and locations in Parkdale, and cross-checked tenure and household head's occupation for 1901, 1921, and 1941 to ensure that the information was broadly representative of the neighbourhood. Three sample block faces shifted from working-class dwellings to a more mixed set of inhabitants over time, one sample block face was built up in upper-middle-class villas that slowly became subdivided into ever more substandard accommodations, one sample block face remained mixed in both land-use and social composition, and the final block face was expropriated for an expressway in the 1910s, with the houses torn down by the 1950s.

The first sample block face, in order of development, is the east side of Gwynne Avenue between Melbourne Avenue and Queen Street West (see Map 2). Part of the first Parkdale subdivision registered in 1875, it was developed in the early 1880s, mostly with small two-storey row houses. Clusters of low-priced row housing were typical of many streets close to the railroad tracks and industries east of Dufferin Street. Gwynne's original population was mostly working-class tenants, and homeownership increased slowly throughout the twentieth century. There was some gentrification, and considerable house price inflation, from 1970 onwards.

The second sample block face is the north side of Noble Street between Strickland and Brock Avenues. It was subdivided during the 1880s land boom by one of the many female developers who populate Parkdale's early history, Pamela Noble, daughter of a local landowning family, and built up immediately in a combination of small industries and row housing. Both industrial and residential properties changed hands infrequently until the 1970s. In the late 1990s, the industrial buildings were converted into live-work lofts and condominium apartments.

The third sample block face is the north side of Queen Street West

between O'Hara Avenue and West Lodge Avenue. Subdivided in the 1870s, built up in the 1880s and 1890s, and relatively unchanged in physical form to this day, this is a handsome set of properties at the centre of Parkdale's main commercial street. The shops, and the tenants of the apartments above them, reflect Parkdale's changing fortunes over the years.

The fourth sample block face is the east side of Dowling Avenue between Lake Ontario and King Street West. Subdivided in the 1880s and built up intermittently between the 1880s and the 1910s, this block face is typical of the grand avenues lined with the villas of the wealthy that were once taken to represent Parkdale as a whole. Conversion of these villas into flats was common from the 1910s onwards. In the 1920s, two low-rise apartment buildings were constructed on what had been empty lots. From the 1950s to the 1970s, a large developer bought up many properties in this block face, resulting in the construction of two privately owned high-rise apartment buildings, and a controversial parcel of land was eventually developed as public housing. Today, the block face consists of three original villas, all converted into single-room-occupancy apartments, plus two low-rise and three high-rise apartment buildings.

The fifth sample block face is the south side of Empress Crescent between Dunn and Jameson Avenues. It is one of eight streets, with a total of 170 houses, destroyed for the construction of the Gardiner Expressway in the late 1950s. Like most of these streets, its housing was built relatively late, between 1900 and 1913, and many of the villas and semi-detached houses were soon converted to multiple occupancy. After 1913, the houses were slowly expropriated and torn down by the City of Toronto for road allowance or parkland.

Finally, I sample the north side of Galley Avenue between Macdonell and Sorauren Avenues. This avenue was subdivided in the 1880s but not built up until the tail end of the 1906-1913 Toronto housing boom. The substantial two- and three-storey semi-detached and row houses were initially sold to British immigrant working-class and lower-middle-class families. There were very few re-sales until 1949, when many houses began to be sold to Eastern European working-class families. Another changeover began in the 1980s, as middle-class homeowners began to predominate.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to find comparative information on Toronto house prices, mortgage financing, and ethnic/class change before 1951. Some limited data exist on mortgage financing in particular neighbourhoods or parts of the city in the mid-twentieth century (Murdie 1986, 1991; Patterson 1991), and some comparative data are available on central neighbourhoods between 1981 and 1996 (Ley 1996). I also compare Parkdale trends

with the limited data on land prices, including house price inflation, in other North American cities and internationally (Hoyt 1970 in Chicago; Edel, Sclar, and Luria 1984 in Boston; Ball and Wood 1999 internationally).

Further data can be gathered from secondary sources. Housing quality can be gauged not only from fire insurance atlases but from City Council reports in 1934 and 1942 mapping “substandard houses” and further reports in 1946 and 1956 judging housing quality on a neighbourhood level. Public health annual reports give information on death from infectious disease and child mortality, common health indicators, broken down by district, although the Parkdale public health district is much larger than the boundaries I use, comprising all of west-central Toronto from Bathurst Street to High Park.

Information on ethnic origins of inhabitants is harder to find. Toronto was a more homogenous city than many of its US counterparts in the pre-World War Two period. The 1951 census shows that 73 percent of Toronto's population was of British (Anglo-Celtic) origin, and Parkdale's average was the same. However, it is sometimes possible to identify the presence of ethnic minority individuals and, in a few cases, communities in Parkdale, by the last name in assessment records, some oral or local history sources, and insurance atlases (which mark places of worship). Information on crime rates was not available broken down by police district for most of the period of this study, and therefore was not included in my set of indicators.

For the changing images of Parkdale, I rely on both the writings of outsiders – journalists, marketers, politicians, civil servants, social reformers, academic researchers – and on neighbourhood oral histories and memoirs (Harney 1985, 8-9). Representations of the community in newspaper photographs, maps, advertisements for new and renovated property, and historical markers have also been used as evidence of changing perceptions (Sies 2001). As will be discussed in the next chapter, an influential theory of “urban growth machines” was developed in the 1970s to explain how local politicians, land developers and marketers, and some social reformers and members of the media worked together to shape public opinion and influence policy (Jonas and Wilson 1999). In all three eras of Parkdale's history, journalists, local politicians, social reformers, property developers, and real estate agents played powerful roles in creating images to describe the neighbourhood and in developing policy in response to these images. There was never an easy consensus over these images, and full play will be given to the relative power of conflicting images of place over time. Aside from the primary sources of newspaper articles and oral histories, secondary sources include an excellent local history of

Parkdale before its annexation by the City of Toronto in 1889 (Laycock and Myrvold 1991), numerous planning reports, especially from the late 1960s onwards, and mentions of Parkdale in many academic and popular non-fiction books, plays, memoirs, novels, and articles written about planning, history, and neighbourhoods in Toronto (Goheen 1970; Moore 1979; Ganton 1982; Kaplan 1982; Careless 1984; Lemon 1985, 1986; Murdie 1986; Reeves 1992a, 1993).

1

A Good Place to Live? Perceptions and Realities of Suburbs, Slums, and Urban Villages

Now he was warming to his theme: to chart the life of each word, he continued, to offer its *biography*, as it were, it is important to know just when the word was born, to have a record of the register of its birth ... And after that, and for each word also, there should be sentences that show the twists and turns of meaning – the way almost every word slips in its silvery, fish-like way, weaving this way and that, adding subtleties of nuance to itself, and then perhaps shedding them as the public mood dictates.

– Simon Winchester, *The Professor and the Madman*

Parkdale has been described over time by a succession of key words and phrases: *suburb*, *slum*, and *urban village*. The definitions of the terms *suburb* and *slum* have changed over the years, and have been supplemented by other terms used as urban locality descriptors, such as *bowery*, *bohemia*, *ghetto*, and *urban village*. These labels are, of course, not unique to Parkdale, but are products of the broader Anglo-American discourse related to the suburban ideal in the nineteenth century, fears of central city decline in the early twentieth century, and the new rhetoric of central city versus suburb in the late twentieth century. The relationship between such perceptions of a place and social conditions is described in this chapter.

Perceptions of Place and Urban Differentiation in Three Intellectual Traditions

As Edward Relph (1976, 3) posits, “Places have meaning: they are characterized by the beliefs of man [sic].” Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as developed English-speaking nations became more urbanized, cities and the components of cities attracted considerable description and analysis. Both statistical and perceptual descriptions sought to discover meaning in these urban places.

For some theorists, a description was an uncomplicated dissection of an underlying objective reality that could be universally discerned and applied. This view is evident, for example, in the writings of sociologists

associated with the University of Chicago in the 1920s. The members of the Chicago school were influenced by the great German and French sociologists of the nineteenth century: Emile Durkheim, Georg Simmel, Ferdinand Tonnies, and Karl Marx (Chorney 1990, 100-102). They were also influenced by evolutionary theory, especially as these biological theories had been adapted to human society by writers such as Herbert Spencer (Sibley 1995). The Chicago school sought to apply the sociological traditions of Europe to American cities, while removing any hint of class struggle that might attach the label *communist* to them in the highly politicized university environment of the 1920s (Chorney 1990, 102).

According to Robert Park's seminal 1925 article, "The City," urban growth and differentiation are results of "sympathy, rivalry and economic necessity." These forces are neutral, structural, and essentially unchangeable. Rich and "fashionable residential quarters" simply "spring up," "from which the poorer classes are excluded because of the increasing value of the land." Slums arise because some people are weaker than others: "There grow up slums which are inhabited by great numbers of the poorer classes who are unable to defend themselves from association with the derelict and vicious." Communities within the city change through a natural and inevitable progression: "The past imposes itself upon the present, and the life of every locality moves on with a certain momentum of its own" (Park 1974, 5-6).

Ernest Burgess, another key member of the Chicago school, argued that the purpose of urban research is to facilitate the process of business and state planning, although the agency of planners is inherently limited to small interventions such as the creation of settlement houses and playgrounds in some "evil neighbourhoods" (Burgess 1974, 48; Park 1974, 8-9). The prognosis for particular neighbourhoods was bad: as cities were "invaded" by waves of immigration, neighbourhoods would inevitably become "junked" as they aged and were overtaken in popularity by newer communities on the periphery. However, the prognosis for urban society as a whole was good: these urban forces of "disorganization and organization may be thought of ... as co-operating in a moving equilibrium of social order toward an end vaguely or definitely regarded as progressive" (Burgess 1974, 54-58). As the city grew outwards, more and more families would attain homeownership, and more immigrants would become Americanized. Vice, crime, and poverty would remain a "natural, if not normal part of city life," but only among those who were "peculiarly fit for the environment in which they are condemned to exist" (Park 1974, 45).

As David Sibley (1995, 127) points out, "a model like Ernest Burgess' representation of the organization of social space in the western city

attained the status of a universal statement, with the effect that other readings of the city, representing other world-views, were not seen." For the next fifty years, the Chicago school's moral map of the city dominated discourse on urban differentiation and growth, not only in the United States but in Canada (Harris and Lewis 2001) and Australia (Howe 1994) as well. Although the Chicago school accepted that the "city is ... a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions" (Park 1974, 1), its adherents maintained that this urban mind and body were universal, able to be mapped, understood, and analyzed across cultures.

Intellectual descendants of the Chicago school perfected tools to dissect the urban form. In the 1930s, Homer Hoyt modified the concentric ring model of the city to accommodate the notion of growth along radial sectors such as highways and rail lines. He elaborated on the uses of the rules and maps he provided for city planning and zoning, slum clearance, and mortgage providers (Hoyt 1939). For Hoyt, as for many others who followed in the footsteps of the Chicago school, the role of the urban analyst, whether based in academe, government, or business, was to provide rational and scientific advice, based on perception and understanding of an underlying reality. Throughout, this reality was informed by a binary moral order. The central city was bad for people, and the people who were left there, after natural selection had removed those most fit to live in the suburbs, were bad.

David Harvey's *Social Justice and the City* disrupted the relationship between perception and reality posited by the Chicago school, and became an influential text for a new generation of urban analysts. Published in 1973 by an author previously known as a torchbearer for scientific modernism, the book reinserted class conflict into the discussion of urban growth and structure. According to Harvey, the ruling class provides the dominant ideas, including the ideas about where rich and poor should live (147). Harvey sees postwar suburbanization (the movement of the majority of city dwellers into politically separate suburbs) as a logical out-growth of middle-class movement after jobs that have decentralized, along with a desire to avoid negative externalities associated with poor people, such as degraded public services and depressed property values. The provision of new residential and industrial space in suburbs allows excess capital to be used to create new products, "new wants and needs, sensibilities and aspirations" (311). Discriminatory practices, including zoning out low-income housing, stop the poor from also moving outwards to follow the jobs (57-66). Spatial structure is thus derived from the economic basis of society (293), and perceptions and values arise from the prevailing social and political norms.

Harvey Molotch also drew his inspiration from a Marxist view of the

city to analyze urban politics. He was specifically critical of pluralism, the dominant discourse of American political science into the 1970s. This school of thought, closely allied to the Chicago school, held that decisions taken were the result of equally competing interest groups. In contrast, Molotch argued that urban politics could be seen as a machine for urban growth, which was supported by an ad hoc coalition of real estate interests (property developers, mortgage lenders such as banks, and realtors), local media, and politicians (both local and federal). The urban growth machine theory, further reinforced by the insights of sociologist John Logan, remains influential today (Jonas and Wilson 1999).

The first feminist critiques of urban form and power were influenced by the Marxist perspective. Beginning with a 1973 article, "Social Change, the Status of Women, and Models of City Form and Development," published by Pat Burnett in *Antipode*, "the radical journal of geography," and continuing with the founding of *Women and Environments Magazine* in 1976 and the publication of *New Space for Women* (Wekerle, Peterson, and Morley 1980) and *Women in the American City* (Stimpson et al. 1981), an underlying socio-economic structure of patriarchy as well as capitalism was held responsible for the dominant ideology. This ideology promoted the city as an appropriate space for men, and the suburban home as an appropriate space for women. Feminists explicitly critiqued the moral values behind the view of suburbs as safe havens, positing central cities as places of economic opportunity and relative social freedom.

For Harvey and many of the critical urban theorists who followed in his footsteps,¹ perception is mediated by the largely invisible and taken-for-granted power system of capitalism and, in the case of feminists, patriarchy. The role of the critical analyst is to strip away the veil of seemingly natural behaviours in order to reveal the exploitative system that lies underneath. Despite the omnipresence of this underlying structure, urban agents have opportunities to subvert power and make positive changes. The most eloquent explanation of this urban agency is found in the work of Harvey's contemporary Manuel Castells (1983). However, Marxist and feminist urban analysis of the late 1970s and early 1980s continued, rather than disrupted, several assumptions behind modern quantitative research. For a radical urbanist of that era, there remained a reality to be uncovered, and furthermore, a reality which is universal, largely structural, and rational.

A third wave of theories on urban growth and structure began to be popularized in the 1980s and 1990s under the umbrella title of postmodernism. Postmodernists consciously reject the notion that there is a simple or universal reality that can be perceived through research and analysis. Indeed, the role of the researcher, according to David Sibley, the

author of *Geographies of Exclusion* (1995), might be to show “how exotic [the previous] constitution of reality has been,” to “emphasize those domains most taken for granted as universal ... [and] make them seem as historically peculiar as possible.” Like Marxists, postmodernists tend to assume that divisions within space are a reflection of unequal power relations. Unlike Marxists, postmodernists generally see that superstructure as encompassing inter-related forms of oppression on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and abilities, as well as class. Thus, Sibley begins his book by contending that “power is expressed in the monopolization of space and the relegation of weaker groups in society to less desirable environments” (ix). In one way, this echoes Burgess and Harvey in their formulations of urban succession: the strong overcoming the weak in an eternal struggle over living space. Like Harvey, Sibley attributes socio-spatial differentiation to unequal division of power, not to some natural force, as was the case with the Chicago school. Power is socially constructed and thus mutable.

Unlike Harvey, Sibley posits a complex face to power. Attempts to create a totalizing or universalizing critique of the city based on an underlying binary worldview, however progressive or even radical in nature, are wrong. Christine Boyer (1983, 60) adapts Michel Foucault’s aphorism, “Against the plague, which is one of mixture, discipline brings into play its power, which is one of analysis,” to urban studies. “So too,” says Boyer of the birth of modern planning, “against the chaos of the city with its simultaneity of land uses, jumble of vehicles, multitudes of people, corrupt politicians, and labour unrest, there stood an ideal: the city as a perfectly disciplined social order.” In the postmodern worldview, the first order of the researcher is to uncover past “myths” and “constructs of the imagination,” as Alan Mayne (1993, 1) defines the historical slum, not to create a new layer of urban mythology. Complexity is not only inevitable but good: simple solutions do not work.

I have a considerable amount of sympathy with this perspective. If we say, for instance, that a century of urban planning was dead wrong, what claims allow us to say that an alternative path is right? Can we still say, as Jane Jacobs did forty years ago in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1992, 4), that it is possible to create maxims for successful cities based on “how cities work in real life,” if there is no shared understanding of real life?

Postmodern writers on the city have been critiqued, perhaps most effectively by Harvey, as theorists who privilege arcane analyses of discourse over concrete issues of social disparities and what to do about them. After all, asks Harvey (1989, 291), if it is “impossible to say anything of solidity

and permanence in the midst of this ephemeral and fragmented world, then why not join in the game?" Ironically, emphasis on unpacking perceptions was pioneered by several cultural analysts who wrote from a Marxist perspective, such as John Berger and Raymond Williams. As the latter wrote in *Keywords*, changes in the meanings of words both reflect and can shape changes in a society (R. Williams 1976, 9-10). The question for Harvey, and for myself as a researcher, is how unpacking changes in the meanings of words can lead to some form of positive social change.

In order to talk about positive social change, I believe it is necessary to accept that there is some level of social reality, however imperfectly discernable. As Mayne (1993, 1-2) says in his dissection of slum discourse in English-speaking societies between 1880 and 1914, "deplorable life choices available to inner-city residents were real in material and absolute senses," although "the term slum, encoded with the meanings of a dominant bourgeois culture, in fact obscured and distorted the varied spatial forms and social conditions to which it was applied." Mayne argues that the prevalent discourse shapes the choice of which statistics are used and which voices are heard, a point also made by Robert Beauregard in his analysis of a century of popular writing on the American city (2003, 239). Discourse analysis also allows hitherto obscured voices to have a say. For example, Sibley (1995) resurrects the relatively neglected writings of Jane Addams and W.E.B. Du Bois, two contemporaries of the Chicago school; Beauregard (2003) uncovers surprising ambivalence within a predominantly anti-city twentieth-century American discourse; and Elizabeth Wilson (1991) shows how cities have offered women pleasure as well as danger.

A discussion of positive social change also requires a generally accepted goal against which progress can be measured. Current feminist and post-modernist writers such as the late Iris Marion Young are developing a politics of difference that posits tolerance of the "other" as a basis for a just urban society (Fincher and Jacobs 1998). Tolerance evokes, for these writers, not only an end to exclusionary practices that seek to discipline and punish those who do not fit societal norms. Tolerance also connotes a commitment to inclusion, choice, diversity, and rights to a basic set of urban goods, including housing, health, and rewarding work (Young 1990).

The Binary Rhetoric of Suburbs and Slums

As discussed in the Introduction, cities and their component parts are often described in binary terms. For much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the most popular rhetorical opposition in talking about cities was to compare them to the countryside (R. Williams 1973). This was hardly surprising, since most migrants to the city were from rural

areas and small towns, and thus had to accommodate themselves to a way of life significantly different from the one known by themselves and their parents. Sociologists like Georg Simmel and Emile Durkheim compared urban and rural mindsets, while visionaries like Ebenezer Howard proposed a new form of community, garden cities, that would combine the best of both city and countryside (Hall 1996). As suburbanization increased in the later twentieth century, the suburb/city dichotomy received a great deal of attention from scholars, who compared political representation, taxation levels, access to jobs and services, urban architectural form, and again, ways of life (e.g., Jackson 1985; Teaford 1986; Sewell 1993; Duany, Plater-Zyberk, and Speck 2000).

In this section, I propose to analyze a third dichotomy in “the rhetoric of urban space” (Wilson 1995): the relationship between the terms *suburb* and *slum*. For about a hundred years, from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, these two terms were used as binary opposites, thesis and antithesis, in attempts to describe a good place to live. Slums were seen as urban problems, suburbs as solutions. Slums represented the societal nightmare: a shifting and shiftless population of renters and slumlords who destroyed the urban fabric; a mixture of noxious industries and a diseased and immoral underclass; a place to be avoided and feared; a cancer that might spread if not contained. Suburbs represented a dream for both individuals and the city as a whole: families owning homes and thus having a financial stake in improving their communities; separation of workplace and residence (for many men, at least); and the shared expertise of architects, planners, and enlightened developers promoting the best housing and community designs. Slums were, in short, unstable, unhealthy, and bad; suburbs stable, healthy, and good.

Forty years ago, US urban historian Sam Bass Warner (1978, vii-viii) summarized the “central event of the 1870-1900 era” as the “creation of a two part city, an old inner city and a new outer city, a city of slums and a city of suburbs, a city of hope and failure and a city of achievement and comfort.” Harold Dyos and David Reeder (1973, 370), writing ten years later in the United Kingdom, took a far more critical approach to the reality of late-nineteenth-century suburbs and slums, but echoed the rhetoric: “the convulsions of the city became symbolic of evil tendencies ... while the serenity of the suburbs became a token of natural harmony.”

Despite a vast literature on suburbs, and an equally impressive literature on slums, few writers have tried to come to grips with the historical trajectory of this rhetoric. Dyos, in his pioneering case study of an English nineteenth-century suburb, and more recently Kenneth Jackson (1985), Robert Fishman (1987), John Stilgoe (1988), and Witold Rybczynski

(1995), in their US-focused overviews of the origins of suburban life, all provide examples of the rise and fall of the suburban ideal, from pre-1800 descriptions of suburbs as bad places where bad people lived (i.e., slums), to late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century descriptions of suburbs as opposites of, and solutions to, slums. The change coincided with the large-scale industrialization and urbanization of cities in Europe, the United States, Australia, and Canada. These writers also grapple with the future of suburbs, coming to dissimilar conclusions about their popularity and viability.

Similarly, writers on slums, such as Gareth Stedman-Jones (1984), Thomas Philpott (1978), Terry Copp (1974), and Alan Mayne (1993) have all provided short histories of the origin of the word *slum* in the early nineteenth century, and its adoption as a problem with local, national, and international dimensions during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the prewar years of the twentieth century. Philpott, Copp, and Mayne identify a similar time frame (between 1870-1880 and 1914-1930) as the heyday of government reports, surveys, and sensationalist literature on slums. Robert Beauregard (2003) describes the second flourishing of slum literature in the United States: the series of slum reports during the Great Depression of the 1930s and the integration of slum stereotypes into post-World War Two urban renewal schemes, even as the term *slum* was superseded by *inner city* (see also the debate between Metzger 2000 and critics Downs 2000, Galster 2000, and Temkin 2000).

The rhetoric of suburbs and slums lingers today as gentrification has brought on the “class remake of the central urban landscape” (Smith 1996, 39). According to Beauregard (1986, 36), “The image of a city and its neighbourhoods are manipulated in order to reduce the perceived risk and to encourage investment.” Peter Williams (1986, 56) describes how the “original features” and “period charm” of nineteenth-century suburban housing are highlighted for Melbourne and Sydney gentrifiers, while Caroline Mills (1993) gives a similar example in a case study from Fairview Slopes, Vancouver. Certain artifacts associated with slums, such as abandoned industrial buildings (Zukin 1989, 73) or a “heroic” immigrant past (Mele 2000b, 643), can also inspire nostalgia in middle-class homebuyers. These safe versions of the older city (the industries no longer spew out smoke, the period charm of older houses has been altered to provide indoor toilets and central heating, the descendants of heroic immigrants are now second- and third-generation citizens) are contrasted with the supposed “anonymity and homogeneity” of current suburbs (Howe 1994, 157; see also Caulfield 1994). Gentrification can be seen as a way to restore a past order to the current urban wilderness, wherein a new generation of urban pioneers harvests what is best from the central city’s past, leaving

the now old-fashioned outer suburbs to those with less courage and foresight (Smith 1996). Gentrification can also be described as a cyclic reversal of the centre-periphery dichotomy: the urban village is now the repository of community spirit and civic virtue, while the bad city of bad people is embodied in Los Angeles-type suburban sprawl (Peel 1995b).

The rhetoric of suburbs and slums also features in the urban theories described in the first part of this chapter. The Chicago school and its successors see suburbs and slums as a natural, evolutionary, structural response to competition between individuals for space (Park 1926; Burgess 1974; Zorbaugh 1976). Positivists like Hoyt (1939, 1970) and Hoover and Vernon (1959), and Marxists like Harvey (1973) and Smith (1978), in their early works, share the belief that the divide between suburbs and slums is an economically rational outgrowth of conflict within industrial capitalist economies. Feminists like Gwendolyn Wright (1980), Dolores Hayden (1984), Margaret Marsh (1990), and Elizabeth Wilson (1991) see suburbs and slums as a socially constructed and not particularly rational product of struggles over gender roles. Postmodernists of various stripes claim that the division between suburbs and slums is a discontinuous, fluid, and highly contingent reflection of oppression, which encompasses class, gender, ethnicity, and other grounds of difference (Boyer 1983; Harvey 1989; Mayne 1993; Sibley 1995; Smith 1996).

The Development of the Suburban Dream

The word *suburb*, derived from a Latin term meaning "beyond or below the city," has a long history. The suburban dream itself is even older. Jackson (1985, 12) cites a letter from a nobleman to the king of Persia in 539 BC: "Our property seems to me the most beautiful in the world. It is so close to Babylon that we enjoy all the advantages of the city, and yet when we come home we are away from all the dust and noise." Like the anonymous Persian, a few wealthy people throughout European and Asian history could afford to spend weekends in a villa, near the commerce and culture of walled cities, but far from their noise and pollution. The combination of proximate access and psychological distance remained a common theme in the suburban ideal for the next 2,500 years.

More commonly, suburbs housed those on the fringes of urban society. They included, in medieval Europe, the craftsmen not associated with guilds, obnoxious trades such as leather working, immigrants not yet accepted into their adopted societies, and places of amusement beyond taxes and moral laws. In both suburbs and cities at the beginning of the eighteenth century, "the poor were living cheek by jowl with the rich to an extraordinary degree" (Dyos 1961, 34). Even in the first stages of the

industrial revolution in Britain, migrants to cities tended to settle in outer districts. Only when industries concentrated within cities, in the early and mid-nineteenth century, did the demand for casual labour bring a wave of impoverished newcomers into the heart of the city, while the proliferation of wharves, warehouses, stations, and offices began to cut into housing and increase land rents, expelling those residents who had any choice about where to live (Stedman-Jones 1984).

A great deal of the imagery later associated with central city slums was developed to describe pre-industrial suburbs. Six hundred years ago, in *The Canterbury Tales*, an alchemist's servant could describe his "sly" and "crafty" master living in "the suburbes of a toun," "lurkinge in hernes [hedges] and lanes blinde / Whereas thise robbours and thise thieves by kinde / Holden hir pryve ferefule residence" (Chaucer 1974, 90). Suburbs were the home of the outlaw, a hidden and sinister landscape of dark dead ends. The Mephistophelean alchemist has the capacity to "infect al a toun" if allowed within its safe and regulated boundaries (103). Suburbs were also described in feminized and sexualized terms. In 1548, Nash, who wrote an early travelogue of Britain's capital city, asked: "London, what are they Suburbes but licensed Stewes [brothels]?" *Suburb sinner* was a common synonym for *prostitute* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Fishman 1987, 7). In Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* we find: "There's a trim rabble let in / Are these your faithfull friends o' th' Suburbs?" Mobs of potentially dangerous poor people, as Hall (1998), Wilson (1991), and others have pointed out, were a common concern in cities of the industrial era, and mobs, like pre-industrial suburbs, were often described as debased females (see the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of *suburb*).

During the latter half of the eighteenth century, the term *suburb* went through a radical, although gradual, change. Stilgoe contends that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English literature drew upon a classical thread that contrasted the morality of country life with the sinful city. American intellectual leaders like Thomas Jefferson propounded the belief that democracy would flourish only in smaller communities. And as basic knowledge of the origins and spread of infectious disease grew, densely packed urban centres were seen as less healthful (Stilgoe 1988, 38-45). By 1752, the novelist Samuel Richardson could receive a get-well note stating, "I hope that ... the air of your agreeable suburbane North-end, will restore you." The *Oxford English Dictionary* uses this example and others to support its statement that, by the 1820s, suburbs were associated with "professional men and artists." But negative imagery still lingered: in 1820, another writer of travelogues, the aptly named Crabbe, observed "Suburban prospects, where the traveller stops / To see the sloping tenement on

props." Fishman (1987, 62-63) says that *suburb* lost its negative connotation only in the 1840s.

The British were the "first predominantly urban-dwelling people in the long history of human settlement" (R. Williams 1973, 2), so it is hardly surprising that England, Scotland, and Ireland were experimenting with new urban forms in the early nineteenth century. St. John's Wood in London saw the first semi-detached houses, a compromise between villa and row house, in 1800, and Regent's Park in 1820 introduced the concept of a suburb planned around a green space (Fishman 1987, 64-65). However, it was Manchester, the "shock city" of the early nineteenth century, in historian Asa Briggs' phrase (1993), that drew most attention from contemporary writers. Manchester's growth was phenomenal: from a town of 17,000 in 1750, it grew to 70,000 by 1801 and 303,000 by 1851. And Manchester suburbanized as it grew. By the 1830s, a pattern was discernable: a central business core surrounded by an industrial zone with working-class dwellings interspersed, in turn surrounded by the houses of the new middle class (Fishman 1987, 74-75). The development of middle-class suburbs in Manchester was supported by a combination of low land prices in the periphery and hyper-inflated central city land prices. In other words, a middle-class household could sell a house in the central city for a good price and use that money to buy a much more spacious house and lot in the suburbs, commuting by the new technologies of rail or horse tram. There were also push factors that drove the middle class from the central city: fear of industrial riots, for example, which translated into a fear that lower classes would follow the middle class to the periphery and depress the value of their new homes (81-87).

Frederick Engels, who lived and worked in Manchester, wrote in 1845 that: "The town itself is peculiarly built, so that a person may live in it for years, and go in and out daily without coming into contact with a working-people's quarter or even with workers ... The facades of main thoroughfares mask the horrors that lie behind from the eyes of factory owners and the middle-class managers who commute into the city from outlying suburbs" (1969, 78-79). A little more than a century later, but in the same vein, Dyos and Reeder (1973, 369) described "the middle class suburb" as "an ecological marvel. It gave access to the cheapest land in the city to those having most security of employment and leisure to afford the time and money spent traveling up and down; it offered an arena for the manipulation of social distinction to those most adept at turning them into shapes on the ground; it kept the threat of rapid social change beyond the horizon of those least able to accept its negative as well as its positive advantages." The growth of suburbs can thus be seen as an example of

successful middle-class control over space, a symbolic wall protecting the middle class from “the foul-smelling environment of the poor, the smell of the poor – and the poor themselves,” in the words of Sibley (1995, 24).

There are, of course, many ways to divide the city by class, and Sibley is actually referring to the radical replanning of Paris by Baron Haussmann in the mid-nineteenth century. Haussmann’s wide boulevards, lined with luxury apartments and exclusive stores and theatres thanks to generous government loans to developers, made the central city safe for the middle class by clearing out slums and effectively banishing the poor to the periphery (Harvey 1985). The contrasting experience of Paris indicates that another factor needs to be taken into account to understand the flourishing of the middle-class suburb in Anglo-American cities during this period: the growing cult of the nuclear family. The rise of a new set of meanings for *suburb* in Anglo-American culture coincided with the rise of new meanings for *family* (Marsh 1990, xii). According to Raymond Williams, the term *family* evolved between the Middle Ages and the nineteenth century from meaning everyone living in a household, including servants, to meaning a small kin-group sharing a house. Thus in 1631, a description of a family could read, “himself and his wife and daughters, two mayds [sic] and a man,” while in the early nineteenth century, the economist James Mill defined a family as “the group which consists of a Father, Mother, and Children” (cited in R. Williams 1976, 108). Sibley talks of “sites of nationalist sentiment, including the family, the suburb, and the countryside, all of which implicitly exclude” others, while Wright devotes an entire book to the intertwined relationship between the idea of a “model” or typical house and the notion of the model family” (Sibley 1995, 108; Wright 1980, 1).

Influential designers of pattern-book homes and early planned suburbs doubled as moralists for suburban family life. A.J. Downing, the Beecher sisters, and Frederick Law Olmsted, all prominent in the development of mid-nineteenth-century US suburbs, held that they were the only way to protect women and children from the evil influences of the city. Suburbs also provided opportunities for women to exert positive influences on society through their moral leadership in the home (Wright 1980). Fishman (1987, 110) contends that the main difference between Anglo-American and continental European culture was a religious concern in Anglo-American culture with the sin found in the city, primarily in evangelical religions such as Methodism and Presbyterianism. Wilson (1990, 6) elaborates on this Anglo-American notion: “Nineteenth century planning reports, government papers and journalism created an interpretation of the urban experience as a new version of Hell, and it would even be possible to

describe the emergent town-planning movement – a movement that has changed our cities almost beyond recognition – as an organized campaign to exclude women and children, along with other disruptive elements – the working class, the poor, and minorities – from this infernal urban space altogether.”

Thus a tension existed within the new notion of the suburb, between those developers and property holders who valued exclusivity and increasing land values for the middle and upper classes, and those evangelical visionaries who wanted everyone living in the suburbs for the sake of their souls (not to mention their acquiescence and productivity as workers and begetters of the next generation of workers). Brooklyn is an example of the latter type of “big tent” community. The *Brooklyn Star* proclaimed in 1815 that the suburb “must necessarily become a favorite residence for gentlemen of taste and fortune, for merchants and shopkeepers of every description, for artists, artisans, mechanics, laborers, and persons of every trade in society,” and Walt Whitman, writing of “Brooklyn the Beautiful,” observed fifteen years later: “men of moderate means may find homes at a moderate rent, whereas in New York City there is no median between a palatial mansion and a dilapidated hovel.” Brooklyn developed its own commerce, industry, and culture (cited in Jackson 1985, 27-32). In 1870, Brookline, outside Boston, called itself the “richest town in the world,” although only 25 percent of its household heads were executives, professionals, or manufacturers, and 40 percent were blue-collar, first-generation Irish immigrants, most working in nearby industries (100). Another Boston suburb, Jamaica Plain, had streets where affluent businessmen and their families lived adjacent to parks, but also streets that housed every other occupational group, including industrial workers and labourers working small market gardens (Von Hoffman 1994, 7, 33).

While the big tent suburb may have been the norm, other pre-existing settlements at the periphery of large US cities tried to maintain or increase their exclusivity through early attempts at zoning and residential restrictions. The town council of Cambridge, Massachusetts, for example, promoted residential over commercial or industrial expansion in the mid-nineteenth century. Meanwhile, newer developments like Beacon Hill in Boston, Gramercy Park and Washington Square in New York, Germantown in Philadelphia, and Nob Hill in San Francisco marketed themselves to an exclusive group of homebuyers (Jackson 1985, 21-25). In the later nineteenth century, restrictive covenants became increasingly common. These could ban non-residential uses and subdivision of land, prescribe a minimum value for a house along with nature and colour of materials and architecture style, or exclude particular racial or ethnic groups (most

commonly blacks and Jews) from buying property (Fishman 1987, 151; Doucet and Weaver 1991, 100-101). Suburban communities also incorporated new residential designs to add value. Highbury New Park in Islington, London, used curving streets and a large central park to attract buyers in the 1850s (Hinchcliffe 1981), and in the 1860s Riverside outside Chicago was designed in the same fashion by Frederick Law Olmsted, the famed landscape architect of New York's Central Park (Fishman 1987). Perhaps most importantly, this period saw the beginning of a corporatization of the urban land process, although master-planned suburbs, developed and sold by one company, were not the norm until after 1950. Whereas subdividers, home builders, estate agents, and mortgage financiers had once worked separately, these functions began to be brought together within one firm. A more efficient housing production process allowed much more efficient social segregation by the developers themselves (Weiss 1987; Doucet and Weaver 1991).

Mixed suburbs of the nineteenth century were often the result of a land marketing process that resembled today's discount fashion stores, where the worth of a product decreases rapidly with time. A developer would lay out multi-acre lots. If a few choice lots were taken but the majority remained unsold, the developer (who usually had borrowed short-term money on high interest to purchase, subdivide, and resell a piece of property) would further subdivide lots in order to sell them for less. Builders, in turn, would buy lots on speculation; if there was a glut in the middle-class housing market, they would erect two or three row houses rather than one villa on a lot. This process was seen in Manchester in the 1830s (Fishman 1987, 89), Islington in the 1860s (Hinchcliffe 1981, 33; J. White 1986, 12), and most North American suburbs until the turn of the twentieth century (Doucet and Weaver 1991, 33). Clifton, a hilly suburb three miles (five kilometres) north of Cincinnati's municipal boundary, comprised multi-acre country estates in the 1840s. By the 1890s, there was a much more varied mix of housing and apartments, lived in by blue-collar and white-collar workers and small businessmen, as well as merchants. Still, the image of "park like grounds, splendid residences, magnificent prospects" and inhabitants of "American stock" remained long after Clifton had become a mixed community (Miller 2001, 1-20).

Although a preponderance of small-scale developers made sense in highly unstable housing markets, some developers realized that profits could be realized by buying land while it was cheap and then marketing it over a longer period (Doucet and Weaver 1991, 81, 44). Potter Palmer used his influence as a member of Chicago's elite to make the Gold Coast the wealthiest section of Chicago in the 1870s. This involved draining

and filling marshy land, and then changing the whole high-value commercial orientation of the city from an east-west to a north-south axis (Keating 1988, 66). William Harmon of Cincinnati and Samuel Gross of Chicago are usually credited with being the first home builder/developers to provide instalment-plan mortgages for more modest homebuyers, in the 1880s (Doucet and Weaver 1991, 84; Ward 1998, 83).

Gross was also a pioneer in place marketing, providing picnics at new home sites and running lushly illustrated newspaper and magazine advertisements extolling the virtues of suburban homeownership. According to Gross' advertisements, owning a home in the suburbs would ensure that children grew up with clean air and water, and that women were protected from immoral influences. Images of "good women" were common in illustrations marketing suburbs, just as illustrations of "bad women" were common in slum literature: an 1891 Gross advertisement shows a young lady, dressed in white, pointing at "virgin soil" (Ward 1998, 120). Freed from the depredations of "house renting sharks," families would enjoy personal and financial security by owning a house in the urban frontier. New suburban houses were advertised as having the latest in modern, labour-saving devices, and as being connected to central cities by efficient public transportation (railways and streetcars). Subdivisions were advertised as being on higher land, closer to nature, and upwind from smoke (which meant, generally, to the west of the city in the northern hemisphere, and east of the city in the southern hemisphere). The names of subdivisions used signifiers such as *park*, *heights*, *hill*, and *west* to convey these attributes. Gross possessed a particularly American melting-pot sensibility: he targeted advertisements to immigrant families in German, Swedish, Italian, and even Yiddish newspapers, while excluding black Americans from his working-class suburbs (90-91, 120-31).

By the beginning of the twentieth century, Anglo-American culture had fully embraced the notion of the suburban future, while developers provided a range of suburbs, from industrial working-class to exclusive to minority-culture (Harris and Lewis 2001). The developing suburban dream was based on the material realities of cheap land and quick profit, as well as ideological constructs of strictly separated gender roles, the moral purity of family life, and fear of the mob. The problem with the future, however, is that it keeps becoming the present, and the highly valued periphery had a tendency to merge into the central city with dizzying speed. Although in the 1890s a British observer noted that "the process of urbanisation has been modified by one of suburbanisation," Eric Lampard (1973, 29) adds that the "late Victorian belief in suburban 'purity' was belied by the fact that the suburbs of one generation were often indistinguishable from the

town of the next; sometimes yesterday's suburb became today's slum." In 1925, Harlan Douglass' *The Suburban Trend* (1970, vi) pointed out what was becoming increasingly obvious, that suburbs were "intermediate in form. They are parts of evolving cities." The corollary to this statement was that "nearly all suburbs are either being made or being unmade" (164). Development was followed by decline as surely as birth led to death.

Central City Decline and the Slum Nightmare

As suburbs developed their reputation as good places to live, living in the central city was increasingly derided by researchers and reformers. Compared to *suburb*, *slum* is a young word, which emerged along with the industrial city in the early nineteenth century. Slums in their original meaning were associated with rooming houses. The first written mention of a slum is in a British "flash," or slang, dictionary of the 1810s, where it derived from *slumber* and meant a short-term rental room. The term *back slum* gradually widened in the 1820s to encompass "a street, alley, court in a crowded district of a town or city, inhabited by the poor," then, by the 1840s, "a number of these streets or courts forming a thickly populated neighbourhood or district where the houses or conditions of life are of a squalid or wretched character" (*Oxford English Dictionary*).

Late-nineteenth-century suburbs were associated with good women, virtuous daughters and wives who were separated from the paid workforce; hard-working immigrants and migrants of European origin who were anxious to assimilate; and healthy children. From the first, slums were associated with their binary opposites: bad, immoral, working women; despised ethnic groups such as Gypsies, Irish, people of African origin, and Chinese; and physically and mentally stunted children and adults. In an 1824 history of gaming cited by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, we find this early use: "Regaling ... in the back parlour (*vulgo* slum) of an extremely low-bred Irish widow." By mid-century, the term *slum* also described "gypsy jargon" (the origin of Cockney), begging letters, and as a verb, "to do substandard work." Mayne provides a lexicon of dehumanizing descriptions of slum dwellers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: "savage nations," a "degenerate race"; in Birmingham, "trollops ... idle around"; in San Francisco, Chinese immigrants "live like prairie dogs" and are "human scum" (1993, 167, 181, 188). An 1894 US report, *Slums of Great Cities* (New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Chicago), defined them as "an area of dirty back streets, especially when inhabited by a squalid and criminal population" (cited in Philpott 1978, 22). These attitudes lingered among those who focused on the physical and social problems of slums. A 1963 textbook, *New Towns for Old: The Techniques of Urban*

Renewal, instructed: "The Dwellers in a slum area are almost a separate race of people, with different values, aspirations, and ways of living ... Most people who live in slums have no views on their environment at all ... When we are dealing with people who have no initiative or civic pride, the task, surely, is to break up such groupings, even though the people seem to be satisfied with their miserable environments and seem to enjoy an extrovert social life in their own locality" (cited in Wilson 1991, 100).

Even such a progressive and scientific observer as the British social reformer Charles Booth contended that "the lowest class of occasional labourers, loafers, and semi-criminals," which he estimated at 1.25 percent of London's population, "are perhaps incapable of improvement" (1971, 54-56). But although some slum dwellers would not change, in the nineteenth century it became considered increasingly necessary for governments to destroy their homes, under the rationale of social and economic progress. A mid-century British observer of slums hyperventilated: "We fear them for what they are – beds of pestilence, where the fever is generated which shall be propagated to distant parts of town ... not only the lurking places, but the *nurseries* of felons. A future generation of thieves is there hatched from the viper's egg" (cited in J. White 1980, 9). The medical officer of health from Glasgow told the parliamentary Dwellings Committee in 1873, "The destructive part of the duty of the authorities is of more importance, if possible, than the constructive; the first and most essential step is to get rid of the existing haunts of moral and physical degradation, and the next is to watch carefully over constructing and construction, leaving, however, the initiative of these usually to the law of supply and demand" (cited in Stedman-Jones 1984, 198). From the 1830s onward, slums in London were "ventilated" by the construction of wide new roads. These were supposed to help slum dwellers by bringing in air, light, and police supervision, but the underlying impetus was to assist commercial growth (J. White 1980, 9-10). Between 1830 and 1880, approximately 100,000 people were displaced from central London by a combination of road, railway, and dock construction, with virtually no new housing constructed to accommodate those made homeless (Stedman-Jones 1984, 167). Similar case studies of the destruction of working-class slums in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are provided by Mayne (1993) for Birmingham, Sydney, and San Francisco, and Philpott (1978) for Chicago. In every case, regulation and demolition of substandard housing was favoured over construction of low-cost housing in the central city. In the few cases in which low-cost housing was constructed by the state or private philanthropists, the rents were too high for the impoverished residents displaced by slum removal.

Unsurprisingly, there was enormous pent-up demand from working-class people for housing close to central workplaces in large cities. Booth pointed out in the 1870s that the middle-class "demand is for new houses, not old," which meant that they constantly migrated to peripheral areas where "streets are wider and houses have gardens of some sort." This "centrifugal action" left "inner ring" neighbourhoods to become increasingly filled up with "workshops and extensions," and eventually to become "overcrowded" (Booth 1971, 51-52, 421-22). Jacob Riis, writing at the turn of the century about New York City, distinguished between purpose-built "rear house" slums and "tenant houses" that had once been "decorous homes." As middle-class "residents moved out, once-fashionable streets along the East River fell into the hands of real estate agents and boarding house keepers." Although "in the beginning, the tenant house became a real blessing to that class of industrious poor" who needed to live near work, further subdivision resulted in a "class of tenantry living from hand to mouth, loose in morals, improvident in habits, degraded, and squalid as beggary itself" (Riis 1957, 5-6).

Jerry White describes the origins of the "worst street in North London," "Campbell Bunk" in Islington. Campbell Road's six-room houses were built for clerks and artisans in the 1860s, but speculative overbuilding for the lower middle class, combined with demand from workers at nearby industries, resulted in one or two houses being converted to lodgings. By the 1871 census, only twenty-six of the sixty-three occupied houses on the street were home to a single household, while five houses contained eighteen people each (for an average of three people per room). A few years later, a lodging-house keeper named John King obtained a licence to lodge ninety men in his six-room house (J. White 1986, 8-10).

An even more spectacular decline is recorded in Richard Sennett's case study of Union Park, Chicago. At the edge of Chicago in the early 1870s, Union Park housed "only the best families." By the 1890s, "only the worst families" would live there (Sennett 1974, 9). Sennett presents Union Park's rise and fall as a complex story. In the 1830s, when Chicago was still a tiny settlement, the area west of the Chicago River had stockyards and a tavern, plus the mansion and extensive grounds of Philo Carpenter. In 1837 Carpenter was forced to sell his land at a loss to a bank where he held loans, and the bank commenced developing the area as an exclusive neighbourhood for the upper middle class. A park and broad commercial avenues were laid out, and volunteer improvement societies, made up predominantly of women, began to organize family entertainments such as Saturday afternoon concerts and good works with female inebriates and

foundlings. By 1860, the suburb had between six hundred and eight hundred mostly upper-middle-class residents.

But in the late 1860s, Potter Palmer began to promote the Gold Coast just north of the city as an elite commercial and residential hub. Some properties on Lake Street, Union Park's main commercial thoroughfare, became warehouses and bars. A more precipitous change occurred after the Great Fire of 1871, when tens of thousands of temporary refugees moved west of the river while the central city was rebuilt. Inevitably, most of the central city housing was lost, and developers wedged in smaller houses between mansions and in the back streets and alleys of Union Park. By 1880, twelve thousand people were living in the same forty-block area that, two decades before, had accommodated a hundred socially homogeneous households. While there was "no sudden break from affluence to poverty," the suburban character of the area was forever lost. By the turn of the century, Dreiser's Sister Carrie lived near the new elevated railway in Union Park, trapped with her respectable poor family in the house that had eaten up most of their savings and was now declining in value (Sennett 1974, 12-50).

The decline of Union Park can be seen as the result of aggressive marketing of a competing elite area, along with an intensification process exacerbated by a natural disaster. Put simply, the decline was caused by investors investing elsewhere. But accounts of the rise and fall of residential areas by members of the Chicago school mention neither development industry boosterism nor the impacts of the Great Fire. Instead, Park (1974, 4) talks of "the inevitable processes of human nature [that] proceed to give these regions and these buildings a character." Slum residents are drawn to particular neighbourhoods, not by cheap rents or because there is nowhere else to go, but because "they are particularly fit for the environment in which they are condemned to exist" (45). The process of housing filtering to ever-lower classes is described by Burgess (1974, 57-58) in biotic terms: immigrant "invasion of the city has the effect of a tidal wave inundating first the immigrant colonies, the ports of first entry, dislodging thousands of inhabitants who overflow into the next zone, and so on and on until the momentum of the wave has spent its last force on the last urban zone." Despite a "relative degree of the resistance of communities to invasion," such resistance is futile (51-52). All that urban planners or social reformers can do is provide settlement houses to Americanize slum inhabitants and speed them on their generational progress towards the outer suburban zones. Change is inevitable, yet change is bad. Neighbourhoods in the process of "disorganization" are

associated with “juvenile delinquency, boys’ gangs, crime, poverty, wife desertion, divorce, abandoned infants, vice” (59).

A decade later, in the depths of the 1930s depression, Hoyt (1939) sought to give the insights of the Chicago school a more quantitative basis. He was more specific than his predecessors in two ways. First, he suggested “a series of techniques by which the ‘terra incognita’ of a city may be mapped and charted and the growth of its various parts measured” in fifty American cities (see Introduction). Based on this historical research, his findings suggested one major amendment to concentric zone theory, namely, the importance of sectoral paths in the outward movements of high-rental, industrial, and some low-income neighbourhoods. But the equation of the periphery with high status and centrality with low status remained largely unchanged: “From the high rental areas that are frequently located on the periphery of one or more sectors of American cities, there is a downward gradation of rents towards areas near the business centre. The low rent areas are usually large and may extend from this center to the periphery on one side of the urban community” (112).

Second, Hoyt was more specific about the causes of decline, while maintaining the basic thrust of the Chicago school argument. The proportion of buildings requiring repairs reduces the value of adjacent residential property, as do older buildings and centrality in general, a low proportion of owner-occupiers, and overcrowding, for which Hoyt (1939, 31-44) used the common measure of more than one person per room. Perhaps most important, “the presence of even one non-white person in a block otherwise populated by whites may initiate a period of transition,” and, as already established by the Chicago school, transition equals decline (54). Third, Hoyt was specific about the uses of his theories: “city planning or zoning, slum clearance, and market surveys all require a knowledge of the patterns formed by types of neighbourhoods within the urban community” (81).

Indeed, urban planners, real estate developers, and mortgage guarantors were hungry for this kind of scientific information. The US government set up the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation in 1933 to refinance long-term residential mortgages. This initiative was intended partly as an economic boost for the home construction industry, and partly to stimulate growth of new suburbs, which by this time were seen as the panacea for all urban evils. The Home Owners’ Loan Corporation used maps based on the works of Burgess and Hoyt, which divided cities into four classes of neighbourhood. First-grade neighbourhoods consisted of new and homogenous homes, occupied by “American business and professional men.” Neighbourhoods, no matter how well-to-do, that had experienced an “infiltration of Jews” were never “best” or “American.” Second-grade

neighbourhoods had “reached their peak” but were stable. The third class of neighbourhoods was “definitely declining,” with an “appearance of congestion” due to factors like a lack of front yards. Houses in the fourth-class neighbourhoods, those given a “D” rating, were refused mortgage guarantees. New and good-quality homes in St. Louis, for example, were given a “D” rating (or “redlined,” because of the colour code used in the maps) because they had “little or no value today, having suffered a tremendous decline in values due to the coloured element now controlling the district.” Later programs such as the mortgage insurance offered by the Federal Housing Administration and the mortgages provided under the GI Bill also used these maps (Jackson 1985, 197-204).

By 1944 in New York City, it was assumed that the “almost complete removal of upper-middle income groups from the city and their replacement by unskilled coloured people” had occurred (Swan 1944, 1). Edgar M. Hoover and Herbert Vernon, in their 1959 analysis of that city, identified five stages of “residential evolution”: from new single-family houses, to apartment buildings and other sources of increasing density, through a “slum invasion” by immigrants and non-whites, to a “thinning out” due to abandonment of “obsolete housing,” and finally, urban renewal (192-202). In the 1970s, guides to urban revitalization reiterated these inevitable stages of housing decline (Ahlbrandt and Brophy 1975, 6-9).

This assumption of inevitable house value decline, buttressed by scientific maps and formulas, was devastating to individual homeowners. As Matthew Edel, Elliot Sclar, and Dan Luria (1984, 30, 7) point out, “filtering penalizes each group of investors,” trapping most of their savings in a highly depreciable asset whose value is determined as much by neighbourhood perception as household maintenance. White homeowners in Chicago frightened of losing their equity threw themselves into ratepayer associations, advocated for zoning, restrictive covenants, and other conservative measures, and, when all else failed, smashed windows and set off bombs in black homes (Philpott 1978). Both active terrorism and passive redlining created black ghettos in American cities, ghetto inhabitants being differentiated from slum dwellers by their total, involuntary, and perpetual segregation from better housing and neighbourhood conditions (xv).

The terms *slum* and *ghetto* had been used interchangeably by the Chicago school, despite different connotations. Slums have been considered to be creatures of poverty, places where poor housing and health conditions combine with a different and possibly dangerous population (such as foreigners) to evoke a mixture of sympathy and fear in authorities, which in turn generally leads to reform. Ghettos, whether for Jews in Europe or for African Americans in the United States, have been places of total, invol-

untary, and perpetual segregation of a group considered inferior by the dominant society (Philpott 1978; Marcuse 1997). They are not necessarily places of deep poverty, although poor living conditions are almost inevitable, given an expanding population and limited land and capital resources. But they are places of entrapment. Individuals or families can, with luck and effort, move out of a slum. In ghettos, mobility is severely limited by external discrimination: edicts in European Jewish slums, restrictive covenants in early-twentieth-century US black ghettos, lack of cheap small units for single people with long-term mental or intellectual disabilities in many cities today (Philpott 1978, xv). Ghettos may be torn down, as they were in many US cities in the mid-twentieth century, but they immediately reappear, for instance, as public housing projects. Barriers to escape may no longer be as blatant as restrictive covenants, but a combination of single-family zoning in better neighbourhoods, poor educational and employment opportunities within ghettos, non-existent public transit to good jobs, and other less obvious methods of discrimination operate effectively to keep people in the ghetto. It can be argued that the ghetto, not the slum, is the obverse to the ideal of the middle-class residential suburb. Suburbs were supposed to keep unwanted land uses and people out, while the underlying purpose of a ghetto is to keep a particular group confined in order to avoid contaminating the rest of the city. The ghetto is a landscape of power, created by powerfully inequitable social relations. The ghetto is also a landscape of despair for those who live within it and cannot escape (Dear and Wolch 1987, 9).

In the latter years of World War Two, governments in all Anglo-American societies began to plan for massive postwar central city reconstruction and suburban expansion. The identification of slums and ghettos in the central city that could be replaced by modern roads and housing was an important aspect of that planning. Both John Bacher (1993, viii) and Jane Jacobs (in Sewell 1993, x-xi) argue that Canada's traditional suspicion of government intervention, along with a variant history of immigration and racism, spared Canadian central cities the worst depredations of the US "federal bulldozer." It is true that the government-funded expansion of the US urban expressway system in the 1950s and 1960s, a vital aspect of urban renewal, was fuelled by Cold War plans to move troops and evacuate cities (Fishman 2000, 199). But the Canadian understanding of neighbourhood transition, and resultant plans and government policy, were clearly influenced by American reports maintaining that slums drained civic coffers through costing more in fire prevention, police, and public health services than they brought in through property tax (Bacher 1993, 72). The notion that central city blight would inevitably spread unless

checked was prevalent in both nations, as well as in Australia and the United Kingdom (Sewell 1993, 150).

Few central city neighbourhoods were untouched by the assumption of decline. A 1937 slum report divided Melbourne's central city into three zones, all with negative connotations: congested areas, where houses were built on narrow lots; blighted areas, where factories mixed with housing; and decadent areas, where once-fashionable houses had been converted to apartments and boarding houses (Howe 1994, 149). Similarly, because Clifton was by then considered part of central Cincinnati, planning reports of the 1940s called it a "once exclusive residential section, a suburb of mansions and huge estates," now "middle aged" and facing inevitable decline (Miller 2001, 50-54). Society Hill in Philadelphia, a wealthy neighbourhood in the mid-nineteenth century, was threatened with destruction in a 1959 urban renewal plan, shortly before the housing became upgraded (Smith 1996, 53). And Boston's West End was demolished in the 1950s, just as a similar neighbourhood, the North End, was beginning to be rehabilitated by its residents (Gans 1962; Jacobs 1992, 8-11).

By the 1960s, urban renewal was under sustained attack in influential books written by Jane Jacobs and Herbert Gans, and in less populist policy reports as well. In a US policy report published in 1964, Martin Anderson argued that urban renewal was an inefficient use of government resources, since land was usually sold to private developers for about 30 percent of what it cost the city to acquire, clear, and improve it in preparation for sale (Anderson 1964, 2-3). Urban renewal was racist in impact if not in intent, since "approximately two-thirds of the people forced out of their homes are Negroes, Puerto Ricans, or some other minority group" (7). It was also a disaster for low-income city dwellers, since over 90 percent of newly created housing commanded rents that could not be afforded by displaced residents (93). A 1968 Canadian federal task force on urban renewal echoed these concerns: "In order to eradicate the 20 to 30 per cent of buildings that were rotting beyond repair, whole blocks were demolished. Thousands of sound houses capable of being rehabilitated at reasonable cost, together with thousands of others in perfectly good conditions were destroyed. The economic waste was enormous. But far more important, the sense of community, that certain intangible something that gives a district life and meaning, was eradicated" (cited in Bacher 1993, 227).

Sense of community, economic rationalism, and avoiding racism were thus being put forward as grounds for a complete turnaround in policy. In order to understand these attacks on urban renewal, it is necessary to back up once again and look at the changing image of the Anglo-American central city during the latter half of the twentieth century.

The Urban Village, A New Urbanist Dream

As discussed above, a consensus had built by the mid-twentieth century that central city neighbourhood change was inevitably downward. The only solution offered by researchers and policy makers was to entirely replace so-called obsolete housing stock with more modern buildings. Where there was a perceived need for commercial uses, offices, or expressways, the process was straightforward: expropriate, demolish, and rebuild. After World War Two, piecemeal philanthropic efforts to provide central city housing for low-income people displaced by slum removal were replaced with large-scale public housing efforts. These were led by the United Kingdom, which by the interwar years was creating large public housing estates in the suburbs, and the United States, followed in a less ambitious fashion by Australia and Canada (Fishman 1987; Howe 1994; Bacher 1993; Hall 1998). Unfortunately, these efforts almost always produced neighbourhoods with even worse housing, employment, and health conditions, and greater marginalization of the poor and racialized, than the places they had replaced (Teaford 1990; Jacobs 1992).

A few dissident voices questioned the inevitability of central city decline. One of the most insightful was Walter Firey (1948). For Firey, space is a "neutral arena" rather than a "determinate and invariant influence," and he disputes Burgess's and Hoyt's assumption that high-income households all eventually migrate to the periphery (3). His case study of the growth of Boston emphasizes the "importance of cultural values in determining space," and he stresses the agency, or "positive human volition" as he called it, of both individuals and local governments in attributing values and symbolic meanings to neighbourhoods and places (45, 53, 170).

Firey uses the example of Boston's Beacon Hill, which was subdivided by a development syndicate in the late eighteenth century. By the mid-nineteenth century, Beacon Hill was adjacent to the central business district. Despite its central and congested location, the eastern (uphill) part of the neighbourhood attracted and maintained an elite set of residents, while the western (downhill) part of the neighbourhood "gradually lost its families and the dwellings [were] taken over by landladies who rented out rooms to single men," followed by redevelopment into tenements (Firey 1948, 45-49). By the mid-twentieth century, the eastern portion of Beacon Hill had successfully resisted the encroachment of apartment buildings. It was still considered an elite district, largely because of the "weight of past history," and despite the proximity of a lower-class district and non-residential uses (94, 63). Of course, Beacon Hill was only one of the elite central city neighbourhoods that successfully resisted decline during the era of mass suburbanization: Baltimore's Roland Park, Philadelphia's Chestnut Hill,

Pittsburgh's Squirrel Hill, Cincinnati's Hyde Park and Mount Lookout, and Minneapolis' Lake District are a few other US examples (Teaford 1990, 309). Mayfair and Kensington in London, Westmount in Montreal, Rosedale in Toronto, and Toorak in Melbourne are among a long list of other elite central city neighbourhoods that retained or heightened their status during the twentieth century.

Moreover, Firey points out that becoming a slum is not the terminal phase in a neighbourhood's life, even if the housing is not demolished to make way for a higher use. He uses the example of the North End, often considered the "worst part of Boston" in terms of density and house repair (Firey 1948, 172). Here, at the time he wrote, the residents were attached to the place, and many were renovating their buildings. Firey believes that local government should encourage this private-sector rejuvenation, instead of threatening the neighbourhood with demolition.

Firey is perhaps most radical when he speaks of the need for housing to accommodate a low-income, transient population. This is a significant break with the Chicago school and Hoyt, who had continued the quasi-medical metaphors of earlier slum literature, such as "growths" and "cancers," in describing areas with cheap apartments and rooming houses. While Firey supports the enforcement of housing standards and the amelioration of vice, he does not suggest tearing down viable multi-unit housing. Rather, he suggests small improvements that retain this function while making the lives of their inhabitants better (i.e., more moral). For instance, he is in favour of requiring parlours in all rooming and boarding houses, so residents do not have to entertain their friends in their bedrooms or in a tavern (Firey 1948, 336-37). Such prescriptions might seem both limited and condescending today, but his ideas represent a quantum leap forward in working with the realities of poor people's housing.

Whereas Firey's work was largely ignored, Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, published in 1961, was enormously influential in its "attack on current city planning and rebuilding" (1992, 3). According to Jacobs, "cities are an immense laboratory of trial and error," but instead of looking at cities as they are, practitioners and teachers of urban issues ignore "success and failure in real life," while elaborating simplistic theories in a false science of separating people and land uses (5). Like Firey, Jacobs recognizes that density and centrality could be construed as advantages by some housing consumers, and that some neighbourhoods, regardless of income or adjacent land uses, retain people because they like living there. She returns to the example of Boston's North End, where housing was rehabilitated using local money because the area was redlined and effectively off-limits for institutional mortgages. In the 1950s, the neighbourhood

had a low rent-to-income ratio, safe streets, and good public health indicators despite its high density and older housing (8-11). San Francisco's North Beach and Chicago's Back of the Yards are two other examples of what she calls "unslumming," working-class neighbourhoods generating their own investment capital for housing and commercial rehabilitation (271, 297-300). In successful districts, she says, "old buildings filter up," in part through residents getting wealthier while remaining in the same place (193). Jacobs goes much further than Firey in her attack on the principles of urban planning as they had developed by the mid-twentieth century. For her, a mixture of land uses and incomes in a neighbourhood, which she calls "intricate and close-grained diversity," is to be treasured, not separated, because it is part of what makes a city diverse, healthy, and safe (14). Small, narrow streets do not cause traffic congestion, but cure it, by deterring car traffic and thus making the sidewalks more pedestrian-friendly (222).

Jacobs does not deal much with housing per se, partly because she sees housing in the larger context of a city's economic life, and partly because she believes that wholly residential areas are boring. She also does not particularly engage with the issue of class, or at least, she discusses it in a way that seems problematic in hindsight. At one point, she contends that "unslumming" is not a question of "bringing back the middle class as much as it is retaining people who become middle class," and that "gradual money" helps a neighbourhood more than a sudden influx (1992, 281). Yet she takes issue "with a common belief about cities – the belief that uses of low status drive out uses of high status. That is not how cities behave ... People or uses with more money at their command, or greater respectability (in a credit society the two often go together), can fairly easily supplant those less prosperous or of less status, and commonly do so in city neighbourhoods that achieve popularity. The reverse seldom happens" (97).

In other words, Jacobs returns to the Chicago school's notion of an ecological process whereby groups with more power (i.e., money) force out those with less power, a notion later accepted by Marxists and one that appears to be borne out by the trajectories of gentrification in most cities. Given the potential problem of the rich supplanting the poor in the successful districts, she does not offer much in the way of prescriptions for maintaining income mix over time. She suggests that governments should subsidize dwelling units rather than buildings (1992, 321). This measure was successful in non-profit co-operative housing in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s, and perhaps has some applicability in a city with strong rent controls (New York City had rent controls on apartments built before 1947

at the time Jacobs was writing; Mele 2000b, 117). But it is hard to see, forty years later, how subsidizing dwelling units would not contribute to rent inflation, and how this measure alone could maintain a large stock of dwellings affordable to lower-income people once central city neighbourhoods became popular and housing prices started to rise rapidly. This was already beginning to happen in some places, as Jacobs (1992, 70-71) concedes, by the late 1950s: the "rich and near rich" were moving in and "crowding out" middle-income and poor people in "Yorkville and Greenwich Village in New York ... Telegraph Hill in San Francisco ... [and] Georgetown in Washington."

The incipient gentrification of Greenwich Village, where Jacobs lived and worked at the time, offers an interesting example of how central city housing stock could increase its cachet over time. Gerald McFarland (2001, 1-3) describes how Greenwich Village was developed as a suburb in the early nineteenth century, when there was a buffer of fields between the original agricultural settlement and the northern outskirts of New York City. While there were fine houses around Washington Square, the majority of the suburb's inhabitants were middle or working class. By the 1850s, Greenwich Village was surrounded by development, and during the second half of the nineteenth century it was "left to decay into a picturesque ... slum," with its row houses and tenements settled by successive waves of Irish, German, Jewish, and Italian immigrants.

On the eve of World War One, US magazines like *Collier's* were describing Greenwich Village as "American Bohemia," after the Parisian immigrant suburbs of Montparnasse and Montmartre, where artists and free thinkers were drawn to the combination of cheap accommodations and a sort of working-class authenticity they felt was lacking in the wealthy quarters (Hall 1998). Greenwich Village had become a hotbed for similar political and cultural activism, and free love, feminism, and new writing and art were being promulgated in a heady mix (McFarland 2001, chap. 6). Traditionally, there had been tensions between the patricians who were still associated with the Washington Square Association and the settlement-house-led Village Improvement Society, which articulated a commitment to represent every ethnic community except African Americans (105). However, the two groups worked together in 1913 to promote a zoning plan that would keep the neighbourhood's core area a residential and small business zone, with height limitations and restrictions on large manufacturing uses (215). Real estate developers based in new migrant communities, like the Italian immigrant Vincent Pepe, began remodelling older houses into studio apartments. Their marketing efforts included a 1914 pamphlet advertising the cheap and accessible units to single and married

office workers, entitled, "How would you like to open a door to this – Ten minutes after you 'punch the clock?'" (cited 212). The fact that these developers also emphasized the existence of good schools in the area suggests that they were also trying to attract families to this central city neighbourhood. Thus by the second decade of the twentieth century, at least one place in the United States was using heterogeneity and centrality as selling points to attract what would later be termed the "new middle class."

The example of Greenwich Village shows how a new lexicon was developing to combat the conflation of central city with slum. The notion of bohemia gradually lost its countercultural connotations as it was approvingly taken up by both developers and the popular press. The Chicago school had had an equivocal and somewhat patronizing attitude towards bohemias and bohemians. Burgess (1974, 54-56) referred to Chicago's zone of transition as containing the "mainstem of 'hobohemia,' the teeming Rialto of the homeless migratory men of the Middle West" along with the "Latin Quarter, where creative and rebellious spirits resort," while Harvey Zorbaugh (1976, 87, 91) sneeringly referred to Towertown, a Chicago neighbourhood, as a Bohemia of students, artists, and writers "whose radicalism runs to long hair, eccentric dress, lilies, obscenity, or a Freudian interpretation of dreams" as well as "free love." But it was also during the 1920s that the term *bohemia* was becoming a valuable marketing tool for an area in transition. Towertown's rising land values and rents were making it too expensive for young artists and students by the end of the 1920s, and Greenwich Village became unaffordable to a new generation of artists by the 1950s (103; Mele 2000b, 143).

In the meantime, the term *village* was being unhitched from its rural connotations. Transported to the central city, it became a signifier of community spirit in a heterogeneous yet socially integrated neighbourhood (Peel 1995b), a Sesame Street for grown-ups, a place, in the words of the theme song for the TV show *Cheers*, "where everybody knows your name." Developers in the Lower East Side, like their confreres in adjacent Greenwich Village, used centrality and heterogeneity to market new apartment buildings to clerks, professionals, and corporate workers in the 1920s. Images of the heroic immigrants of past decades were contrasted with the current "queer, unadjusted, radical, bohemian and criminal ... neighbourhood of lost souls" to justify tearing down tenements. But the quaint Eastern European and Jewish stores remained to serve those who had moved outwards as well as the "logical future residents of the East Side," the new middle class (Mele 2000b). By the 1950s, the name East Village was replacing Lower East Side, used first by the bohemian radicals, known as Beats, who fled there from the high rents of the previous generation's countercultural paradise, Greenwich

Village, then by real estate agents who liked the implied link to that now-pricey enclave (x-xi).

As some former slums began to gain a certain cachet, the term *ghetto* began a new phase of existence. Michael Dear and Jennifer Wolch have argued that the deinstitutionalization of people with physical, intellectual or mental health disabilities in the 1960s led to "service dependent population ghettos" in many North American cities. In the classic economic terms of supply and demand, a supply of established low-cost rental accommodation, preferably close to established support networks, meets a demand of increasing migration to these sites, through formal referral and in the absence of other options. But the lack of options is no accident; it is the result of political choices made by people with more power, which govern the extremely limited choices of those with little power. In Marxist terms, the development of these ghettos represents the meeting, not of neutral forces of supply and demand, but of particular social processes and evolving spatial forms (Dear and Wolch 1987, preface, 8-9). Dear and Wolch use Parkdale, along with east downtown Toronto, as a case study of the development of such a ghetto.

The idea of a ghetto based on discrimination not by race or religion but by disability does have precedents. New York's Bowery was the city's "last stop on the way down" for alcoholics and chronically ill men from the early twentieth century onwards (Sante 1991, 14). This area, like Seattle's Skid Row (originally where inland logs were rolled down to seagoing vessels; Ford 1994, 65) lent its name to other streets of extreme poverty. Boweries and skid rows are usually associated with single men in poor health who have no long-term housing options other than leftover buildings, many of them in substandard condition.

Paul Groth (1994, 10) documents the largely hidden history of residential hotels, which have been characterized as the homes of those who are "friendless, isolated, needy, disabled, marginal, on welfare, psychiatric, alcoholics or drug addicts, drifters or transients, elderly men or welfare mothers with three kids," but which offer a range of conditions and options. He posits that the growth of homelessness in the United States is at least in part a function of the wholesale destruction of these options (twenty-three thousand units lost in Chicago alone between 1973 and 1984), just when the need for them was increasing. Poor single women had even fewer options than men did. Boarding houses were a significant source of income and housing for single women (as can be seen in various negative descriptions of landladies cited in the literature on slums), but institutionalization always loomed as a threat for women too old or too ill to pay the rent, or for women whose strategies for coping with poverty

were judged immoral. However, as former slums began to be marketed to the middle class, inevitable tensions arose between the increasingly impoverished and marginalized inhabitants of boarding houses and the renovators.

The post-World War Two period is usually remembered as the time when mass suburbanization was enabled by mass corporate production of Levittowns and their successors. Perhaps in reaction to the majority, the growing counterculture in the United States began to speak with contempt of suburbia (contempt towards suburbia has a much longer history in Britain and Australia, possibly because mass suburbanization had already occurred in large cities by the beginning of the twentieth century). Hugh Hefner's *Playboy* magazine carved out a consumer niche from 1953 onwards by vociferously rejecting the suburban values embodied by suburban wives. Instead, Hefner proclaimed his bohemian central city values in the first issue of the magazine: "We like our apartment ... we like mixing up cocktails and an hors d'oeuvre or two, putting a little mood music on the phonograph and inviting in a female acquaintance for a quiet discussion on Picasso, Nietzsche, jazz, sex" (cited in Ehrenreich 1983, 44). Barbara Ehrenreich contrasts this vision of bachelor paradise with that of the Beat authors, such as Kerouac, who extolled "the underworld and underclass invisible from the corporate 'crystal palace' or suburban dream homes." Yet these masculine rebels agreed on some points: love of jazz and black culture in general (at least in the abstract), and disdain for the nuclear family and its supposed home in the suburbs (55-56). Then, in *The Feminine Mystique* of 1963, another unlikely ally joined in, the suburban wife herself. The housewives described by Betty Friedan may have suffered from "the problem without a name," but the problem's place was clear: the suburban periphery of the city.

The 1960s were a time of immense social change. Women entered the paid workforce in growing numbers. Heterosexuals tended to marry later, divorce more often, and have fewer children. The increase in woman-led households, with and without children, increased the demand for child care, public transit, restaurants, and proximate work. People lived longer and lived alone for longer periods. A broader base of migrants brought new tastes and new housing needs, especially in Canada and Australia, which were unaccustomed to high levels of non-European immigration. Alternatives to the nuclear heterosexual family began to be openly discussed, with singles using bars and restaurants for sexual searching. The 1960s were also a time of rapid economic change, with central city industries languishing while jobs in corporate business, education, the arts, and the public and non-profit sectors grew rapidly. Many industrial and service workers followed their jobs to the periphery of the city, while growing

numbers of the new middle class followed corporate, government, media, cultural, and academic jobs into the central city. As suburbs continued to grow, housing prices and transportation costs increased to a point at which they were in many cases higher than the costs of central city housing (Beauregard 1986; Ley 1996, 8; Smith 1996, 52). As innovation and creativity were posited as the motors of growth in an information economy, a bohemian index used by Richard Florida (2002) has been positively correlated to urban wealth. People – artists, immigrants, sexual outsiders – once considered peripheral or even threatening to mainstream society have become central to economic growth in the beginning of the twenty-first century, and the places where they live have correspondingly become admired.

During the early 1960s, the term *gentrification* first appeared, invented by a London sociologist, Ruth Glass. The *Oxford American Dictionary* defined it as “the movement of middle-class families into urban areas, causing property values to increase and having the secondary effect of driving out poorer families” (cited by Smith and Williams 1986, 1). *Gentrification* is an odd and perhaps deceptive term. The first people to renovate houses in poor or working-class neighbourhoods and former industrial areas are often artists, single parents, and other people on the margins of the middle class; they are hardly gentry (D. Rose 1984; Zukin 1989). But the term stuck with most critical commentators because it contains the ideas of displacement and potential class conflict, as opposed to the purely positive *revitalization*.

Gentrification has an ideology, a set of beliefs that seem diametrically opposed to the consensus that had grown over the previous hundred years. Central city neighbourhoods are not bad places to live or metaphors for the failures of industrial capitalism. It is moral and healthy, not immoral and unhealthy, to be able to walk or commute quickly to work and shopping (assuming that work is in an office, not a smoke-spewing factory). Old houses are beautiful, not obsolete. Families belong in the city. Children should play on the street (that is, the sidewalk). Diversity is good, not dangerous or evil. Rehabilitating older housing and walking are part and parcel of the ecological movement that began in the 1960s: reuse and save, not consume and destroy (Allen 1984).

In a deeper way, pro-urbanism and pro-suburbanism share essential elements. They both represent utopian quests for community. They both refer to a simplistic vision of the past: the urban ideal is the dense, polyethnic, centralized urban village of the railway age, rather than the suburban ideal of the traditional rural village (Allen 1984). And of course, every utopia needs its dystopia. The virtues of the central city are now contrasted with the vilified periphery. By the 1980s, central city housing

was not cheaper than suburban housing, at least in Canada. Central neighbourhoods were “being selected *despite* cost disadvantages compared with the suburbs.” The suburbs, however, were associated with “negative values” that these consumers wished to avoid: standardization, homogenization, blandness, conformism, conservatism, patriarchy, “straightness” (Ley 1996, 205).

Jon Caulfield’s interviews with gentrifiers in central Toronto reveal a remarkable dependence on stereotypes of suburbs and suburbanites. One respondent had internalized the lessons of the *Feminine Mystique*: “I’m of a generation that equated going to the suburbs with putting my head down, having many babies and never thinking again for the rest of my life.” A single woman equated suburbs with “couple life.” A third respondent was apparently immune to the contradiction in the following statement: “People who move to the suburbs are pulverized by a dominant culture that defines what the normal, acceptable lifestyle is ... for us to go and live in a suburb would be, in our circle, abnormal” (Caulfield 1994, 189). A book co-written by the renowned “new urbanist” architects Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk confidently asserts that in a landscape of “cookie cutter houses” and “mindlessly curving cul-de-sacs,” “you would not be welcome ... not that you would ever have reason to visit its monotonous moonscape” (Duany, Plater-Zyberk, and Speck 2000, x).

At some point in the late twentieth century, for some writers at least, the suburb had become foreign and menacing, like nineteenth-century descriptions of central city slums or fourteenth-century descriptions of the hostile places outside the city wall. As in the days of Chaucer, the unwary urban explorer could become trapped in greenery and dead ends, where environmental thieves and robbers lurk in their fearsome McMansion residences.

Was the central city so different from the suburbs? And if so, how did it differ? In 1961, the residents’ association in Cincinnati’s Clifton, the late-nineteenth-century suburb turned declining central city neighbourhood, began to advocate for the preservation of what it called an “in town suburb” (Miller 2001, 68). The Clifton Town Meeting began to organize house tours of historic properties, advocate for more recreational space, and oppose any attempts to tear down older buildings (86-118). Clifton was successful in marketing itself to professors from nearby educational institutions. But despite the liberal intentions of the residents’ association, there were continuing tensions over residential segregation, particularly fear of encroachment from a nearby black community: “Negroes next door no cause for panic,” read a panicky-sounding 1960s community newspaper headline (81, 131). In Clifton, at least, gentrification involved a return

to the original suburban marketing strategy, albeit with a new, slightly more diversified twist.

Demand-side changes in taste were sweetened by the supply side: institutional mortgage providers reinvesting in the central city, governments offering rehabilitation grants, developers seeking new grounds for profit, and hyperbolic real estate agents. Peter Williams, in a 1978 study of gentrification in Islington, London, speaks of the role of financial institutions in supporting neighbourhood change. Since the late nineteenth century, the majority of the housing in Islington had been owned by absentee landlords, who sold to other absentee landlords at low prices: usually ten times the generally low annual rent for the property. Despite rent controls, rental property was considered a suitable investment, and sales were not frequent: approximately ten sales per year over a large area. Only one estate agent specialized in Islington (73).

In the late 1950s, three changes rapidly raised house prices and homeownership rates in Islington. The first was a change in borough housing policies: the local government now wished to support investment in houses and, accordingly, decontrolled rents in 1957. The second was an increase in immigrants, many of whom were forced to buy property because of discrimination in the rental housing market. The third was an increase in demand from middle-class homebuyers, actively encouraged by a new generation of estate agents who scented profit in what was then called the "Chelseafication" of Islington (P. Williams 1978, 73-78). The architecture of older houses was aesthetically pleasing to both consumers and agents, but they also correctly assumed that neighbourhood house prices were rising. The number of properties on the market rose from 45 in 1965 to 114 in 1969 and 323 in 1972; sale prices increased from an average of £2,750 in 1959 to £7,154 in 1969 and £19,392 in 1972. Institutional lenders were increasingly inclined to lend larger sums, as the investments proved sound (74).

The example of Islington seems to support Neil Smith's influential rent gap theory (1978), which was based on the early work of Harvey (1973). According to the theory, gentrification occurs because housing suppliers note places where actual rent falls below potential rent, and markets them accordingly. The state supports profits made on the commodity of housing by directly subsidizing renovators and by indirect measures such as the abolition of rent controls. But Beauregard, among others, argues that the rent gap theory is overly simplistic. According to him, the potential for gentrification is not simply equal to a rent gap: "capital cannot annihilate space," gentrifiers are not just yuppies, and gentrification is rarely simple in form, cause, or effect (Beauregard 1990, 856).

Beauregard (1990, 857-71) offers case studies of four Philadelphia

neighbourhoods to illustrate the “chaos and complexity of gentrification.” City government was heavily implicated in the process of revitalizing Society Hill in the 1950s and 1960s, subsidizing the construction of new luxury housing to replace demolished “blighted” structures, renovating older housing itself for resale, and providing loans to owners for rehabilitation. This urban renewal success story has been used by many writers as a classic example of the rent gap in action, as well as a model of government-directed gentrification (Smith 1978; Teaford 1990, 115-17). Another neighbourhood, Spring Garden, rapidly gentrified in only one portion, where a hospital was converted to luxury apartments using heritage tax credits. Here the process was developer-driven, with some government assistance. Newcomers and the working-class Hispanic community formed a common front to combat drug activity (Beauregard 1990, 864-66). A third neighbourhood, the Northern Liberties, was developed in mixed land uses during the 1860s. A century later, there had been considerable population decline, and some of the abandoned buildings were rehabilitated by artists. This in turn led to some new residential construction (again using tax credits), but change was slow. A fourth community, Fishtown, had not gentrified during the 1980s despite its proximity to other gentrifying neighbourhoods and the new virtue of centrality (866-70).

Some older industrial cities, like Manchester and Detroit, lack the excess capital to drive investment in wholesale gentrification (Ley 1996, 81). There, gentrification looks like “islands of renewal in seas of decay,” in Brian Berry’s phrase (1985). But in many other cities, the marketing of the central city to lure both middle-class settlers and tourist dollars has been in place since the 1960s, with profound impacts on local government politics, taxation, and spending. Anglo-American central cities now begin to resemble seas of renewal with small islands of decay (Wyly and Hammel 1999).

In the meantime, suburbs are changing. Industrial jobs that moved out of the central city in the postwar era have now moved out of the region. New immigrants often settle directly in outer suburbs, which are often the only places with affordable housing. Along with the visible signs of a new economy, such as industrial parks and superstores, there is a hidden army of suburban workers, primarily women and visible minorities, struggling within an invisible economy (see, e.g., Baxandall and Ewen 2000). David Ley may have been correct when he predicted in 1984, “With the revitalization of the past decade, sections of the post-industrial city have begun a transformation from the home of the labouring classes toward a zone of privilege reminiscent of the innermost ring in Sjoberg’s model of the preindustrial city. If present trends continue, the social geography of the nineteenth-century industrial city may even appear to urban scholars

of the future as a temporary interlude to a more historically persistent pattern of higher-status segregation adjacent to the downtown core" (Ley 1996, 201). It is also possible that future cities will be the multinucleated sprawling conglomeration of central and edge cities posited by the LA school (Dear 2002). What is certain is that the rhetoric of suburbs and slums has shifted yet again.

Conclusion: The Case Study in Theoretical Context

This chapter has focused on the importance of changing images of place to the growth and differentiation of Anglo-American cities over the past two centuries. Explanations that focus solely on investment factors such as the cost of land or the probability of profit do not provide a complete account of such changes. Nor do explanations that focus on ideological constructs such as housing tastes. Instead, changing perceptions of places are based on both economic transformations *and* the culturally based desires and fears of those with the power of residential choice.

Toronto fits the larger pattern of Anglo-American urban development. Although US and Canadian cities have significant differences in governance and values, these are no more significant than the differences between big and small cities, between the northeast and southwest United States, or between particular cities like Montreal and Toronto. In short, I agree with Harris (1996) and Doucet and Weaver (1991) in placing Toronto within a North American context, and also in making comparisons with Australian and British urban development. I disagree with the particularist approach of Jim Lemon (1996, 287), who states that, in Toronto, the "city that works," "Except for Parkdale, talk of vulnerable, declining, and even blighted neighbourhoods, which were ubiquitous in the 1940s, fell by the wayside by 1975." On the contrary, Parkdale is not terribly unusual, whether within the Toronto context or internationally. In Toronto, Parkdale can be and has been compared to Regent Park and Alexandra Park, two central city public housing projects with considerable gentrification at their edges, and with St. James Town, a mostly privately owned group of high-rise apartments that provides poor living conditions for first-generation immigrants within a neighbourhood with increasing cachet for the new middle class.

As Fishman (1987), Rybczynski (1995), Hall (1998), and many others point out, ideas about urban problems and their solutions disseminated quickly through an international network even before the creation of the planning profession in the early twentieth century. The impact of London's 1851 Industrial Exhibition and Chicago's 1893 Columbian Exhibition on ideas about cities cannot be overemphasized. In addition, local

newspapers reported problems and progress in other cities; many urban reformers and writers travelled widely; designs for model houses were carried in national magazines; and, of course, Canada and Australia's nineteenth-century elite were usually no more than one generation removed from Britain.

An important asymmetry between suburbs and slums was that slums were almost entirely described by outsiders, who presented themselves to the rest of "us" (middle-class society) as intrepid explorers and knowledgeable experts on the problems of "them." The straightforward subject/object relationship between writers on slums and slum inhabitants in turn led to easy stereotypes. In contrast, nineteenth-century suburbs were described, at least in North America and Australia, by people who lived in and promoted suburbs. Then, beginning in Greenwich Village and the West End of London in the early twentieth century, the voice of progress began to shift from periphery to centre. Political power may still be retained in the sprawling suburbs of North America and Australia, but that power is resented and derided by an increasingly powerful central city intellectual elite. This intellectual elite denigrates postwar suburbs just as their suburban predecessors condemned slums.

The ideal of proximate access with psychological distance became associated with development at the periphery of the industrial city by the mid-nineteenth century. Nineteenth-century suburbs were intended to inject some of the social stability and family values of village life into a rapidly changing urban system, while providing the best of the modern world. The virtues of suburbs were contrasted with the vices of central city slums. As demand grew for centrally located housing, many places that were once suburbs became engulfed within the central city. Densities in these areas increased, as did ethnic and social signs of difference from the norm. This process of decline, or becoming a slum, became codified in theory, although there were many different kinds of central city neighbourhoods, just as there were many different kinds of peripheral neighbourhoods. Residential intensification, the subdivision of units and properties, became feared as the harbinger of decline.

As successful cities grew outwards, however, there came a point at which proximate access to the central city became problematic for some people living on the periphery. Moreover, in contrast to the dominant concentric zone theory, central city housing demand often remained high for higher-income households in some neighbourhoods, as well as for the industrial poor. When industries moved to the periphery while knowledge-economy jobs grew in the central city (a process which, like suburbanization, is sometimes erroneously assumed to have started after World War Two), housing suppliers faced a new set of demand factors. Demand

became rationalized by reversing theory and values to support central city housing choices. The central city became the “village,” the place that epitomized positive postmodern societal values of diversity and liveability; in contrast, the suburbs were trapped in values of the past, namely boring homogeneity and excessive energy consumption. The city was revitalized while suburbs were increasingly seen as devitalized. Although actual housing and neighbourhood patterns and process are always more complex than prevalent theories, in the new rhetoric of urban space, the central city is the moral core and the suburbs the rotten cancerous growth. The dream of “a good place to live” remains as alive as ever.