Harvesting Suburbs: 
Recalling the Suburban Side of California’s Agricultural Colonization

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Public History

by

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ABSTRACT

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“Harvesting Suburbs” attempts to provide an understanding that agricultural communities in California represent a unique rural suburban type labeled here as “agriburbs.” Such an understanding deepens an appreciation for both the growth and development of California in general at the turn of the twentieth century and the diversity of suburban types across the American landscape. Moreover, by reviewing historical narratives concerning agriburban areas, one can reach a better understanding of the dynamics at play working to divert attention from the suburban side of agriburban areas’ origins. Put differently, “Harvesting Suburbs” seeks to explain what an agriburb is and why historians and others have failed to identify an agriburb. Parallels are hence drawn between the suburban ideal and the California dream to show how they largely mirrored each other. The suburban side of three case study sites (Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks) is then furnished to specify better what made California’s “agricultural colonies” agriburbs. Finally, early promotional efforts concerning agriburbs reveal how a master historical narrative about each of these communities largely contributes to diverting attention from their suburban origins. Examining a metanarrative also exposes much about the nature of public memory in agriburban communities. It shows the importance and lasting influence of older historical narratives and other public representations of the past on present-day historical narratives and public representations of the past.
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INTRODUCTION

The Agriburb — Conceptualizing Rural Suburbs in California

I wish to have rural strength of religion for my children, and I wish city facility and polish, I find with regret that I cannot have both.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1844

“It is a sunny morning in the fall of 1882,” begins Joseph A. Alexander’s chapter “Ontario — The Model Colony” in his 1928 biography of George Chaffey, Jr. He continues: “A solitary figure is standing on the mesa at the head of the plain lying between the floodwater washes of the Cucamonga Canyon on the east and the San Antonio Canyon on the west.” According to Alexander, Chaffey, the “solitary figure” who founded Ontario, California “was the last man living to let the grass grow under his feet.” Indeed, Alexander’s opening paragraphs of “Ontario — The Model Colony,” reflect well the spirit in which many historical narratives tell the story of George Chaffey and the establishment of Ontario in 1882. They also reflect the type of narrative that dominates many historical accounts of so-called agricultural colonies in California. Such narratives, however, while certainly lurid and fun to read at times, convey multiple meanings that shroud the origins of agricultural colonies in a mask of seeming ambiguity. Alexander’s account of the agricultural colony of Ontario reads like a fairy tale or creation myth as Chaffey looks out upon a land in need of ingenuity and imagination, both of which Chaffey apparently had ample supply:

The plain beginning at his feet is a slightly inclined plain, falling in a continuous slope to the horizon, where blue sky and purple sagebrush merge and melt into one. There is not one human habitation visible — for ages, jackrabbit and coyote have had it to themselves. After the infrequent rains it is covered with evanescent wild flowers, but in its normal arid state only sage brush and a few other desert growths can retain a footing there. So this lovely slope lying at the foot of snow-capped Old Baldy is useless for cultivation unless water can be brought to it from the mountains. . . . He is dreaming a dream which shall come true. He sees lying at his feet a colony settled by prosperous people setting a standard of comfort formerly deemed unattainable by ordinary people, extracting a generous living from a soil thought by generations of Spanish proprietors to be incapable of settlement. It is at once Rus in Urbe and Urbs in Rure, where the best features of town and country life have been retained. It is a rustic retreat without loneliness, a city without slums or saloons. He sees this imaginary colony bisected by a noble avenue . . . planted with a quadruple row of trees extending some seven miles in a straight line down the slope. He sees in the heart of this dream city a famous school . . .

George Chaffey dreamed a dream that came true, so the legend goes, and founded the so-called agricultural colony of Ontario approximately thirty-eight miles southeast of Los Angeles in 1882. Ontario lay upon a bucolic landscape filled with jackrabbits, purple sagebrush, and surrounded by snow-capped mountains. It was ideally rural. Chaffey recognized, however, that Ontario needed the added benefits of irrigation, education, and infrastructure, such as a “noble avenue.” It was ideally urban in that his dream included amenities commonly associated with city life and culture. According to Alexander, Chaffey’s dream colony embodied a synthesis of these two ideals, “at once a Rus in Urbe [country in the city] and an Urbs in Rure [city in the country], where the best features of town and country life have been retained.” These descriptions of Ontario as either rural or urban, or both, as a community ready to bloom if someone just added water, mirror some of the many ways other interpreters and scholars discuss California’s agricultural landscape and rural communities at the turn of the twentieth century. In the northern section of the state, Sacramento boosters hailed the agricultural colony of Fair Oaks

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as a perfect city-country blend. According to the Fair Oaks Woman’s Thursday Club in 1976, “They [Fair Oaks’ developers] studied subdivision maps and dreamed of the health, wealth, and happiness that would be theirs in this agricultural Utopia.”

3 Taken together, however, such narratives generally lack a uniform characterization of California’s agricultural and rural communities. Specifically, such communities at the turn of the twentieth century often received and continue to receive distinction for their agricultural prowess. Yet, they are also distinguished for their so-called urban amenities, which included such things as clubs, roads, and schools. Amenities also included irrigation and irrigation, to be sure, encompassed agriculture while also representing a technology that enabled one to achieve and maintain a middle class lifestyle.

A set of rhetorical questions and answers present just how scholars have variously and intricately characterized California’s rural areas at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It also underscores the lack of clarity such collective characterizations can cause. What would one call rural areas in California at the turn of the twentieth century? How would one characterize them? Do particular words or images best describe them? In short, besides calling rural areas in California simply rural areas in California, scholars have used a variety of labels to describe these areas: a world of their own, Arcadia, agricultural colonies, agricultural empire, agricultural wonderlands, blend of rural and suburban, boom towns, citrus belt, citrus suburbs, citrus towns, colonies, eclectic mixes of rural and urban, family farms, farms, horticultural settlements, a horticultural wonderland, irrigation colonies, irrigation districts, irrigation settlements, neither country nor urban, never-never land, the orange empire, orchards,

progressive rural communities, quasi-utopian experiments, rurban, small farms, small rural-
seeming communities, specialized forms of urban settlement, subdivisions, suburban and
plantation-like, suburban estates, suburbs, urban/rural interplays, utopian settlements, and
vineyards.4

4. For “a world of their own,” see Carey McWilliams, Southern California: An Island on the Land (New
York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1946), 207. This work is also known as Southern California Country: An Island on
the Land. All citations are to Southern California: An Island on the Land. For “Arcadia, see James Vance, Jr.,
199, and 202. For “agricultural colonies,” see Glenn S. Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties in Southern California
(San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1944), 106; Douglas C. Sackman, Orange Empire: California and the Fruits
of Eden (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 40; Kevin Starr, Inventing the Dream: California
Through the Progressive Era (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 46-47, 166; and Vance, “California and
the Search for the Ideal,” 200. For “agricultural empire,” see Starr, Inventing the Dream, 134. For “agricultural
Each term, phrase, or characterization seemingly and adequately captures what rural areas in California were. Even “never-never land” may be very accurate for some. When considered altogether, however, understanding rural areas in multiple ways, from rural to suburban to urban, is easy to do.

The second set of questions and answers posed for the rhetorical purpose of highlighting the ambiguity of California’s rural areas is how various historians and others have described the people who lived in them. What would one call the people who lived in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century California rural areas? Are they simply farmers? Are they reflective of something altogether new? Do they represent one group of people, a cohort, or are differences detectable within the group and over time? Scholars have labeled California’s rural inhabitants in a variety of ways, such as agrarians, agriculturalists, better class of people, bourgeois horticulturalists, citrus industrialists, citrus scientists, farm fascists, farmers, gentleman farmers, growers, horticulturalists, industrial agriculturalists, innovative, an intelligent class of people, Jeffersonian farmers, Jeffersonian yeoman, middle-class horticulturalists, orchard capitalists, producers, revolutionary capitalists, and scientific farmers. Furthermore, such inhabitants are in rural-seeming communities,” and for “specialized form of urban settlement,” see Vance, “California and the Search for the Ideal,” 200, 205. For “subdivisions,” see Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties, 8; McWilliams, Southern California, 122, and 216; Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 202; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 15. For “suburban and plantation-like,” see Anthea M. Hartig, “In a World He Has Created’: Class Collectivity and the Growers’ Landscape of the Southern California Citrus Industry, 1890-1940,” California History 74, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 100. For “suburban estate,” see McWilliams, Southern California, 211. For “suburb,” see Dumke, Boom of the Eighties, 10, 41, 76, and 131; and Vance, “California and the Search for the Ideal,” 186. For “urban/rural interplay,” see Starr, Material Dreams, 17. For “utopian settlements,” see Hine, California’s Utopian Colonies; and Vance, “California and the Search for the Ideal,” 200-02. For “vineyards,” see, among many others, Vaught, Cultivating California, 10.

5. For “agrarians,” see Daniel, Bitter Harvest, 29; Moses, “The Orange-Grower in not a Farmer,” 24; and Pisani, From the Family Farm to Agribusiness, 11-12. For “agriculturalists,” see Kevin Starr, California: A History (New York: Modern Library, 2005), 151; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 168. For “‘better class of people,” see Carey McWilliams, California: The Great Exception (1949; repr., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 69; and Stoll, Fruits of Natural Advantage, 42-46. For “bourgeois horticulturalists,” see Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 202. For “citrus industrialists,” see Hartig, “In a World He Has Created,” 105. For “citrus
"search of an ideal," which has been labeled as agrarian, agricultural, Californian, communal, family farm, the geography of (the ideal), horticultural, Jeffersonian, middle class, rural, small farm, and suburban.6 Owing to such disparate and various ways used to label and characterize the people of California’s rural areas, as well as describing the places they live and what they were supposedly seeking, conceptualizing exactly who they were and what they were doing is difficult upon first glance.

Bourgeois Horticulturalists in an Agricultural Wonderland: Recalling Past Conceptualizations of California’s Rural Areas to Build a Better Understanding

The different ways historians and others have characterized California’s rural areas at the turn of the twentieth century fashioned the image of California in the minds of many for more scientists,” see Sackman, Orange Empire, 33. For “farm fascists,” see McWilliams, Factories in the Field, 9. For “farmers,” see Daniel, Bitter Harvest, 15; Sackman, Orange Empire, 50; Starr, California, 151; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 165. For “gentleman farmers,” see McWilliams, Southern California, 211. For “growers,” see Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties, 14; Carey McWilliams, “Farmer Gets Tough,” American Mercury 33 (October 1934): 245; Sackman, Orange Empire, 41-44; Starr, Inventing the Dream, 142; Stoll, Fruits of Natural Advantage, 32-46; and Vaught, Cultivating California, 2. For “horticulturalists,” see Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties, 107; Sackman, Orange Empire, 42; Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 202-03; Starr, California, 151; Starr, Inventing the Dream, 142; and Stoll, Fruits of Natural Advantage, 42. For “industrial agriculturalists,” see Hartig, “In a World He Has Created,” 106. For “innovative,” see Starr, Material Dreams, 15. For “an intelligent class of people,” see Sackman, Orange Empire, 41; and Stoll, Fruits of Natural Advantage, 41. For “Jeffersonian farmers” and “Jeffersonian yeomen,” see Daniel, Bitter Harvest, 15; Garcia, A World of Its Own, 19; Moses, “The Orange-Grower is not a Farmer,” 24; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 170. For “middle-class horticulturalist,” see Starr, Inventing the Dream, 46; and Starr, Material Dreams, 17. For “orchard capitalists,” see Moses, “The Orange-Grower is not a Farmer,” 24; and Stoll, Fruits of Natural Advantage, 32. For “producers,” see McWilliams, California, 112-13. For “revolutionary capitalists,” see Moses, “The Orange-Grower is not a Farmer,” 26. For “scientific farmer,” see Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 202.

6. For “agrarian,” see Daniel, Bitter Harvest, 32; Garcia, A World of Its Own, 19-22; Pisani, From the Family Farm to Agribusiness, 11-12; Sackman, Orange Empire, 56; and Stoll, Fruits of Natural Advantage, 16. For “agricultural,” see Daniel, Bitter Harvest, 21; Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 192; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 45, 83, and 134. For “Californian,” see Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 417; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 3. For “communal,” see Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 145-54. For “family farm,” see Daniel, Bitter Harvest, 21-23. For “the geography of the ideal,” see Vance, “California and the Search for the Ideal,” 202. For “horticultural,” see Vaught, Cultivating California, 10. For “Jeffersonian,” see Daniel, Bitter Harvest, 21-23; Moses, “The Orange-Grower is not a Farmer,” 24; Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 192; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 170. For “middle class,” see McWilliams, Southern California, 96-97; Pisani, From the Family Farm to Agribusiness, 73; Moses, “The Orange-Grower is not a Farmer,” 24; Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 201; Starr, California, 133-34, 146, and 154; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 46-47, 138, and 142. For “rural,” see Sackman, Orange Empire, 29; Starr, Inventing the Dream, 134-42; and Vaught, Cultivating California, 197. For “small farm,” see Daniel, Bitter Harvest, 32; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 165. For “suburban,” see Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 416.
than 100 years. For example, in *Southern California: An Island on the Land* (1946), California journalist Carey McWilliams discussed the area he famously labeled the “citrus belt,” which included “the orange towns of Monrovia, Azusa, Glendora, Covina, Pomona, Upland, and Ontario.” He argued: “This citrus belt complex of peoples, institutions, and relationships has no parallel in rural life in America and nothing quite like it exists elsewhere in California. It is neither town nor country, neither rural nor urban. It is a world of its own.” Without a doubt, McWilliams casts a long shadow over the study of California. Through a collection of articles and books, primarily *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Labor in California* (1935), *Southern California* (1946), and *California: The Great Exception* (1949), he fashioned a dominant image of California and provided the conceptual foundation and framework to which subsequent scholars adhere or refute. In short, his is sacred text and discussions of California,

7. McWilliams, *Southern California*, 206; and 207.


particularly about Southern California and agriculture at the turn of the twentieth century, ignore
him at their own peril.

“Agriculture,”” McWilliams observed, “is quite a word, but, in California, it has taken
on new meaning and novel implications.”9 Thus, as political economist Henry George
concluded half a century earlier in Progress and Poverty (1879) and The Land Question (1881),
McWilliams saw California agriculture as “speculation.”10 “The soil is really mined,” he added,
“not farmed.”11 Admittedly, McWilliams largely glossed over small farmers and growers,
though not completely as is suggested by recent historians.12 He did focus, however, on what he
described as a grower conspiracy of exploitation and landownership — the establishment of
“fascist control” — to focus, like any good activist, on the basic civil rights of farmworkers. He
criticized land “in the hands of a few large speculators” because of the consequences of land
monopolization.13 Some recent historians, however, have described the growers’ world as

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9. McWilliams, Factories in the Field, 4.
12. Indeed, a “Factories in the Field paradigm,” said David Vaught in both Cultivating California and “Factories in the Field Revisited,” depicts California’s farmers “as people devoid of any ideology or culture whatsoever, except the desire to cut costs and maximize profits.” See David Vaught, “Factories in the Field Revisited,” The Pacific Historical Review 66, no. 2 (May 1997): 149-84, quote from 151.
13. McWilliams, Factories in the Field, 9; and 19. Sachs discussed McWilliams in terms of an activist as well in “Civil Rights in the Field.” For more on land monopolization, see also McWilliams in California, 91-102.
extremely more complex than portrayed by McWilliams.14 Nevertheless, McWilliams’s work pioneered investigations into the seamier aspects of California’s agriculture. He rigorously raised concerns about land monopolization, agricultural specialization, irrigation, and the plight of ethnoracial farm laborers as well as the manipulation of the historical narrative and landscape of Native Americans and Mexicans to suit the needs of a white majority. He thus referred to the creation of an “orange empire” in Southern California, an understanding of which historians such as Cletus E. Daniel, Matt Garcia, Anthea M. Hartig, H. Vincent Moses, Richard Orsi, David J. Pisani, Douglas C. Sackman, Kevin Starr, Steven Stoll, and David Vaught have sought to expand.

McWilliams characterized Southern California as “rurban,” which he defined as “neither city nor country but everywhere a mixture of both.” He observed that the “fairly well to-do-people” arrived during the real estate boom of the 1880s and, in quoting California booster Charles Fletcher Lummis, concluded: “In fact, they were, by and large, by far the most comfortable immigrants, financially in history.” He added that they brought “the refinements of civilized life,” such as churches, improved roads, quality schools, and water supply. That is, “rural life has never been precisely ‘rural’ in Southern California.” McWilliams maintained that the “typical owner [of a citrus farm] is a gentlemen-farmer who has purchased a suburban estate as a means of acquiring status.” He called Southern California’s citrus belt an “agricultural wonderland” whereby an “orange grove is the perfect setting for a handsome suburban estate.” They were “not farm houses,” but rather “suburban residences” that constituted an “orange empire” and a “suburban shopping district.”15 “What this means,” he clarified in California: The

14. See Garcia, A World of Its Own; Sackman, Orange Empire; Vaught, Cultivating California.

15. McWilliams, Southern California, 12; 150; 151; 194; 211; 214; and 216-17.
Great Exception, “is that even agriculture in California is highly ‘urbanized’; a large population of those engaged in agriculture live, not on farms, but in small towns and cities in the rural areas.” McWilliams surmised, “California’s divergence from the national farm tradition is also reflected in the remarkable way in which urbanism, as a way of life, has invaded rural areas.” He added: “This invasion, in turn, has brought into being a type of social structure in rural areas that does not have its precise counterpart in any other state.”

The agricultural situation in California at the turn of the twentieth century, as evidenced by McWilliams’s commentary and other characterizations, represented something unique. The rural area both blended the more familiar elements of rural, suburban, and urban and constituted an entirely new community type with no comparison. McWilliams, however, does not stand alone in his observation on the uniqueness of California’s rural areas, particularly in highlighting “urban amenities” and “suburban” lifestyles and homes. Both before McWilliams and after him, those who have focused their attention on California’s agriculture have consistently been impressed by and compelled to comment on its more urban and suburban characteristics.

Historian Kevin Star is another California chronicler and interpreter par excellence. As an award-winning and nationally honored historian, Starr’s pen and wit has graced eight volumes — not to mention a novel, scores of articles, and a textbook — relating to California’s past. His work towers over most others and provides a rich socio-cultural history of the state.

16. McWilliams, California, 83; and 102.

Starr’s multi-volume history is a chronicle of a dream — the California dream. Collectively, his versions of the California dream — a predominantly white dream — is always about adaptation and progress. If, for example, he wrote about California’s *Endangered Dreams* (1996), he then wrote that *The Dream Endures* (1997).

In *Americans and the California Dream*, Starr noted that promotional writers, even before the “rapid, monstrous maturity” of California and the explosion of its agricultural prowess, conjured up an image of California in the 1850s and 1860s. This image portrayed California as an imminent agricultural utopia whereby any American could participate in the Jeffersonian agrarian vision of life on the land, expressing a belief, as one historian described it, that “country people were morally virtuous and superior to city dwellers.”18 Thus, by the 1880s, California emerged as an all too familiar place for the planning of an “agricultural wonderland.” “Hope for the good life,” Starr said, “glowed white-hot in the 1880s.”19 The Southern Pacific Railroad employee and California booster Benjamin C. Truman commented in his 1883 *Homes and Happiness in the Golden State of California* that California belonged to the “well-disposed, industrious people, who desire to better their conditions in life.” Such people were “to come to California and help settle her vast territory and make themselves comfortable and happy homes — to do well under their own vines and fig trees — not only in the land of promise, but in the

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land of real fruition.”20 Added Starr: “Intensive farming had made a new way of life possible, one possessing the benefits of country life and at the same time preserving values of diversity, leisure, and family living.” He continued: “With the subdivision of its large holdings underway, California offered the middle class a way out of the increasingly burdensome work loads of business and the professions. They could return to the land as scientific farmers.” Thus, for these “bourgeois horticulturalists,” Southern California’s rural life “showed a pattern approaching bourgeois suburbanism of later days.”21

In Inventing the Dream: California Through the Progressive Era (1985), Starr continued his commentary on the unique rural life in California, particularly in the “Southland,” to highlight “horticulturalists” that had time for “finer things,” such as churches, concert halls, and schools. The colony system in California, said Starr, germinated from this ideal. He contended that “agricultural colonies” in Southern California were “quasi-utopian” experiments that emphasized cooperativism and centered on a homogenous group that jointly purchased a tract of land. Agricultural colonies “dispelled the terrible isolation of nineteenth-century life on the land.” “They also brought about,” Starr surmised, “stable translations of values and styles of living.” Between 1880 and 1920, California promoted and created itself into an “agricultural empire.” “Fruit culture,” at the heart of this empire, encouraged families to live on farms. The “family farms” represented, according to Starr, democracy and rural civilization with urban amenities. “Above all else,” Starr reminded us, “fruit culture encouraged a level of rural civility,


21. Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 202; and 416.
the founding of schools, churches, and libraries, the nurturing of social and recreational
amenities which stood in completed contrast to the Wild West attitudes of wheat.”22 Starr
ultimately described how California boosters, authors, and other promoters, such as Edward J.
Wickson, ordained agriculture as a classic act of culture building, an enterprise whereby all the
details, all the prudent choices coalesced to create a landscape and way of life that promoted
civility and “good order.”

In Material Dreams: Southern California Through the 1920s (1990), Starr began his third
try at describing the California dream. He opened with the story of irrigation to highlight the
difficulties, laws, politics, and technicalities, as well as the belief of some Californians, such as
State Engineer William Hammond Hall, that they could transform California into a refined neo-
Mediterranean area through irrigation.23 With his attention turned on “private action” from 1879
to 1889, Starr focused on George and William Chaffey and the “Model Colony” of Ontario,
California. “At this point,” he concluded, “the Chaffeys and their associate, the visionary
journalist” Luther M. Holt of Riverside “advanced the water practice of Southern California by a
quantum leap.” First in Etiwanda, based on an irrigation scheme in Riverside, the Chaffeys and
Holt developed a mutual water company in 1882 (San Antonio Water Mutual Company). The
company planned that those who purchased land in Ontario would receive one stock in the
company for every one acre they bought. “Shareholders” then received an amount of water based
upon the total amount of stock they held as owners. Ontario then, Starr maintained, demonstrated
“the fullest possibilities of a Southern California life-style based on irrigation, technology, and

22. Starr, Inventing the Dream, 46-47; and 134. See also 137.

23. Starr, Material Dreams, 12. See California, Office of State Engineer, Irrigation Development: History,
Customs, Laws, and Administrative Systems Relating to Irrigations, Water-Courses, and Waters in France, Italy,
and Spain; the Introductory Part of the Report of the State Engineer of California, on Irrigation and the Irrigation
Question, William Hammond Hall (Sacramento: James A. Ayers, 1886).
middle-class cultural values.” Moreover, Ontario, as an agricultural colony, “incorporated within itself an urban/rural interplay deliberately orchestrated to preserve for middle-class horticulturalists the feel and amenities of an urban community,” such as an agricultural college, good roads, prohibition, and a water supply.24

Beginning with authors and boosters like Benjamin C. Truman in the 1870s and 1880s, through McWilliams in the 1930s and 1940s, and Starr from the 1970s to the present, the depiction of California’s unique agricultural landscape is a constant feature of the literature. For example, in Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farmworkers, 1870-1941 (1981) historian Cletus E. Daniel launched his narrative with an introduction to the Jeffersonian ideal of farming to argue that farming not only centered on cultivating the soil, but also a cultivating of the soul.25 Yet, Daniel saw agricultural development in California as a more capitalistic and exploitive endeavor than he did as a means of so-called civilization. Still, like McWilliams before him, Daniel identified a “small farm” ideal that spurred the original development of agriculture in California (during the American era). Quoting Charles F. Reed, president of the California State Agricultural Society in a speech in 1869 against the evils of land monopolization, Daniel summarized well the small farm ideal in California as presaged by Henry George. “Our public domain,” said Reed, “our lands in general, should be divided up into small farms or parcels, each one of these to become the home and homestead of a family, dependent for a livelihood upon the

24. Starr, Material Dreams, 15; 16; 16; and 17. See also, Starr’s California: A History whereby he characterized the agricultural development of California as one that “brought a new kind of agriculturalist — the intensive farmer, educated, middle class, capable of making a living on forty acres — and an aesthetic reshaping of the landscape” (151).

Reed and others hoped for the decline of large-scale agriculture and the rise of small family farms — centered on specialty crops. According to Daniel, some lofty expectations accompanied the small farm ideal:

Among the several benefits that its proponents expected from such a change was the subdivision into small farms of the huge tracts of land previously devoted to wheat; a displacement of the migratory labor force by non seasonal, local labor drawn largely from the ranks of the farmers’ own children; and an increase in diversified farms that still had the capacity to generate a modest cash income from the sale of the fruits whose cultivation was especially suited to California’s mild climate. In short, what the agrarians hoped the change would at last introduce into the state’s rural society was the conviction that farming ought to be a way of life rather than simply an instrument of capitalistic enterprise and profit.27

This ideal, however, contained a paradox, as noted by Daniel, McWilliams, Starr, and eventually other historians. The intensification, specialization, and capital accumulation characteristic of California’s agricultural development fostered the “concentration of resources and intensity of operation” in contrast to operating small farms without the labor of non-family members. The intensification process both undermined traditional small farm values and ushered in the age of intensified farming and agribusiness while also bringing in an ethnoracial, non-family workforce in greater numbers. The California farmer sought the “application of scientific methods to what was with increasing frequency referred to as the ‘profession of agriculture’ [because it] became especially important with the development and expansion of horticulture on a commercial scale.”28


begin with *and* proved to be the principal element in its eventual downfall. Agribusiness arose (e.g., Sunkist) instead of thousands of small family farm homes.

In *From the Family Farm to Agribusiness: The Irrigation Crusade in California and the West, 1850-1931* (1984) historian Donald J. Pisani noted that fellow historian Henry Nash Smith (1950) summed up the westward movement succinctly when he concluded that rising urbanization and industrialization threatened the “agrarian ideal.” Thus, the West had originally offered an opportunity to restore and strengthen an already seemingly “tarnished dream.”

This “agrarian ideal,” as already underscored by the small-farm ideal, meant the creation of a large middle class. In Aristotelian-like fashion, then, the fable held that the middle class would serve as the bedrock of society, of western society, and help the numbers of both rich and poor dwindle. Yet, during the Gilded Age, an era known for rising “labor problems” because of industrialization and a “corporate revolution,” the elimination of class conflict did not occur. Rather it became more acute. Nevertheless, Pisani, like Starr, identified the “promise” of irrigation in bringing about a small family-farm ideal centered on homes and horticulture. Specifically, critics of large-scale wheat hoped that irrigation in California would encourage the subdivision of large farms.

Pisani observed that the small family-farm ideal promised to strengthen the family as well as the middle class. He therefore tracked the development of an

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30. Pisani, *From the Family Farm to Agribusiness*, 73. For a coeval primary source, see California, State Agricultural Society, *Transactions, 1874* (Sacramento: [s.n.], [1875]), in California, Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly of the 21st Session of the Legislature of the State of California*, vol. 1 (Sacramento: State Printing, 1876), 201.
“irrigation civilization” through “irrigation colonies” and “irrigation districts” in California that included “a wide range of civic institutions ranging from churches and schools to performing arts groups and literary guilds.” He continued: “The small farms and dense settlement pattern required by irrigation would also dispel the isolation and dreariness of rural life experienced by farm families in the Midwest.” Thus, “irrigation colonies,” such as Fresno and Riverside in California, but also colonies in Colorado and Utah, represented close-knit communities surrounded by farms that would permit the establishment of churches, libraries, performing arts, and schools.31

*California History: The Magazine of the California Historical Society* published a special issue in 1995, “Citriculture and Southern California.” While the articles primarily focused on the consequences, development, and practice of California’s transformation to “industrial agriculture” from small family farms, some of them captured well — and added depth to — the notion that such development ran contrary to the original intent and, at least, promotional literature. Ronald Tobey and Charles Wetherell, for example, argued that this transformation spurred the economic modernization of Southern California. They suggested this happened because California’s turn to the fields for small farms occurred in conjunction with a “revolution of corporate capitalism” that infused the development of California’s agriculture with an insatiable “growth mentality.”32 H. Vincent Moses concurred and labeled California’s “new” farmers as “agricultural capitalists” who “behaved like full-fledged industrial capitalists.”33

Moses portrayed the “Orange Grower as Revolutionary Capitalists” who “were, in fact, captains

31. Pisani, *From the Family Farm to Agribusiness*, 73; 120-21; and 122-27.


of industry.” As noted by Daniel, the economic growth of Southern California through industrial agriculture seemed imminent. “The development of a middle-class agrarian society in California,” concluded Moses, “seemed assured by the citrus industry.”

Following on the growing focus of intensification, capital accumulation, and “learning” about the “science” of horticulture described in the special issue of *California History* Steven Stoll documented the rise of industrial agriculture in California that displaced small family farms. In *The Fruits of Natural Advantage: Making the Industrial Countryside in California* (1998) he observed, “Farmers needed to grow more food on land they already owned.” He continued: “Hereafter, agriculture would advance intensively, or through the application of capital, technology, and new methods to existing farm land in order to attain the fullest possible use of scarce resources.” Horticulture became a business, the results of “the efforts of a capitalistic and cosmopolitan group of farmers.” Farmers referred to themselves as “growers” — or, what Stoll called, “orchard capitalists.” Through “agricultural colonies,” Stoll positioned the explosion of industrial agriculture. Still, he described a variegated landscape. “The [agricultural] colony became the money-making cousin of the bungalow suburb,” he said, “and the vineyard and orchard posed themselves as business like versions of the gracious gardens that

34. Moses, “The Orange-Grower in not a Farmer,” 26; and 28.

35. Moses, “The Orange-Grower in not a Farmer,” 24, emphasis added. See Hartig, “In a World He Has Created,” 100. Hartig referred to “an industrial landscape that [was] . . . at once suburban and plantation-like.”


accompanied all respectable California homes.”39 Thus like McWilliams, he quoted geographer Joseph Russell Smith (1925) to highlight the difficulties in distinguishing city, suburb, and country in California. “Nowhere in the United States,” Smith said, “is it more difficult to draw a line between city life, suburban life, and country life.”40

While the agricultural evolution and development in California represented a blend of rural, urban, and suburban, it also involved both a pining for, backward-looking nostalgia in the idealization of the Jeffersonian small farmer tilling the soil and a more forward-looking embrace of business, science, and technology. The seeming fluidity of this transformation leads to a tendency to group all farmers together as one cohort and together over a long span of time (1880-1920). In Cultivating California: Growers, Specialty Crops, and Labor, 1875-1920 (1999) historian David Vaught sought to overturn — or at least differentiate within — this more “traditional” narrative of California agriculture. He argued that “growers” were not monolithic and that, thanks to McWilliams’s depiction of them as “farm fascists” in Factories in the Field, growers have been misunderstood.41 Pointing out that farms and farmers had not yet fully transformed into industrialized agriculture until World War I, he claimed small orchards “offered hard-working, community-minded individuals a ‘pleasant and profitable’ alternative to either the isolation of rural life or the ‘hustle and bustle’ of the modern industrial city.”42 Although


40. Stoll, Fruits of Natural Advantage, 34. For original quote, see Joseph Russell Smith, North America: Its People and Resources, Development, and Prospects of the Continent as an Agricultural, Industrial, and Commercial Area (New York: Hartcourt, Brace and Company, 1925), 553. McWilliams, without notes, cites Russell to contend that Southern California is neither urban nor rural but a mixture of both (McWilliams, Southern California, 13).

41. Vaught, Cultivating California, 1; 2; and 4.

42. Vaught, Cultivating California, 8-9, quote on 4.
McWilliams focused more on chronicling the economic, political, and social consequences of land monopolization, Vaught’s take on McWilliams’s long shadow over the study of California’s farmers is correct. Vaught’s analysis has served as the basis for a corrective turn from McWilliams demonstrating not only the legacy and influence of McWilliams, but also the power of historical narratives. Vaught wanted to show “horticulturalists” not cut in McWilliams’s mold — so-called farm fascists. “We have neglected to analyze the growers’ world view with that same rigor and subtlety that has characterized many studies of farmworkers,” Vaught lamented. For him, some of California’s growers envisioned an alternative to both industrial capitalism (as epitomized by agribusiness) and a more traditional rural agrarian existence that still included agriculture. “We should think of them neither as agrarians nor as industrialists,” Vaught concluded, “but as horticulturalists.” He continued: “In their orchards and vineyards, horticulturalists frequently fervently believed they were cultivating not only specialty crops, but [as Daniel argued] California itself.” Vaught added that they “advanced this horticultural ideal within a framework that blended both agrarian and capitalistic perspectives.” If Vaught’s “horticultural ideal” sounds familiar, particularly when compared to “ideals” identified by Daniel, Pisani, Starr, and Stoll, that is because the “horticultural ideal” essentially mirrors small family farms, irrigation colonies, agricultural colonies, and a “middle-class urban/rural interplay.” For example, Vaught said the horticultural ideal represented “a place where educated, land-owning families lived on small, orderly, and prosperous orchards and vineyards in close proximity to one another.” This “practical horticulture,” like agricultural colonies and irrigation colonies, included social urban advantages such as churches, schools, and even hotels.43 As McWilliams, Starr, Stoll, and others make clear, industrial agriculture thus won out

43. Vaught, *Cultivating California*, 2 (see also 3); 10; 34; and 31.
and the growers — at least those with an alternate vision that Vaught called the “horticultural ideal” — lost. The reason for this, as pointed out by Vaught, involved labor requirements, market improvements, and political conditions spurred by the growing specialization and intensification of California agriculture. These reasons, as previously highlighted, undercut the dreams of the growers’ horticultural ideal.

Two additional works — whose titles are clearly inspired by McWilliams — also emphasized the rise, development, and, ultimately, consequences of industrial agriculture in California: Matt Garcia’s *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (2001) and Douglas C. Sackman’s *Orange Empire: California and the Fruits of Eden* (2005). Garcia masterfully centered his analysis on the “suburban” lives of ethnoracial laborers, particularly Mexican, to get behind the “orange curtain” to see the true role of farmworkers. He initiated a discussion of how profit led to the growth of citrus belt “towns” and contributed — as, again, McWilliams argued — to the “polynuclear” landscape. Indeed, as others stated, Garcia saw the advent of intensive agriculture in the citrus belt as contributing to a metropolitan economy. The context for understanding the role of laborers in Southern California necessarily required Garcia to restate the growers’ vision of a unique blend of rural and urban, agrarian and industrial, communities. While sometimes referring to citrus belt areas as “towns” and other times as “suburbs,” Garcia maintained that they exhibited an “eclectic mix of urban and rural characteristics” and that they were marked “by the predominance of luxuries and benefits not typically afforded to farming communities.”

Sackman saw much the same in *Orange Empire* as he too echoed a conception of the growers’ early visions of a rural-urban-suburban landscape. He concluded that many growers

44. García, *A World of Its Own*, 18; 2; 5; 12; 25; 12; 27-28; and 31.
believed that a way of life focused on growing fruit would be supremely rewarding — culturally, fiscally, and physically. California represented the “highest and most perfect stage” for the manifestation of “the American dream itself.” For Sackman, the “grower was a clean, efficient, gentlemanly, and yet modern businessman imbued with the aesthetic sensibility of an artist, the pragmatism of an engineer, and the spirit of a civic leader.” Linking city and country, he quoted from a 1903 edition of Out West: “The horticulturalist combines city life with country pleasure and his occupation is one requiring rather more brains than of hard labor.”

Exploding Dichotomies: Traditional and Modern

It seems clear that a complex and variegated California agricultural landscape existed at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The landscape, historically, imaginatively, and physically, seemed familiar to both contemporaries and later retrospective interpreters. First, it reflected a rural ideal. The life of a farmer — as both a means and a mode of existence — characterized the California lifestyle, or, as one historian said, the “belief that farming is the best way of life and the most important economic endeavor.” This view, known as “agrarianism,” “celebrated farmers for their supposed centrality in a good society, their political virtue, and their moral superiority.” In other words, “farmers were society’s heroes.”

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45. Sackman, Orange Empire, 26; 40; and 41-42.

46. Sackman, Orange Empire, 42. For original quote, Sackman cites F. Llewellyn, “Pomona,” Out West 18 (June 1903): 412.

47. Hurt, American Agriculture, 72.

Second, California’s agricultural landscape reflected an urban ideal and, thus, according to the eminent historian Arthur M. Schlesinger (1933), a way for “cultivating the life of mind and spirit.” Another historian added that the city “was the unity of everyday life” while yet another saw it as a place “where personal and public growth, personal and public prosperity intermingled.” While cities did often receive condemnation as “the altars burning with incense to the genius of vice and crime,” they also received praise as vibrant commercial, cultural, economic, intellectual, and social centers unmatched by anything found outside their borders. “The growth of cities,” said George Tucker (1843), “commonly marks the progress of intelligence and the arts, measures the sum of social enjoyment, and always implies increased mental activity.” Henry P. Tappan added in 1855 that the “association of men in cities is favorable to the highest development of humanity,” including capital, culture, and labor reaching their fullest potential.

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Third, California’s agricultural landscape represented a suburban ideal because family, home, and nature all intermingled to provide, as one observer said of the “villages” outside Philadelphia in 1839, “all the beauties of the country, within an easy and cheap communication with the city.”\textsuperscript{54} The quintessential American poet Walt Whitman likewise extolled the ideal of homeownership as he concluded, “a house to live in is the third great necessity” of life after food and clothing. He continued: “Furthermore it is in some sense true that a man is not a whole and complete man unless he owns a house and the ground it stands on.”\textsuperscript{55} “Place the house in the countryside,” said Andrew Jackson Downing (1850), and there, “in the little world of the family home,” “truthfulness, beauty, and order” would have domain.\textsuperscript{56} Indeed, historians such as Robert Fishman, Dolores Hayden, Kenneth T. Jackson, and Sam Bass Warner, Jr. have all pointed out that suburban houses represented a distinct visual attempt to take the city to the country in the nineteenth century. The suburb thus meant, at least according to Frederick Law Olmsted (1869), “elbow room about a home without sacrifice of butcher, banker, & theaters.”\textsuperscript{57}


But California’s agricultural landscape at the turn of the twentieth century also seemed something entirely new and original to both contemporaries of the era and subsequent interpreters. First, it represented something *sui generis* — unique unto itself — that, as McWilliams concluded, had “no parallel in rural life.” This “world of its own” had no counterpart, according to McWilliams, whether described as a blend of rural and suburban, eclectic mixes of rural and urban (rurban), alternatives to rural isolation or the hustle and bustle of the city, subdivisions comprised of suburban estates, or agricultural or irrigation colonies. Here, revolutionary orchard capitalists and bourgeois horticulturalists morphed into growers and producers in an agricultural wonderland that seemed “highly urbanized” in comparison to other rural areas.58

Second, with “farm fascists” and “capitalist exploitation” put aside for the moment, California’s agricultural landscape represented something better, particularly concerning class and types of people — something civilizing and more cultured. Agriculturalists and other “-alists” like capitalists, horticulturalists, and industrialists signaled the arrival and proliferation of a large civic-minded middle class that would help democratize and domesticate California and, by implication, the United States. Armed with “middle-class cultural values,” a growth mentality of professional business-minded farmers sought, as Starr said, a “rural civilizing” as a means of “culture building” through such “urban amenities” as churches, clubs, concert halls, houses, libraries, literary guilds, roads and avenues, and schools.

Third, California’s agricultural landscape represented something innovative, irreducibly and undeniably modern. Within a unique and more cultured environment, lifeway, and mindset, boosters and farmers articulated a “small farm,” “family farm,” “horticultural ideal” that, with no

counterpart or parallel, embraced a modern business approach that emphasized science and technology. “Scientific farmers,” or “gentleman-farmers,” ushered in a “great transformation” of intensified “industrial agriculture.” They were innovative — an exception — and not simply agrarian farmers, but rather, as McWilliams told us, “producers” who contributed to the “polynuclear” landscape and metropolitan economy of California. Conversely, to steal from the title of journalist Peter Schrag’s take on California politics and institutions (which he stole from English poet John Milton), California became a *Paradise Lost* (1999) whereby farm fascists and capitalistic exploiters emerged. Such consequences undermine any connotations of good and modern as naturally synonymous terms.

An identifiable dichotomy of *traditional* versus modern, which can slip into assuming the existence of a binary opposition between them, is reflected by depictions of California’s farmers — or, more specifically, boosters’ call and public announcements to them — as either agrarian or capitalist and California’s agricultural areas as rural or urban. On the one hand, California’s


60. Whether via progress theory, economic development models, world systems theories, or simple depictions of old versus new, *traditional* serves “as a catchall, the antithesis of modernity, connoting a lack of education, social mobility, social equality, secularization, division of labor and roles, industry, and technology.” In this context, history teleologically advanced from barbarism to civilization — or “modernized,” although “that term is avoided in favor of less offensive ones: industrialization and development.” See Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 401. See also, among others, Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 132-34. Burke uses Herbert Spencer’s *The Principles of Sociology* (1876-85) to highlight how “‘Traditional society’ and ‘modern society’ are presented as antithetical types” (132).

*Modern*, as historian Charles Postel (*The Populist Vision, 2007*) observed, “can be understood in a double sense: both as a condition or environment and a disposition or striving” (9). About environment, nineteenth-century United States experienced modernity with the rise of a world market, which made production and consumption increasingly international and cosmopolitan. “-izations,” such as commercialization, corporatization, cosmopolitanization, democratization, developmentalization, internationalization, mechanization, secularization, and urbanization, transformed the United States “-ally,” such as culturally, demographically, economically, politically, intellectually, and structurally — it gave the United States its “modern face.” Concerning modern as a disposition or striving, modern implies “a particular kind of people with particular types of strivings.” Modern people “yearn for and demand change” (*Postel, The Populist Vision, 9-10*). Whether in terms of art, economics, morality, political
boosters and farmers articulated a version of Jeffersonian agrarianism as a superior way of life. Comparable to how historian Richard Hofstadter viewed the Populists in the latter nineteenth century (1955), they “looked backward with longing to the lost agrarian Eden, to the republican America of the early years of the nineteenth century.” Added Hofstadter: “I have found much that was retrograde and delusive, a little that was vicious, and a good deal that was comic.”

On the other hand, California’s boosters and farmers at the turn of the twentieth century often and intimately articulated a vision of attaining, modifying, possessing, and utilizing modern technologies, such as sophisticated communication systems like the nascent telephone and new media, as well as the railroad and new business methods like the establishment of corporations and trusteeships. Comparable to historian Charles Postel’s rebuttal of Hofstadter’s view of the Populists (2007), their “world was too commercially and intellectually dynamic to resemble traditional society in any meaningful sense of the term. . . . [They] were modern people.”

California’s boosters and farmers at the turn of the twentieth century looked backward to structure their judgment of California’s agricultural landscape to create, even to “invent,” continuity with the past. But they also looked forward in a break from the past. Their philosophy, or science, a modern character or quality of thought, expression, or technique generally means avant-garde, innovation, or progress. To be modern, or modernized, meant a deliberate break with classical and traditional forms and methods of character or quality of thought, expression, or technique. See Charles Postel, The Populist Vision (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).


62. Postel, The Populist Vision, 9. The dichotomy of traditional versus modern is detectable in many studies from the framing of the Constitution, to Populists, to Progressives, to the New Deal, to Civil Rights, to name a few, and underscore the tendency of historians to cast people and events in two opposing narrative paradigms. For brief and quick reviews — explicitly or implicitly — see, among others I am sure, volumes one and two of Interpretations of American History: Patterns and Perspectives, Francis G. Couvares, et al, eds. (New York: The Free Press, 2000).

63. For more on the “invention of tradition,” see, principally, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., The Invention of Tradition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983). I have also found the following useful: John Bodnar, Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century.
framework of understanding and, subsequently, recollection reflected a thoughtful modern disposition that embraced notions of traditionalism and modernity as opposed to something “regressive” or “retrograde.” Indeed, agricultural historians such as Hal S. Barron, R. Douglas Hurt, and, particularly in looking at California, David Vaught, saw both tradition and modernity when they looked at farmers through a lens of “resistance and accommodation and of change and continuity.”64 The turn of the twentieth-century California agricultural landscape thus explodes easy dichotomies between traditional and modern. An exploration of California’s agricultural areas, particularly through case studies on Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, highlights the dual nature of these communities: a mixture of traditionalism and modernity, “a combination,” as one historian said of California’s “suburban warriors,” “that suggests the adaptability, resilience, and, thus perhaps, intractability” of California’s “eclectic mix of urban and rural characteristics.”65

The Agriburb: A Model for Understanding California’s Rural Suburban Phenomenon

In 1844, Ralph Waldo Emerson recorded in his journal, “I wish to have rural strength of religion for my children, and I wish city facility and polish, I find with regret that I cannot have

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Fortunately, for anyone who shared Emerson’s desire to capture the supposed better of two worlds in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, suburbia and its blend of city and country began a meteoric rise. In other words, a suburban ideal that celebrated bringing the city to the country and for providing the best of both worlds arose and resulted in the development of countless suburban communities. These suburban areas both germinated in and reified — through booster literature — a suburban ideal based on family, home, pastoral, and urban amenities. Indeed, as noted, numerous historians and others have pointed to a link between California’s growth at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the suburban ideal, particularly as some researchers have labeled a number of California communities as suburban or as suburbs. Two scholars, historian Glenn S. Dumke and geographer James E. Vance, Jr., most specifically connected California’s development and growth with suburbanization at the end of the nineteenth century.

In *The Boom of the Eighties in Southern California* (1944), Dumke unmistakably recognized that the real estate land “boom” in Southern California not only spurred the development and intensification of agriculture, but also led to the creation of suburbs. “The receding wave” of the boom, he said, “left behind it a multitude of undeveloped townsites and staked-out lots, but also a number of flourishing suburbs.” In fact, Dumke advanced that “pioneers” in Los Angeles thought the boom “was a purely suburban phenomenon.” For Dumke, this “suburban phenomenon” caused him to explain a larger metropolitan and regional growth centered out of Los Angeles and facilitated by “city realtors” and “speculators.” “The boom assumed its most extravagant aspects,” he said, “in the suburbs,” which included, among others,

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Inglewood, La Ballona, Santa Monica, Long Beach, and, as chapter seven of his work is titled, the “Suburban Centers of the Boom: The San Gabriel Valley and Pasadena.”

In “California and the Search for the Ideal” (1972), geographer James E. Vance, Jr. defended his thesis that the “countryside” — nature — in California represented a “specialized form of urban settlement” at the turn of twentieth century. Tracing the rise of middle class “discrete suburbs” born out of a growing idealization of home and a picturesque “countryside” environment, he concluded such “geography of the ideal” helped to explain the settlement pattern of California. In fact, he argued the search for the ideal spurred migration to California as much as any economic determinant. “The image” of California as an ideal site of health and leisure within nature “is the pull,” he claimed. This narrated sense of place and ideal shaped California as “the place to realize most of the images that beckoned men to make long journeys.” Vance cast boosterism about — and migration to — California from the days of ’49 to the turn of the twentieth century as a “small, rural-seeming community” ideal that fashioned California’s development and, ultimately, represented a “search for the ideal,” which he labeled “Arcadia.” For Vance then, like Dumke, California’s development and growth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries meant a “suburban phenomenon.”

When viewing California’s agricultural landscape through the lens of suburbs and suburbanization the many seemingly disparate characterizations of the landscape, people, and potentially even their dreams for an ideal become a bit more analogous and their similarities seem more apparent, particularly concerning their suburban attributes. Without the insights of

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67. Dumke, *The Boom of the Eighties*, 10; 41; 58 and 200; and 59 (see chaps. 6 and 7 for his discussion of suburban places in Southern California).

68. Vance, “California and the Search for the Ideal,” 194; 194; 194; and 195.
scholars like Dumke and Vance, not to mention those made by Garcia, Pisani, Sackman, Starr, Vaught, and others, the recognition of the suburban side of California’s development at the turn of the twentieth century likely would not garner much attention. Even with that disclaimer, the suburban side of California’s agricultural development at the turn of the twentieth century, particularly concerning “agricultural colonies,” remains largely unexamined or critically assessed. This is not because, again, for any lack of recognition, but rather largely because those who have focused their attention on California’s farms and farmers did not specifically examine the suburban side of the story. Likewise, although more on this is explored later, the public memory of rural suburbs in California, which do include textual narratives, essentially divert attention away from the suburban side of the story despite, ironically at times, recognizing it. Therefore, this study seeks to uncover the suburban side of California’s agricultural colonization story, as well as to elaborate on why and how the suburban side of the story has remained largely unexplored.

Case studies of the “agricultural colonies” of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, California, which include both the northern and southern portions of the state, reveal that each reflects a distinct type of agricultural suburb. A review of some of the history and literature concerning these areas specifically, and California and suburbs in general, from the mid-nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries, unveil that these places were not only agricultural suburbs, but also, as such, representative of a suburban type that has remained largely undescribed and circumstantially detailed by historians and other retrospective interpreters. I call this suburban type a “rural suburb,” or, to offer a neologism, an “agriburb” — a perhaps obvious combination of the words agriculture and suburb. At the risk of repeating myself ad nauseum, although numerous writers have identified and linked areas such as Ontario,
Orangevale, and Fair Oaks and some of their neighboring communities with suburbs and suburbanization, none fully elaborate on the constituent suburban elements that define them. Specifically, Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks represent a suburban type in which horticulture plays a paramount enticement to draw in residential migrants. The agriburb is thus a model for helping to explain this phenomenon and provides the foundation for the case studies.

The model of an agriburb has some general characteristics that I present now in a condensed form to offer the reader a chance to keep in mind such characteristics as they are described in more detail in the following chapters. Hence, from here on out, the term agriburb will appear as the key defining term for California’s rural suburbs as represented by the three case studies. The general characteristics of the agriburb sites of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks not only mark them as agriburbs, but also broaden our understanding of the suburbanization pattern in California and, perhaps, other areas outside California where horticulture received heavy promotion, such as “agricultural colonies.” Agriburbs are a suburban type that physically and visually appeared separate from cities and typical contiguous subdivisions. Yet, agriburb areas remained close to larger cities both via transportation routes and conceptually to justify their existence and advertisement as rural suburbs. The promotion of agriburbs exploited nature — the rural ideal and climate — and the suburban ideals of homeownership and urban amenities such as businesses, improved roadways and transportation, and quality schools. Agriburbs also appealed to gender issues at the time, as girls could become women by tending to the suburban home and boys could become men by tilling the soil and managing a business. Residents of agriburbs had agriculture. More specifically, they had horticulture (another term examined later on). Without horticulture, agriburbs would be near impossible to imagine anywhere, yet alone develop and advertise because of the vast amounts of
land large farming endeavors required. Agriburbs, then, as one writer in *The Ontario Record* concluded in 1907 as if to answer Emerson’s 1844 expression of grief, made it “possible for those in search of small home groves to obtain their desire and yet remain within the confines of a beautiful and progressive city.”

Delineating what agriburbs were is important, to be sure, but stating what they were not also adds clarification. Agriburbs did not equal mere rural supply lines of an urban center or isolated agricultural colonies. They did not come into existence only because of urban sprawl or emigrant flight *away from* danger or solely because of some mass immigrant exodus of the wealthy class *toward* safety to the outer fringes of the hinterland — an exurb. Instead, agriburbs came into existence because of both flight and exodus and, more importantly, because of a local “urban growth machine.” The “land-based elite” of the growth machine in the agriburb areas, particularly as they connected with a larger regional area, like any first-rate booster organization, understood that what was good for the urban or regional area, or the potential suburban resident, was also good for them. Essentially, an urban growth attitude cultivated agriburbs — that is, the growth machine members were “harvesting suburbs.” To be sure, without a local urban growth machine to idealize and promote them, it seems unlikely that agriburb areas would have materialized.

Admittedly, one of the easiest critiques that anyone may make against the agriburb is that the agriburb is only a model and not a true representation of reality. As argued by German historian Rudolf Zeitler, “precisely defined concepts result in unhistorical divisions severing

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real-life connections or similarly unhistorical relationships connecting thoroughly incompatible events.”

Without doubt, the agriburb is a conceptual and theoretical “model.” The term “model” refers to a simplified representation of a system or phenomenon: suburbanization of agricultural areas in California. The agriburb model is thus advanced here as an interrogative hypothesis whereby detailed descriptions — through case studies of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks — support the conclusion that the agriburb model is a highly probable and accurate representation of historical phenomena. In addition, the public memory and history concerning agriburb communities has particular consequences. Specifically, the promoters of agriburbs helped to fashion a dominant tradition and image concerning the historical origins of agriburban communities. They helped to construct a creation myth that has directed subsequent reproductions of the past in agriburban communities for more than 100 years.

The fashioning of an image and tradition concerning California’s agricultural landscape, whether it came from McWilliams, Wickson, Starr, or local boosters, has diverted attention away from the suburban side of the origins of many communities in California, such as Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, even if such images can paradoxically point to the suburban side at the same time. On the one hand, the agriburb model and the case studies presented here work to correct that. On the other hand, the fashioning of an image concerning agriburban places reveals the power and lasting influence of the packaging of place by boosters at the turn of the twentieth century and subsequent historical narratives. Historical narratives are as much imagined, narrated, and memorialized as they are an attempt to represent the past as it actually happened.

The original packaging of place by a growth machine cohort of land-based elites helped to shape a metanarrative of California’s agricultural landscape that subsequent interpreters have both taken their cue from and helped to reify. Historical narratives concerning Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, and a review of them, show this process at work. They show how, and perhaps why, a metanarrative emerged and how subsequent historical narratives and retrospective interpreters have been shaped by it. In the process, subsequent historical narratives and interpreters have propagated a metanarrative and helped to legitimize and even sacralize it. The result has been to divert attention away from the suburban side of these communities’ origins. Moreover, the result has been the formation of a metanarrative that serves as a basis for a sense of place, the shaping of public memory, and manipulation of historical consciousness. These cultural costs of a metanarrative are most evident in their influence and affect upon individuals and groups who stake much of their sense of self in the history of any one of these communities, such as residents living in or nearby the community. In other words, a metanarrative concerning the agriburban communities of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks diverts attention away from the suburban side of these communities’ origins, which helps to reveal further why some of California’s rural communities — agricultural colonies — are not, in the main, discussed in terms of suburbs and suburbanization. It also reveals how historical narratives can serve as a foundation for the formation of individual and group identity, which also demonstrates farther how a metanarrative that diverts attention away form the suburban side of these communities’ origins propagates.

“Harvesting Suburbs: Recalling the Suburban Side of California’s Agricultural Colonization” aims to underscore two fundamental points. First, “Harvesting Suburbs” attempts to provide an understanding that agricultural communities in California represent a unique rural
suburban type that are labeled here as agriburbs. Such an understanding further deepens an appreciation for both the growth and development of California in general at the turn of the twentieth century and the diversity of suburban types that dot the American landscape. Second, by reviewing historical narratives concerning agriburban communities, one can perhaps reach a better understanding of the dynamics at play working to divert attention away from the suburban side of agriburban communities’ origins — not to mention some of the cultural costs of such dynamics. In other words, (1) what is an agriburb and (2) why have historians and others failed to identify an agriburb. To reach these dual destinations, chapters one and two attempt to draw parallels between the suburban ideal and the California dream to show how the two mirrored each other. Chapters three and four highlight the suburban side of three case study sites (Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks) to specify better what made California’s so-called agricultural colonies really suburban types. Finally, chapters five and six show the lasting influence of early promotional efforts concerning agriburbs. They show how a master historical narrative about each of these communities largely contributes to diverting attention away from their suburban origins and, in the process, exposes much about the nature of public memory in agriburban communities and the importance and lasting influence of historical narratives and other public representations of the past.
CHAPTER ONE

Little Boxes on the Hillside: Saving America by Taking Advantage of the Rural Countryside — The Rise of the Suburban Ideal

In the United States, nature and domestic life are better than society and the manners of towns. Hence all sensible men gladly escape, earlier or later, and partially or wholly, from the turmoil of the cities.

— Andrew Jackson Downing, 1848

California’s Suburban Phenomenon

At the end of the nineteenth century, California came forth as the perfect site and sacrosanct place for the ideal suburb. The suburbanization of California required and included the establishment of physical places and material landscapes as well as images and ways of life. This procedure laid a foundation, materially and ideologically, for further growth and development in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Reviewing some definitions and characteristics of suburbs and highlighting some of the historical literature concerning suburbia accords a better understanding of the suburban phenomenon in California.

Distinguishing Old from New: The (Not So) New Suburban History

According to definitions advanced by the U.S. Census Bureau and others, suburbs refer to unincorporated and incorporated spatial communities of moderate density typically located outside a central city or cities. Suburbs reside within a metropolitan area and are under an urban center’s socio-cultural and political-economic orbit. As of 2000, just more than 50% of the United States’ population resided in suburbs. Moreover, most Americans now shop and work in suburbs and spend an increasing amount of their commute, leisure, and travel time moving from one suburb to the next. The Census Bureau in 2000 listed 390 suburbs, what the agency calls

Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA), up from 284 in 1990, 152 in 1940, 90 in 1910, 29 in 1880, and nine in 1850. An MSA is a suburban place outside a central city or twin cities of more than 50,000 people. From 1850 to 1940, scholars have shown that the census can account for MSAs as “metropolitan districts” that, among other things, included an “outer fringe” that, first, was contiguous to the city and urbanized fringe and, second, incorporated townships with greater than 150 persons per square mile but less than 1,000 per square mile. A suburb’s economic activity is typically nonagricultural and government is most often through independent and sometimes uncoordinated local units. Although American suburbs have been primarily residential, their population and economic activities are spread throughout an extensive area and tied to the city by a dependency on transportation routes and methods from ferries to trains to streetcars to automobiles. When using the term “suburb” I mean to use it in a way similar to both official and vernacular definitions and expressions to refer to a community of moderate density outside a central city or cities but within the urban center’s orbit.2

Suburbs are far more than the summation of census data, terminology, and head counts. The popular imagery of suburbia is a prevailing force in shaping the conception of what suburbs

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actually are for many Americans. Suburbs evoke many images, characterizations, and lifeways. Perhaps none is more salient than the 1950s and 1960s notion of the nuclear family of dad, mom, two kids, a dog, with a large grass lawn in the front yard of an attractive house with a garage. Depicted in this light, Beaver and Wally Cleaver, or Princess, Bud, and Kitten Anderson, or David and Ricky Nelson ate dinner, always followed by dessert, with mom and dad at the family table with Ward, Ozzie, or Jim reading the newspaper in the study afterwards as June, Harriet, or Margaret cleaned the dishes. The same went for Fred, Wilma, and Pebbles Flintstone in the Stone Age and George, Jane, Judy, and Elroy Jetson in the Space Age. All of these, of course, are well-known television characters from the period. Collectively they presented a picturesque image of the American family in suburbs that represented proper family values and relationships, appropriate gender behaviors, and a tireless, and especially patriotic, devotion to strong moral character. It was irrefutably white and indisputably middle class.³

The problem with this quaint image of American suburbs is life in suburbia has not always been so picturesque. Never is there mention that Beaver might have unexplored sexual feelings toward his friend Whitey, that Princess may have had a self-induced abortion, that Ricky could never face the terrible truth that marijuana led to heroin addiction, or that Fred and George beat their wives behind closed doors. Clearly silly, the underlying point is that the gap between

Hollywood and reality about popular cultural depictions of suburbia is real. Many from the same era expressed conflicting views of suburbia and produced counter narratives. Journalist Frederick Lewis Allen complained in 1954 that growth came “too fast” and destroyed all that made suburbia originally attractive.\(^4\) William H. Whyte famously perceived a dangerous trend toward conformity at the expense of individualism for the “Organization Man” in the “New Suburbia” in 1956.\(^5\) Betty Friedan gloomily described the “problem that has no name” in *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) to alert people of the psychological consequences facing suburbia’s homemakers.\(^6\) Later on, in the 1970s, Norman Lears’ *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* satirized both soap operas and life in the suburbs while in the 1990s the Bundys epitomized the dysfunctional family in *Married with Children*.\(^7\) On the one hand, then, suburbs represented home, family, and community and, on the other hand, they represented conformity, uniformity, racism, and elitism.

Another problem with the Hollywood image of suburbia is that suburbia has developed in different forms throughout history and has brought with them different connotations for different people during many eras. From suburbs outside ancient Babylon, or sixteenth-century England,


or twentieth-century Miami, these respective suburbs arose because of different demographic patterns, infrastructural capabilities, and productive forces, not to mention that suburb, as a term, has referred to a variety of differing spatial and settlement forms throughout history.

Kenneth T. Jackson’s *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (1985), together with works by Henry C. Binford, Michael H. Ebner, Robert Fishman, Ann Durkin Keating, Margaret Marsh, and John R. Stilgoe, usually receive demarcation as the founding literature of either the “orthodox” suburban history or, rather idiosyncratically, the “new suburban history.” With the exception of Sam Bass Warner, Jr.’s *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900* in 1962, Jon C. Teaford’s *City and Suburb: The Political Fragmentation of Metropolitan America, 1850-1970* in 1979, and, to a lesser extent, Lewis Mumford’s “Suburbia — and Beyond,” in his *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects* in 1961, the new suburban historians delivered a more intense examination of suburbs than previously given by historians. Jackson et allii were the new suburban historians (with Warner as perhaps their intellectual forbearer) committed to examining why American suburbs took shape as they did. With the exception of Binford, each new suburban historian regarded suburbanization as the migration of the affluent from the central


city to suburbs and, whether in defeat, fear, or a yearning desire, they searched for homes, family life, and a better, cleaner, and safer environment. In the process, suburbia largely excluded the economically and socially marginal members of society. The new suburban historians consequently painted suburbs as predominantly white middle-class residential enclaves.

Beginning with a special issue of the Journal of Urban History in March 2001, which featured a landmark essay by Richard Harris and Robert Lewis subtitled “A New Synthesis,” a “revisionist” suburban history arose and included works by, among others, Matthew D. Lassiter, Lisa McGirr, Becky M. Nicolaides, Adam Rome, Robert O. Self, and Andrew Weise.10

together, these writings have also been referred to as the “new suburban history” to distinguish it from Jackson et alii, marking the original new suburban history as either orthodox or the first generation. By implication, this categorized Mumford, Teaford, and Warner as a part either of the Jackson consortium or the old suburban history, or even old old suburban history.

Table 1. A Generalized Genealogy of Suburban Historical Schools

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<td>Mumford, Teaford, and Warner</td>
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Whatever, two to three groupings emerge, regardless of their label: (group A) Mumford and Warner — Teaford is in reality not mentioned very often if at all (though footnoted a lot), (group B) Binford, Ebner, Fishman, Keating, Jackson, Marsh, and Stilgoe, and (group C) Harris, Lassiter, Lewis, Nicolaides, McGirr, Rome, Self, and Weise. If group C is new suburban history, then group A and B are old suburban history, with the possibility of further stratification as group B is old suburban history by itself and group A is old old suburban history. If group B is new suburban history, then either group A is old suburban history or a part of group B and group C is new new suburban history, or, at least, revisionist.

The most recent historical literature concerning suburbia, which I shall go ahead and call suburban revisionism (particularly because of its multidisciplinary makeup), has taken pains to separate itself from the older literature. Above all, revisionists argue that the rise and dominance

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of suburbia in the United States after World War II meant that suburbs “belong at center stage.” Yet, they concluded that the “first [generation of] suburban historians . . . sketched out a vision of suburbia that was narrow in both demography and geography.” Specifically, revisionists reject what they see as an older, more orthodox description of suburbia “as homogeneous, conformist, and bourgeois.” The revisionists have identified historians such as Mumford, Warner, Jackson, and Fishman as an earlier legion that “chose to study only those suburbs that fit that stereotype and, in doing so, reified it.”

Suburban revisionists claim to challenge earlier depictions of suburbia, particularly for what they declare are omissions: industry; multifamily housing; blue-collar workers; ethnic and racial minorities; and the poor. While suburban revisionism is still relatively new, their writings show several major themes in which they “push the field in new directions.” Among these, they challenge the notion that suburbs are white, affluent, and almost exclusively residential in character. For example, My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of

Los Angeles, 1920-1965 by Becky M. Nicolaides and Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century by Andrew Weise examine suburbs through the lens of class, race, and homogeneity. Together, they explore the significance of suburban life for the ethnic working class and African Americans, emphasizing homeownership above all in the lives of non-white and non-middle-class suburban residents to show that they also desired to partake in this aspect of the suburban ideal, especially as it afforded them a degree of economic security. Nicolaides concludes homeownership, as opposed to occupation status, became the new paradigm for determining who — and thus who not — belonged under a growing but still exclusive conception of middle class. Weise contends that stringent economic, political, and social forces mandated most African Americans live in ghettos and slums in the twentieth century. Even so, others established homes, built kinship networks, and created a sense of community in suburban places. In fact, between 1960 and 2000, African Americans living in suburbs grew by nine million and, as of 2000, one-third of all African Americans (12 million), resided in suburbs.15

Suburban revisionists such as Matthew Lassiter, Lisa McGirr, Adam Rome, and Robert O. Self, in addition to Nicolaides, reflect some of the recent work that examines suburbia through the lens of political culture and political economy.16 From environmentalism to Black Power to

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15. Weise, Places of Their Own, 1.

16. Lassiter, The Silent Majority; McGirr, Suburban Warriors; Nicolaides, My Blue Heaven; Rome, The Bulldozer in the Countryside; and Self, American Babylon. See also, Kevin M. Kruse, White Flight: Atlanta and the
modern conservatism, they reveal the details of a dynamic and changing political landscape. Most striking, they have pointed to the dismantling of the liberal growth state, which, ironically, created many of the industries, particularly defense industries, and infrastructure that provided “suburban warriors” — white middle-class conservatives — with their jobs and suburban lifestyles in the first place. In other words, suburban revisionists such as Lassiter, McGirr, and Self see the convergence of suburbanization, modernization, and conservatism as affecting larger metropolitan areas by disproportionately distributing assets and debts, and realizing and then contributing to the fall of growth liberalism. Suburban revisionists have therefore employed place theory and notions of the production of space in much the same manner urban and regional historians such as William Cronon’s *Nature’s Metropolis* and George Chauncey’s *Gay New York* did in the early 1990s.\(^\text{17}\) Simply put, they utilized the theories popularized by Henri Lefebvre, Pierre Bourdieu, David Harvey, Harvey Molotch, and Edward Soja to describe how suburban places, and entire metropolitan landscapes, are social spaces that are essentially material products shaped by a society’s social relations, which encompass class interests, experts, the grassroots, and other contending forces.\(^\text{18}\) Social spaces do not magically or inherently spring forth from nature. Rather, the production — and reproduction — of social space results from, and then

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subsequently influences and/or constrains, human action, thought, and attempts at altering the economic, political, or social dynamics. Here, the focus is on corporate and real estate capitalism to stress how the production of space (also called place) makes space an economic good — the commodification of space.\textsuperscript{19}

Suburban revisionists are taking a broader metropolitan view that pays more attention to the place of the suburbs in relationship to central cities, competing suburbs, and their region as a whole.\textsuperscript{20} They have approached the whole metropolis as their unit of analysis to reveal that suburbs do not exist within a vacuum and accentuate the production of space. For example, Self’s \textit{American Babylon} used the history of Oakland as a case study to explore larger issues, such as the ideology of the Black Panther Party, to situate the postwar transformation of metropolitan America in the arena of political economy. The development of suburban places

\textsuperscript{19} Lefebvre, \textit{The Production of Space}, 401-04. Earlier suburban historians, such as Fishman, Jackson, and Warner, recognized the influence of real-estate capitalism and market forces in the production of suburbia as well. See, Fishman, \textit{Bourgeois Utopias}, 10; Jackson, \textit{Crabgrass Frontier}, 296; and Warner, \textit{Streetcar Suburbs}, 26, 154. Indeed, Jackson keenly acknowledged the importance and consequences of the production of suburban social spaces with the following: “It suggests that the space around us — the physical organization of neighborhoods, roads, yards, houses, and apartments — sets up living patterns that condition our behavior” (3).

outside Oakland, like Milpitas, tied intimately to activities in Oakland, and vice versa. Likewise, *Manufacturing Suburbs: Building Work and Home on the Metropolitan Fringe*, edited by Robert Lewis, not only contests the white middle-class paradigm of an earlier cohort of suburban historians, but also takes a metropolitan perspective on how many manufacturing industries choose suburban locations. “Residential areas have not singularly led the way outward from a previously concentrated city, but have always been joined at the hip by industry locating at the urban fringe.”21 Lewis and several other writers describe an urban-suburban landscape in which no uniform process of suburbanization and growth during the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries sufficiently explain the formation of metropolitan areas and their periphery. The emergence of many suburbs, mainly working class and industrial districts, “were created in waves of industrialization and building construction” throughout the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries.22

While “new” suburban historians, in this case the revisionists, are claiming to challenge an earlier group of suburban historians, their claims seem to exaggerate their own separation from the practice of their forebears, especially since many agree with the earlier legion that the suburbs segregated class and race. Certainly, revisionists can claim the detailing of suburban types other than white, affluent, middle-class enclaves as their justification for the “new” branding. Yet, for example, Jackson clearly identified the existence of industrial, racially diverse, and working class suburbs in *Crabgrass Frontier*.23 Fishman, Jackson, Keating, and

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23. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 5, 18, 101. Still, *Crabgrass Frontier* constituted a exhaustive probe into residential patterns. Jackson decided to call the residential pattern of the United States “suburbanization.” Hence, his study is more about the so-called suburbanization of the United States than on suburban places *per se*. 

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Warner unquestionably took a metropolitan perspective in their works that documented a transformation in class-consciousness and some of its consequences in terms of segregation, government assistance policies, and spatial settlement forms.24 The intensified chronicling of ethnoracial, working class, and industrial suburban social spaces by revisionists, however, is by far better than anything else done by historians before as they work to broaden the understanding of suburbs as social spaces and suburbanization as a process. Still, while claiming to be new, the “new” suburban revisionists are more rightfully building upon the work of their earlier colleagues and expanding the understanding of suburbs over a larger space and time. Indeed, the majority of revisionists’ work centers on twentieth century, usually post-World War II, suburbia. Still, some claims at newness have resulted in the ironic narrowing of the work of the earlier cohort who many revisionists claimed had a narrow view of the suburbs. While change must be recognized, the fresh work of revisionists has elements of continuity with earlier allies of suburban history.

Despite any qualms, the in-depth insights of revisionists allow for a better positioning and understanding of agriburbs in California. Specifically, their detailing of suburban social spaces as not entirely residential communities, particularly industrial suburbs, sets an intellectual precedent for conceptualizing suburban places that include agriculture. Moreover, although some official definitions, such as the Census Bureau’s MSA category, have distinctly identified the major economic activity of suburbs as nonagricultural, suburban revisionists have made it abundantly clear that suburban places are complex, diverse, and, again, not solely residential communities.

The expanding trend for metropolitanization in suburban history is critical to unlocking the mysteries of agriburb communities in California. Without positioning the production and reproduction of space within a metropolitan context, the role of often distant, but usually very regional, land-based elites, entrepreneurs, and socio-cultural and market forces risk flying under the radar. The production of agriburb communities in California intimately joins the regional activities, actors, and forces amid a broad metropolitan or regional landscape. An agriburb like Ontario, outside Los Angeles, or agriburbs outside Sacramento, like Orangevale or Fair Oaks, is hard to appreciate without linking it to Los Angeles or Sacramento, not to mention happenings in California, the West, the United States, and even globally. Larger metropolitan, regional, and national forces influenced the production and further economic, political, social, and spatial form of agriburbs in California.

A history of agriburb communities in California, however, is not a “metropolitan history” of any metropolitan area. Although some historians are calling for a suburban history that equates to a metropolitan history, the account of the production of agriburbs and some of their subsequent stages of development takes a “metropolitan perspective” more than to give a history of an entire metropolitan region. To claim otherwise would be an exaggeration of what this suburban-based history attempts to do. Specifically, a metropolitan perspective refers to a way of viewing and understanding suburbs, or cities, with regard to relative position to cities, or (other) suburbs. Suburbs are viewed in relation to urban centers and competing suburbs to understand the affect and influence of cities, and, in an extent for a suburban-based history, the suburbs’ affect and influence on cities. In other words, the suburb is reckoned within a larger metropolitan landscape in order to better analyze historical phenomena and actors. This contrasts sharply with a metropolitan history that attempts to recall the past of an entire
metropolitan area. While I may be splitting hairs over word choices and semantics, a distinction between a metropolitan perspective (or view) and metropolitan history, as I understand them, distinguishes between a suburban history that situates suburbs within a larger metropolitan landscape and a history of an entire metropolitan area that includes the city, or cities, and suburbs. Taking a metropolitan perspective concerning Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, then, attempts to account for the broader influences of Los Angeles, Sacramento, and other surrounding areas to account for their affect on the formation and development of these communities rather than to try to give a metropolitan history of the Los Angeles or Sacramento regions.

The Market Revolution and the Transformation of America

As a metropolitan perspective unquestionably helps to reveal the historical dynamics and phenomena in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, a national perspective helps reveal the impetus for a rise in suburbia. The extraordinary changes taking place in the United States in the early nineteenth century have impressed historians for a long time and help us to understand the rise of a suburban ideal. Whether called the Antebellum Era to stress war, the Age of Jackson to focus on political culture, the first Industrial Revolution to highlight the rise of large-scale industry, or, in parts, the Era of Reform and the Era of Good Feelings to examine a time of sweeping democratic ferment and a soaring sentiment of patriotism, the United States experienced enormous changes that, in one way or another, touched the lives of most Americans. What one historian called the “transportation revolution,” other historians, particularly Charles Sellers and Sean Wilentz, called a “market revolution” to explain profound political changes
during the era that featured great technological and economic innovation. The economy transformed from a largely subsistence economy of small farms and workshops whereby most local needs were satisfied through barter and exchange to a more capitalist commercial economy in which farmers and manufacturers produced foods and goods for cash incentives from an often distant marketplace. In other words, the United States, in general (and certainly not everywhere), experienced a powerful transformation from the early years of the republic to the eve of Civil War. The population exploded, which included the arrival of larger amounts of new immigrants. Cities arose while older ones grew larger. Manufacturing and industry began what would be a meteoric rise. Transportation and communication technologies appeared that would transform both the way people experienced their everyday lives and imagined their future. An American middle class also emerged that would be shaped by and shape economic activities, political philosophies, and cultural values that have had a lasting affect and influence on the territorial organizations and spatial forms of the United States. The rise of the suburban ideal, during this epoch, represented one of the many ways in which Americans imagined an alternative. And, if not an alternative, then a place where they could set things right and, by implication, create and maintain an idyll American society of model Americans.

A quick review of some of the changes caused by the market revolution helps to situate and possibly understand better the rise of a suburban ideal. Specifically, the changes sparked by the market revolution had major implications in terms of industrial growth, immigration, slavery and ethnoracial conflict, political ideology and practice, social institutions and cultural patterns, and family life and household arrangements. For example, the population totaled four million in 1790. By 1820, it reached ten million; and by 1840, seventeen million. Federal legislation slashed the price of land significantly: $2.00 an acre, at a minimum of 640 acres, in 1796; $0.125 an acre at a forty-acre minimum in 1854; and virtually free for 160 acres in 1862. Immigration, originally limited because of wars in Europe and domestic economic crises, exploded in the 1830s with about 600,000 immigrants, 70% German or Irish, coming between 1831 and 1840. This compares with 144,000 arrivals between 1821 and 1830. The population not only exploded and moved westward, but also, thanks to King Cotton, nearly one million slaves relocated from the older slave states to the Deep South to harvest cotton production that skyrocketed from about 500,000 bales in 1820 to three million in 1850 to almost five million in 1860. The number of total slaves climbed from nearly 700,000 in 1790 to about 1.2 million in 1810 and roughly 4.5 million in 1860. Those casting their lots in cities, particularly for employment in burgeoning factories, contributed to the growth of urban areas as the number of cities with populations exceeding 5,000 rose from a dozen in 1820 to nearly 150 in 1850. Cities of more than 25,000 to 250,000 grew from three in 1800 to thirty-two in 1860.26

Rapid population growth, demographic change, and residential and occupational shifts were an outcome and medium of change in commerce and industry, communication, technology, transportation, and the patterns of society and everyday life. Transportation improved as more than 3,300 miles of canals in 1840 rose from about 100 miles in 1812. Steam ferries, omnibuses, and the railroad all significantly influenced migration patterns and commerce alike, as railroad track lines boomed from more than 3,000 miles in 1840 to about 31,000 in 1860. Newspaper companies emerged as ninety newspapers with a circulation of about four million in 1790 escalated to more than 1,200 papers with a circulation of ninety million in 1835. Factories and mills, such as those in Lowell, Pawtucket, and Waltham, employed about 3% of the population.
— or 350,000 people — in 1820 and 14% of the population — or two million — in 1860. When
the era began, ax and plow served as the common tools of farmers in a predominantly barter and
exchange economy. By the 1860s, however, within an expanding capitalist economy, farmers
moved toward specialization and utilized horse-powered seed drills, cultivators, and reapers. By
the eve of the Civil War, then, a vastly transformed, if not divided, United States arose out of the
spirit of 1776. Many Americans struggled upon this changed landscape with issues raised by
commercial capitalism, immigration, industrialization, and urbanization and often interpreted
such changes as a conflict and battle for the very soul of the nation. New forms of
consciousness, politics, and social life thus arose and shaped the tumults and innovations most
often associated with the era.27

27. For transportation, communications, and newspapers, see Clarence S. Brigham, History and
Colleen A. Dunlavy, Politics and Industrialization: Early Railroads in the United States and Prussia (Princeton,
NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Fishlow, American Railroads and the Transformation of the Antebellum
Economy; Fogel, Railroads and American Economic Growth; Carter Goodrich, Government Promotion of American
Canals and Railroads, 1800-1890 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960); Erik F. Haites, James Mak, and
Gary M. Walton, Western River Transportation: The Era of Early Internal Development, 1810-1860 (Baltimore:
Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975); Nathan Miller, The Enterprise of a Free People: Aspects of Economic
Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism: A History of Newspapers in the United States through 260 years: 1690 to
1950 (New York: Macmillan, 1950); David Paul Nord, Communities of Journalism: A History of American
Newspapers and their Readers (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001); Jeff Pasley, The Tyranny of Printers:
Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001); Ronald E.
Shaw, Canals for a Nation: The Canal Era in the United States, 1790-1860 (Lexington: University Press of
Kentucky, 1990); Carol Sheriff, The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817-1862 (New
York: Hill and Wang, 1996); Stover, American Railroads; and Taylor, The Transportation Revolution. For factories
and mills, see Blewett, Men, Women, and Work; Alan Dawley, Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in
Lynn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976); Paul G. Faler, Mechanics and Manufacturers in the Early
Industrial Revolution: Lynn, Massachusetts, 1760-1860 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981); David
A. Hounshell, From the American System to Mass Production, 1800-1932: The Development of Manufacturing
Technology in the United States (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984); Barbara M. Tucker, Samuel
Slater and the Origins of the American Textile Industry, 1790-1860 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984); and
David A. Zonderman, Aspirations and Anxieties: New England Workers and the Mechanized Factory System, 1815-
1850 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). For agriculture and farming, see Chaplin, An Anxious Revolt;
Danbom, Born in the Country; Danhof, Change in Agriculture; Hurt, American Agriculture; and McClelland,
Sowing Modernity.
The enormous transformation wrought so virulently by the forces of the first half of the nineteenth century divided the nation into conflicting economic, gender, racial, and social interests and differentiated those interests spatially within geographically expanding metropolitan areas, including urban centers and small suburban communities. Suburbia represented an architectural, cultural, and spatial response to the affect of the market revolution, creating changes that marked the mid-nineteenth century and beyond. As suburban historians have pointed out, the division of the nation both derived from and affected social hierarchies that, as demonstrated by historians Stuart M. Blumin and Mary P. Ryan, saw the creation of a new middle-class culture and consciousness. Attempts to define the behaviors and values that ought to be considered as the signs of middle-class status as well as the style of life appropriate to that status — what one reformer called an “anxious spirit of gain” in 1845 — marked the creation of a new middle-class culture. A new class- and identity-consciousness centered on values of democracy and freedom and concepts of a “self-interested man” or “self-made man” became established as natural. As economic life became more competitive because of the market revolution a process of “middling” America took place and, in overtly gendered and racialized notions, a new celebration of the successful young white male emerged whereby so-


called entrepreneurs received praise for success. Yet, “the scheming speculations of the last ten years,” wrote Reverend Henry Ward Beecher in 1846, “have produced an aversion among the young to the slow accumulations of ordinary industry, and fired them with a conviction that shrewdness, cunning, and bold ventures, are a more manly way to wealth.” In other words, men had to prove themselves in the new competitive market economy. They had to prove their ability to support their families and, in the process, as men and as members of a new middle class. An enhanced higher income signified success. Ascension to middle classdom usually came through wealth. A lifestyle that correlated with, and thus signaled to others, a higher income level and class status accompanied wealth as another signifier. Therefore, with new found wealth, the new middle class sought to distinguish itself culturally, ideologically, materially, and spatially from everyone else (early examples of what Thorstein Veblen and Pierre Bourdieu called “conspicuous consumption” and “distinction” respectively). A redefinition of the American dream and ideal lifestyle took place in the process. A single-family home in the countryside, but still close to the city, emerged as an idyllic model and entitlement of middle-class Americans. This ideal further transformed the United States, as well as the meaning of


success. Suburbia and middle-class status consequently represented a powerful redefinition of what it meant to be American in a time of great change.

The Suburban Ideal: Constructing a Middle Landscape and City-Country Alternative

Said landscape designer Andrew Jackson Downing in 1850: “The republican home, built by no robbery of the prosperity of another class, maintained by no infringement of a brother’s rights; the beautiful, rural, unostentatious, moderate home of the country gentleman, [is] large enough to minister to all the wants, necessities, and luxuries of a republican, and not too large or too luxurious to warp the life of manners of his children.”35 According to Downing and others, such as Susan Fenimore Cooper in Rural Hours in 1850, the suburban home in the countryside, close to nature, would make Americans better citizens or “virtuous citizens” — particularly vital given the perceived cacophony of exigent problems and vicissitudes wrought by the maelstrom of the first half of the nineteenth century.36 This rural democratic fantasy posited that suburbs would save America, foster republicanism and civic participation, stimulate neighborliness and community, and restore Americans’ democratic spirit.

Suburban imagineers, retaining some elements of the agrarian ethos, celebrated a society of small property owners who, while not exactly farmers, were close enough to nature and far enough from the city to mirror Thomas Jefferson’s independent, rational, and “democratic

(Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Press, 1988), 5; Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias, 3-9, 88, 118-19; Hayden, Building Suburbia, 25; Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 50, 91; Mumford, The City in History, 484; Linda E. Smiens, Building an American Identity, Pattern Book Homes and Communities, 1870–1900 (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 1999), 86; Warner, Streetcar Suburbs, 34, 48, 53, 64, 155; Wright, Building the Dream, 113; and Wright, Moralism and the Model Home, 55.


36. “Virtuous citizen” quoted from Downing, Architecture of Country Houses, 270; see also xiv, xxiii, 257, 264, 267, and 286; Susan Fenimore Cooper, Rural Hours by A Lady (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1850); Archer, “Country and City,” 147; and Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 65-66.
husbandman” that would help “preserve a republic in vigor.” O37 Others agreed, such as architect and planner Frederick Law Olmsted, architect author Samuel Sloan, and landscape designer Calvert Vaux. Olmsted thought suburbs would help further democratize and thereby equalize Americans, particularly by transforming them into a homogeneous middle class “of certain tastes.” Sloan believed that homeownership, “allied to taste,” filled the owner with a “love for it” and a “proportionate determination to uphold and defend it.” “Such a man,” he concluded, became “a good citizen, for he has a stake in society.” Finally, Vaux maintained a suburban home “will, doubtless, help a good deal to clear away the obstructions that at present hamper the social progress of the spirit of republicanism.”38

An increased middle-class antipathy, particularly toward the city, accompanied increased immigration, industrialization, and urbanization. Much of this grew over concerns with congestion and traffic, crime and vice, and health and pollution. Suburbia became an imagined landscape and community for combating, even escaping, undesirable influences from the city. “Flee the great cities!” said Reverend Henry Morgan in his 1880 Boston Inside Out! Sins of a Great City! A Story of Real Life. He continued: “Oh young man, happy in your country home, come not to the great city!” For Morgan and others, liquor, prostitution, and crime were the “quicksands of city life.”39 In contrast, the suburban home emerged as the imagined safeguard

37. Jefferson, Query XIX, Notes on the State of Virginia, 170-71. For more on suburbs and their relationship to democracy, republicanism, citizenship, and civic participation, see Archer, “Country and City,” 147; Clark, The American Family Home, 24; Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 65-66; Marsh, Suburban Lives, 5; Mumford, The City in History, 499-500; and Warner, Streetcar Suburbs, 158.


of American liberties and the authentic American habitat to promote better family relations, escape urban vices, and commune with nature in “a healthful location” or, as Catharine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe argued, “A Healthful Home” in a good climate with pure air and proper ventilation. Authors from Beecher, to Emerson, to Jefferson, to Olmsted invented and fostered a set of images and new — or at least retranslated — cultural values and perceptions of quality and taste that were decidedly anti-urban, pro-nature, and centered on class, domesticity, home, and family. The suburb therefore emerged as a middle landscape, an alternative to the city on one hand, a mix of the best of city and country on the other hand. In the suburban family home Americans were imagined to reap the rewards of climate, health, and nature without the sacrifice of urban conveniences, individualism, or self-reliance.

Beecher, Emerson, Jefferson, Olmsted, and other image-makers articulated a vision of a superior environment and proper lifestyle that constituted the emergence of a suburban ideal. They also expressed a set of cultural values, images, and practices. For example, Emerson, Jefferson, and writer and naturalist Henry David Thoreau were leading — and popular — antiurbanists who did little to disguise their disgust with the city. Like Henry Morgan, antiurbanists bemoaned cities because of such things as congestion, epidemic diseases, pollution, and hordes of immigrants. “I view large cities,” said Jefferson, “as pestilential to the morals,  


41. Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias, 8-9; David M. Hummon, Commonplaces: Community Ideology and Identity in American Society (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 100; Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 44; Marsh, Suburban Lives, xii, 2; and Palen, The Suburbs, 100. For even more on suburbia as reflecting cultural values, see Grier, Culture and Comfort; Hayden, Building Suburbia; Smiens, Building an American Identity; Wright, Building the Dream; and Wright, Morality and the Model Home.

the health, and the liberties of man.”43 Emerson believed in a sort of brain drain as cities weakened the United States because they “drain[ed] the country of the flavor of youth, the best part of the population, and leave the countryside (in the absence of landed aristocracy) to be cultivated by an inferior, irresponsible class.”44 While many urban leaders and potential profiteers portrayed cities as vital centers that nurtured culture and innovation, many others portrayed the city as the symbol of problems and evil — the city as menace. Cities just could not properly support the rapid population growth and lacked open, public spaces, which, as one critic judged in 1819, meant “an evil of much more serious cost” because it would “keep without” that “ministering angel of health.”45 “A man’s health,” Thoreau surmised in 1862, “requires as many acres of meadow to his prospect as his farm does loads of musk.”46

Believing “our government will remain virtuous for many centuries as long as they are chiefly agricultural,” Jefferson and others extolled a “rural virtue” that both contributed to a growing hostility to the city and a romanticized celebration of nature.47 The city emblematized a menace and lacked the means to support a moral life. A home in the countryside, to oppose the oppressive modes of city life, provided families a safe and simple gathering place in an environment of natural surroundings. This change, in closer contact to nature, panoplied the


43. Thomas Jefferson, letter to Benjamin Rush (1800), quoted in Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 68.
44. Ralph Waldo Emerson, quoted in Marx, The Machine in the Garden, 235-36.
45. Henry McMurtie, Sketches of Louisville and its Environs (Louisville: S. Penn, Jr., 1819), 114.
46. Henry David Thoreau, quoted in Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 68.
moral, psychological, and physical health of the individual and the nation. This rural ideal — also often referred to as the romantic, picturesque, or pastoral ideals — represented, as Thoreau said, “absolute freedom and wildness,” wholly superior to “merely civil” culture.\(^{48}\) The image of picturesque cottages and villas in a bucolic landscape became a commodity eagerly and readily consumed by middle-class Americans through the writings of Jefferson, Emerson, and Thoreau, not to mention authors such as George Gordon Byron, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Mary Shelley, and Alfred Tennyson.\(^{49}\) Byron and Tennyson demarcate an English influence, especially on Downing and Olmsted, which numerous suburban historians point to, particularly noting the influence of the editor John C. Loudon (1838) who saw suburban residences as “procure[ing] health and enjoyment at the same time.”\(^{50}\) Nevertheless, a distinct and enduring American


ideology and cultural construction that has viewed individualism, self-reliance, and democratic citizenship as more compatible with rural rather than urban environments arose by the 1830s and 1840s. This rural antidote to a growing urban disease celebrated an agrarian past that linked an equalitarian democratic republic with rural life, with or without agriculture, and represented a place for experiencing what it meant to be an American. As Emerson noted, “nature is medicinal,” and if Americans were sick because of some market revolution, then suburban homes in the countryside would provide the appropriate healing and acclimation.51

Suburbia also arose as an alternative, residential middle landscape, not so much anti-urban as much as a location to set things right. In 1961, Lewis Mumford concluded pre-World War II suburbs, as a middle landscape, were places “to take advantage” of a “rural surcease.” Suburban pleasures were “between rural and urban pleasures: eating, drinking, dancing, athletic sports, [and, what else,] love-making.”52 Gervase Wheeler pointed to this ideal mix of city and country in his 1855 Homes for the People, in Suburb and Country when he concluded a suburban home “joined the social habits of the city” with “rural tastes.”53 The suburban middle landscape then, while not quite rural, but not quite urban, combined city and country. “To those who desire to dwell amid the beauties of nature and yet be within convenient distance of the city,” wrote one contributor to Suburban Homes on the West Jersey Railroad in 1881, suburbs had urban amenities in which one could enjoy “excellent religious, education, and social advantages.”

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52. Mumford, The City in History, 483.
Such advantages included a library, opera house, public and private schools, and “numerous shops, stores, mills, lumber, and coal yards.” That is, as utopian socialist Albert Brisbane explained in 1843, suburban homes in the country combined “all the advantages, resources, and enjoyments of city and country life, and avoid the disadvantage of both.”

Frederick Law Olmsted, as well as his partner Calvert Vaux, utilized the combination of city and country as a principal conceptual foundation for suburban planning and design. Repeatedly recognized by historians and others as the apotheosized figures of suburbia’s proliferation, they laid out sixteen suburbs, including Brookline, MA, Chestnut Hill, MA, and Riverside, IL. Olmsted and Vaux stated that suburbs were “not a sacrifice of urban conveniences, but their combination with the special charms and substantial advantages of rural conditions of life.” The designers, above all in Riverside, offered suburban communities with

54. Anonymous, Suburban Homes on the West Jersey Railroad, 269-70.


large lots and an environment that sought to blend urban elements within “sylvan surroundings,” which included curvilinear streets, parks, rambles, and shade trees.\textsuperscript{58} This “best application of the arts of civilization” meant suburban residents would find “the advantages of society, of compact society, of the use of professional talent in teachers, and artists and physicians.”\textsuperscript{59} Olmsted stated in a letter in 1860, “They want to be served in a regular, exact, punctual, and timely manner with superior comestibles, and whatever else it is desirable to have supplied to a family, freshly, frequently, or quickly on demand.”\textsuperscript{60} Olmsted and Vaux said they designed Riverside “in such a manner as to combine the conveniences of the city — viz, Gas, Water, Roadways, Walks and Drainage — with all the beauties of landscape gardening and the essential advantages of the country.”\textsuperscript{61} Reminiscent of an Enlightenment sense of progress whereby “happy ages” are detectable through such things as art and architecture and mark “an era of the greatness of the human mind,” Olmsted and Vaux believed their suburban communities reflected a “progress” that “was never more rapid [than] at the present moment.”\textsuperscript{62}

The single-family home in a setting that combined the supposed better of two worlds emerged as a bastion against the adverse outside forces associated with the market revolution. The family and their habitat in suburbia became places of refuge — physical and social self-segregation. Men of the cloth during this “era of reform,” the so-called Second Great


\textsuperscript{60} Olmsted, letter to Elliott, August 27, 1860, \textit{The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted}, vol. 3, 264.


Awakening, cited the importance of the family as a safeguard against a morally failing society. The family home of the middle class thence emerged as much as, if not more than, an emotional rather than an economic unit. Books such as Lydia Maria Child’s *The Mother’s Book* (1831), Reverend John Abbott’s *The Mother at Home* (1833), Reverend Herman Humphrey’s *Domestic Education* (1840), and Reverend William G. Eliot, Jr.’s 1854 *Lectures to Young Women* — who seemed to need a lot of lecturing — depicted the middle-class family as the stabilizer of American society. No government institution, political philosophy, or cultural practice could do what the family circle could. “The foundation of our free institutions,” Eliot said, “is in our love, as a people, for our homes. The strength of our country is found, not in the declaration that all men are free and equal, but in the quiet influence of the fireside, the bonds, which unite together the family circle. The cornerstone of our republic is the hearth-stone.” Indeed, as Beecher and her sister Harriet Beecher Stowe maintained, both individual Americans and the nation would find salvation in the perfection of family life in suburban homes close to nature.

The romanticization of the single-family home in suburban communities also represented a pattern of social and class segregation through spatial difference and distance and the placability of gender roles and arrangements with the rise of the “cult of domesticity.” Most

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strikingly, class, cultural, and racial conformity, homogeneity, and uniformity were not something repulsive to suburbia’s early imagineers as much as they seemed to later critics. In a time of growing concerns regarding security and moral, psychological, and physical health of both Americans and the republic for which they stood, notions of privacy and separateness gained saliency. The single-family home became the ultimate place of refuge and the locally controlled suburban community, “united,” as Beecher said, “by similarity of character and pursuits,” emerged as a homogeneous fantasy to counter a heterogeneous urban landscape. While perhaps not as Machiavellian as some retrospective interpreters have characterized the middle-class movement to suburbia, suburban places as portrayed by the likes of Beecher and Olmsted nonetheless did reflect a middle-class longing for social segregation, if not at least away form ethnoracial and other working class inhabitants of the city, if more toward common interests and similarity. Regardless of motivation, homogeneity proved desirous as suburbs fostered a uniformity that minimized ethnic hostilities. Suburban relocation also created a “spatiality of whiteness” or “possessive investment in whiteness” that minimized differences between ethnic whites and intensified the racializing — if not radicalizing — of “others.” Historians such as Matthew Lassiter and Robert O. Self have pointed out how such racializing has had dire economic, political, and social consequences as late as the mid-to-latter twentieth century. White middle-class entitlement, more often than not spoken in the language of

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67. Warner, Streetcar Suburbs, 156.

property values, citizenship, constitutional rights, and reverse discrimination, trumped any attempts at redressing hundreds of years of discrimination, oppression, and segregation that disproportionately favored one class, gender, race, sexual orientation, and system of belief over any others and, in the process, became institutionalized culturally, structurally, and spatially. In other words, the United States, including colonial America before 1776, has a long history of affirmative action favoring white, heterosexual, protestant, middle-to-upper-class males. So in suburbs, historically, the middle class sought and preserved social homogeneity, particularly in terms of class and race separation, whether as “clubbing together,” finding “common interests,” or, as Beecher and Stowe imagined, a “Christian family” in a “Christian neighborhood” that would be “the grand ministry of salvation” for the democratic citizen and the republic alike.  

Depictions of the single-family as a place of refuge — a private, supposedly gentler and safer haven — also portrayed the home as the proper place for women as an ideology of domesticity celebrated the single-family home, where women presided and ruled, as the central institution of American life. Women were to create a peaceful and domestic world, removed from the city. Because of the market revolution, women’s domestic duties and roles were glorified. Under what has been called a time of “republican motherhood” prior to the full affect


of the great transformations occurring in the wake of the market revolution, advice givers such as
Liza Farrar and Lydia Maria Child urged women to complete their domestic responsibilities
because such was their duty. Domestic responsibilities took a backseat to women’s commitment
to both civic and family life by asserting that mothers’ nurturing of public-spirited male citizens
could guarantee the steady infusion of virtue into the republic. 71 By the 1830s and 1840s,
however, women such as Beecher, fellow writer Sara Josepha Hale, and Catherine Sedgwick told
women that domestic responsibilities were what actually constituted the means of social
salvation. “And not only in domestic life is the moral effect of women’s character and conduct
thus influential,” wrote Hale in 1840, “but the prosperity and greatness of the nation are equally
dependent upon her.” 72

No other figure is more central to the sacralization of domesticity than Catharine E.
Beecher, one of thirteen children of the Reverend Lyman Beecher. 73 Ironically, although she
never had her own home and family and rarely found herself on friendly terms with her siblings,
she became the leading nineteenth-century theorist on the virtues and requirements of
domesticity, value of home, and importance of family. Believing in the doctrine of separate
spheres and women’s moral superiority, which came to full fruition in the privacy of the home, a

71. For more on Republican Motherhood, see Linda K. Kerber, “The Republican Mother: Women and the
Kerber, Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America (New York: Norton, 1986); and
Mary Beth Norton, Liberty’s Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800 (Boston:
Little, Brown, 1980), particularly 177-89.


73. For more on Beecher, see Clark, American Family Home, 33-36; Hayden, Building Suburbia, 35-42;
Dolores Hayden, Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods,
Housework,” in Susana Torre, ed., American Architecture: Historic and Contemporary Perspectives (New York:
Whitney Library of Design, 1977), 40-49; Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 62-64; Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias, 121-
23; Marsh, Suburban Lives, 12-45; Kathryn Kish Sklar, Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity (New
Haven: Yale University Press, 1973); and Wright, Building the Dream, 75-77.
“cult of true womanhood” served as the basis for women to create a measure of their own power while Beecher linked architectural and landscape design with the domestic ideal. She believed in the power of place and offered plans for an ideal middle-class home “in the country or in the suburban vicinities as give space or ground for healthful outdoor occupation in the family service.” She believed women were the “ministers of home” and could construct homes on “democratic” and “Christian principles,” utilize technological innovation, and play a primary part in uplifting American life. Focusing on family, home, nature, health, and security, Beecher helped shape the rural community ideal and home-style favored by middle-class suburban families ever since.

Historian Frederick Jackson Turner is certainly famous for his articulation of an exceptional American democratic spirit spreading across a “savage” frontier — the safety valve of the republic. Yet, in 1884, nine years before his famed “frontier thesis” roused the historical imagination and profession, he argued that the history of architecture provided evidence of a history of oppression. But, in the United States, he lectured, “the nineteenth century is striving to build humanity into a glorious temple to its God” through an architecture of freedom. In other


words, Turner and others believed that the designs, layouts, and shapes of buildings could have a profound influence on the moral character of their inhabitants. The single-family home, synonymous at this point with the family dwelling inside, hence emerged in the minds of many, particularly those selling self-help manuals and pattern books, as an island of stability — island communities — in a society under strain caused by the market revolution. Together with the appropriate familial relationships and gender assignments, the American family home fostered republicanism, nurtured society, and, ultimately, would ensure that inevitable American march of progress. “He who improves the dwelling-houses of a people in relation to their comforts, habits, and morals,” said one pair of design architects in 1856, “makes a . . . lasting reform at the very foundations of society.” The home, as symbol for ideal family behaviors, became not only a place to live, but also served as an emblem for family cohesiveness and identity, especially middle-class identity as it contributed to the definition of middle class at least as much as income level. By the 1830s, families were going bankrupt to appear middle class through lifestyle and proper use of space. “We have, again and again,” wrote one observer in 1832, “seen families of limited means, forego the very necessaries of life, in order to keep up the appearance of being able to enjoy its luxuries, and this, because they were unwilling to seem inferior to those with whom they have been accustomed to associate in life.” At the risk of foregoing the necessaries of life, the isolated family home became the American middle-

78. For more on house and home, see Clark, The American Family Home, particularly chapters 1-2; Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias, 53-56; Handlin, The American Home; particularly chapters 1-4; Hayden, Grand Domestic Revolution; Hayden, Building Suburbia, particularly chapters 1-4; Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, particularly chapter 3; Marsh, Suburban Lives; xiv, 2-6; Stilgoe, Borderland, 30-32; and Wright, Building the Dream, particularly chapters 5-6.


ideal, the safeguard against ill fortunes, as well as the preserve for American liberties and virtuous habits.

The nearby countryside of a growing urban area, as indicated by Olmsted and Vaux, was the most appropriate setting for the single-family American home. Many more, both before and since Olmsted and Vaux, have agreed, such as Beecher, Henry Hudson Holly, and Gervase Wheeler. Alexander Jackson Davis, perhaps the preeminent figure in at least introducing and developing the country house of middle-class envy, also concerned himself with not just design, “but in the want of connexion with its site.”

That site, in the countryside close to nature, influenced his design of Llewellyn Park, New Jersey, in 1857, which, according to Kenneth T. Jackson, “began the tradition of carefully planned suburbs.” Llewellyn Park, like Riverside a decade later, attempted to combine the best of both city and country. By dividing plots into one to ten acres, combined with curvilinear roads and natural open space, advertisements of Llewellyn Park included “special reference to the wants of citizens doing business in the city of New York, and yet wishing accessible, retired, and healthful homes in the country.”

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82. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 77.

As Beecher was to domesticity, Andrew Jackson Downing was to the image of the American family home and in translating the rural ideal into the suburban ideal.84 “We believe,” said Downing in 1850, “about all things under heaven, in the power and virtue of the individual home.”85 As author and editor of The Horticulturalist, Downing espoused a faith in the power of “rural tastes” in connection with homes, landscape architecture, and parks. Arguing, all “sensible men gladly escape, earlier or later, or partially or wholly from the turmoil of cities,” he added, “the love of country is inseparably connected with love of home.”86 In the move to country houses a great transfiguration of the individual American and family occurred by “not only augmenting his own enjoyment, but strengthening his patriotism, and making him a better citizen.”87 Downing desired for people to live more fashionable and tasteful lives. He suggested that in the city’s hinterland the purchase of farmland and converting it into suburban property was what Americans ought to be doing. He idealized “love of rural life” for middle-class suburban residents and sought to give advice, “practical methods,” so as to “render domestic life


87. Downing, Treatise, ix.
more delightful.”88 With a goal of bringing “men into daily contact with nature . . . in their country and cottage homes,” he lectured, one “should look for the happiest social and moral development of our people” in such houses.89 Put differently, “it is the solitude and freedom of the family home in the country which constantly preserves the purity of the nation, and invigorates its intellectual powers.”90 Downing boldly offered “three excellent reasons” for “good houses.” First, they were a “powerful means of civilization” whereby a “refinement of manners which distinguishes a civilized from a coarse and brutal people” is established and signaled the “progress of its civilization.” Second, good homes had “a great social value,” particularly best for the family and the “purity of the nation.” Finally, Downing said “there is a moral influence in a country home — when, among an educated, truthful, and refined people, it is an echo of their character — which is more powerful than any mere oral teachings of virtue and morality.” In other words, a “good house,” in suburban communities, “contributes largely to our stock of happiness, and to the elevation of the moral character.”91

**Americans, the Suburban Ideal, and the California Dream**

A distinct suburban ideal arose by the time of the Civil War that celebrated a single-family home in sylvan surroundings. Suburbs represented an imagined landscape and most beneficial location that made Americans more American, a republic more equal, and a democratic spirit more capable and able to grow. Suburbia assured hopes for the rejuvenation and even salvation of Americans’ hearts, minds, and souls as suburban imagineers and others


articulated fears of being under attack and hurt by relentless commercial capitalist expansion, immigration, industrialization, and urbanization. Suburban imagineers depicted a social space whereby Americans could set things right and proceed with the United States’ forward march of progress. Rural but not remote and urbane but not urban, suburban places were close to nature without sacrifice of urban amenities. Suburbs seemed almost a city without a city as private cottages and villas in a rural hinterland close to the city replaced isolated cabins and huts in an untamed and remote wasteland. Churches and social clubs replaced bars and brothels, shade trees and avenues replaced pollution and traffic, and family values replaced sinful living. Butchers and bankers, dry goods stores and lumberyards, and libraries and opera houses were all found together in a pastoral landscape where no prostitute, smell of soot, or infectious disease could cause harm.

A focus on home, family, health, nature, and cultured refinement were the hallmarks of a mid-nineteenth to early twentieth-century conception of an ideal suburban home and community. Place, as a geographically specific location, was vital to the procurement, cultivation, and proliferation of suburban homes and families — to the creation of an ideal residential social space. As imagined by the likes of Beecher, Downing, Olmsted, and others, nothing seemed inconsequential about where — not to mention how — people lived in the United States. The power of place, in this case a rural setting within the orbit of an urban center, meant the power to save an American society and way of life that, by many accounts, seemed threatened by the insatiable forces unleashed by the market revolution.

The suburban ideal had been firmly established and transmitted to a large and growingly antagonistic middle class and middle class aspiring public audience by the time shots ricocheted off the walls of Fort Sumter in 1861. The hunt for the perfect location, the physical and idyllic
site for a suburban community and family home, had already begun before the Civil War and continued, as many have argued, well into the twenty-first century. The search for the geographic ideal — the perfect location for the best residential social space — spanned the nation from the eastern slope of the Watchung Mountains in New Jersey, to the Des Plaines River in Illinois, to the South Platte River Valley in the Colorado Territory.

California boosters distinctly laid claim to the notion that California, as they translated it, meant the supreme geographic location and physical landscape so desired and extolled by those who had constructed the image of suburbia. Descriptions and narratives of California as a land of homes, ideal for families, best for health, abundant in natural resources, and blessed with a pristine environment filled thousands of pages of hundreds of promotional and other print publications made available across America. If one truly desired a single-family home in the countryside without sacrifice of urban amenities, then one needed to go to California’s beautiful countryside adjacent to nascent, but growing, urban centers such as Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento, and San Francisco. The California dream, in large measure from the 1870s to World War I, represented the peaceful suburban landscape as envisioned by early to mid-nineteenth century image-makers of the suburban model. California, in short, was the best place for suburbs, and not just any type, but rather a rural suburb that retained the agrarian ethos of tilling the soil and soul. The agriburb, as a rural suburban type then, was the materialization of California’s “suburban phenomenon.”
CHAPTER TWO

“Going to California with an Aching in My Heart”: The California Dream — Toward a Common Definition of Colony, Horticulture, and Suburb in California at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

A California fruit-grower is in some respects akin to the middle class of suburban dwellers near Boston and New York, with this very important difference, that he actually and constantly makes his living from the soil he owns.

— Charles Howard Shinn, 1891

Prior to the dawn of the twentieth century California had emerged as the perfect site for a suburban family, home, and community amid orchards and vineyards and adjacent to growing urban centers and regional networks such as Los Angeles, Sacramento, and San Francisco. In California, those suburban ideals of family, home, and nature would reach their fullest potential and characterize the narratives of California’s promotional literature at the turn of the twentieth century. The idealization and romanticization of horticulture, essentially consistent with how Downing and other suburban imagineers used the term, meant far more than the simple cultivation of a garden. Horticulture represented the cultivation of America’s exceptional mind and spirit. In conjunction with a suburban home, horticulture signified the art, even science, of cultivating or managing profit-rewarding agricultural gardens of Eden that nurtured and rejuvenated America’s democratic spirit, rural virtue, and republican form all while in vital contact with healthful natural surroundings. With the subdivision of large land holdings in the 1870s and 1880s, California portrayed itself as a way out of the vilified heterogeneous and criminalistic city as well as the tireless workloads and routines often associated with an

1. Although more about youthful infatuation and earthquakes, it is a rare pleasure to quote from a Led Zeppelin song, yet alone make it a chapter title. See, Led Zeppelin, “Going to California,” Led Zeppelin IV, released by Atlantic Records on November 8, 1971.

increasingly commercialized business world. In California, a business-minded “refined class” of “intelligent people” could return to the soil as both a way of life and profit. For aspiring farmers, California’s boosters promoted the life of an independent, democratic husbandman in close contact with nature as extolled by Beecher, Emerson, Jefferson, and others. For would-be horticulturalists, or “scientific farmers,” or “gentleman farmers,” or “producers,” they idealized a liberal ideology and celebration of individual profit and self-gain that venerated innovation and its own power to strengthen a more equalitarian and classless society. In California, running a farm made one, as Charles Howard Shinn observed in 1891, “akin” to middle class suburbanites outside Boston and New York. Yet, he noted a “very important difference.” Suburban dwellers in California made their living from the soil as farmers. More specifically, California’s agricultural landscape and farmers were essentially redefined as suburban, but were so in-and-of a distinct way: they were of a suburban type that actually included agriculture — the agriburb.

**California’s Fertile Growth**

The striking growth and transformation from large-scale extensive ranching and wheat farming to small-scale intensive farming in California from the 1870s to World War I represented one of the most rapid in American history. Spurred by a collapse in grain growing and the rise of horticulture, California’s growth and development skyrocketed in a relatively short time span. In addition to the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, other rail lines such as the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe helped end California’s seclusion from the rest

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of the nation and provided rate competition with Southern Pacific that reduced transportation and shipping costs.⁴

California’s fruit growth is perhaps the most impressive aspect of this change. In 1873, two Bahia trees alive with Washington Navels grew outside Riverside. By the end of the 1880s, more than one million Bahia trees dotted the Southern California landscape, producing about 2,000 carloads of navel oranges in 1886 alone.⁵ In Northern California, Sacramento produced just three carloads containing thirty-three tons of fruit in 1870. By 1882, the area shipped 3,161 tons, 20,000 tons in 1891, and 37,000 tons in 1898. Beginning in 1893, four carloads of oranges shipped out from Northern California; eighty-one in 1896; and 589 in 1898. By 1900, 1.25 million orange trees grew in the Sacramento Valley alone.⁶ Altogether, California ranked eighth in the nation in terms of the value of orchard products, with an output of $1.4 million, in 1869 — less than 3% of the national total. In 1899, however, California received the nation’s top rank in fruit production, with an output of $28 million, almost 22% of the U.S. total. Although California impressively shipped just less than 1.25 million boxes of oranges in 1889, that compared with about 4.4 million boxes nationwide. In 1899, California held a monopoly on orange production with about 5.9 million boxes of oranges out of the 6.2 million produced nationwide. California also enjoyed a near monopoly on almonds, apricots, figs, lemons, walnuts, and, by the 1910s, grapes.⁷

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⁴ The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe extended from Arizona to Needles, reaching San Bernardino in 1885 and Los Angeles in 1887.


California’s population also exploded, particularly in urban areas. Upon admission to the union in 1850, the 31st state stood at fewer than 100,000 people, ranking it 29th out of 31 states. In 1860, California had about 380,000 people; 1880, about 865,000; and in 1910, about 2.38 million, which made California the 10th largest state. Correspondingly, cities in California grew. Four of the largest cities of the time, Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento, and San Francisco, had fewer than 76,000 people in 1860, about 20% of the state’s total. These cities held about 424,500, or about 35% of the state’s population, in 1890 and 931,000, or about 40% of the state’s population, in 1910. Sacramento began to grow following the gold rush in 1850. With less than 7,000 in 1850, it grew to become the 67th largest city in the nation in 1860 with more than 13,500 people; and, in 1910, Sacramento grew to 44,696. Oakland also grew from less than 2,000 people in 1860, to 34,500 in 1880 (making it the 51st largest city in the nation), to 150,200 in 1910 (32nd largest). Los Angeles went from a scarce 1,600 in 1850, to 5,700 in 1870, to 50,400 in 1890 (57th largest city in the nation), to 319,200 in 1910 (17th largest). San Francisco, most impressively, went from about 1,000 on the eve of the gold rush in 1848, to 34,800 in 1852, to 56,000 in 1860 (15th

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Los Angeles (LA)</th>
<th>Oakland (OAK)</th>
<th>Sacramento (SAC)</th>
<th>San Francisco (SF)</th>
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<td>5,728</td>
<td>10,500</td>
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<td>11,183</td>
<td>34,555</td>
<td>21,420</td>
<td>233,959</td>
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<td>50,395</td>
<td>48,682</td>
<td>26,386</td>
<td>298,997</td>
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<td>102,479</td>
<td>66,960</td>
<td>29,282</td>
<td>342,782</td>
<td>541,503</td>
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<td>1910</td>
<td>319,198</td>
<td>150,174</td>
<td>44,696</td>
<td>416,912</td>
<td>930,980</td>
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</table>

Sources: See footnote #8 of this chapter.
largest in the nation), to 299,000 in 1890 (8th largest), to 417,000 in 1910 (11th largest).

California thus grew physically, fiscally, and, by implication, socially and structurally.\(^8\)

The rapid growth and change in California and the United States at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were, in many ways, a Pyrrhic victory. Modernizing civilization led to the concentration of control in the production and distribution of goods and services, extremes in wealth and poverty, declining farm income, child labor, and unsafe and unsanitary work and living conditions.\(^9\) In California, large land holdings were broken up, homes built, small communities formed, and plenty of money made as laborers struggled to make a buck. In the process, society became ever more segregated and the success of intensified agriculture ironically led to the rise of agribusiness and an increased reliance on and exploitation of ethnoracial minorities.\(^10\) Still, many coming to, writing about, or farming in California

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In between, from the break up of large land holdings in the 1870s and 1880s to the rise of agribusiness in the late 1910s and 1920s, a perfect image of family farming in California emerged as boosters spread the word and speculators built entire communities based on horticultural practice and suburban lifestyle.

“land grabbers have had it pretty much their own way in California — they have molded the policy of the General Government; have dictated the legislation of the State; have run the land offices and used the Courts.”13 The combination of Spanish and Mexican land grants to cattle ranchers — about nine million acres — and American land policies, such as the Homestead Act (1862), Timberland Culture Act (1873), Desert Land Act (1877), and Timber and Stone Act (1878), contributed greatly to further land consolidation by favoring capital rich investors and speculators.14 Large-scale farming stifled small family farms from materializing while critics began to call for more access to land and, particularly, land ownership. Many charged that land monopoly retarded California’s agricultural development. Moreover, few white wage earners desired to labor on large farms, as they simply would not take jobs they regarded as especially arduous or accept the degraded economic and social status associated with such work.15

With the growth of fruit culture, hope for the decline of large-scale agriculture and the rise of small family farming centered on specialty crops. “If the land-holders . . . would subdivide their lands into tracts down to 40 acres,” wrote one observer in 1877, “a million people

13. Henry George, Our Land and Land Policy: National and State (San Francisco: White & Bauer, 1871), 14. See also, McWilliams, Factories in the Field, 24; Pincetl, Transforming California, 7; Pisani, From the Family Farm to Agribusiness, 7; and Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 133-41.

14. Gates, Land and Law in California, 267-68; McWilliams, Factories in the Field, 17; and Pincetl, Transforming California, 6-7.

could be put into these great valleys in ten years.” 16 Another observer in 1882 added that land “owned in small tracts and occupied and worked by the owners” destined “all conflict between labor and capital [to be] adjusted; their differences all reconciled and ended.” 17 For those opposed to large land holdings, Mother Nature turned friend as drought coupled with bankruptcy to devastate California’s cattle industry and spurred the subdivision of the large ranchos and the growth of diversified agriculture. 18 In 1888, Governor Robert W. Waterman felt comfortable and confident enough to exclaim “a great revolution is rapidly but quietly taking place, whereby the larger land holdings are breaking up, and being sold . . . in small tracts to families that are seeking homes, where they can till the soil three hundred and sixty days in each year, and reap the result of their labor with less output than anywhere else in the civilized world.” He concluded this would lead to “the building up of a happy and prosperous community.” 19

The California Dream and the Suburban Ideal

To entice migration to California, boosters and promoters drew upon a deep well of already iconic images of California, invented some new ones, and most fervently employed the language and imagery of suburban lifestyle as made prominent by suburban image-makers. California’s advertisers in fact spoke of community, health, home, family, and nature as much as they spoke of small farms, specialty crops, and capital gains. These advertisers emphatically portrayed California’s agricultural lifestyle as a suburban lifestyle, peppered with an agrarian


18. Cleland, The Cattle on a Thousand Hills, 212; and Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties, 8-12.

fable and a uniquely Californian set of iconography. California, the land of sunshine, both
fulfilled the needs of an aspiring and growing middle class, eager for home, family, and
community, and the appeal of farming as a way of life and way to profit.

The image of California as primarily a land of wealth and new opportunities is an old
one. When California boosters began to narrate an image of California to potential investors and
migrants at the turn of the twentieth century they had a ready pool of images and stories dating
back to the sixteenth century. They embraced such images to cast farmers in the state as
progressive-minded, forward-looking, and technologically savvy bulwarks of social and moral
order that would rejuvenate democratic citizenship and save a nation suffering the ills of
immigration, industrialization, modernization, and urbanization. They were, at the same time,
yeoman farmers, family and community members, urbane sophisticates, morally virtuous good
citizens, and a homogenous lot of middle-class whites.

Armed with only a creative imagination to speculate what compelled the original visitors
to wander into California thousands of years ago, scholars have revealed that in 1533, when a
group of Spanish explorers sailed off the Baja Coast, they saw the land through a lens of rich
folklore and imaginary history.20 Certainly familiar with García Ordóñez de Montalvo’s best-
selling *The Exploits of Esplandian* (ca. 1510), the young Spaniards thought they had reached the
fabulously and dangerously wealthy island empire of the Black Amazon Queen Califia and her
legendary man-eating, lion-headed, eagle-winged griffins.21 They promptly named the supposed

20. For more on the early imagery of California, see Starr, *Americans and the California Dream*, 3-48.
For more on pre-European California, see Brian Fagan, *Before California: An Archaeologist Looks at Our Earliest
Inhabitants* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003); and William S. Simmons, “Indian Peoples of California,”
in Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Richard J. Orsi, eds., *Contested Eden: California Before the Gold Rush* (Berkeley:

21. García Ordóñez de Montalvo is also known as García Rodríguez de Montalvo. *The Exploits of
Esplandian* is actually one of several sequels to *Amadis of Gaul* written by an unknown author sometime in the
island California and embarked on a genocidal fantasy quest for gold and treasure. Dreams and images of California, hence, even — and particularly so — for those to have yet stepped foot on her soil, have a long history of exciting interest and fueling expectations of a paradise on Earth. The travel literature of the late eighteenth century confirmed this image and upped the ante by decrying a lack of proper Native, Spanish, and, eventually, Mexican use and appreciation of this second Eden. Foreign travelers bemoaned the lack of development, cultivation, and supposed civilization in California while praising the state’s beauty and fertile soil. Such works heralded a host of later image-makers molding the California dream in their own minds and narrating a sense of place for others outside California looking in.

An imagineering of California as a land of vast potential also underscored the writings of various French, Russian, English, and American visitors to Spanish- and then Mexican-controlled California that carried forward a lamentable frustration over California’s economic and social backwardness. They recognized California’s vast potential to reap a rich harvest

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while remaining appalled by the lack of agricultural development. Russians, for example, saw a sunny land that contrasted with a cold and darkened northern territory that could facilitate their southern-seeking advance. The French saw a locus site good for the growing of grapes while the British coveted the potential of California as an agricultural and maritime colony that at once would bring relief and further prestige to an empire. Early American writers before statehood in 1850 also saw a land improperly being used and, according to one observer in 1846, “capable of being metamorphosed into a perfect orchard.”

In what would become a dominant theme in California history and narrative, Americans, with Carey McWilliams being no exception, frequently related racist views of superiority over minorities, particularly the Californios, but also Mexicans and Native Americans, in contempt for supposed misuse of the land.

“Thus, by the last lingering days of Mexican rule,” California’s chief cultural historian said, “Americans had worked out for themselves a California expectation: a sense of mismanagement awaiting correction, of luxuriance awaiting a better pattern.”

Early Americans commented on the physicality of California from its climate to its opportunities for leisure and recreation. One could freely live an outdoor lifestyle disease free.

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25. In *Southern California,* McWilliams perhaps epitomized anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss’s (*The Savage Mind*) lamentation concerning characterized primitive societies in juxtaposition to modern societies when he wrote, “Admittedly the culture of these Southern California Indians was primitive in character. They had no agriculture. Their calendar was extremely crude. Their art-forms were limited in number and elementary in design, with basketry being their most developed art (there was only a little pottery)” (McWilliams, *Southern California,* 26). See, Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).


California not only offered a pleasant climate and natural advantages, but also freedom and a second chance where Americans could improve their lives simply by locating in California. As exemplified by the travels and writings of Jedediah Smith and Richard Henry Dana, California offered a new opportunity for the Puritan errand into the wilderness. California equaled a land of new opportunities — the ultimate frontier — even before American statehood.

California’s sons of ’49 that flooded the state after the discovery of gold off the aptly named American River further added credibility to the image of a land of opportunity, as did the ecclesiastical visions of Protestant preachers who saw in California God’s plan for the progress of his chosen children. Regardless of whether the Gold Rush meant a bestial rape of the land and fellow man alike or a providential reward to the entrepreneurial spirit of American capitalism, it forever joined with the American sacralization of the pursuit of happiness. The Gold Rush allowed for not only the pursuit of happiness, that inalienable right afforded by God according to white slave holders, but also the opportunity for Americans to seize upon the improperly used and developed land of multiple treasures to transform it into a thriving American example and temple to manifest destiny. As demonstrated by the likes of such men of God as Joseph A. Benton, Thomas Starr King, and Samuel Hopkins Wiley, California could potentially fulfill His plan for the spread and succession of American Protestantism, its civilizing effects, and, with some Christian sensibility so graciously interspersed, emerge as a true terrestrial paradise.28


The prosperous imagery of California and its potential for limitless wealth for all is what Henry George and other California dreamers conjured up as they ranted and raved over the detrimental effects of land monopolization and large-scale cattle and wheat hegemony. This vivid description of California provided those promoting it with a set of images and narratives to stimulate migration to the many new subdivisions developing from the breakup of large land holdings in the 1870s and 1880s. Familiar, appealing, and simply the stuff of good stories, California’s boosters pulled in popular portrayals of agriculture, particularly concerning the rise of horticulture, suburban lifestyle, and middle-class cultural values to complement and reify California’s image as the best place to live. As with Beecher, Downing, Olmsted, and others, the ideal lifestyle according to California’s boosters centered on such things as home, family, and nature, which in turn bettered the individual and the United States all at once.

U.S. presidents were not exempt from California’s allure. Abraham Lincoln purportedly “had heard so much of the delightful climate and the abundant natural productions of California” that he “fixed his eyes on California as a place of permanent residence” once his second term ended and, obviously, before Booth’s gun fired at Ford’s theatre. Apparently, Lincoln “thought that the [Californian] country offered better opportunities for his two boys.”

California, like suburban places, signified progressive communities that promised to be a land of plenty and, more poignantly, a democratizing agent for all. California, according to most promotional accounts, seemed the perfect stage for the manifestation of the American dream. Through horticulture, what Charles Howard Shinn called “the fair goddess who is making the world young once more,” California provided not just financial benefits, but also intellectual


fulfillment, satisfying work, and cultural advancement.\textsuperscript{31} “Horticulture in the fullest sense of the term,” wrote the editor of \textit{California Fruit Grower} in 1899, “embraces . . . everything that makes our country bright, beautiful, ornamental, and enjoyable.” He continued: “The great stride made in this State in redeeming it from a parched and unproductive waste and making it a land of plenty and great productiveness, is due to horticulture.”\textsuperscript{32} California’s horticultural practice promised to bring a higher level of civilization to rural life and place.\textsuperscript{33} California promoters, such as professor of agriculture at the University of California Edward J. Wickson, argued that a fruited garden in California, synonymous with horticulture, was the space of the most rapid and complete process of Americanization. Agriculture in California, as with the agrarian ideal overall, predestined the creation of secure homes of independent farm families of a genuine republican society. California would accordingly transform into something sweepingly democratic in principle while also offering high returns with light work in a pleasant environment. “It will appear natural,” wrote one author in 1850, “that California should be the most democratic country in the world.”\textsuperscript{34} California, the “most efficient advocate of that Young America of which she is the choicest and richest jewel,” said another writer in 1852, represented the “happy results of Democratic progress, both on the individual and our republican system.”\textsuperscript{35}

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\textsuperscript{33} McWilliams, \textit{Southern California}, 151; and Starr, \textit{Inventing the Dream}, 134.
\textsuperscript{34} J. G. Whittier, “Eldorado: Adventures in the Path of Empire,” \textit{The International Magazine of Literature, Art, and Science} 1, no. 3 (July 15, 1850): 77.
\end{flushright}
The California dream, at least more incessantly between the 1870s and World War I, constructed itself on, and advertised itself as, this ideal.36

Just as Beecher and Downing had extolled the moral dimensions of a proper home and lifestyle in the rural countryside, so too did California’s boosters applaud the supposed moral dimensions of horticulture. California represented a fulfillment of the agrarian ideal, Jefferson’s proclamation that “those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God.”37 Americans idealized Jefferson and other romanticists’ agrarian dream for its vision of a more civilized and productive society. An agrarian existence, as the fairy tale goes, would foster democracy, particularly as farmers would seek to — as classical liberalism contends is a truism of human nature — create institutions that would protect their own interests.38 Yet, while this may have been all well-and-good in a pre-market revolution society, unequal land distribution and real-estate speculation disrupted such an agrarian paradise, to which Karl Marx, Henry George, and, more recently, David Harvey, Henri Lefebvre, and Harvey L. Molotch have shown to conflict with a constantly growing capitalist system.39 Nevertheless, farming in California not only


38. Wrote Adam Smith: “By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it. I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good” (Adam Smith, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of The Wealth of Nations, Book IV, Chapter III, [1776; reprint by Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1999], 513). See also, Daniel, Bitter Harvest, 15; Garcia, A World of Its Own, 19-20; McWilliams, Southern California, 214; Pisani, From Family Farms to Agribusiness, 11-12; Sackman, Orange Empire, 47-53; Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 192, 202-03; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 45-46, 139.

created and guaranteed egalitarian institutions according to promotional publications, but also restored and strengthened a tarnished agrarian dream. California’s farmers were to be autonomous agents liberating and improving a land that had been caged or improperly used. California’s farmers could then help stave off the debilitating effects of immigration, industrialization, modernization, and urbanization that were supposedly on the rampage nationally. Put differently, “in the hands of an enterprising people,” wrote famed author and early California chronicler Richard Henry Dana in 1840, “what a country this might be.”

The enterprising people of Dana’s vision were no other than the emerging and growing white middle class. California’s boosters, chroniclers, and resident supporters used words such as businessmen, cultivation, culture, enterprise, entrepreneurial, industrious, intelligence, professional, refinement, talent, and well-to-do to describe, as Wickson did in 1889, “the class of people which constitute the most desirable element in the up building of a great State.” The focus turned decidedly on the human ideal, on a conception of progress that mirrored the sociocultural evolutionism of Herbert Spencer and the Enlightenment rhetoric of both European and American romantics. In the first book published in Los Angeles and the first narrative of Southern California’s origins published in English, Major Horace Bell’s *Reminiscences of a Ranger* in 1881 described a European conquest to show how order came to the frontier, how civilization subdued savagery. “Surely, we civilized the race of Mission Indians with a


refinement known to no other people under the sun” and revealed to “primitive people . . . the mysteries of American citizenship.”

According to boosters, California’s population, primarily in the mold of a small farm family, represented a specific “class of people,” a “cultured, refined people,” who could purportedly become extraordinarily prosperous, even advance “beyond his class,” and jumpstart California’s growth, reclaim a savage wasteland, and push onward America’s march of progress with a sense of high society to shape higher culture. This professional, talent rich, enterprising, intelligent, cultured class were, as the prolific Southern California promoter Charles Fletcher Lummis said, “the least heroic migration in history, but the most judicious; the least impulsive but the most reasonable.” He added, “instead of by Shank’s Mare, or prairie schooner, or reeking steerage, they came on palatial trains; instead of cabins they put up beautiful homes; instead of gophering for gold, they planted gold.” Lummis and others as a result described a movement of middle-class families who arrived in comfort and invested in business and home, just as others had imagined suburban places would do.

The so-called boom of the eighties, often referred to as the dawning of a second Gold Rush, differed greatly from the gold mining days of ’49. The Gold Rush, whether Iliad or Odyssey, triumphant of tragic, became ground zero for a heterogeneous mass migration of

44. Horace Bell, Reminiscences of a Ranger; or, Early Times in Southern California (Los Angeles: Yarnell, Caystile & Mathes, 1881), 49, 73.


46. Charles Fletcher Lummis, quoted in McWilliams, Southern California, 150.
mostly males from not just the United States, but also from around the globe, including Asia, Latin America, and Europe. Whereas Carey McWilliams depicted the rush for riches as “The Magic Equation” that stimulated “a truly amazing democracy in production,” others cast the Gold Rush in the light of closed opportunities.\textsuperscript{47} For example, one historian described a transformation of nativism into racism that resulted in racial hostility (even racializing itself), which intensified toward the Chinese after 1852 when the technology of gold mining became more capital intensive and further resulted in the establishment of an Anglo-dominated racial hierarchy.\textsuperscript{48} Likewise, opportunities for a more tolerant homosocial and homosexual society closed with the influx of white women in the late 1850s and 1860s as they sought to bring California in line with middle-class cultural behaviors and values.\textsuperscript{49} Still, as many California scholars have pointed out, not only did non-middle-class non-whites move to California, but also California’s new farmers increasingly turned to, and exploited, a growing pool of ethnoracial minority labor that worked to both undermine the small family farm ideal and dreams about a homogeneous community of solely middle-class whites “clubbing together.” Even so, California’s promotional literature unremittingly appealed to the homogenous desires of a white middle class or middle class hopefuls who, while perhaps anxious, defeated, or fleeing the city, were a separatist set of consumption driven, materialistic, homeseekers.

Historians who focused their attention on California’s agricultural boom at the turn of the twentieth century have highlighted the homogeneous lustful desires of a large white middle class. California, said many boosters, promised a second Eden for the Anglo-Saxon homeseeker, 

\textsuperscript{47} McWilliams, \textit{California}, 27.


\textsuperscript{49} Johnson, \textit{Roaring Camp}. 
particularly in Southern California. Joseph P. Widney epitomized this belief that God destined Anglo-Saxons to flourish in Southern California, as well as the southwestern United States overall.\(^{50}\) California and the Southwest supposedly rejuvenated and reinforced both the health and spirit of the Anglo-Saxon race. Although a racialist, Widney did not overtly argue that non-Anglo-Saxons were inferior, but rather different. He argued that each race excelled within different particular climates, for example, Anglo-Saxons in the Southland and Africans in tropical environments. For Widney and other separatists, the California dream stood for the rejuvenation of white Anglo-Saxon protestant culture that, in actuality, helped to construct a spatiality of whiteness and consolidate those with European ancestry, except of course for Mexicans, into "whiteness.” In the process, those refined and cultured people, helped simultaneously to lay the foundations for both the expansion of metropolitan regions in California and a more highly segregated landscape.\(^{51}\) So as many scholars correctly look to the twentieth century to highlight an incessantly segregating society intertwined with suburbanization, the basal and structural foundations were established far earlier in the nineteenth century and gave bigoted institutions and systems of belief sharper teeth, connection with the past, and a limited sense of culpability.\(^{52}\)

California’s lifestyle, particularly its farming life, attracted professionals, the ranks of the middle class who would find in horticulture a mode of agriculture suitable for profit and comfortable way of life. California’s promotional literature used sustained rhetoric to massage

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the egos of a largely middle class audience in hopes of stimulating migration for the purchase of small landholdings and suburban houses. “From California the reversal of the westward course of empire — the return-flow of civilization will proceed,” stated Edward J. Wickson.53 California represented the land of sophisticated people and a land of “the most intelligent” people who required “both skill and industry,” who were urbane and progressive, and who used brains as much as, if not more so, than their muscles.54

These “well disposed, industrious people” were the avant couriers of California’s destiny to reclaim a savage frontier and rejuvenate America’s democratic spirit.55 Although many extolled the supposed agrarian nature of California’s small farm life, others cast California’s farmers as modern businessmen, as manufacturers who embraced science and technology and practiced efficiency and control. “High-class farming,” wrote one observer in 1905, appealed to the “bright and observing” who “utilize at all times the results of scientific investigation.”56 In the context of approaching agriculture as a commercial interest, as supported by the likes of Adam Smith (1776) and Populist Charles Macune (1887), California’s boosters and growers articulated a vision of improvement by means of business, education, science, and technology that cast California as the best place for realizing the benefits of progress and development.57 Whether labeled bourgeois horticulturalists, citrus scientists, modern businessmen, orchard


55. Truman, Homes and Happiness, 12.


capitalists, producers, or scientific farmers, California’s small farmers favored brain over brawn, used knowledge and technology to remake their world, could improve and liberate the land, sought to embrace marketing and advertising, and, ultimately, industrialized and mechanized agriculture. In short, they were nothing less than forward-looking, irreducibly modern, and middle class.  

Citriculture, particularly the “glamour crop” orange, became the principle occupation for the forward-looking, intelligent, and refined white middle-class farmer that dominated the materials of the image-makers between the 1870s and 1910s. Historians such as McWilliams and Starr have depicted the orange as an iconographic symbol, the very symbol of civilized rural life, of richness, class status, and prosperity.  

Citriculture, as the greatest horticultural attraction of the state, while requiring initial startup capital, required only a little investment and promised high returns. “Orange culture must continue as has began,” wrote William Andrew Spalding in 1885, “an industry suited to the most intelligent and refined people.” “For [Californians], north and south, . . . wherever horticulture . . . is crowned queen and welcomed friend, there are to be homes for the rich and poor,” wrote another booster. Returns of $1,000 or more per acre were commonly cited, and usually within three to four years of planting. One observer added in 1871,  

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a citrus orchard would return “not only competency, but an independent fortune.” Perhaps most impressive were testimonials from farmers themselves commonly used in booster publications throughout the period, such as Charles Nordhoff’s *California for Health, Pleasure and Residence* (1882). According to a farmer owning twenty acres of oranges, citriculture promised the good life:

Last year my trees paid the whole of my family expenses for the year; that was my first crop. This crop I shall make over five thousand dollars clear; after next year I am planning to take my family for six months to Europe, and I expect thereafter to have four or five months for travel every year, with sufficient means from my twenty acres to go where my wife and children may wish to go.63

Fruit became a leading image of California. McWilliams, for example, called Southern California the “orange empire,” the symbol of richness. Starr argued fruit culture “nurtured values of responsible land use, prudent capitalization, cooperation among growers,” the creation of the “bourgeois horticulturalists” and the vehicle for “rural civility.” Another historian labeled fruit culture in California a “horticultural wonderland.”64 In a land of goodness and fruitful earth, an endlessly cited growing market for California’s bountiful harvest, and fantasies of easy wealth and easy living, citriculture “brought a new kind of agriculturalist — the intensive farmer, educated, middle class, capable of making a living on forty acres — and an aesthetic reshaping of the land.”65 Fruit farming represented, with the orange as the king of fame, a means and mode

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64. McWilliams, *Southern California*, 216; Starr, *Inventing the Dream*, 134; and Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 35.

of existence that, as one farmer said in 1873, “would make us happy and rich in a short time.”

A growing middle class in search of home, appropriate lifestyle, and means for showing off such to others could look to citrus farming as a superlative approach.

The circumstantial elements that comprised life on a California fruit orchard mirrored the same elements that suburban imagineers demarcated as the suburban ideal: city and country mix; urban amenities in a community decidedly not urban; healthy climate and proper physical environment; and a place for good homes, families, and the nurturing of children. The California dream and the suburban ideal were largely the same at the turn of the twentieth century. As McWilliams pointed out with his neologism “rurban,” a California farming community, or “suburban estate,” was “neither city nor country, but everywhere a mixture of both.”

Farming communities combined city and country, new and old. “The horticulturalist,” said one author in 1903, “combines city life with country pleasure.” “Here may be found beautiful rural homes, whose owners are within touch of social life, and enjoy the best features of the city and country.” California’s boosters and the suburban image-makers were accordingly describing the ideal place and lifestyle in nearly identical terms. Such places represented civilized rural life because of their close proximity to nature, away form cities, but brimming with urban amenities. “The settler can have churches, schools, medical advice,” wrote the author of Letters from

66. David M. Berry, letter to Thomas Balch Elliott, September 18, 1873, quoted in Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties, 14.

67. McWilliams, Southern California, 12.

68. Garcia, A World of Its Own, 25-28; McWilliams, California, 83, 102; McWilliams, Southern California, 231; Sackman, Orange Empire, 52; Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 202; Starr, Inventing the Dream, 165; Stoll, The Fruit of Natural Advantage, 34; and Vaught, Cultivating California, 20.

69. Llewellyn, “Pomona,” 412.

California in 1877, “in short, all the advantages . . . a citizen possesses over a frontiersman.” California’s farming communities had the institutions of a small city that emphasized outdoor and domestic pleasures, providing residents outlets for supposed finer things that were the hallmark of their class status, aspirations, or anxieties: concert halls, literary guilds, and opera houses.

The home emerged as one of the key defining characteristics of California for the state’s boosters at the turn of the twentieth century just as it did for suburbia in the nineteenth century. The depiction of California as a land of homes for homeseekers strategically drew upon the glorification of home so glamorized by suburban image-makers. Continual citation of California for homes, as well as for the families living inside, served as justification for calls for the subdivision of large land holdings in the hands of insatiable, ruthless, and exploitative land barons. Moreover, the language of family and home plainly sought to attract migrants to the state by utilizing a vernacular that distinctly articulated and appealed to the cultural values and ways of life popular among a persistently conspicuously consuming middle class. If people with money or those that could make payments wanted single-family homes, any good booster organization worth its salt would then likely offer such people single-family homes, as the overwhelming majority of California’s boosters did. The single-family home had emerged as a premier marker of class status and lifestyle throughout a large part of the country so that California’s boosters were, minimally at least, exercising good practice and coherent judgment when they touted the state as the best and most opportune place for the homeseeker. Advertising California as a suburban oasis of single-family homes among fruitful and profitable orchards and vineyards made good business sense.

“The overgoing [sic] sun shines upon no region, of equal extent,” bragged Benjamin C. Truman in his 1874 *Semi-Tropical California*, “which offers so many and such varied inducements to men in search of homes and health.” California’s agricultural landscape offered not just a bountiful and profitable harvest, but also, as Truman again expressed in his aptly titled *Homes and Happiness in the Golden State of California* in 1884, “comfortable and happy homes.” Talk of home, family, and California’s agricultural possibilities echoed the suburban ideal of country homes and served as a leading illustration for speculators and boosters as best-case evidence to subdivide large land holdings. The ideal of family-owned and family-operated small farms with single-family homes in California repeated the Jeffersonian notion of secure homes of independent farm families as the bedrock of a genuine republican society. The hope for the decline of large-scale agriculture rested upon the hope for the rise of small-family farming. “Our public domain,” said Charles F. Reed, president of the California State Agricultural Society, in 1869, “our lands in general, should be divided up into small farms or parcels, each one of these the home and homestead of a family, dependent for a livelihood upon the cultivation of that homestead.” In 1874, another observer for the California Agricultural Society commented that the subdivision of large land holdings in California into small family farms meant that “population will increase, wealth will appear every few miles, [and] a thousand pleasant homes will dot the state where now there are but scars.”


73. Truman, *Homes and Happiness*, 12.


The promotion of family homes for homeseekers characterized most booster publications for California generally and specific communities at the turn of the twentieth century and underscores the suburban side of California’s growth and development. Bernard Marks’s *Small-Scale Farming in Central California* (1882) spoke of children, family, and home as much as agricultural opportunity to stimulate migration to the Fresno area:

This pamphlet is addressed to those who will prize a home in which the flower-garden will furnish a bouquet everyday in the year without a single exception; in which the vegetable garden may be harvested and replaced in some part every month of the yearly twelve; in which a single acre may be so treated that it will support a cow in high condition the whole year through; in which a berry-patch a hundred feet square will furnish the family table with all its sugar, tea, coffee and condiments; in which the children may pick and pack for market enough waste raisins and figs to enable [them] to compete in child-wealth with the children of the rich; in which the solitary apple-barrel of the East is replaced by boxes of raisins, figs, pomegranates, almonds, and walnuts for the evening family circle.76

Likewise, others such as Wickson, pointed to orange culture. “The orange is an exponent of the possession of those natural characteristics of sky and air and soil, constituting the most desirable environment of human life — the highest desirability in the location of a home.”77 In fact, a number of immigration societies were active in promoting California in terms of agriculture and homeownership. One leading organization, the California Immigrant Union, founded in 1869, wanted to attract “settlers” — as if somehow the land was unsettled. After praising the state’s agricultural and climatic superiority, the Immigrant Union concluded in 1872: “Residents of those [other] States are easily induced to sell off their farms and seek new and more congenial homes in this State, and seldom regret the change.”78


77. Wickson, *California Fruits*, 358.

78. California Immigrant Union, *Memorial and Report of the California Immigrant Union to the Legislature of the State of California* (Sacramento: T. A. Springer, 1872), 13. Family homes and homeownership were dominant themes for promoters throughout the state, as numerous local and statewide publications made clear:
The romantic idealization of picturesque villas and cottages in a pastoral landscape barraged readers in thousands of California promotional pages at the turn of the twentieth century. Writing about Riverside in 1881, The Weekly Call (San Francisco) captured three of the more salient elements in a larger theme of nature in California that echoed the sentiments of Beecher, Downing, Emerson, and Thoreau: weather and soil advantageous for agriculture, a more healthful climate, and an environment capable of cultivating a more advanced and refined way of life. Riverside, The Weekly Call reported, “is almost entirely settled by Eastern people, mostly of some means, many of whom have located there for health; some for the pleasure of its mild climate, and some for the purpose of raising semi-tropical fruits to which the entire surrounding country is devoted. It has an air of newness; the houses are all neat and clean, gardens well kept, and everything indicative of enterprise and thrift.”79 As historian Oscar Osburn Winther said, “ever since the first wiggle of the first amoeba, climate has influenced the destiny of life.”80 Perhaps a bit overly dramatic, his sentiment captures well the publicity of California’s creative promoters who essentially created the “folklore of climatology.”81 Homeownership and urban amenities remain somewhat empty in allure without the appeal of the site itself — the power of place. In fact, “climate” and “health” were as much buzzwords for boosters throughout California competing for increased migration at the turn of the twentieth century.

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Homes in Los Angeles City and County (1873); Plain Reasons Why Home Seekers Should Purchase Homes in the Northern Portion of San Joaquin County, California (1887); Butte County, California: Its Resources and Advantages for Home Seekers (1888); Homes [in Madera, Fresno County] (1890); Placer County California: Facts and Figures for Homeseekers (1891); The Counties of California: A Guide for Home-Seekers, Settlers and Investors; Containing an Accurate Description of Each County in the State (1895); and The Sacramento Valley of California: Its Resources, Industries and Advantages, Scenery, Climate and Opportunities; Facts for the Investor, Home-maker and Health-seeker (1904).

79. The Weekly Call, California as It Is (San Francisco: The San Francisco Call Company, 1881), 29.


81. McWilliams, Southern California, 96.
century, as they are for modern historians who attempt to place “the stories of [agricultural] colonization and capitalist development alongside stories of health and disease.”\(^\text{82}\) Focusing on a straightforward economic pull did not suffice for promoters in drawing migrants in or historians analyzing the immigration. They also needed the spatially independent attraction of the geographical image itself and its promise to reward culturally, economically, psychologically, and physically.

“Nature here runs a boom that is permanent . . . with a Harvest of grain, nuts, and fruits absolutely perennial,” wrote one booster in 1890.\(^\text{83}\) The supposed superiority for the growing of almost every type of fruit, grain, nut, or produce possible served as another central feature of California’s rural environment and fertile countryside.\(^\text{84}\) Another booster said in 1886, “Southern California seems to produce with proper care nearly every kind of tree, shrub, grass, herb, or tuber that is at all common or useful in the temperate zone, together with a large number of those tropics.”\(^\text{85}\) Whether they were almonds, asparagus, grapes, or oranges, the land soaking up California sunshine proved, without exception, the best for the farmer anywhere, particularly in Southern California. The natural advantages and resources of California were so clear that not to take train, mule, or boat thousands of miles to break her rich soil, take a loan, put down an investment, build a house, and plow a field would be otherwise foolish and downright stupid. Over and over again, promoters such as Benjamin C. Truman, Edward J. Wickson, Joseph P.

\(^{82}\) Nash, *Inescapable Ecologies*, 2.


Widney, and the four California gospel writers named Charles (Nordhoff, Lummis, Shinn, and Warner), as well as hundreds of local and county-wide boosters, boasted of California’s agricultural superiority, rich soil, horticultural innovation, not to mention advantages for industry and manufacturing enterprises. Said Nordhoff in 1872, “after a thorough examination, I believe Southern California to be . . . the best region in the whole United States for farmers.”

California boosters cultivated a California Eden myth to harvest large levels of migration. On one level, the glorification of nature repeated the outlook of romantic transcendentalists such as Emerson and Thoreau in which the countryside became a place of religious redemption and rejuvenation, the archetypal space for experiencing what it meant to be an American. On another level, as pointed out by historian William Cronon, “ever since the nineteenth century, celebrating wilderness has been an activity mainly for the well-to-do city folks. Country people generally know far too much about working the land to regard unworked land as their ideal.” Nevertheless, California’s rural landscape embodied images of the garden, frontier, and sacred nature. It represented a place outside of time, where human beings had been ejected, but were now, in a savage world at the dawn of America’s onward march of progress and civilization, in a place in need of transformation, and, in the process, a place that offered illusions that one could not only escape the troubles of the world, but also make a profit.

A promised unique relationship with nature characterized the heart of the California dream. “The temperature,” William Henry Bishop concluded in 1883, “is perfection.”


continued: “It is neither hot nor cold. A sybarite would not alter it.”90 By the turn of the twentieth century, a Goldilocks- Baby- Bear Porridge formula had become modus operandi for most boosters throughout the state and characterized such disparate climates and environments as the shores of Malibu and the foothills of the Sierras. “This is paradise,” wrote Warner in 1888. “It is very confusing to the mind of the new-comer to reconcile his necessity for winter clothing to what he sees and almost feels; in short, to get used to the climate.”91

Of all the appeals to nature’s exoticism, nothing captured the imagination of the potential middle-class migrant or propagated so pompously in promotional literature as the comparison of California to the Mediterranean.92 The Mediterranean analogy arose as a moral and aesthetic metaphor for all that California offered — or hoped to offer — as a regional civilization. In the context of a region supposedly best suited for the advancement of the Anglo-Saxon race, Walter Lindley and Joseph P. Widney argued in 1888 that a “newer and nobler life” in Southern California seemed secured. They concluded that a visitor could “discern the fair promise of a civilization which had its only analogue in that Graeco-Latin race-flowering which came to the shores of the Mediterranean centuries ago.”93 “Whatever Greece, Italy, and Spain were in their

noblest days,” said Shinn in 1880, “that we hope to become, except that our facilities are greater, so our mingling of the beauties of a world may be greater.”94

At once Greek, Italian, North African, Near Eastern, and Spanish, the Mediterranean metaphor had behind it the force of a region steeped in history and the force of a region celebrated for its idyll clime and topography.95 California, particularly the Southland, regularly received comparisons to Italy from the 1870s forward. Italy had beauty, Greece had art, and both were forbearers of republicanism and democracy. North Africa and the Near East symbolized a vast desert set to bloom and the home place of Christ. Spain, as well as Mexico, had long histories in California that were simply too obvious to ignore and the celebration of a Spanish and Mexican past established a connection with the past and a narrative sense of place that gave new migrants a sense of continuity. “California has the climate of the lands which have given the world its noblest religion, its soundest philosophy, its highest art, its greatest poets and painters and sculptors and musicians,” said Lummis. He continued: “There does not seem to be anything bad for the intellect or the heart in the sort of climate that has mothered Jesus of Nazareth, and Homer and Socrates, and Praxiteles, Plato, Virgil, Michelangelo, Titian, Correggio, Velásquez, Saavedra, and all the interminable list — even to Napoleon.”96

Whether focused on such places as Los Angeles or San Diego, scores of booster publications publicized specific places and California in general as a healthier place, particularly

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95. Starr, Inventing the Dream, 46.

96. Charles Fletcher Lummis, quoted in Starr, Inventing the Dream, 83.
for the “invalid.” Whatever California’s Mediterranean climate could do for fruit or mind, it
could also do for the body. According to such boosters as Widney, California’s therapeutic
qualities could cure almost anything from tuberculosis to a wide variety of other pulmonary
diseases. The imaginary curative powers of California’s climate transformed health into a
natural resource and along with other such places as Denver and Tucson, California’s rural
places represented “geographies of hope.” After the arrival of the railroads in the 1870s, a
“health rush” ensued as many came to seek out the benefits of a restorative climate. “The air,
when inhaled,” wrote Truman in 1873, “gives to the individual a stimulus and vital force which
only an atmosphere pure can ever communicate.” Bishop added, “Certainly many advantages
offer to the invalid. The climate permits life to be almost constantly out-of-doors.”

97. For more on California and health, see Baur, The Heath Seekers of Southern California; Billy M.
Jones, Health-Seekers in the Southwest, 1817-1900 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967); McWilliams,
Southern California, 96-112; Nash, Inescapable Ecologies; Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 365-414;
and Vance, “California and the Search for the Ideal,” 196-98. For example, above and beyond mere page after page
of text devoted to the subject, some boosters felt strongly enough to parade forth the healthfulness of their particular
site, along with the such obviously related matters of homeownership, leisure, profit motive, and tourism, in the
subtitle of their publications: George Wharton James, B. R. Baumgardt and Co.’s Tourists’ Guide Book to South
California: For the Traveler, Invalid, Pleasurist and Home Seeker (Los Angeles, CA: B. R. Baumgardt & Co.,
[1895]); San Diego “Our Italy”: Illustrative and Descriptive of the Natural Resources, Developments and Prospects
of San Diego County: Containing Information for the Capitalist, Home Seeker, Tourist and Invalid, compiled under
direction of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce by the Literature Committee, John N. Young, et al ([San Diego:
San Diego Chamber of Commerce], 1895); Jerome Madden, Southern Pacific Company, California: Its Attractions
for the Invalid, Tourist, Capitalist, and Homeseeker, with General Information on the Lands of the S.P.R.R. Co. (San
Francisco: Crocker, 1890); and Southern California Bureau of Information, Southern California: An Authentic
Description of Its Natural Features, Resources, and Prospects; Containing Reliable Information for the
Homeseeker, Tourist, and Invalid (Los Angeles: Bureau of Information Print, 1892).

98. Gregg Mitman, “Geographies of Hope: Mining the Frontiers of Health in Denver and Beyond, 1870-

99. Truman, Semi-Tropical California, 33-34.

100. Bishop, Old Mexico, 450-51.
Agricultural Colony, Horticulture, and Suburb: Toward a Common Definition

The picture of California for the small farmer abounded because of the notion that with the profitability of horticulture the California small farmer could reputedly earn more money than the farmer could with much more land elsewhere. Less land required also meant less money needed to purchase the land and more available for the purchase of equipment, possibly labor, and a home. Boosters routinely employed the language of horticulture to communicate the validity of their faith in California’s agricultural potential and promise for a supreme country life. They also used the term “colony,” as in agricultural colony or irrigation colony, with irrigation serving as the means to facilitate a more intensive and profitable type of agriculture. The term “colony” received loose treatment in California, but usually referred to the subdivision of an area into small parcels of land. In such colonies, however, boosters and others pointed out that these new farm areas, through horticulture, retained a level of amenities usually only found in long-settled communities, such as churches, good roads, schools, and social clubs.

The ways in which boosters and subsequent interpreters have characterized and detailed specific elements of California’s agricultural colonies and horticulture beg comparison to how suburban imagineers depicted the ideal American lifestyle. Terms such as colony, horticulture, and suburb were used in markedly similar ways to describe strikingly similar things that suggest such terms were nearly synonymous at the turn of the twentieth century in California. Perhaps Glenn S. Dumke proved keenly insightful to call the “boom of the eighties” a “suburban phenomenon” but he limited it to only the so-called boom of the 1880s. More accurately, a large measure of what we understand to define California’s growth and development from the 1870s through World War I, particularly agriculture, is representative of a suburban phenomenon.

In 1848, Andrew Jackson Downing reiterated Jefferson’s romanticization of the American farmer when he wrote, “the cultivators of the soil constitute the great industrial class
of this country.” In scores of articles written for his journal *The Horticulturalist* in the 1840s through the early 1850s (he tragically died in 1852), Downing depicted “horticultural pursuits” as what “makes one’s country worth living and dying for.”

Downing, not to mention Beecher, Olmsted, and Vaux, fanatically believed that “horticultural pursuits [possessed] a political and moral influence vastly more significant and important than mere gratification of the senses. . . . Horticulture and its kindred arts tend strongly to fix the habits, and elevate the character, of our whole rural population.” Downing glorified “retirement to country life” as a “universal pleasure.” In “a good country residence” a house was “no longer a comfortable shelter merely, but an expression of the intelligent life of man, in a state of society where the soul, the intellect, and the heart, are all awake, and all educated.” In the single-family home, amid the city-country middle landscape, “we believe,” said Downing, “in the improvement of human nature necessarily resulting to all classes, from the possession of lovely gardens and fruitful orchards.” Through horticulture, Downing and others imagined “the advantage, morally and socially, of orderly, neat, tasteful villages; in producing better citizens, in causing the laws to be respected, in making homes dearer and more sacred, in domestic life and the enjoyment of property to be more truly and rightly estimated.” In short, Downing’s horticultural fantasy, like the belief of the model family, home, and community life by Beecher, Olmsted, Vaux, and others, defined the suburban ideal. The place for this was the nearby countryside, of which California had plenty. “The best advice,” Downing said for the best location of a country home, “is . . . to choose a site . . . where nature offers the greatest number of good features.” California, according to the boosters, seemed such a site as depicted in small communities of families and homes flourishing

101. Downing died untimely during the wreck of the steamer, the *Henry Clay*, in 1852 while traveling on the Hudson River with his wife and family. A boiler explosion quickly spread flames across the wooden vessel and Downing drowned as he tried to save people.
amid a mix of city and country, urban amenities within a more rural setting, and small farmers tilling the soil as a means to prosperity broadly conceived. California’s environment, metaphorically for some but literally for many others, was paradise, a second Garden of Eden, and most emphatically, as Downing desired, a site “where nature offers the greatest number of good features.”

The way in which Downing and other suburban image-makers used the term “horticulture” fell more in line with the historical definition: “the cultivation of a garden; the art of science of cultivating gardens, including the growing of flowers, fruits, and vegetables.” A horticulturalist therefore practiced the “art” of horticulture, one who practiced gardening “scientifically.” In comparison, California’s boosters often used the term horticulture to describe intensive agriculture, specialty crops, and farming on small amounts of land. Horticulture, as a descriptive term, represented an economic endeavor pursued for the sake of maximizing profits. Economics alone did not define horticulture though. In almost every imaginable way, California’s boosters and farmers used the term to depict both a particular type of agriculture and a way of life that mirrored the language of suburbia. “Horticulture,” said one observer in 1889, “is the broad term applied to fruit growing in California, but it covers far more than this one branch of this wide-spread industry. Horticulture in the fullest sense of the term embraces every


portion of the fruit grower’s, gardener’s and landscape worker’s art; in fact, it covers everything that makes our country bright, beautiful, ornamental and enjoyable.”

Horticulture, both as a way to profit and lifestyle, dominated the promotional literature of California and echoed a suburban literature’s focus on the single-family home within a rural setting that offered close contact with nature without sacrifice of urban amenities such as churches, roads, and schools. Such “practical horticulture,” said historian David Vaught, was special because of its social advantages: institutions, amenities, and even hotels. Historians such as Vaught, as well as Cletus Daniel, Richard Orsi, Douglas Sackman, Kevin Starr, and Steven Stoll, have all recognized that the benefits of horticulture, as extolled by boosters and farmers, extended beyond the financial to include cultural, intellectual, and social advancement. Vaught therefore asked us not to think of them “as agrarians nor as industrialists, but as horticulturalists” who “fervently believed they were cultivating not only specialty crops, but California itself.” Vaught then quoted from an 1892 *Yolo Weekly Mail* article to demonstrate his point: “There is something in horticulture which quickens the notions and enlarges the ideas, and therefore within its ranks is found a class of people who enrich a community with new blood, new brains, and fresh energy.”

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California’s boosters habitually bragged that horticulture required great skill and knowledge, lured stable and intelligent people, and fostered community pride while appealing to a middle-class esthetic. California horticulture thus mirrored the suburban lifestyle as imagined by others. California’s horticultural frontier was a place where a middle-class family lived on small and prosperous farms near other “like-minded” middle-class families. It fostered “neighborliness, strong local social, cultural, and political institutions, and economic progress, all in an environment that was esthetically pleasing as well.”

California emerged as the “highest and most perfect stage” for the manifestation of “the American Dream itself,” a dream that numerous suburban historians from Fishman, to Hayden, to Jackson, to Warner have shown was intimately tied to the suburban ideal. The California dream also promised to rejuvenate and save the democratic spirit of the great American republic. Just as suburbia’s literati sacrosanctified country suburban estates for their potential in stimulating democratic citizenship, California boosters believed horticulture would be the medium by which, as Wickson said, the “class of people which constitute the most desirable in the upbuilding of a great State” poured into California. The moral dimension of horticulture promised a subdivision of land that would stimulate the rise of small farms, displace migratory labor, and introduce into the state’s rural society a conviction that farming must be a way of life rather than simply a speculative investment. Perhaps there is no mistaking California’s suburban heritage when Frederick K. Cox declared in 1891 that the “pursuit of horticulture may be the happy means of dotting the


land with small holdings, which will be the seat of happy homes, whence shall proceed a
generous brood of men and women reared amid the most congenial environments, perfect types
of American manhood and womanhood, and fitted for every duty and performance of life.”

California’s horticultural fantasy of an ideal farming life happened most visibly in the
development and promotion of agricultural or irrigation “colonies” throughout the state.
“Colonies” are what link California with the suburban rhetoric of the nineteenth century most
clearly. The depiction of colonies by boosters and later interpreters alike emphatically mirrors
the characterization of suburbs by suburban imagineers and their later interpreters. Still,
“colony” offers a rather difficult term to deal with. Historically, a colony is a specific
community type and political entity. In classical Greek and Roman use, a colony meant a farm,
an estate in the country or a rural settlement. The term, in more recent times, also describes a
territory peopled by like-minded individuals, whether culturally, economically, politically,
 racially, or spiritually. Although both usages represent well how the term colony applied to
California’s agricultural settlements of the turn at the twentieth century, in more modern
application, colony represents a territory under the immediate political control of a
geographically distant state. Here, images of British or other European empires manifest. It
perhaps seems far-fetched to compare colonial Ontario to Colonial Williamsburg, Orangevale to
Hong Kong, or Fair Oaks to Ruanda-Urundi but, perhaps, not unwarranted as many western
historians have discussed the American West’s characteristics as a colonial territory under

113. Cox, Transactions, 1891, 98.
control, and for the exploitation, of a geographically distant state in Washington or, at least, business interests in distant cities.\textsuperscript{114}

The term colony as used by boosters and historians implied dominant colonial themes such as empire, exploitation, and capitalist expansion. Terms like empire, exploitation, and expansion may convey thoroughly negative connotations. While perhaps not that simple or Draconian, boosters and developers certainly did use the term colony to brand agricultural communities in an economic sense. Historians have also discussed colonies in terms similar to French legal sociologist René Maunier’s theory of colonization in which colonization is a capitalist achievement tied to race, politics, economy, and imperialism.\textsuperscript{115} For example, Dumke, in his study of “Colony Promotion during the Southern California Land Boom,” in 1943, argued that along with railroads, chambers of commerce and boards of trade “were extremely interested in colony migration which promised to enhance the value of surrounding properties.”\textsuperscript{116} In 1953, Oscar Osburn Winther also characterized the colony system in California and, although he identified several other motivating forces (communal, moral [temperance], and religious), he pointed to real-estate speculation and the colony system as an orchestrated way to profit.\textsuperscript{117} The depiction of colonies in California as a real-estate speculator’s castle in the sky has remained consistent from William H. Bishop in 1882, to Dumke and Winther, to Carey McWilliams, to,


\textsuperscript{116} Glenn S. Dumke, “Colony Promotion during the Southern California Land Boom,” \textit{The Huntington Library Quarterly} 6, no. 2 (February 1943): 238.

\textsuperscript{117} Oscar Osburn Winther, “The Colony System of Southern California,” \textit{Agricultural History} 27, no. 3 (July 1953): 94-103.
more recently, Donald Pisani, Steven Stoll, David Vaught, and Matt Garcia. Not coincidentally enough, the portrayal of suburbia as a system of capitalist expansion and real-estate speculation dominated by an economically powerful and politically influential elite runs smoothly in sync with a comparison of suburb and colony.

The homogenous fantasies of a white middle class — or aspiring middle class — defined both the suburban and agricultural colonial experience, at least in literary accounts. Just as suburban historians have worked to show that suburbs, while intertwined with real-estate capitalism and market forces, are more than mere speculative ventures and involve a variety of socio-cultural factors and imagined lifeways, so too have those describing the colony system in California. In 1915, one of California’s pioneer historians defined a colony in California at the turn of the twentieth century as the joining of people “from the East who were imbued with the same purpose.” The joining of people with the same purpose in colonies, or “with other believers” who “settle among friends,” was the same depiction given by geographers in 1934 and 1972, as well as by Kevin Starr who referenced a “homogeneous” group who lived in social and economic cooperation.

The way of life described by boosters and subsequent historians is an obvious connection between colony and suburb, and vice-versa. Suburbs promised community life and urban amenities in a beautiful rural landscape. So too did California’s small farms. California


historians have been long impressed with the vast array of “amenities” offered in, and characteristic of, California’s “colonies.”121 Colonies were subdivisions, usually in five-, ten-, and twenty- acre allotments, sustained by a matrix of institutions and infrastructure typically established by business savvy developers: bridges, canals, ditches, merchants’ stores, and newspapers. Good boosters understood that to attract “colonists” they needed to provide a level of infrastructure that would prove useful to a potential small farmer or homeseeker. Quick and easy connection to rail lines for either access to market or job commute to the hustle and bustle of the city, and good roads with shade trees to appeal to their middle-class cultural values. As suburban imagineers depicted a community with ample leisure time to enjoy finer things with a level of urban amenities without the crime and vice of cities, so too did colony organizers and leaders parade forth “amenities” such as churches, clubs, parks, stores, theaters, and a thriving commercial district. Such amenities, in both suburbs and colonies, represented the perfect blend of a city without a city and a country life without isolation. A California agricultural colony was the ideal suburb in an ideal environment with the best possible chance to make a buck, build a home, raise a family, and restore the individual heart, mind, and soul, as well as a more republican society.

That the term colony is reflective of an increasing celebration of the thirteen colonies and the American Revolution, particularly as the centennial approached in 1876 and remained a vibrant symbol years thereafter, is indicative of another possible connotation associated with the term colony and its usage at turn of the twentieth century in California — and elsewhere. As historian John Bodnar has pointed out, a rising commercial and professional class “found

121. See Garcia, A World of Its Own, 29-32; Pisani, From the Family Farm to Agribusiness, 73, 120-22; and 119. See also, McWilliams, Southern California, 215; Starr, Inventing the Dream, 166-67; Starr, Material Dreams, 17; and Vaught, Cultivating California, 19-22.
attempting to employ patriotism ‘to bolster entrepreneurial activity’” a viable business tactic by the 1820s. This reinforced the attempt of the rising middle and professional classes to place their pursuit of gain and advancement in the context of patriotic activity. To romanticize and celebrate colonies, particularly as they embodied the original thirteen colonies of the Revolutionary era, in one way or another, played off a powerful iconography and emotional symbolism. Even the Puritan errand into the wilderness, the supposedly great motivation behind the growth of many English colonies in the New World, reflected a nobler errand and represented a longing for a better way of life.

The agricultural colonies of Ontario in Southern California and Orangevale and Fair Oaks in Northern California provide thorough examples for detailing California’s suburban phenomenon, links between colony, horticulture, and suburb, and the existence of the agriburb as a unique rural suburban type. Boosters and other community leaders reiterated the suburban and Californian rhetoric of home, family, nature, and urban amenities to persuade readers and other potential migrants or investors that Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks were the best places to live. In addition, Ontarians, Orangevaleans, and Fair Oakians were farmers who hoped to earn a dollar amid California’s booming horticultural enterprise, achieve or maintain middle-class status, and nurture the soul and American republic via the hearth-stone. These boosters employed the language of suburbs and the agrarian ethos of small farmers dotting the land because it made good business sense. Colonies like Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks were


123. Bodnar, Remaking America, 24; and Appleby, Inheriting the Revolution.

planned rural suburbs — agriburbs. In the following chapters, then, reviewing how, and to an extent why, boosters packaged the California agricultural colonies of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks (i.e., commodified these places) allows them to be seen as unique rural suburban types — what I call agriburbs. Moreover, a review of these agriburbs shows the precise ways in which suburb, colony, and horticultural are not exclusive terms and, in California at the turn of the twentieth century, largely meant the same thing. In turn, the packaging of these agriburban places has had lasting consequences concerning how these places have been and are remembered in the present. The result of such remembrance, as discussed in chapters five and six, has been to divert attention away from the suburban side of these communities’ origins.
CHAPTER THREE

The Model Colony as a Model Agriburb: Ontario

_The plan for the colony is of the most advanced and liberal kind._

— _Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 1883_1

On October 15, 2005, 200 people gathered in front of Upland City Hall for the unveiling of a 13-foot statue of the founder of Ontario: George B. Chaffey, Jr. Upland had once been a part of Ontario, founded by Chaffey and others in 1882.2 The Chaffey statue is a 13-foot-bronze depiction of the man standing on an outcropping of rocks (San Gabriel Mountains) looking out on the valley as he holds a compass in one hand and a Jacob’s staff, a surveyor’s scope, in the other. The statue is a material representation of Chaffey’s own romantic recollection: “From the plateau of the foot of the mountain I obtained a bird’s-eye view of the whole area I proposed to acquire, and while I was standing there looking at it, I saw what Ontario was to and did become.”3 Behind Chaffey is a cactus sculpture as they rest atop a circular base showing fish swimming. The entire statue stands on a concrete pedestal that has a plaque, stating, “George Chaffey, Jr. / 1848–1932 / Man of Vision / Land, Water and Power / Father of The Model Colony.” On the other three sides of the four-sided pedestal are two bronze reliefs, six in all, showing the _S.S. Geneva_, long distance telephone, Chaffey College of Agriculture, Euclid Avenue, hydro-electricity, and a recreational vehicle.


2. Bernice Bedford Conley, _Dreamers and Dwellers: Ontario and Neighbors; An Offering of the Years of Research into the Beginnings of the Model Colony and its Neighbors in the Boom Years of Southern California_ (Privately Published: Stump Printing & Services, 1982), 102-81. Later Ontario promoters and investors sold the land at the turn of the twentieth century that would become Upland, which incorporated in 1906. Upland, then, like Etiwanda (founded by Chaffey early in 1882), shares a Chaffey heritage as both communities point to him as their founder.

3. Alexander, _The Life of George Chaffey_, 43.
Conveying how many others have remembered and exalted and continue to remember and exalt George Chaffey and the establishment of Ontario, Susan Chaffey Powell, great-granddaughter of Chaffey, remarked at the statue’s unveiling, “Not only do you care about your past but you care enough to do something.”4 According to a contributor to the *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin* (Ontario, CA), “Bringing about this monument has been a grassroots effort . . . with money coming in from the community and $125,000 in assistance from the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors.”5 In an effort “to remember Ontario’s most prominent citizen with a proper tribute,” former Mayor of Ontario Robert E. Ellingwood said, “Rancho Cucamonga has its Jack Benny statue, and San Dimas its Jedediah Smith statue; surely Chaffey’s amazing life and contributions to Ontario and Southern California deserve similar recognition.”6 Ellingwood thought the statue would cost $80,000 and, recognizing city governments could not pay for it, he believed private donations could suffice, including “hopes the children will respond by saving their pennies to go toward the statute.”7 Ellingwood’s vision combined education with

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7. See, “George Chaffey: The Final Dream,” collection of materials concerning the creation of a George Chaffey statue, Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario City Library, Ontario, CA; and Robert E. Ellingwood Collection, Box 2, folder 6, collection of materials concerning the creation of the Chaffey statue, Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario City Library, Ontario, CA.
a celebration of Chaffey’s importance to give “proper tribute” to Ontario’s “most prominent citizen.”

Interpretation of the statue can vary, though clear themes do emerge. The base of swimming fish represents Chaffey’s irrigation efforts and maritime love, while the relief bronze carvings depict “Chaffey’s accomplishments” and memorialize his role in building up the community through the consortium of Euclid Avenue, Chaffey School of Agriculture, telephone service, and electricity. Some more novel topics are depicted, including his connection to the S.S. Geneva — the fastest ship of the day — and the growing popularity of recreational vehicles — one plaque states: “First RV, 1920.” The statue memorializes Chaffey as an exceptional man who was ahead of his time. One contemporary writer for the Inland Valley Daily Bulletin poignantly observed, “If he were around today, the founder of Ontario and Upland would carry an iPod and a BlackBerry — after improving both.”

What local children supposedly donated their pennies for seems priceless. “I hope they look at this as representing a man who had a vision for what this area could and did become,” stated the sculptor John Edward Svenson. His statement illustrates how the Chaffey statue, as well as other historical narratives concerning Ontario, attempts to celebrate the material progress and cultivation of civilization. Chaffey stands majestically on a mountaintop, holding a

8. See, “George Chaffey: The Final Dream,” Ontario City Library, Ontario, CA; and Ellingwood Collection, Box 2, folder 6, Ontario City Library, Ontario, CA. Ellingwood’s vision also included plans to produce a documentary film for Public Broadcasting Service (PBS).


scientific tool, looking down upon a land in need of improvement. His legacy in Ontario and the region is of an entrepreneur that improved upon what he had found, particularly through irrigation, as the cactus represents a dry and barren land. In other words, Chaffey brought life.

What Chaffey founded, or, more rightfully, what he said and what others have said he founded, is the subject of this chapter. Chaffey’s vision for “what this area could and did become” represents a suburban fantasy that incorporated an agrarian ethos of rural civility and security and urban sophistication, culture, and modernization. Ontario, touted as the “Model Colony,” was an agriburb, particularly because the community’s promoters vigorously employed the language and planning of suburbia as espoused, designed, and made popular by such suburban imagineers as Beecher, Downing, and Olmsted. As California’s dreamers and boosters boasted of the state as unsurpassed for the location of an idyll community, local promoters bragged how their community perfectly represented the best of the best. In other words, local promoters, such as those in Ontario, utilized the language and narratives of place, class, lifestyle, and profit. They were sophisticated businessmen and advertisers who understood that by crafting and exploiting an image of community, place, and lifestyle in a language many could understand, recognize, and aspire to made good business sense and enhanced their chances to make a buck. Whatever potential migrants or investors thought — or were told — was good for their own interests, was also good for boosters pursuing a profit. If people wanted — or, at least, thought they needed — home, family, nature, health, culture, refinement, rural virtue, and prosperity, then good boosters would tell them all about such things as they echoed those that had crafted the popular and sought after images of the rural, suburban, and urban ideals. A picturesque single-family home in a bucolic California landscape that included urban amenities made a good place to live and an excellent way to profit, not to mention fostering republicanism,
cultivating the soil, and producing happy, well-adjusted boys and girls who would grow to
perfect kinds of men and women.

Real estate capitalism and ventures reflect a speculation that is a kind of seeing with an
imagination. Stripping away, only for a moment that is, real estate’s encompassment of
appraisal, brokerage, management, marketing, and investment, real estate speculation includes a
piece of land, the air above it, and the ground below it. Real estate, as real property or otherwise,
represents a physical landscape upon which individuals can project many feelings, hopes, and
even suspicions. For example, in California, Henry George saw land monopoly as the means
toward hegemony. Carey McWilliams agreed. Nevertheless, speculation in real estate requires a
creative imagining of what can be and not always what is. Assuming this is true of the seller,
investor, and buyer alike, the development and promotion of real estate in Ontario, not to
mention such places as Orangevale and Fair Oaks in Northern California, involved a real estate
entity selling land to buyers who all approached the land with a set of expectations. The realtors
looked to profit through the sale of land, investors and absentee land owners looked to profit
through anticipated increases in land value, and settlers hoped to profit as the land provided an
ideal home site and an ideal soil good for the production of produce for market. Everyone, we
can imagine, anticipated good things. Moreover, the image epitomized suburbia. A review of
the promotional literature shows Ontario’s promoters took an expanded and scattered approach
to appeal to as many potential migrants and investors as possible. For example, for a farmer in
Iowa, Ontario promised urban sophistication as well as a profitable business venture that
displayed farmers’ astuteness. For a Chicago businessman or New York City factory worker,
Ontario promised life among trees, shrubs, and flowers without sacrifice of city convenience.
Yet, Ontario also promised the absence of city vices or problems such as alcohol, prostitution,
and pollution. For all, male or female, city or rural dweller, working class or already middle class (but all still white), Ontario symbolized a residence and way of life that was essentially middle class and, more importantly, exceptionally American.

Table 3. Chaffey Promotional Material for Ontario

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places in which Chaffey Brothers received inquiries and sent promotional literature according to letters contained within Chaffey Letters, 1883-1885</th>
<th>Places in which Chaffey Brothers sent promotional literature to advertisers or interested real estate agents according to correspondence contained within Chaffey Letters, 1883-1885</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaheim, CA</td>
<td>Barrie, Ontario (2 times)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los Angeles, CA (4 times)</td>
<td>Berlin (now Kitchener), Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>Riverside, CA</td>
<td>Collins Bay, Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Francisco, CA (5 times)</td>
<td>Elora, Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denver, CO (3 times)</td>
<td>Goderich, Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aspen, CO</td>
<td>Kingston, Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collinsville, CT</td>
<td>Lambton Mills, Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington, D.C. Storm Lake, IA</td>
<td>London, Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traer Tama, IA</td>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chicago, IL (7 times)</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario (12 times)</td>
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<tr>
<td>La Grange, IL</td>
<td>Barrie, Ontario (2 times)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas City, KS</td>
<td>Berlin (now Kitchener), Ontario</td>
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<td>Topeka, KS</td>
<td>Collins Bay, Ontario</td>
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<td>Newton, MA</td>
<td>Elora, Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holyoke, MA</td>
<td>Goderich, Ontario</td>
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<td>West Durham, ME Homer, MI</td>
<td>Kingston, Ontario</td>
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<td>Minneapolis, MN Sedalia, MO</td>
<td>Lambton Mills, Ontario</td>
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<td>Hartford, MO St. Charles, MO</td>
<td>London, Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidney, NE Omaha, NE Rye, NH</td>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silver City, NM Brookfield, NY</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario (12 times)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niagara Falls, NY</td>
<td>Barrie, Ontario (2 times)</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York, NY Coshocton, OH</td>
<td>Berlin (now Kitchener), Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paddy’s Run, OH Harrisburg, PA</td>
<td>Barrie, Ontario (2 times)</td>
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<td>Nova Scotia</td>
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<td>Toronto, Ontario (12 times)</td>
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Data tallied by author from correspondence found in the Chaffey Letters. Chaffey Letters, Binder 1, Book 1: January 23, 1882 to March 10, 1885, letters 1-265 and Book 2: March 15, 1883 to November 14, 1883, letters 1-175; and Binder 2, Book II: November 14, 1883 to September 4, 1885, letters 176-486, transcriptions of original letters compiled by Ron Baker and transcribed by M. Tikfesi, Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario City Library, Ontario, CA

Ontario, as described in a 1905 article for the Land of Sunshine, had “city conveniences and country health and pleasure; peopled with the intelligent, well-to-do and law-abiding.”12 Homeownership and infrastructure were essential for this agriburb to become “the most perfect and beautiful residential settlement in the world.”13 Again, the agriburb was not a rural supply


line to an urban center or an isolated “colony.” Rather, the agriburb evolved because of a growth machine whereby land-based elite, particularly newspapermen and other professionals, sought to produce wealth through real estate development. It did not occur because of urban sprawl or because of some mass exodus of the wealthy class to the outer fringes of the hinterland. A land-based elite promoted and invested in the agriburb. It was planned. Taken altogether, the agriburb had the following things: horticulture; close proximity to, but physical separation from, a growing urban area; promotion that exploited both a rural and suburban ideal, particularly through homeownership and climate, as well as urban amenities such as good roads, schools, and businesses; and a land-based elite promoting and developing it for profit. The agriburb thence, as expressed by one writer in *The Ontario Record* in 1907, made it “possible for those in search of small home groves to obtain their desire and yet remain within the confines of a beautiful and progressive city.”

The basis for most suburban histories since the mid-1980s remains with the authoritative suburban account of Kenneth T. Jackson’s *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (1985) in which he contends the United States possessed a unique suburbanization process. “This uniqueness,” he concludes, “involves population density, homeownership,


residential status, and journey-to-work.”

Recent suburban historians, revisionist or otherwise, challenge — and complement — Jackson’s description of the suburbanization process. Collectively, they describe an urban-suburban landscape in which no uniform process of suburbanization and growth during the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries amply explains the formation of metropolitan or regional areas and their periphery in the United States. Therefore, on the one hand, Jackson’s amalgamated definition of a suburb, in juxtaposition with other accounts, provides a well-defined model to which we can compare Ontario. On the other hand, the suburbanization of Ontario provides a case study that further challenges — or at least differentiates from — Jackson’s generalizations and helps to describe the elements of the agriburb as it materialized in Ontario. Yet, before any explanation concerning the hows and whys of Ontario as an agriburb can take place, some background information about Ontario’s establishment in the latter part of the nineteenth century is needed, particularly as it establishes the context, primary actors, events, and other historical phenomena that will be regularly referred to throughout the rest of this work.

**The Establishment of Ontario**

The establishment of Ontario could have been the inspiration for any number of Hollywood films or other tall tales about the creation of communities in the so-called Wild West. Men armed with rifles, guards on post, fence wire, and concerns over water rights were


17. Indeed, Ontario’s promoters expressed a high sense of honor at times. Upon reading a damning editorial criticizing the Chaffeys for lying about Ontario’s superior advantages in advertisements, Chaffey ripped of a letter to a friend, a reverend no less, on May 25, 1883 exclaiming, “I am therefore forced to the conclusion that he [the author of the editorial] has been induced to evil and allow[ed] himself to be used as a cats paw. I will catch the monkey however and warm his jacket [i.e., to beat him].” See, George B. Chaffey, Jr., Etiwanda, letter to Reverend W. Thomas Wilkson, Belgrave, Ontario, Canada, May 25, 1883, Chaffey Letters, Book 1, in Chaffey Letters, Binder 1, transcriptions of original letters complied by Ron Baker and transcribed by M. Tikfesi, Book 1: January 23, 1882 to March 10, 1885, letters 1-265 and Book 2: March 15, 1883 to November 14, 1883, letters 1-175, Robert E.
all present and accounted for in the spring of 1882. Representatives of the firm Chaffey Brothers clashed with representatives of the Pomona Land and Water Company over the purchase of a land option first offered to Captain Joseph S. Garcia by a group of San Francisco investors called the Cucamonga Company. There was no mistaking that this was real estate capitalism and speculation at its seemingly most wild. The land in question had actually changed hands several times, as the Cucamonga Company had bought the land just eleven years earlier from Isaias W. Hellman of Los Angeles who had been the last of several owners of an original Mexican land grant given to Tiburcio Tabia in 1839. Luckily, in 1882 that is, cooler heads prevailed before guards representing the competing real estate interests soaked the soil with their blood. In short, the Chaffey Brothers won the battle through negotiation, secured Garcia’s option, and on September 18, 1882 paid the San Francisco investors $60,000 for 6,216 acres of land located between San Antonio Creek and Cucamonga creek along the San Gabriel Mountains approximately thirty-eight miles southeast of Los Angeles. The Chaffey Brothers then purchased an additional 250 acres at $20,030.80 and another 114 acres at the mouth of the San Antonio Canyon for $11,000. At this point, as George Chaffey allegedly recalled in 1925,

Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario City Library, Ontario, CA. To “warm” one’s jacket is a British colloquialism for hitting, striking, or beating up someone, as in excessively rubbing down or dusting a person’s jacket in an attempt to make the person warmer and thus causing injury (Oxford English Dictionary Online, s.n. “Dust” and “Jacket”). Calling someone a “monkey” is just plain rude and mean, as in saying the person in question is “a lecherous person” (Oxford English Dictionary Online, s.n. “Monkey”).

“The plan for laying out Ontario was thought of under some old peach trees.” He continued: 
“That is where I went to plan this scheme. I laid out there all day long and after a time I had it 
pretty well in mind. I got my surveyor and the thing was under way.”19

The Chaffey Brothers Company included George B. Chaffey, Jr. of bronze statue fame 
and his brother William Benjamin Chaffey, both of whom were originally from Kingston, 
Canada located in the Ontario province. In 1877, William’s brother-in-law Dr. Joseph Jarvis, 
M.D. visited Riverside, California and purchased a tract of land. Returning to Kingston in 1877 
or 1878, Jarvis extolled the virtues of Riverside and urged his brother-in-law to relocate to the 
Golden State. William’s parents, George Chaffey, Sr. and Ann Chaffey, joined him and his 
siblings Charles and Emma and moved to the “Canadian Tract” in Riverside’s Arlington District 
later that year. Although precise dates are a bit muddled, story has it that the elder George, 
William, and Charles scouted land near Pomona in 1880 and/or 1881 in a profit-driven fantasy of 
reproducing the success of Riverside, not to mention Pasadena. Whether already in Riverside or 
back home in Kingston, the Chaffey clan then informed the eldest of George Chaffey Sr.’s boys, 
George Chaffey, Jr., of their find. Again, as story has it, William, a so-called horticulturalist, and 
soil expert, skillfully scouted the possibilities for an agricultural wonderland. The problem, as 
often was the case in arid Southern California, was water. But the younger George was a marine 
engineer and shipbuilder. The family regarded him as the best man up to the task of bringing

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water to a barren land to make it bloom. Besides, here lay a fantastic business opportunity. Chaffey, who reportedly became “excited by the strange enthusiasm of his father and brother for a land so different from their beloved Canada,” joined the family in cultivating their dreams of speculative real estate ventures.

The first Chaffey Brothers’ speculative real estate venture was Etiwanda, reportedly named after an Antiguan chief and Chaffey family friend in Canada. On Thanksgiving Day in 1881, the Chaffey Brothers met with Captain Garcia and offered him $30,000 for 560 acres of land, water rights, and even the good captain’s house — since then know as the Garcia-Chaffey house. After signing the deed in January 1882, the Chaffey Brothers purchased an additional eighty acres in February from Garcia at a grand total of $1.00. The brothers then subdivided the land and began to advertise and sell. What has impressed residents, historians, and others since the first years of Etiwanda’s establishment were the numerous amenities offered. The Chaffey Brothers organized the Etiwanda Water Company, a mutual water company, and pipe system of irrigation designed by Chaffey, which became the standard for water system management in Southern California. The first long distance telephone call in Southern California was completed between San Bernardino and Etiwanda in 1882 and the Chaffey-Garcia house lighted the Southern California night sky for the first time with electric lights on December 4, 1882. In other words, Etiwanda, a “community of firsts,” was on the cutting edge of technological

20. Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties, 106-08; Garcia, A World of Its Own, 28-33; McWilliams, Southern California, 154-56; Starr, Material Dreams, 14-19; and Tyrrell, True Garden of the Gods, 141-43. See also, Alexander, The Life of George Chaffey, 42-69; An Illustrated History of Southern California, 473-75; Austen, Ontario, 28-37; Conley, Dreamers and Dwellers, 22-40; Brown and Boyd, History of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, 229-37; Freeman, Ingersoll’s Century Annals of San Bernardino County, 565-81; Frankish, “Some Early History of Ontario,” 176-80; Guinn, A History of California, 451-453; “Ontario,” Land of Sunshine, 247-50; and Rounds, Ontario, 45-63.

advancement and implementation of community planning without sacrifice of rural virtue and security, at once modern and traditional.

The Chaffey Brothers infused Etiwanda, and later Ontario, with the nineteenth-century symbols of progress, advancement, and modernity. Historians have long understood that technologies like communication, electricity, irrigation, and transportation were essential to constructing America as a modern nation. Not all Americans, however, particularly rural Americans, directly experienced or used such technologies. Yet, technologies were as commonly and powerfully imagined as they were experienced or used. New national networks of railroads, interurban and intraurban transit, telephone lines, electricity, and even regional irrigation projects were critical as both tools and images. While they facilitated a more integrated regional and national economy, “they taught,” said historian Robert MacDougall, “Americans how to imagine themselves within that economy, and gave them vivid metaphors with which to do so.”

Although Etiwanda could make a great case study to describe the details of an agriburb, so too could numerous communities from Pasadena to Riverside to Redlands. Ontario, though, perhaps more than the others, stands out for two reasons. First, Ontario is the community that numerous historians from Dumke, to McWilliams, to Starr, to Garcia single out as an archetype of Southern California’s distinctive development at the end of the nineteenth century. Ontario is, hence, a well-known case study and familiar to those who study California history. This first reason bleeds into the second. Specifically, Ontario serves as a good case study for delineating


the details of an agriburb because it has such a long, rich, and extensive body of historical literature on which to draw. Information concerning Ontario’s past is plentiful and Ontario also represents a community with a long and intense sense of history, public memory, and sense of place that further contributes to an understanding of the socio-cultural environment of the community over a 100-year span. With all that said, the Ontario promoters, not to mention hundreds of subsequent historical narratives, recall the establishment of Ontario as “the most perfect plan ever adopted by a colony in this State.” While not exactly validating that claim, this case study adds depth to it nevertheless.

When Chaffey sat Zen-like under the peach tree in 1882 after purchasing the land that would become Ontario, he set out to establish a “Model Colony” based on three principles. In 1884, his business partner Robert M. Widney listed the three principles that constituted Chaffey’s vision of a Model Colony. “First — distribute the water for irrigating purposes over the whole tract and to each farm lot in concrete and iron pipes, requiring some forty miles of piping. Second — improve the main thoroughfare so that it will be a thing of beauty and usefulness forever. Third — furnish a college for the education of the people of the colony.”

Concerning the first, the Chaffeys created the San Antonio Water Company on October 25, 1882, to which they sold the water rights they had previously acquired in land deals, and laid down forty miles of conduits. After tunneling in San Antonio Canyon, Chaffey discovered a vibrant underground stream and then constructed the first underground water tunnel in Southern


California. About the second, Chaffey envisioned Euclid Avenue as an eight-mile 200-foot-wide double drive lined with trees to serve as the thoroughfare where the streetcar system connected to the Southern Pacific depot at the heart of downtown Ontario. Euclid Avenue was certainly impressive as one writer noted in 1895 that the double drive was “now the finest boulevard in California.” About the third, on March 17, 1883, ground broke for the laying of the foundation for the Chaffey College of Agriculture, which, for a time, was a branch of the Los Angeles-based University of Southern California (USC) campus.

Ontario’s promoters, residents, and entrepreneurs worked quickly to build and develop institutions and infrastructure designed to appeal to both potential migrants and speculative imagination. With such infrastructure and institutions, what historians and boosters alike have called “urban amenities,” life in Ontario, promised the promoters, reflected an urbane existence without the problems of a city, all while in a comfortable and healthy climate close to nature and upon a soil perfect for the cultivation of profitable produce. Ontario’s promoters continually cited the potential for land values to rise exponentially, particularly with regard to fruit and related markets. Yet, the promoters also understood the appeal of urban amenities to draw migrants and investors and, in turn, the likelihood that land values would indeed rise and therefore more fully line the pockets of the promoters. Put differently, to advertise, build, and develop urban amenities was a smart and pragmatic business decision. By arranging for and making a capital investment in urban amenities, the promoters essentially provided the needed


(or, more rightfully, wanted and desired) institutions and infrastructure required for a community to develop and grow, which, as the promoters hoped, would likely secure lasting profits from the continual sale of land. In addition, the arrangement for and capital investment in urban amenities could — and were — used as essential enticements in the promoters’ publicity campaign.

Ontario’s promoters touted a variety of benefits in the new “agricultural colony.” Opening the pages to both the 1883 and 1884 booster publications created by Ontario’s promoters shows an extensive advertising approach as the promoters likely wanted to appeal to every possible interest, migrant, or investor. Advice and information splashed across the pages and were cited or otherwise presented as authoritative and factual, particularly through such simple things as impressive tables and charts and signed testimonials from doctors and other supposed experts. The promoters filled the pamphlets with pages of information concerning planting and pruning, irrigation and cultivation, diseases and insect pests, picking and curing, sorting and packing, and the raisin and citrus industries. The information potentially appealed to an experienced farmer or someone otherwise knowledgeable in agriculture as the material demonstrated the promoters’ understanding — or at least dedication to secure people who understand — the complexities and details of farming and production for market. The reader was therefore assured the necessary and correct steps had or were to be taken to develop a successful agricultural region. Then again, the detailed information in the pamphlets concerning agriculture potentially appealed to city dwellers or people otherwise unfamiliar with agriculture to assure them that the promoters knew what they were doing. The pamphlets’ material likely served as some kind of corroborating evidence demonstrating the reliability of Ontario’s agricultural prowess.
The advertisement of urban amenities served the same sort of purpose as the information concerning agriculture in the Ontario booster pamphlets. Touting urban amenities, as well as modern technologies increasingly associated with urban life, progress, and culture, such as railroad depots, good roads, electricity, a water system, a cable railway, and even shade trees, probably appealed to city dwellers. The promotional material aimed to guarantee that the benefits of the city would be present in Ontario. Still, as shade trees, parks, and the agrarian rhetoric underscores, Ontario was planned and promoted as a city without the supposed problems of a city, such as pollution, crime, alcohol abuse, or immigrants. The adoration of urban amenities also likely appealed to farmers or people otherwise not often associated with urban living. The booster pamphlets promised urban culture and amenities — particularly as such amenities represented the cultural symbols of modernity, refinement, and progress — without leaving the rural countryside behind; new residents could essentially escape the seamier sides of city life. The adoration of Ontario’s urban amenities represented an exaltation of such amenities because Ontario was also an “agricultural colony.” In other words, Ontario was cutting edge and innovative despite being based in agriculture.

The list of urban services promoted in Ontario’s booster literature included such things as transportation, communication, electricity, a water supply, educational institutions, religious institutions, social clubs, a post office, shops and stores, a hotel, public library, and much more. Of central importance was the railroad. The railroad, to be sure, was a cultural symbol of modern industrial society at the time. The railroad provided access to market for Ontario’s aspiring prosperous farmers while also providing a convenient connection to emerging urban centers and nearby communities such as Los Angeles, Riverside, Santa Monica, and Orange.  

The railroad created an extensive regional network that also reached out nationally and, by implication, globally. Certainly, among other lines, thriving agriculture and regional networks grew exponentially with the completion of the Santa Fe Railroad (1885), reaching Ontario in 1887, and several others lines, such as a second Southern Pacific line running to San Diego (1882) and a link with Santa Fe at Cajon Pass (1885), the Chino Valley Railroad (1887), and the Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad (1903).30

Euclid Avenue unquestionably served as a centerpiece in Ontario’s promotional literature. “A grand avenue,” wrote the promoters in the 1884 booster pamphlet, “200 feet wide, named Euclid Avenue, will lead from the railroad to the mountains, and be illuminated at distances of a mile by an electric light.” The promoters further promised that on Euclid “will be built a double track cable railway” propelled by “water power” and lined with “shade trees” such as eucalyptus and palm.31 If any doubt remained about the purpose of Euclid, good roads, shade trees, railroad links, or cable railways, the promoters minced no words when they stated: “let him remember that when he has so purchased the cheap lands [in California] it will cost him vast sums to add to it these things which alone elevate and build up the human race into higher culture, enjoyment, and civilization.”32 Therefore, no one moving to or investing in Ontario needed to worry as the promoters in Ontario thus provideth.

Besides trees, railroad lines, cable railways, and Euclid Avenue, Ontario offered educational institutions from high schools, to normal schools, to an agricultural college, the “aim of which shall be to bring to the inmates of these homes [in Ontario] the improving influences of

30. See Austen, Ontario, 41; Conley, Dreamers and Dwellers, 3-5; and Rounds, Ontario, 62.


32. Widney, Ontario, 14.
mental and moral culture.” Religious denominations were “well represented here,” said the promoters, “and either have or are securing suitable places to worship.” To highlight their investment in “public and quasi public improvements” the promoters again cited such things as railroad lines, a telegraph line, cross streets, electric lights, stores and shops, and a newspaper. They said that because “homeseekers coming to this country . . . desired a tract of fruit land surrounded by all the comforts and many of the luxuries of life, they [the promoters] determined to find here a settlement that should out-rank all other localities in natural and artificial attractions.” According to the promoters, “A constant intellectualization has been going on around the farm” and Ontario would attract “men of good business judgment.” These amenities and Chaffey’s “most perfect plan” show Ontario to be a suburb, particularly when compared to the suburban analyses by Kenneth T. Jackson and others.

**Ontario: A Model Agriburb**

The first distinguishing element of suburbs identified by Jackson in *Crabgrass Frontier* is low residential density and the absence of distinguishable divisions between town and country. Concerning low residential density, Ontario at the turn of the twentieth century meets Jackson’s criterion well. Ontario’s population reached

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Density / People per acre</th>
<th>Density / People per square mile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>66.31</td>
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35. *Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County*, 29; see also 30-31.
683 by 1890 and remained under 23,000 until the 1950s, all within an area of approximately 6,582 acres, or 10.3 square miles.³⁷

Nonetheless, many rural-seeming areas, particularly the nearby communities of Colton and Redlands, show similar low-density residential numbers of less than or at about, 1,000 people per square mile — at least until 1920 concerning Colton and 1950 about Redlands.³⁸

The lack of a sharp distinction between town and country is therefore where Ontario seemingly does not compare to a typical suburb, according to Jackson. Ontario’s non-contiguous location to the three nearest county seats — Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino — is important for two reasons. First, it partly explains why historians and other researchers fail to recognize Ontario as a unique rural suburb because a common misconception of suburbs is that they resulted from a process of development spreading directly out of an urban core like rings on

³⁷. For population numbers, see California, Department of Finance, “Population Totals by Township and Place for California Counties: 1860 to 1950.” See also, Conley, Dreamers and Dwellers, 98; Bank of America Economic Department, Economic Growth and Development in the San Bernardino – Riverside – Ontario Area (n.p.: [Bank of America], 1961), 5; and California Department of Finance, Budget Division, Report to the City of Ontario on its Population Growth ([Sacramento, CA]: California Department of Finance, 1959), 1. For the expanding acreage of Ontario, see Austen, Ontario, 30-40; Brown and Boyd, History of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, 229-237; Conley, Dreamers and Dwellers, 24-40; Freeman, Ingersoll’s Century Annals of San Bernardino County, 577, 452; and Rounds, Ontario, 40-65.

³⁸. Colton had an area of 4.1 square miles, or 2,624 acres, listed in 1940 and a population of 1,315 in 1890 (320.1 people per sq mi according to 1940 land size); 1,285 in 1900 (313.4 per sq mi); 3,980 in 1910 (970.1 per sq mi); 4,282 in 1920 (1044.4 per sq mi); 8,014 in 1930 (1,954.6 per sq mi); 9,686 in 1940 (2,362.4 per sq mi); and 14,465 in 1950 (3,528 per sq mi). Redlands had an area of 16.5 square miles, or 10,560 acres, listed in 1940 and a population of 1,904 in 1890 (115.4 people per sq mi according to 1940 land size); 4,797 in 1900 (290.7 per sq mi); 10,449 in 1910 (633.27 per sq mi); 9,571 in 1920 (580.1 per sq mi); 14,177 in 1930 (859.2 per sq mi); 14,324 in 1940 (868.1 per sq mi); and 18,429 in 1950 (1,116.9 per sq mi). See, California, Department of Finance, “Population Totals by Township and Place for California Counties: 1860 to 1950.”
an onion.\textsuperscript{39} The emphasis here is on geographic and territorial location, on the measurable
distance between suburb and city. Second, Ontario’s non-contiguous territorial and physical
location to an urban center such as Los Angeles — or at least growing urban areas — reflects
one of the appeals drawing what Ontario’s promoters called “colonizers.” The emphasis again is
on location, the geographically measurable and visually physical separation and distance
between suburb and city.

Ontario may not seem to many a suburb because it was located approximately thirty-eight
miles away from Los Angeles, and just over twenty miles from Riverside and San Bernardino,
with divisions marked by “unsettled” areas in between. The problem with this argument is
twofold. First, not all suburbs are contiguous with, or located near (within 10-15 miles) a large
urban center in the United States (or Canada), as Richard Harris and Robert Lewis pointed out in
a 2001 special issue of the \textit{Journal of Urban History} concerning industrial suburbs. Harris and
Lewis added, “Arguably, prewar suburbs were as socially diverse as cities that they surrounded,
and it is doubtful whether the city-suburb dichotomy was very significant.”\textsuperscript{40} The emergence of
many suburbs then, particularly working-class and industrial suburbs, “were created in waves of
industrialization and building construction” from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth
centuries.\textsuperscript{41} Suburban historians Binford and — rather paradoxically — Jackson acknowledged

\textsuperscript{39} For a more detailed discussion on the literature and theories of suburbanization as a process of
decanting the core, see Richard Walker and Robert Lewis, “Beyond the Crabgrass Frontier: Industry and the Spread
of North American Cities, 1850-1950,” \textit{Journal of Historical Geography} 27, no. 1 (January 2001): 3-5. This article
is also republished in Lewis, \textit{Manufacturing Suburbs}.

\textsuperscript{40} Harris and Lewis, “The Geography of North American Cities and Suburbs,” 263. See also, Harris and
Lewis, “Constructing a Fault(y) Zone,” 622-39. For more works that provide invalidating evidence of
decentralization, see Harris and Lewis’s review in “The Geography of North American Cities and Suburbs,”
particularly endnote #3. Mary Corbin Sies also provides a good review in “North American Urban History,” 30-34.

\textsuperscript{41} Walker and Lewis, “Beyond the Crabgrass Frontier,” 3.
suburban separation and distance as well, as railroad suburbs in the 1830s and 1840s were not
directly connected to cities but by transportation routes, which suburbanites often took the lead
in funding.42

The historical definition of a suburb concerns places that exist outside a town or city —
either sub-urban or sub-town. The town or city must be nearby and constantly present to
constitute a suburb. For example, around 1342, Benedictine monk Ranulf Higden discussed the
“subarbes of Rome.”43 This understanding of suburbs was and is common. Perusals through
dictionaries reveal more examples, as the definition of a suburb has remained salient for more
than 350 years.44 “Suburban,” according to Thomas Blount in his 1656 Glossographia, is
“belonging to the Suburbs or out streets, and parishes of a Town or City.” Noah Webster’s first
An American Dictionary in 1828 defined a suburb as “a building without the walls of a city, but
near them; or more generally, the parts that lie without the walls, but in the vicinity of a city,”
which even remained the definition for Webster’s from the 1950s – 1980s.45

42. Binford, The First Suburbs, especially 18-44; and Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 101.

43. Ranulf Higden, Prolicionycion (ca. 1342), translated into English as Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden
Monachi Cestrensis, Together with the English Translations of John Trevisa and of an Unknown Writer of the

44. For more examples of suburbs being defined in juxtaposition to the city, see Geoffrey Chaucer, who
mentioned “the suburbs of a town,” in “The Canones Yeoman’s Tale,” Canterbury Tales (ca. 1386), chapter 48, line
104, available online through the Electronic Literature Foundation, www. thegreatbooks.org; and John Kersey’s
1708 Dictionarium recorded for suburb, “that part of a City or Town, which lies without the Walls” (John Kersey,

45. Thomas Blount, Glossographia: or a Dictionary, Interpreting all such Hard Words (London: Thomas
Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language, College Edition (Cleveland: World Publishing
Company, 1966), s.v. “Suburb”; Webster’s New World Dictionary and Thesaurus of the American Language (New
The problem with historical definitions and characterizations is that suburbs in the United States have not always been *sub*. Understanding them as such — both today and yesteryear — creates a bias in our minds when discussing them and, potentially, risks becoming a barrier for many as they try to conceive of the agriburb. Specifically, very different economic, political, and social forces fostered the creation of suburbs outside Rome, England, and the United States, not to mention ancient Babylon and the suburbs of the Levites.46 In fact, urban historians of the United States, such as Eric H. Monkkonen and Sam Bass Warner, Jr., have pointed to a unique urbanization process in the United States, one that categorically did not include walls, possessed very ambiguous and constantly evolving boundary lines, and grew to a shape molded by the pursuit for profit.47 Likewise, historians such as Jackson, while correctly citing similarity to, and inspiration from, England, point to a unique suburbanization process in the United States.48 Consequently, one ought to avoid getting caught up in the definition of the term suburb as if suburbs, in reality, have been constantly just one thing. Suburban form, type, and suburbanization as a process are contingent on historical phenomena and context. Suburban historians and revisionists, such as Henry Binford, Robert Lewis, Richard Harris, and Richard

46. A letter to the King of Persia in 539 B.C.E. represented “the first extant expression of the suburban ideal,” according to historian Kenneth T. Jackson. It read: “Our property seems to me the most beautiful in the world.” The author continued: “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 noise and dust” (quoted in Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 12). References to suburbs in connection with a town or city — at least in some translations — even appear in the Hebrew Bible. In *I Chronicles* (450-435 B.C.E.) the author mentioned, “The suburbs thereof round about” Judah and other places to conclude, “And the children of Israel gave to the Levites these cities with their suburbs” (*I Chronicles* 6:55-64; most contend the Jewish priestly scribe Ezra wrote Chronicles after Babylonian captivity around 450 and 435 B.C.E).

47. Monkkonen, *America Becomes*, 53-58. Despite citing a “New World” legacy different from Europe, Monkkonen still subscribed to the dominance of a city center, what he called the “tyranny of the center” (58). See also, Josef W. Konvitz, *The Urban Millennium: The City-Building Process from the Early Ages to the Present* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), 47-53. Sam Bass Warner, Jr. also found something unique in the American city, privatism, which, as he defined it, celebrated the pursuit of profit — which then can lead to the later expansion of suburbs, particularly streetcar suburbs (see, Warner, *The Private City*, especially 3-11, 14-21).

48. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*.
Walker have tried to make this clear. On the one hand, they narrow their analytical lens to focus on suburbs within a particular epoch and geographical region — North America. On the other hand, they expand the definition of a suburb to include working-class and middle-class residential communities, as well as industrial communities, not directly tied to an urban core.\footnote{See, Harris and Lewis, “The Geography of North American Cities and Suburbs”; Harris and Lewis, “Constructing a Fault(y) Zone”; Walker and Lewis, “Beyond the Crabgrass Frontier”; and Lewis, \textit{Manufacturing Suburbs}.}

The historical understanding of a suburb regarding its geographical location near a city is therefore misleading because it does not encompass all of what suburbia represents in the United States or all the suburban types that have come into existence.

The second problem with an emphasis on physical location and place is that it risks marginalizing the importance of imagery and imagination. Suburbia is as much a cultural symbol and intellectual construction as a geographical place. Even suburbia’s critics, such as Lewis Mumford and Robert Blake, to name a few who often lament uniformity, conformity, and a decline in civic participation, have made this abundantly clear.\footnote{Robert Blake, \textit{God’s Own Junkyard: The Planned Deterioration of America’s Landscape} (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964); and Mumford, \textit{The City in History}. See also, Frederick Lewis Allen, “Suburban Nightmare,” \textit{The Independent} 114 (June 13, 1925), in Nicolaides and Weise, \textit{The Suburb Reader}, 228-30; Allen, “The Big Change In Suburbia,” 21-28; Duany, Plater-Zyberk, and Speck, \textit{Suburban Nation}; Robert M. Fogelson, \textit{Bourgeois Nightmares: Suburbia, 1870-1930} (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005); Friedan, \textit{The Feminine Mystique}; Kay, \textit{Asphalt Nation}; Jacobs, \textit{Dark Age Ahead}; Kunstler, \textit{The Geography of Nowhere}; and Whyte, \textit{The Organization Man}.}

A connection between the values people have and the kinds of communities they create, and vice versa, seem palpable. American urban sociologist Robert E. Park, for example, believed changes in physical and spatial structure directly affected social behavior. He said, “Most if not all cultural changes in society will be correlated with changes in territorial organization, and every change in territorial and occupational distribution of the population will effect changes in the existing culture.”\footnote{Robert E. Park, \textit{Human Communities: The City and Human Ecology} (New York: Free Press, 1952), 14.}
Culture was and is, as Pierre Bourdieu said of \textit{habitus}, a “structured and structuring structure.”\textsuperscript{52} That is, suburbs, as social spaces, encompass much more than geographical location or material form. Changing conceptions of the family, home, privacy, separateness, nature, and domesticity all shaped and were shaped by the territorial organizations and transformations occurring in the United States during the nineteenth century. The valuation of nature and health were crucial, to be sure, as Olmsted even argued suburbia was “strongly counteractive to the special enervating conditions of the town.”\textsuperscript{53}

The significance of Ontario’s non-contiguous location to major urban centers hence rested upon its advertisement and appeal. While a principal appeal of Ontario was its connection to cities such as Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino, via the Southern Pacific and, later, Santa Fe railroads, it was just as important that it stayed separated, quasi-isolated, by a rural landscape. Ontario represented a middle landscape and appealed to a rural ideal of rustic simplicity and healthy living in a rapidly modernizing and industrial society — though it did not shun technology as it embraced “the machine in the garden.”\textsuperscript{54} Ontario appealed to middle-class dreams of success in horticulture in the state coinciding with, and contributing to, the general citrus boom in Southern California in the 1880s. A booster brochure produced in 1883 by Luther M. Holt’s Riverside Press and Horticulturalist Steam Print, \textit{Ontario, Located in San Bernardino}

\textsuperscript{52} See Bourdieu, \textit{Distinction}, 171; and Bourdieu, \textit{The Logic of Practice}, 52.

\textsuperscript{53} Frederick Law Olmsted, “Public Parks and the Entanglement of Towns,” 1870, in S. B. Sutton, ed., \textit{Civilizing American Cities: A Selection of Frederick Law Olmsted’s Writings on City Landscapes} (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), 73. Suburbs were to counter the industrialized city, to be sure, but they were also social spaces that contained urban amenities and, as Olmsted and Vaux maintained, “conveniences and luxuries, which, even yet, can be generally enjoyed by great numbers of people only in large towns” (Olmsted, Vaux, & Co, “Letter to the Riverside Improvement Company,” 266).


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"County, California on the Southern Pacific Railroad," captures the middle-class appeal and spirit of horticulture typical of the period, particularly fruit production:

The result of careful, judicious cultivation of agriculture or horticultural products is profitable. Some products yield a profit of $50 per acre. The small profit is from grain crops. The large profit is from fruit crops. In fruits, one man can properly cultivate and market 20 acres of land, leaving sufficient time to properly care for poultry and animals needed to use up ordinary fallings about the place. . . . This country is of such character that each twenty-acre tract of our lands fit for cultivation, by proper cultivation, and a capital of say $2,000 to $3,000, invested in improvements, will support and educate a family; not in extravagance, but with the comforts and necessaries of life.55

In contrast to the economic opportunities of the rural ideal, Ontario was, again, located many miles from Los Angeles and other surrounding urban centers. The promoters highlighted the recently built Southern Pacific railway and other rail lines built in the 1870s and 1880s that connected those living in Ontario to Los Angeles and other burgeoning cities and towns.56 Ontario did exist within the socio-economic orbit of Los Angeles and surrounding neighborhoods via transportation routes and capital flow, and it could facilitate the development of other areas as well. Though such a sentiment went unspoken, actions, as the saying goes, speak louder than words as Ontario’s promoters sponsored excursions from Colton, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino in March 1883 to entice nearby residents to invest or resettle in the budding community.57 Regarding fruit production, Ontario’s promoters touted the railroads’ benefit to production for market to demonstrate further life in Ontario paid monetarily as well as

55. Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 28.

56. Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 14; Widney, Ontario, 37-38; and “Ontario,” Land of Sunshine, 248.

culturally. The 1883 *Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, California on the Southern Pacific Railroad* booster pamphlet, as well as another pamphlet published by Holt’s press, written in 1884 by Widney, highlights the importance of the railroad for Ontario:

New markets will soon be opened up for Southern California. The new Southern railroad route, now completed, and the prospect of two or three other independent lines being finished to Southern California within the next two years will furnish, it is hoped, cheap transportation to the heart of the Mississippi Valley. These routes will enable us to find a market where millions of people will want our fruit.58

The adoration of agriculture in primary sources and subsequent historical texts concerning Ontario is typical, particularly for a community in California. Images of California agriculture and its profitability, particularly horticulture, apply to numerous communities in California from the northern vineyards of Napa Valley to the orange groves of Southern California. Boosters throughout California meticulously promoted the state’s horticultural promise. Moreover, praise of California agriculture has spanned several centuries, whether Spanish padres lauded the fertile soils in the eighteenth century or large corporations or cooperatives such as Sunkist and Blue Diamond celebrated the quality and quantity of produce possible in the twentieth century.

“The orange tree is the living symbol of richness, luxury, and elegance,” blazoned McWilliams in 1946. He continued, “It is difficult to emphasize sufficiently the importance of the citrus industry in the development of Southern California.”59 The glorification of agriculture, particularly citiculture, not only dominated local accounts and historical narratives concerning Ontario, but also larger accounts and historical narratives of California in general. Many prominent California historians from Hubert H. Bancroft to Kevin Starr to Matt Garcia highlight


59. McWilliams, *Southern California*, 207; 213.
the importance of California agriculture. The enormous land boom and rise of the citrus belt in Southern California in the 1880s is not a lost story in the annals of California history. Glenn S. Dumke and Carey McWilliams, for example, cited Ontario’s rapid growth within a few short years to underscore the larger trend of land boom in Southern California, which horticulture fostered. 60 Within two years of its founding in 1882, the acreage of fruit registered at 7,678. Most acres were devoted to citrus, particularly oranges and lemons. 61 In 1883 alone, Ontario shipped 207 train carloads of oranges and lemons and 104 carloads of deciduous fruits and raisins to market. 62 Still, the great boom of the eighties really did not explode until 1886. The stunning growth and agricultural prowess in Ontario that heightened following the boom receives great attention, though it did stumble like most during the lean depression years of the 1890s. Perhaps most striking is the lasting power of agricultural production in Ontario and its surrounding areas as a major source of local employment through 1960 despite the rise of non-agricultural industrialization throughout the region, particularly the electrical appliance company: Hotpoint. 63 Still, as one observer remarked in 1907, “It would be an impossibility for a person to remain more than a few minutes within the limits of Ontario without realizing that here oranges are grown.” 64

60. Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties, 107; and McWilliams, Southern California, 206-09.


63. Bank of America, Economic Growth and Development, 12. Hotpoint was established in 1903 as the Pacific Electric Heating Company and, after becoming Hotpoint in 1908, merged into General Electric in 1918. For more on Hotpoint, see Rounds, Ontario, 89-93.

64. The Ontario Record Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Edition, November 1907, 3.
The second distinguishing feature of an American suburb, according to Jackson, as well as suburban revisionists, is a strong desire for homeownership. Said the noted suburban imagineer Andrew Jackson Downing: “We believe, about all things under heaven, in the power and virtue of the individual home.” As author and editor of The Horticulturalist, Downing espoused a faith in the power of “rural tastes” in connection with homes, landscape architecture, and parks. Arguing, “All sensible men gladly escape, earlier or later, or partially or wholly from the turmoil of cities,” he added, “The love of country is inseparably connected with love of home.” In the move to country houses a great transfiguration of the individual American and family occurred by “not only augmenting his own enjoyment, but strengthening his patriotism, and making him a better citizen.” The advertisement of homeownership in Ontario, therefore, reflects the intent of developers to promote Ontario as a suburban type as they fervently employed the language and symbols of suburbia.

“The cost of building neat, plain houses,” asserted the promoters in the 1883 booster publication, “is about $200 per room of 9x12 feet, and about $250 per room of 12x14.” The promoters continued:


66. Downing, “Hints to Rural Improvers,” July 1848, Rural Essays, 111; and Downing, Treatise, ix.

67. Downing, Treatise, ix.

68. Homes and homeownership were dominant themes for promoters throughout the state, as the following small selection of local and statewide publications makes clear: Homes in Los Angeles City and County (1873); Plain Reasons Why Home Seekers Should Purchase Homes in the Northern Portion of San Joaquin County, California (1887); Butte County, California: Its Resources and Advantages for Home Seekers (1888); Homes [in Madera, Fresno County] (1890); Placer County California: Facts and Figures for Homeseekers (1891); The Counties of California: A Guide for Home-Seekers, Settlers and Investors; Containing an Accurate Description of Each County in the State (1895); and The Sacramento Valley of California: Its Resources, Industries and Advantages, Scenery, Climate and Opportunities; Facts for the Investor, Home-maker and Health-seeker (1904).

69. Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 27.
Having secured both land and water, they [the Chaffey brothers] immediately set about laying the plans for a settlement that should attract the very best class of people that come to Southern California to secure homes and engage in that most pleasant and remunerative business — the growing of fruits indigenous to Southern California.  

Speaking of “home seekers,” the promoters added the “colony” would appeal to those “who desire to enjoy a sort of suburban life, engage in fruit culture and make homes for themselves and families.” The notion of “happy homes” championed in the 1883 pamphlet resounded further in Widney’s 1884 pamphlet, which aptly carried the subtitle Information for Those Seeking Homes in Southern California. Widney pronounced, “TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED AND NINETY-NINE dollars have been spent by the [Chaffey] company up to July, 1884, in preparing Ontario for pleasant and profitable homes.”

Homeownership in the framework of drawing potential settlers and investors, however, did not stand alone. Rather, as hinted in the quotations above, other elements conjoined and augmented the lure of homeownership: economic investment and profitability; climate; and a rural ideal. The promoters in Ontario informed their audience that they properly planned and invested $238,499 on improvements, adding, “The plan of the colony is of the most advanced and liberal kind,” which included joint stock ownership in a water company and water rights. Widney even proclaimed in a phrase destined to become one of the most repeated in Ontario’s historical literature that the promoters set up “the most perfect plan ever adopted by a colony in

70. Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 29.
71. Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 45.
72. Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 38; and Widney, Ontario, title page.
73. Widney, Ontario, 7, small caps original.
This “most perfect plan” included three parts: irrigation and a water system; good roads; and education through an agricultural college.

The promoters wanted to depict Ontario as innovative and cutting edge — exceeding supposed norms and expectations of other rural-seeming communities that included agriculture. In both 1883 and 1884, Ontario’s promoters accredited the “colony” with a dizzying array of infrastructure and idealized attributes. Such attributes included the easy growth and cultivation of just about every item capable of growing under the California sun, such as apples, lemons, limes, grapes (raisins), oranges, peaches, pears, prunes, and wheat. Likewise, the advertised low price of acreage in Ontario, compared to surrounding areas, figured prominently in the publicity campaign. Land sold for $150 per acre for town lots (business district), $200 per acre for horticultural lots, and $250 per acre for villa lots just outside the business district of town. In comparison, lots in Riverside reportedly sold for as high as $500 an acre, Redlands’ “unimproved land” at $200, and Crafton at $200 “on account of the unfinished condition of the water system.”

The underlying points centered on, first, how Ontario land, which the promoters said was improved on account of irrigation and other amenities, was cheap and, second, how the land values of some places, particularly in Riverside, skyrocketed in value in as few as three years, as they claimed Riverside land was once as low as $75. Widney went so far as to add a section to the 1884 pamphlet boasting that land near Bordeaux, France “has sold as

75. Widney, Ontario, 5. For just a few examples of those who quote this line without citation to Widney, see Starr, Material Dreams, 16; Garcia, A World of Its Own, 29; and Alexander, The Life of George Chaffey, 47. Interestingly, Alexander’s book, published in 1928, appeared during the midst of the great “noble experiment” of national prohibition. It is within this climate he added temperance as a fourth part to the “most perfect plan.” Strikingly, temperance has remained a permanent part since and is always cited by modern historians when discussing the “most perfect plan,” such as Garcia and Starr.

76. Widney, Ontario, 7.

77. Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 17; and Widney, Ontario, 14, 33.
high a figure as $16,000 per acre.”78 The presumption here rested on the notion that Ontario’s horticultural promise, business investments that included the promoters’ own investment of more than $200,000 to build roads, schools, buildings, etc, and “most perfect plan” could easily foster an agricultural production and profitability superior to Bordeaux.

The promoters paraded forth a host of institutions that signaled both Ontario’s sophistication and its supporting infrastructure for the benefit of all of Ontario’s citizens. In short, these amenities represented the suburban side of Ontario’s agricultural “colonization.” “They [the Chaffey Company] simply propose,” the 1883 pamphlet read, “to invest a large proportion of the profits of the sale of the tract in permanent improvements for the benefit of the settlers.”79 As previously noted, the promoters cited a post office, roads and streets, hotels, shops, a newspaper, prominent citizens, a streetcar, and electric lighting. In fact, historians — local or not — name Ontario, behind Etiwanda, as one of the first communities in the West to have electric lighting.80 Ontario thus seemed to have everything a would-be-colonizer could ever fantasize about in cultivating work and home on the fringes of Los Angeles.


The promotion and design of Ontario to include amenities such as churches, clubs, electricity, interurban travel, parks, roads, schools, shade trees, and telephone service are what categorically, in fact, delineate the suburban side of Ontario’s origins. Certainly home and nature correspond to the ideal image of suburbia as imagined by the likes of Beecher, Downing, and Olmsted, but so too did, according to Olmsted, “the easy gratification of certain tastes” and “numerous luxuries.” Added Olmsted, as if he had Euclid Avenue in mind, “The main artificial requirements of a suburb then, are good roads and walks, pleasant to the eye within themselves, and having at intervals pleasant openings and outlooks, with suggestions of refined domestic life, secluded, but not far removed from the life of the community.”

Olmsted was rather specific in his letter to the Riverside Development Company that an ideal suburb possessed a supreme climate, purity of air as “aidful [sic] to refined and healthy domestic life,” drives, walks, and recreations, a public park, and water supply. This is exactly what the promoters of horticultural-based “agricultural colonies” in California, especially Ontario, promised and promoted as they incorporated the design and promotional imagery of suburbia.

The promoters in Ontario utilized the language and design of suburbs as articulated by suburban imagineers, not to mention other California boosters. On the one hand, Ontario’s promoters did utilize a gridiron system of street design in the business district area as a way to maximize house lots and provide an illusion of orderliness and prosperity. On the other hand, however, Ontario’s promoters prized their tree-lined boulevard and pastoral feel — a synthesis of town and wilderness. In fact, Olmsted described “the demands of suburban life with reference to civilized refinement,” such as good roads and businesses, as “not to be a retrogression from but

82. Frederick Law Olmsted, quoted in Hayden, Building Suburbia, 64.
an advance upon those which are characteristic of town.\textsuperscript{83} Likewise, the railroad station and other such urban, seemingly elite, amenities as social clubs, leisure spaces, telephone service, electricity, and trolley service became a source of pride, the very symbols of Ontario’s urbanity without it being urban. Ontario thus had the rural enjoyments of trees, rambles, a public park, and urban amenities such as clubs, good roads, and transportation and communication technologies. In fact, J. A. Alexander, Chaffey’s biographer, said Ontario was “a rustic retreat without loneliness, a city without slums or saloons.”\textsuperscript{84}

But wait, the promoters had more! The innovative creations of a mutual water company and the Chaffey College of Agriculture emerged as the promoters’ \textit{pièce de résistance} institutions designed to sway any remaining skeptics of the “most perfect plan” and win possible cynics over concerning the social mindedness of the founders’ “liberal” intentions of the most “advanced” kind. California in the 1880s, particularly the arid south, dealt with a shortage of water and the need for irrigation — a story not lost in the historiography of California in general and Ontario in particular.\textsuperscript{85} Water did not flow abundantly in arid Southern California. The founders of the “Model Colony” of Ontario realized that and understood the legitimate concern of potential settlers. To douse such fears, the promoters devoted apt and large space in their two pamphlets of 1883 and 1884 highlighting the high rainfall or high water levels in Ontario (or nearby storage ditches) and Southern California.\textsuperscript{86} Lack of access to water, attributable to earlier

\begin{quote}

\textsuperscript{84} Alexander, \textit{The Life of George Chaffey}, 42.


\textsuperscript{86} Ontario, \textit{Located in San Bernardino County}, 20-27; and Widney, \textit{Ontario}, 44.
\end{quote}
appropriation of water rights, also gave rise to negative critiques of California and threatened the promoters’ hopes for the profitable settlement of Ontario. To overcome this obstacle, they designed a mutual water company to grant stock and water rights to all landowners in Ontario.

The mutual water company plan established a corporation (the San Antonio Water Company) in which each owner of Ontario property held stock. The fact that the promoters set up a corporation is in-and-of-itself revealing. Specifically, historians have highlighted the significance of larger corporate capitalism’s rise over smaller competitive capitalism in the late nineteenth century. By the 1880s, incorporation had come to be regarded not as a special state-conferred privilege, but rather as a modern way of doing business. Accompanying this new business norm, corporate capitalism tended to shift power away from shareholders to directors and managers. The promoters thus established a legal institution offering them limited liability, full power, and a chance to maximize profits. These were essentially smart gilded-age businessmen aware of the law and keen to develop institutions to secure larger profits beyond the simple grab and sell of land — a point which further attests to the thesis that Ontario began as a planned agriburb and not some abstract “colony” system dependent on initial real estate sales to a consortium of farmer-purchasers. The promoters’ “life histories” substantiate this claim. In fact, William Chaffey, when confronted with public accusations that he and the other Ontario promoters exaggerated the realities of life and profit in Ontario, turned to the power of law. He seemed to have threatened legal action, if not physical violence, in 1884: “Unless we hear from


you about this matter and you apologize we shall be compelled to . . . have you do so in a way which will not be very pleasant — or inexpensive.

Snapshot biographies of the promoters reveal sophisticated businessmen engaging in a myriad of business-related activities, political institutions, and economic ventures throughout their lifetimes. In other words, we can place the Ontario business venture, the formation of corporations and trusts, within the lifetime of the boosters’ activities as they continually involved themselves in speculation and creative endeavors designed to produce profit. Following the lead of anthropologists, ethnographers, and those that advocate “life history,” the emphasis here is on the notion that people experience events throughout their lifetime and any given event or action requires historians to appraise such events or actions in the context of an individual’s entire lifetime.

George Chaffey, born in Ontario, Canada, became an accomplished marine engineer. He moved to Riverside, California, in 1880 to make his fortune in irrigation. Chaffey pioneered multiple irrigation projects (most prominently in Imperial Valley and several outlying areas of Los Angeles), as well as agricultural settlements in California (Etiwanda and Ontario, as well as being involved in La Habra, Brea, Manzanar, and Imperial Beach) and a settlement in Australia (Mildura). Chaffey also organized the Los Angeles Electric Lighting Company, which


Robert M. Widney, who is considered one of the leading pioneers of Los Angeles, was a California judge, real-estate entrepreneur, and a charter member and president of the University of Southern California. Born in Ohio, he eventually studied law at the University of the Pacific (then in Santa Clara) and became judge of the Court of California for Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties. He was one of the principal players in bringing the Southern Pacific Railroad to Los Angeles, a founder of the first Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce in 1873, began a rail transit company in Los Angeles in 1874, and helped found the city of Long Beach.\footnote{For biographical information concerning Widney, see Hubert H. Bancroft, \textit{History of California, Volume 7: 1860-1890}, vol. 24 of \textit{The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft} (San Francisco, CA: The History Company, 1890), 250; Dumke, \textit{The Boom of the Eighties}, 7, 71-72, 246-47; Fogelson, \textit{The Fragmented Metropolis}, 55, 113; Guinn, \textit{A History of California}, vol. 1, 415-16; Hunt, \textit{California and Californians}, 96-99; Hunt, \textit{California in the Making}, 199-204; “Long Beach,” \textit{Los Angeles Times}, July 10, 1893, 3; Los Angeles Public Library Bio File for Robert M. Widney, Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles, CA (bio card was apparently filled out by Widney himself); Remi Nadeu, \textit{City-Makers: The Men Who Transformed Los Angeles from Village to Metropolis During the First Great Boom, 1868-76} (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948); “San Fernando Water Deal,” \textit{Los Angeles Times}, May 29, 1901; “Sensational Litigation Promised in South: Management of Big Corporation Said to Have Looted It,” \textit{San Francisco Call}, December 20, 1905, 1; “Sleuths Watch Robber at Work: Entrap Son of a Prominent Los Angeles Capitalist,” \textit{San Francisco Call}, March 12, 1902, 3; and “Robert M. Widney,” \textit{Los Angeles Times}, November 16, 1929, A4. Also, see Robert M. Widney, \textit{Los Angeles County Subsidy: Which Shall I Vote For, or}
Luther M. Holt, “a boomer by temperament and training,” was a newspaper editor and publisher, with papers in Riverside and Ontario. He operated the Riverside Press and Horticulturalist, the publishing firm that printed the original Ontario booster pamphlets. He devised the mutual water plan and helped Chaffey implement it in Etiwanda and then Ontario. Holt also receives credit for beginning the first horticultural society in California and for being “the leading irrigation journalist in the state.”

The mutual water company represents a moment within the lifetimes of Ontario’s promoters and their endeavors to seek out creative ways to profit. The contract of the company plan took up several pages of the 1883 and 1884 booster pamphlets, as well as in the pages of the early Ontario Fruit Grower, a newspaper published by Holt. The San Antonio Mutual Water Company, headed by Chaffey, Holt, and Widney, was incorporated in 1883. The corporation assigned each lot a proportionate share of incoming water, which the corporation would supply via an irrigation system — one engineered by Chaffey that included extensive piping. One share of stock in the water corporation accompanied each acre of property purchased, which then went back to the water corporation in exchange for permanent water rights pro-rated according to acreage. Widney proclaimed, “One [acre] inch of water is worth $1,000 to $1,500.” He continued: “In time it will be worth double that.”

Shall I Vote Against Both?; Discussed From a Business Standpoint (Los Angeles, 1872, 14 page pamphlet), reprinted in The Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly 38, no. 4 (December 1956): 347-62.

93. For biographical information on Holt, see “To Honor Memory of Town Builder,” Los Angeles Times, August 16, 1920, II3; Alexander, The Life of George Chaffey, in passim; Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties, 104-06,120, 235-36, 241, 264; Guinn, A History of California, 412; Elmer Wallace Holmes, History of Riverside County, California: With Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1912), 58-60; Kershner, “George Chaffey and the Irrigation Frontier,” 116; McWilliams, Southern California, 122; Starr, Inventing the Dream, 142; and Starr, Material Dreams, 14-25.

94. Widney, Ontario, 14.
piping initially paid for by the promoters, and an irrigation system that promised to turn a profit. The Chaffey brothers received the profits from the sale of land, while they and the other San Antonio Company heads received ongoing profits from the water company.95

The Chaffey College of Agriculture, another innovative institution offered to the settlers of Ontario for their mutual benefit, also dominates subsequent historical accounts and reflects another creative method of indirect profit seeking by the promoters. The Chaffey Company established a trust in which it turned over more than 300 acres of property, plus an additional twenty acres personally donated by Chaffey for the campus. The trustees, headed by Widney, were in actuality the charter members, first directors, and regents of the University of Southern California who, for a time, made the Chaffey College of Agriculture a branch of the Los Angeles-based USC campus.96 Again, the formation of a trust, run by directors of another corporation — USC incorporated as a private religious university in August 1880 — illustrates the business savvy and sophistication of Ontario’s promoters. They established their trust in November 1882 on the heels of the first great trust that same year — Rockefeller’s Standard Oil — and celebrated the laying of the cornerstone in March 1883 with a speech by the noted California booster and educator Edward J. Wickson.97 Their economic and legal cleverness again underscores how the promoters wanted to establish a strong suburban community to secure larger and longer-term profits. In short, USC benefited as an embryonic college that received

95. Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 33-35; and Widney, Ontario, 15-17.

96. Widney, Ontario, 19-27. For more on USC, particularly the Widney years and its formation, see Guinn, A History of California, 415; Hunt, California and Californians, vol. 4, 98; Hunt, California in the Making, 199-204; and Starr, Inventing the Dream, 90.

97. Horwitz, The Transformation of American Law, 80-84. Concerning Wickson’s speech at the Chaffey College of Agriculture cornerstone laying celebration, see Ontario Fruit Grower, March 22, 1883; and Widney, Ontario, 20.
free land and an opportunity to expand while also hoping to increase enrollment. The proceeds from the sale of lands formed an endowment for the construction and operation of the college. The promoters also benefited. As with the water company, the promoters found a way to establish a needed and valued institution that appealed to settlers seeking “refinement.” In other words, the creation of the Chaffey College of Agriculture was an outcome of speculative imagination designed to provide a middle-class cultural establishment and symbol to settlers that might be even more enticed to move to Ontario because of the college and thereby increase the likelihood of the promoters turning a profit.

Literature concerning climate and health in California and histories of its promotion is vast. In Ontario, the promotion of health and climate was both an outcome and medium of a Californian booster literature and speculative tactics whereby boisterous claims about the Golden State celebrated its superior natural environment, what McWilliams called a “folklore of climatology.” In this context, homeownership and other advanced “amenities” are augmented and made more powerful in their appeal when the site of their location is thought to be the manifestation and fulfillment of what one geographer has called the “geography of the ideal.” Such an appeal to the pristine bucolic landscape of Ontario mirrored the type of natural environment suburban advocates such as Beecher, Stowe, and Olmsted called for, as they argued


99. For a review of some of the literature, see chapter two.


101. Vance, “California and the Search for the Ideal.”
for “A Healthful Home” in a good climate with pure air and proper ventilation. This view of climate and health also mirrored the conception of nature popularized by Jefferson, Emerson, and Thoreau. As Emerson noted, “nature is medicinal,” and if Americans were somehow sick from maladies caused by increasing industrialization, modernization, and urbanization, then suburban homes among Ontario’s beautiful orchards and vineyards would provide, literally, just what the doctor ordered as Dr. Joseph P. Widney, M.D., so praised Ontario and the Southland.

In fact, from the time of the Spanish in the eighteenth century, to British, English, and American explorers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, many have been impressed and felt the need to comment on California’s superlative climate. One writer for The United States Democratic Review in 1847 argued that the lives of California’s inhabitants and reports of many other travelers unite “in showing this country not to be excelled by any portion of the globe.”

A principal element to the celebration of California’s natural environment was the Mediterranean analogy, which arose as a moral and aesthetic metaphor for all that California supposedly offered. The metaphor had behind it the force of a region steeped in history and celebrated for its climate and topography. As California, particularly the Southland, regularly received comparisons to Italy from the 1870s forward, Ontario’s promoters did so as well.

Historians have pointed out how the Mediterranean metaphor represented such things as beauty,

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art, republicanism, and democracy, not to mention the home place of Christ. Promoters and others in Ontario, such as *The Ontario Record* (1905), labeled Ontario as “The Italy of America.”106 Whatever Ontario’s Mediterranean climate could do for the superior growth of a farmer’s fruit or for the advancement of his heart and mind, it could also do for his body.107 “The climate is perfect,” wrote the Chaffey Brothers to a Riverside inquirer in 1882, “and one which will be sought after by invalids and those desiring to make pleasant and happy homes.”108

One of the premier figures in the promotion of California’s “healthfulness” was none other than the brother of Judge Robert M. Widney and fellow USC director and a trustee for the Chaffey College of Agriculture: Dr. Joseph Pomeroy Widney — medical doctor, clergyman, and author of treatises on public health.109 Dr. Widney’s influence on Judge Widney’s promotional pamphlet *Ontario* in 1884, as well as the 1883 pamphlet, is clear. The pamphlets utilized the “Climatic Studies” of Dr. Widney and informed potential settlers that Ontario possessed “the finest climate in Southern California for persons affected with pulmonary diseases.”110 In a

106. *The Ontario Record Industrial Souvenir Edition* (1905), publisher’s note page, [i].


section titled “Health Resort” in the 1884 pamphlet, Ontario receives credit for having cured a man’s “indigestion, sleeplessness, neuralgia, and rheumatism.”111 “Children who would languish and die for lack of vital strength in other lands,” Judge Widney wrote, “will here grow to health and strength.” He added, “Adults whose systems are annually deteriorating, will here prolong in health and comfort the days of their sojourn.”112 Ontario, in heath and beauty, truly seemed a “Model Colony,” or, as Judge Widney wrote, “The second Garden of Eden.”113

The final enticement for drawing migration to Ontario, which accompanied homeownership and the rural ideal, coalesces with the third and most important distinctive characteristic of American housing patterns, according to Jackson. He argues socioeconomic distinctions between the center and the periphery mark suburbs as unique. He maintains that in the United States status and income correlate with suburbs. Suburbs are the areas providing bedrooms for an overwhelming proportion of those with college educations, of those engaged in professional pursuits, and of those in the upper-income brackets, i.e., white. According to suburban revisionists, Jackson was wrong in his making such a narrow definition of suburbs. Suburban revisionists convincingly show that suburbs of stunning variety and type emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as African-American suburbs, working-class suburbs, and unplanned suburbs.114 Yet, while much of the labor force in Ontario consisted

111. Widney, Ontario, 42.
112. Widney, Ontario, 42.
113. Widney, Ontario, 45.
of Mexican Americans and Asian Americans, Ontario, in many ways, resembles Jackson’s conception of a predominantly middle-class white community. Still, Jackson’s conception of a suburb as a bedroom community, as well as his thesis that the fourth and final distinguishing characteristic of the American suburban experience is the length of the average journey-to-work, whether measured in miles (twenty+) or in minutes (ten+), inadequately explains the formation and early development of Ontario. In other words, yes, Ontario was a predominantly middle-class white community before the post-World War II boom. Yet, as suburban revisionists point out, suburbs were also semi-autonomous enclaves that combined work and home as much as they were developed to be a “bedroom” community, which undermines the commuter element highlighted by Jackson’s fourth generalization about American suburbanization.

In line with Jackson’s notion that suburbs were white, middle-class communities, California’s boosters, particularly Ontario’s promoters, specifically targeted a middle-class audience by publicizing a rural ideal. The literature on the rural ideal, particularly in California, or any other phrase used in its place, such as agrarian, bucolic, garden, Jeffersonian, or pastoral ideal, like the literature on irrigation, includes a vast number of texts. Specifically,

115. While attention to minority workers in Ontario’s early years exists, little actually does so. Most striking is the silences of minority voices in recollective efforts and counter memories. While it is hard to ignore such silences, because, as historian Linda Gordon contends, “[T]hey [the silences] remind us of hidden assumptions and of the existence of the powerless, the unmoobilized, the alienated,” to do so is beyond the scope of this work. (Linda Gordon, Pitied But Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare, 1890-1935 [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994], 211). For some discussion of where minorities, particularly Chinese and Mexican, lived, see Austen’s Ontario and Rounds’s Ontario, who locate minority communities in Upland (North Ontario).

116. For 1890 population numbers, see Ontario Record, July 9, 1890; and Conley, Dreamers and Dwellers, 98. For 1950s population numbers, see Bank of America Economic Department, Economic Growth and Development in the San Bernardino, 5. The 2000 census lists Ontario’s population of one race at 47.8% (75,575) white while, of two or more races, Hispanic or Latino is listed as 59.9% (U.S. Census Bureau, “Fact Sheet,” Ontario City, California, Census 2000 Demographic Profile Highlights, U.S. Census Bureau Web site, www.census.gov).

117. For more on class and the agricultural landscape in California, see Sackman, Orange Empire, 40-44, 61-62; Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 125; Starr, Inventing the Dream, 31-32; McWilliams, Southern California, 150; and Vaught, Cultivating California, 19-22, 46-48.
the image of rural simplicity in an increasingly modern, industrial, and urban society potentially appealed to both middle-class urban Americans and rural Americans fearing the modern industrialized city, increasingly filled with foreign-born immigrants, as it would corrupt individuals and wipe out any modicum of social control and, as historian Robert H. Wiebe suggested, undermine a “search for order.”118 In other words, the image of picturesque cottages and villas in a bucolic landscape as the ultimate place of refuge emerged as a homogeneous fantasy to counter a heterogeneous urban landscape. As Olmsted and Vaux argued, suburbs were “not a sacrifice of urban conveniences, but their combination with the special charms and substantial advantages of rural conditions of life.”119

The Chaffey brothers, according to the 1883 booster pamphlet, purchased land thirty-eight miles east of Los Angeles “and now offer it for sale in such quantities as will suit the pocket of the humblest of farmers.”120 Yet, despite the deep-seated popularity of the rural ideal upon the breast of most Americans in the late nineteenth century, the plight of farm life was also highly publicized. The difficulty facing American farmers became a popular topic of public and political distress and debate in the form of farmers’ alliances and Populist “revolts” in the last

118. Wiebe, The Search for Order. For more on agrarianism and the rural ideal, see chapter one, as well as Allmendinger, Jr., Ruffin; Archer, “Country and City”; Boorstin, The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson; Chaplin, An Anxious Revolt; Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness,” 46-47; Danbom, Born in the Country, 65-69; Danhof, Change in Agriculture; Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias, 53-54, 127; Garcia, A World of Its Own, 17-22; Hurt, American Agriculture, 72-77; Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 57; Marsh, Suburban Lives, xiii, 5; Marx, The Machine in the Garden; McClelland, Sowing Modernity; Palen, The Suburbs, 70, 93-94; Peterson, The Jefferson Image in the American Mind; Smith, Virgin Land; Warner, Streetcar Suburbs, 11-12, 14, 45, and 90; and Williams, The Country and the City.


120. Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 35.
quarter of the nineteenth century. Indeed, as historian Patricia Nelson Limerick observed, “. .
western farmers in the late nineteenth century lived with a sense of being squeezed by history,
in a vice built by dropping prices on one side and high costs on the other.” If American
farmers, and those who knew of them, throughout the country felt so downtrodden and abused by
the economic and political systems, why would Ontario’s promoters tout a farmer-lifestyle as the
ideal type of middle-class community, let alone assume such a plan to be the best one? While
certainly explainable in the context of the strong appeal of agrarianism, the promoters’ word
choices might seem a bit perplexing if we accept the argument that they were intelligent and
sophisticated businessmen with real aspirations and ideals — based on their identified legal
knowledge to form corporations, invest in multiple enterprises, and successfully pursue business,
academic, and political careers. The promoters, on the surface then, may seem dim-witted for
advertising a farmer’s paradise. The explanation offered here is twofold — gender and class.

Middle-class male aspirations proved important to the appeal of horticulture and the
farming life in the advertisement of Ontario. As the United States shifted to a largely modern,
industrialized urban nation, increasing numbers of men lost their economic independence. In
fact, the number of salaried, non-propertied workers grew eight times between 1870 and 1910.
Concerns about “overcivilization” and “feminization” threatened Victorian and Puritan ideals of

121. See Peter H. Argersinger, *Populism and Politics: William Alfred Peffer and the People’s Party*
(Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1974); Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment
Order*.


123. Peter Filene, *Him/ Her/ Self: Sex Roles in Modern America*, 2d ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press,
1986), 73. See also, Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class*, 258-97; Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 111; T. J.
masculinity, virtue, and vitality, as well as concerns over the loss of social control, epitomized by the large cesspools of “immoral” immigrants and “degenerates” inhabiting the city. Farming offered an antidote to overcivilization and industrial capitalism as a man could till the soil and reap the profits of his own labor — independent of any authority, manager, or boss — while, at the same time, avoiding the problems plaguing farmers throughout the rest of the country.

Likewise, as historian Margaret Marsh maintained, a model of “masculine domesticity” emerged in the 1870s. A suburban man voluntarily took on more domestic chores (such as lawn mowing), spent more time with his children, made his wife a regular companion instead of his “male cronies,” and took a more general interest in the affairs of the home. Ontario offered a man all of the above. The suburban man in the agriburb could potentially bypass the glass ceiling imposed by upper-level bureaucrats in the commercial sector and subsequently claim a sense of moral authority and superiority over the home because the suburban home in the agriburb was the center of a commercial venture itself. As a consequence, the man, as the allegorical top bureaucrat of the agriburb home, challenged the moral authority of his wife in the home that suburban and domestic advocates originally had claimed was intrinsic of the female gender and what made women of the middle class both truly American women and middle class. In

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124. Chauncey, Gay New York, 111; Rotundo, American Manhood, 249; and Lears, No Place of Grace, 60. “Overcivilization” and “feminization,” especially in the context of sociocultural evolutionary progress in which society advanced from barbarous to civilized — with the help of a paternal, not maternal, elite, references to the notion that men at the turn of the twentieth century faced the dangers of “overcivilization” in which American manhood, and thus American culture, actually faced the dangers of women’s civilizing influence and the effeminization, i.e. “feminization,” of men. Indeed, as George Chauncey notes in Gay New York, “The attack on women’s influence on American culture [at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries] led to an attack on men who seemed to have accepted that influence by becoming ‘overcivilized,’ and men who did not do their part to uphold the manly ideal were subject to growing ridicule” (114).

contrast, as will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, the importance of shopping and social clubs became a principal element in boosters’ advertisements (likely) aimed at women.

In the 1883 booster pamphlet, the promoters lamented, “How shall the young man be led to appreciate these charms of country life, without quenching his ambition, curbing his youthful energy, and repressing his longing for a life of enthusiastic action?” In other words, the promoters proactively sought to address potential concerns that agriculture and farming failed to provide a forum for transforming young boys into strong intelligent men with the necessary “commercial skill” needed to survive in a modern, industrial world. When a young man began “to think the thoughts of manhood,” the promoters rhetorically wondered aloud in print whether “agriculture [might] seem most distasteful to him.” Thus, presupposing many might view farming as archaic and dull in nature, lacking the “skills” necessary and championed by a modern, industrial society, the promoters praised California agriculture and proclaimed, “Agriculture will be the science of the future.” Essentially, horticulture provided “young men” with an opportunity to develop “wisdom” as they honed the “financial skill required in carrying a[an] [agricultural] venture from the point of beginning until it yields a dollar in return.” California agriculture, according to the promoters, required commercial awareness, financial skill, intelligence, and promoted robust health. With a successful farm in California came “intellectual and moral advancement.” “It is to make them better farmers,” the pamphlet concluded, “and better citizens.”


Ontario’s promoters, again, mirrored suburban imagineers in their portrayal of democratic citizenship as more compatible with rural rather than urban environments. It provided, said Downing, “the advantage, morally and socially, of orderly, neat, tasteful villages; in producing better citizens, in causing the laws to be respected, in making
homes dearer and more sacred, in domestic life and the enjoyment of property to be more truly and rightly estimated.”

Ontario’s promoters created an image of the archetypal middle-class male, who likely made the final decision on whether to move to Ontario or not, celebrating a male farmer’s intellectual prowess, physical strength and health, democratic citizenship, and love of family.

The promotion of Ontario as a middle-class haven follows two other distinct lines of thought: producerism and civility. “Vast numbers of men came here with no capital,” declared the promoters in the 1883 pamphlet, “who, to-day, are worth from $4,000 to $50,000.” They continued: “But they were men who were not afraid to work hard, and late — who lived within their income, and saved annually — for such there is still room.”

The promoters essentially proclaimed settlers need not be rich, only hard workers capable of using their brains as much, if not more than, their brawn. The land in Ontario they wrote to one potential settler is “lying dormant waiting the necessary capital and brains to carry them to perfection.”

The promoters made both public and private announcements aimed at potential settlers, likely filled with middle-class anxiety or aspirations, whereby they warded off so-called scruff that could give Ontario a bad reputation and lower not only the promoters’ investment value, but also reduce the potential settler and investor’s investment value and sense of middle-class identity and entrepreneurship. Indeed, Ontario was “presenting many opportunities for good investment,”


wrote the Chaffey Brothers to a Kansas City inquirer in 1883 and “the life is ‘pioneer.’”\footnote{Chaffey Brothers, letter to Hutchins, October 22, 1883, Chaffey Letters, Book 1, in Chaffey Letters, Binder 1.} It was through hard work, then, that a comfortable income and life awaited. Likewise, in a quote shared earlier, the promoters pronounced in the pages of the 1883 pamphlet, “Having secured both land and water, they [the promoters] immediately set about the plans for a settlement that should attract the very best class of people that come to Southern California to secure homes.”\footnote{Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 29, emphasis added.}

As historians have noted, middle-class America was transforming and, more to the point, looked to the past nostalgically and sentimentally to interpret what a “better class of people” might be — and to identify themselves as belonging to it, as the bulwarks of moral social order and civility.\footnote{See Blumin, The Emergence of the Middle Class; Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias; Hayden, Building Suburbia; Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier; Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class, 230-42. See also, Appleby, Inheriting the Revolution; Blumin, “The Hypothesis of Middle-Class Formation in Nineteenth Century America,” 299-338; and Halttunen, Confidence Men and Painted Women, 35-40.}

In Ontario, the “better class of people” found a rural ideal set in the past glorification of agriculture and an advertised dry community free of alcohol, slums, prostitutes, crime, and large numbers of non-whites, to name just a few things. Ontario had the institutions and infrastructure of a city without the supposed degeneracy of the city — everything a “better class of people” could ever desire. To compare and contrast, Americans also looked forward, as science, technology, and business savvy symbolized both modernity and middle-class sophistication. Ontario’s promoters massaged the egos of an aspiring middle-class audience — or group of middle-class people anxious to retain, prove, or defend such status — as they remarked: “Men of good business judgment and foresight see these facts and unhesitantly [sic] purchase here for homes. We venture the statement that in the State of California there is
not a collection of men who will average in wealth, business ability, judgment, and foresight as high as purchasers of land at Ontario.”

In Search of Small Home Groves: The Agriburb of Ontario

One writer in The Ontario Record in 1907 stated that life in Ontario made it “possible for those in search of small home groves to obtain their desire and yet remain within the confines of a beautiful and progressive city.” Otherwise stated, Ontario was an agriburb. Ontario, as a planned rural suburban community, reflected a speculative imagining and venture designed to yield a profit for promoters. The way of life and “natural and artificial attractions” of Ontario, as represented by the promoters, reflected the way of life and “urban amenities” so extolled by suburban imagineers such as Beecher, Downing, and Olmsted.

Suburbs promised community life and urban amenities in a beautiful rural landscape. So too did Ontario. Without doubt, California historians have been long impressed with the vast array of amenities offered in, and characteristic of, California’s “colonies.” Such colonies were “subdivisions,” such as Ontario, and were sustained by a matrix of institutions and infrastructure typically established by business savvy developers in longer settled communities: good roads, piping, stores, and newspapers. Good boosters like Chaffey, Widney, and Holt understood that to attract people to Ontario they needed to provide a variety of amenities that would prove useful to a potential small farmer or homeseeker. As suburban imagineers depicted a community with plenty of leisure time to enjoy finer things with a level of urban amenities

133. Widney, Ontario, 14.

134. The Ontario Record Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Edition, November 1907, 8.

135. See Garcia, A World of Its Own, 29-32; Pisani, From the Family Farm to Agribusiness, 73, 120-22; and 119. See also, McWilliams, Southern California, 215; Starr, Inventing the Dream, 166-67; Starr, Material Dreams, 17; and Vaught, Cultivating California, 19-22.
without the crime and vice of cities, so too did Ontario’s promoters. They highlighted amenities that were, according to them, good for “mental and moral culture.”¹³⁶ As both suburban and California historians have also pointed out, such amenities, in both suburbs and colonies, represented the perfect blend of a city without a city and a country life without isolation. Ontario, then, was the model suburb in a supreme environment with the best possible chance to make a buck, build a home, raise a family, restore the individual heart, mind, and soul, as well as a more republican society as farming in Ontario, according to the promoters, made them “better citizens.”¹³⁷

As an agriburb, Ontario emphatically duplicated the language of suburbia as made popular by suburban imagineers from the 1830s through the turn of the twentieth century. The agriburb was both an outcome and a medium of a burgeoning conception of the suburban ideal in the nineteenth century. Ontario’s promoters, like other California promoters such as Charles Fletcher Lummis, Charles Nordhoff, and Charles Howard Shinn, among others, utilized the language of suburbia. Ontario’s promoters praised nature and the suburban ideals of homeownership and urban amenities. Horticulture represented “the science of the future” and a type of agriculture that encompassed specialization, mechanization, learning, capital accumulation, and business savvy, all while retaining an agrarian virtue that celebrated family, refinement, and democracy.

Most histories of California that highlight the uniqueness of agriculture and horticultural communities at the turn of the twentieth century focus on Southern California. Histories on the country-city mix, urban amenities, rural virtue, urbane sophistication, and boosterism are


¹³⁷. Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, 41.
typically reserved for the “Southland.” Works by Donald Pisani and David Vaught are widening the scope of analysis in terms of geography. Nevertheless, the promotion, development, and growth of agriburban communities were not limited to Southern California. Northern California promoters, to be sure, also used the language of suburbia and design to draw potential migrants and investors as they sought to earn a profit as well. The communities of Orangevale and Fair Oaks outside Sacramento were two such ventures as their promoters categorically envisioned a suburban type that mirrored the agriburban model of Ontario. A review of the promotional literature and historical phenomena of these communities widens the geography of an analysis of the suburban side of California’s agricultural colonization to show a larger phenomenon. Such a review also provides another case study to further detail and collaborate the existence and verity of the agriburb as both a useful theoretical construct and actual suburban type.
CHAPTER FOUR

The Agriburbs of Northern California (Orangevale and Fair Oaks): Packaging Places in a Would-Be Turn of the Twentieth-Century Metropolis

There is one especially great advantage to Sacramentans in the opening up and development of these suburban tracts, and that is the facilities afforded business men for enjoying the comforts and privileges of country homes, without interference with their business interests.

— Sacramento Union, May 8, 1888

Place Entrepreneurs “leave a ‘foot-print on the sands of time’”

“The world is moved by action,” proclaimed prominent Sacramento businessman Harris Weinstock in a lecture before students of the College of Commerce in San Francisco in 1905. He continued, “. . . and only he who has the power of action can hope to make progress — can hope to leave a ‘foot-print on the sands of time.’” Weinstock added, “Thrift, fidelity, industry, brains and conscience are receiving higher rewards today than ever before, and are destined to receive still higher rewards in the days to come.” He advocated the philosophical and sociological view of a racialized Social Darwinism as he rhetorically asked, “What think you is the chief cause . . . leading to the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon.” He answered, “It is none other than his power of initiative, and the power to do things. The power of self-reliance and self-helpfulness.” He proclaimed, “You may throw an Anglo-Saxon where you will and, as a rule, he will fall on his feet.” He proudly declared, “Whatever progress the Anglo-Saxon has made beyond that of other races is largely due to his spirit of independence, self-help, and self-reliance; to his power of initiative, and his readiness to assume responsibilities.”


2. Harris Weinstock, “Observation as a Commercial Asset,” a lecture to the students of the College of Commerce, February 20, 1905, reprint from the University Chronicle 8, no. 3: 210-14, on file at the California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California.
Weinstock’s speech exemplifies the mindset of the consortium of entrepreneurs who joined him in founding Orangevale and Fair Oaks in the 1880s and 1890s. Weinstock and his associates (hereafter called the “Sacramento promoters” or “promoters” when referenced collectively) were place entrepreneurs who treated land as a speculative venture, a social space on which they left their collective “foot-print.” As they implemented the “power of initiative,” these Sacramento promoters commodified place and packaged it for consumption, exchanging place for profit.3 Land, then, is a market commodity whereby place becomes a product that can be promoted, sold, and, therefore, structures “the construction of built environments.”4

As in Ontario and with the Ontario promoters, Orangevale and Fair Oaks grew out of the promoters’ interests. These communities were vehicles through which the promoters sought to meet their interest-driven needs. These promoters were sophisticated entrepreneurs and members of the urban elite. Driven by a desire to boost profits, they sought to gain from the direct sale of land and a trickle down economic scheme whereby real estate deals infused the market with new residents who could improve the likelihood of increased revenue for whatever business or businesses the promoters were involved in or planning in conjunction with the sale of land.5 The promoters in both Ontario and Sacramento actively speculated in real estate and relied on their ability to change successfully the relationship of one place — an agriburb — to


5. In Ontario, for example, the promoters were involved in or connected with the San Antonio Water Company, Chaffey College of Agriculture, and *Ontario Fruit Grower* newspaper.
other places. That is, they packaged an agriburb as a desirable commodity. They employed the agriburban model of community as a strategy to influence the larger area of decision-making that affected residential choices and location migrations. Recognizing the perceived problems created by the market revolution, particularly immigration, industrialization, and urbanization, the promoters used the image of suburbs as a way of fashioning a tranquil island community that connected people and the products they produced to regional and national networks during an era in which such communities seemed in danger of passing away.6 The promoters packaged their commodity as a unique type of rural suburb that integrated elements of familiar and popular themes such as the rural, suburban, and urban ideals.

As place entrepreneurs who desired to boost profits, the Sacramento promoters organized collectively to better their prospects. Such a routinized collective organizational strategy represented a “growth machine.” Specifically, growth machine members strive toward organizational manipulations that allow them to boost their returns through such techniques as government subsidies.7 Growth-machine place entrepreneurs typically are local landowners, real estate speculators, or astute business people in a position to profit from specific land use. Some rather wealthy, politically connected and powerful people take an interest in land use and seek to drive politics and policies in a quest to expand the local economy and accumulate wealth. Regardless of precise political affiliation, moral philosophy, or actual business type, most place entrepreneurs agree growth is good. In fact, they portray their effort as a public good because it supposedly increases economic activity that benefits everyone. As historian Daniel Boorstin argued, “Physicians became merchants, clergymen became bankers, [and] lawyers became


manufacturers.” Together, they formed the urban elite of the growth machine that, as historians Richard C. Wade and William Cronon have pointed out, were the backbone of western expansion.

The Sacramento promoters formed a growth machine coalition to bolster their development goals in a nascent, but budding, metropolitan region. Together these entrepreneurs organized colonization and land companies, water companies, a railway company, drafted Sacramento’s third city charter, and formed the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce and the prestigious Sutter Club. These connections included not only links to the local government, but also to the governor of California and huge corporations and institutions such as the Southern Pacific Railroad Company and the California State Bank. An unidentified news article, published upon the death of Orangevale co-founder Thomas B. Hall in February 1920, summarized rather boastfully the accomplishments of not only Hall, but also of Sacramento’s growth machine as a whole: “Mr. Hall would properly be classed among the empire builders of the west.”


through, and with, local government and auxiliary businesses, which, in turn, gave them “the appearance of a civic campaign on behalf of a legal entity and its citizens, rather than of a conspiracy of vested interests.”\textsuperscript{11} The Sacramento promoters, then, attracted the construction and development of urban amenities and the infrastructure that, in their own words, benefited the entire Sacramento community despite the fact investments and capital flowed to and primarily benefited only Orangevale and Fair Oaks. Moreover, while investing their own capital, they formed a growth machine coalition and worked through government and corporations precisely in an effort to spread and redistribute cost while seeking limited liability.

Scholars vary in their acceptance of a growth machine to describe the development of urban and metropolitan landscapes in the United States, including the suburbs. On the one hand, many scholars concede that the political and economic essence of many localities centers on growth and coalitions of land-based elites. Promoting economic possibilities of place, these entrepreneurs influenced local politics in their quest to expand the economy and reap higher profits.\textsuperscript{12} On the other hand, growth and those who support it are not always cast as villainous

\textsuperscript{11} Logan and Molotch, \textit{Urban Fortunes}, 39.

\textsuperscript{12} Scholars have described “growth coalitions” primarily interested in the accumulation and promulgation of favorable real-estate deals, and guidelines. In the end, homeowners, now part of the elite, are mostly interested in property values, that community means homogeneity of race, class, and, especially, home values, and, even worse, that the most important social movement in American suburbs and metropolitan regions is that of affluent homeowners engaged in the defense of home values and neighborhood exclusivity (See, Avila, \textit{Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight}, 4); Davis, \textit{City of Quartz}; Low, \textit{Behind the Gates}; Nancy MacLean, \textit{Freedom Is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace} (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006); McKenzie, \textit{Privatopia}; Sel, \textit{American Babylon}; and Sugrue, \textit{The Origins of the Urban Crisis}. Growth coalitions have also received blame for the alteration and even destruction of the physical environment, often coinciding with the expansion of a capitalist economy that has organized vast spaces and connected them to a larger regional, even global, economy (See, Abbott, \textit{The Metropolitan Frontier}; Cronon, \textit{Nature’s Metropolis}; William Leach, \textit{Country of Exiles: The Destruction of Place in American Life} [New York: Pantheon Books, 1999]; Rome, \textit{The Bulldozer in the Countryside}; and Worster, \textit{Rivers of Empire}). The capitalist elite of the growth machine have further, and most tragically, displaced minorities in the present — postindustrial era — by supporting historical preservation and

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\text{Library, “Clarke, Crawford W.,” Bio Info File, 1-2, California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California; Gary Pitzer, \textit{150 Years of Water: The History of the San Juan Water District} (Granite Bay, CA: San Juan Water District, 2004), 21-29.}
\end{flushright}
and the consequences as disastrous. Some scholars have pointed to urban and metropolitan growth’s positive affect on urban culture and even female gender roles and behaviors.\textsuperscript{13} Other scholars even argue that growth is not the only thing at work in the development of cities and suburbs. These scholars have focused on entrepreneurs’ seemingly sincere desires to raise society itself more than their bottom line.\textsuperscript{14} Yet, when reflecting upon the work of those who fervently subscribe to the growth machine thesis, overlooking the scores of anger and, for the

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\item[13.] Other scholars who seem to have concluded growth characterizes most urban and suburban areas do not all portray those coalitions of land-based elites and institutions as so one dimensional or so negatively and, therefore, complicate a solely profit-driven analysis of a growth machine at work in California’s agricultural wonderlands. For example, while historian Sam Bass Warner, Jr. bemoaned the exploitation of the less powerful and the manipulation of land law use, he also bemoaned a heritage of viewing the land as a basis for liberty rather than as a community resource. In other words, while one could argue ideology is tied to economics (i.e., the Marxian maxim that states the ruling ideas are of the ruling class), ideology can be as much to blame for the consequences of unrestricted city growth as any economic motivation (Sam Bass Warner, Jr. made this argument in several works, including \textit{Private City}; \textit{Streetcar Suburbs}; and \textit{The Urban Wilderness: A History of the American City} [New York: Harper & Row, 1972]). Historians such as Arthur Schlesinger, Sr., Eric H. Monkkonen, and geographer Robert Lewis have also looked beyond economics to contend that cities, suburbs, and their leaders often, and innovatively, adapted and created new institutions and infrastructure to deal with either an increasing population concentration or ways to deal with phenomena beyond their control, or both (Lewis, \textit{Manufacturing Suburbs}; Monkkonen, \textit{America Becomes Urban}; and Schlesinger, \textit{The Rise of the City}). In fact, the growth machine can be triumphant when placed under the correct analytical microscope. For example, Schlesinger argued the city helped to create a more dynamic culture and collective human experience. Historian Lee M. A. Simpson (2004) concluded women were important participants in California’s growth machine and, instead of harming the population, made possible policies that enhanced the quality of life for the general population, as women worked to beautify their cities, promote images of cosmopolitanism, and stimulate tourism (Lee M. A. Simpson, \textit{Selling the City: Gender, Class, and the California Growth Machine, 1880-1940} [Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2004]).

\item[14.] Historians who emphasize interests on dynamics other than growth have attempted to characterize the by now infamous capitalist elites (whereby the term capitalist is typically used as an accusation and not a description) in terms of reform and social control. While an area with negative connotations in-and-of-itself (i.e., Gramscian hegemony), historians discuss an urban landscape where those in power have not necessarily pursued growth in hopes to raise their bottom line, but rather spiritual and social growth in hopes to raise society itself. Middle-to-upper-class elites worked through both private and public institutions to affect reform and foster social control. So, while Schlesinger saw this as a triumph of innovation, historian Robert H. Wiebe saw this as bureaucratisation and the “sinking of the classes.” See Schlesinger, \textit{The Rise of the City}; and Robert H. Wiebe, \textit{Self-Rule: A Cultural History of American Democracy} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). For more works that focus on the role of ideas, particularly in regard to moral uplift and social control, see, among others, Peter C. Baldwin, \textit{Domesticating the Street: The Reform of Public Space in Hartford, 1850-1930} (Ohio State University Press, 1999); Boyer, \textit{Urban Masses and Moral Order}; Amy Bridges, \textit{Morning Glories: Municipal Reform in the Southwest} (Princeton University Press, 1997); and Rosenzweig and Blackmar, \textit{The Park and the People}.
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most part, the dismissal of boosters’ possible good intentions is hard to do. The middle- and upper- class elites of the growth machine, to be sure, rarely seem to seek change, reform, or development because of humanitarian motives. In the classic Marxist sense, they seek development and social control to maintain and increase their own power. Unlike the Marxist ruling classes, however, which confuse their class interests with the general welfare, the classical growth machine elite seems Gramscian because their actions are consciously, albeit often anonymously, villainous. In addition, while some scholars do identify some names, it soon becomes evident that they are merely symbolic and what is truly lurking behind all the symbolism, the shifts in power, and determining forces, is the traditional Marxist culprit of capitalism, which is all the more vicious because it refuses to go away.

It would be a mistake to expunge the profit motive from the likely motivations driving Sacramento’s promoters in their advertising and development of agriburban communities. In fact, their promotion and capital investment in the development of Orangevale and Fair Oaks were two essential cogs in a wider wheel of regional publicity, metropolitanization, and social space. At the turn of the twentieth century, Sacramento’s promoters strived to benefit from a broader endorsement of California, as exemplified by the writings of boosters such as the quadruplet of Charleses (Lummis, Nordhoff, Shinn, and Warner). Their goal was to compete with Southern California’s so-called “boom” to attract migrants and investors to the Sacramento area in Northern California, more than 400 miles north. Sacramento’s promoters recognized a far-reaching business opportunity when they saw one. Built on the backs of boosters championing California in general and Southern California in particular, Sacramento’s promoters worked diligently to take advantage and construct an image of Northern California, particularly Sacramento, as a model place to live that equaled, if not surpassed, Southern California.
Snapshot biographies of some of Sacramento’s principal captains of industry substantiate the validity of portraying them as a metropolitan consortium of place entrepreneurs seeking to raise their bottom line. These biographies reveal a sophisticated network of businessmen and politicians who organized together as a powerful growth coalition. Such biographies also reveal a coalition of place entrepreneurs who, individually, pursued similar place-interest speculative ventures besides Orangevale or Fair Oaks throughout their lives. Many were also involved in related businesses and political activities, from municipal organizations, such as the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, to auxiliary businesses, such as the *Sacramento Bee*. These place entrepreneurs were the movers and shakers of the Sacramento region at the turn of the twentieth century. A lifetime of speculation and business activity defines them individually and collectively and further demonstrates how Orangevale and Fair Oaks were the imaginary and material manifestations of a growth coalition seeking profit.

“Today suburbs are increasingly assigned all the evils of American society,” wrote Sam Bass Warner, Jr. in *Streetcar Suburbs*. He continued, “. . . but in the late nineteenth century they created a wide spread sense of achievement.”¹⁵ Warner’s observation reflects two diametrically opposed views of suburbs that open the door for considering an alternate vision of suburbs and boosterism. Historian William Cronon lamented in *Nature’s Metropolis* (1991), “Few people read the boosters anymore.”¹⁶ Specifically, the well-chronicled consequences of America’s move to suburbia and metropolitan growth has given way to the possible discounting of the more well-meaning intentions — real or imagined — of those who toiled to make it possible and those who actually moved there.

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I share Cronon’s dissatisfaction. Few people boast about the boosters anymore. The dominant focus on the assumed evils of suburbia and metropolitanization overshadows the motives and explanations offered by boosters for their choices and business transactions. Sociologist Elvin Hatch said, “The tendency among historians to focus on commercial incentives behind boosterism may be due not only to the actual importance of economic interests in local affairs but also to the fact that noncommercial motives tend to become buried or even indistinguishable when combined with commercial ones.”¹⁷ In other words, the motives and desires of boosters are multifaceted and complex. When we do learn about the boosters, for example, we read about a host of issues and concerns that center on, among other things, the pastoral ideal, home, family, class, and urban crisis, which do raise fears of race and class bias and a longing for exclusivity. Regardless, as Warner and Hatch observed, something more, something else is present in the residential choices of most Americans besides fear and prejudice, if those two are factors at all.¹⁸ Moreover, the motivations of the boosters, such as Sacramento’s promoters, are indeed multifaceted and complex. A review of their life histories reveals not only shared profit-driven speculation, but also involvement in progressive reform agendas and organizations, rhetoric articulated in the language of raising society itself, particularly in Sacramento, and, seemingly, a genuine desire to create a better community and lifestyle for the benefit of all Sacramentans. As Hatch most poignantly observed, economic motives are not always indistinguishable from, nor antithetical to, social agendas. A gross desire for profit needs not to be so gross or exclusive from humanitarian or non-economic motives. The two can


¹⁸. Hatch, Biography of a Small Town, 259-60; and Warner, Streetcar Suburbs, 156-57.
seemingly co-exist, even if contradictory in rhetoric if not fact. In other words, the growth machine needs not always be so evil, so villainous; it might just simply be.

**Welcome to the Machine: Sacramentans who Left Their Footprints on the Sands of Time**

While not an exhaustive list of all the members of Sacramento’s growth machine coalition at the turn of the twentieth century, the persons highlighted here helped to establish directly the agriburban communities of Orangevale and Fair Oaks or linked to their establishment via auxiliary businesses or organizations. Sacramento’s promoters, however directly or not they were connected to the formation of Orangevale and Fair Oaks, stood to benefit because these agriburban communities were essential to stimulate migration, investment, or both, in Sacramento. That is why promoters constantly highlighted Orangevale and Fair Oaks in a larger publicity campaign. The association of these Sacramento place entrepreneurs linked them and their interests to the most prestigious and powerful of Sacramento’s social and political entities. The story of these place entrepreneurs provides a case study of how they, in fact, constituted a growth coalition and then proceeded to package an image of place as a commodity. The story also provides a case study and context for how and why an agriburban model of community emerged as a seemingly smart way to appeal to migrants and investors while assuring place entrepreneurs that they had picked a reasonable means to profit.

Perhaps no single individual in Sacramento with a direct investment and place interest in the development of agriburban communities in the Sacramento region, in this case Orangevale, was more prominent than Harris Weinstock. His life and career most emphatically complicates any narrative that casts Sacramento’s promoters as greedy cutthroat businessmen motivated solely by profit at the expense of others. Weinstock articulated a blend of agrarianism, Populism, Progressivism, racialized social Darwinism, capitalism, and modernity. While Weinstock’s story certainly is not the only story of Sacramento’s promoters, his is the most well
known and impressive. His career spanned from the late 1870s through the 1920s. He first cut his socio-political teeth on local concerns through local organizations as a Progressive place entrepreneur — a regional resource capitalist — before advancing to state, federal, and international organizations. Weinstock represents a Sacramento businessman who believed in agrarian democracy and virtue while supporting Progressive reforms involving labor, ending political corruption, and championing cooperatives. As a place entrepreneur, he understood the urgency to improve Sacramento’s image to enhance the chances of newcomers and investment. But, through public service, lectures, and crusades against political machines, anti-labor violence, and as California’s first State Market Director, he spent his lifetime trying to raise society as much as his own bottom line. He was a quintessential twentieth-century Progressive who launched his career on the local level in the late nineteenth century.

Born in London, England in 1854, Weinstock’s family moved to New York later that year. In 1864, Weinstock moved to Sacramento to join his half-brother David Lubin. Together, they opened the Mechanics Store in 1874. Lubin, in fact, more so than Weinstock and perhaps more than anyone in Sacramento, represents what historian Daniel T. Rodgers has labeled a “Transatlantic Progressive.”19 He was pivotal in the founding of the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) in Rome in 1908, which the United Nations absorbed into the Food and Agriculture Organization in 1946. Lubin also took to public service early on. He played a key role in the development of Sacramento cultural life, helped to start both the California Fruit

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Union and International Society for the Colonization of Russian Jews, and tirelessly campaigned for subsidies and protection for farmers in California and, eventually, around the globe. He eventually became the permanent U.S. delegate to the IIA. These two progressive-minded half-brothers reorganized and incorporated their store as Weinstock, Lubin, & Company in 1888 after emerging as one of the West’s largest department stores and mail order businesses.  

With his brother, Weinstock began his life long association with farming when the two acquired 1,200 acres in Colusa County (northwest of Sacramento in central California) in 1884. As a farmer himself, Weinstock soon learned the big difference between selling oranges in a store and selling oranges through a commission merchant in far away Chicago. From this lesson, he began a lifetime of activity and service devoted to establishing a better process in the sale, marketing, and distribution of agricultural goods that would make, according to one historian,
Beginning in 1885, Weinstock, as well as Lubin, spent nearly half a century devoted to the plight of farmers as producers. Sponsored by the California State Board of Horticulture, formed in 1883, Weinstock and Lubin vigorously participated in the State Fruit Growers’ conventions. Weinstock served as the president of a transportation committee that fought to obtain rate reductions and service improvements, driven in part by his own discouragement with his own rotting fruit. In 1885, Weinstock helped to organize the California Fruit Union cooperative and, in 1888, he helped to start the California Dried Fruit Association. In 1894, he formed, served as president and general manager of, the Fruit Growers’ and Shippers’ Association that brought together growers, growers’ organizations, and shippers. While not a marketing association, it did create a Bureau of Information to supply each member with market information so that each could make better fruit shipment decisions. The Association also sought to establish auction rooms in each market and, though the Association went defunct in 1902, Weinstock continued his advocacy of auction sales and a collective system of distribution so that, in his own words, “the profits, which formerly had gone to shippers and middlemen, would be made by the grower himself.”

Weinstock focused on local concerns before joining the California Progressive movement. He played a key role in framing Sacramento’s third city charter and he often hosted political parties, including serving as chair of the reception committee in honor of Governor


Henry T. Cage in 1899.\textsuperscript{23} Weinstock’s involvement and importance grew as the California Progressives, who organized in 1907 as the Lincoln-Roosevelt League, originally decided on him as their choice for governor in the 1910 election before he deferred to Hiram Johnson. In 1912, Governor Johnson appointed Weinstock to lead a commission to investigate a labor crisis in Fresno and San Diego involving the Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies). While no particular fan of laborers’ rights, he advocated that the State honor the Wobblies’ First Amendment rights. In 1913, President Woodrow Wilson appointed Weinstock to serve as a member of the United States International Relations Commission. Also, that year, Governor Johnson named Weinstock to a committee to plan a state rural credits system. On the recommendation of the committee, the State established the Colonization and Rural Credits Commission, headed, at Weinstock’s suggestion, by Elwood Mead who, not coincidentally enough, had studied the Chaffey Brothers’ colonization schemes in Australia that they had first developed in Etiwanda and Ontario. The State Colonization and Rural Credits Commission served as a Progressive advocate for state promotion of rural colonization schemes and aid to small farmers with little capital. Finally, in 1916, Weinstock became the first State Market Director by appointment, once again, of Governor Johnson. From this office, Weinstock helped the State of California bring government into the business of agricultural marketing as his bureau, the first of its kind in the country, sought to assist the organization and operation of cooperatives and other associations. According to historian Steven Stoll, “Weinstock found himself in a position to bring order to the countryside in a way that no country-life reformer could have imagined.” Stoll continued: “Weinstock’s purpose was nothing less than to change

\textsuperscript{23} McClatchy & Company, \textit{Sacramento County and its Resources}, 127; and “Brilliant Ball at the State Capitol,” 8.
the relationship between California and the American economy and to build agriculture on the West Coast into a major industry. He acted on the premise that what minimized ‘the waste and expense of distribution, [worked] to the benefit of the consumers.’”

Harris Weinstock began giving public lectures in the 1880s. He spoke to women’s clubs, civic organizations, church groups and synagogues, grammar and college students, and political organizations. Repeatedly he addressed such Progressive-minded themes as democratic citizenship, civil liberties, business ethics, moral character, family and home, and opportunities for educated women. In 1903, he served as the first president of the Commonwealth Club. Founded by editorial writer Edward F. Adam of the San Francisco Call, the Club created a non-partisan educational organization to study public affairs. Perhaps of all Weinstock’s social advocacies and lectures, his most popular was “Jesus the Jew,” which he published in 1902 as Jesus the Jew: And Other Addresses. Like his brother Lubin, both raised as Orthodox Jews, Weinstock embraced a progressive Judaism that championed pluralism, modernity, equality, and social justice. He taught that Jesus preached Judaism in its purest form and he advocated a universal religion with a belief in one God, one brotherhood, and one law for all mankind. He actively participated in the Jewish Publication Society, founded in 1888, that sought to provide children of Jewish immigrants to America with books in English about their heritage. Weinstock saw himself, and all American Jewry, as essentially white. In his 1905 speech to students in a San Francisco business college, Weinstock declared, “Whatever progress the Anglo-Saxon has made beyond that of other races is largely due to his spirit of independence, self-help, and self-reliance; to his power of initiative, and his readiness to assume responsibilities.” On the one hand, in his “Jesus the Jew” lecture, he had argued that the republican form of government so

beloved by Anglo-Americans came from a Jewish tradition thereby constituting Jewish inclusion in the whiteness of Anglo-Saxondom. On the other hand, in his 1905 speech, Weinstock followed up his love of Anglo Saxons with the reasoning that all white Americans were Anglo Saxon. “The fact remains, however, that our language is the Anglo-Saxon, our laws are largely based on the common law of England; our educational methods are, to a great extent, modeled after those of England, and our tone and spirit are preeminently Anglo-Saxon in character.” In other words, Weinstock claimed American Jews, and not Jews in Europe, the Middle East, or elsewhere, were irreducibly Anglo Saxon and thereby white.25

Weinstock, as a Progressive, mirrored efforts in not only Sacramento, but also nationally and internationally. In between the end of Reconstruction and the Great War, nearly all Americans faced the reality of industrialization as railroad lines and telegraph wires dotted the landscape of the countryside, factories grew in number and size, immigration rose, and sometimes labor disputes became violent. This was the emergence of the United States economically and militarily and scarcely a person remained untouched by the rapid changes. With three sharp depressions from the 1870s to 1890s, and the social turmoil they triggered, increasing numbers of Americans, already discontent with the problems of a Gilded Age, came

25. Some scholars have contended that Jewish Americans have been racialized as something other than white, particularly because they argue the United States defined itself as essentially a Christian nation (see, Matthew Frye Jacobson, Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998]; and Karen Brodkin, How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says About Race in America [New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998]). Be that as it may, other historians, such as Paul Spickard, argue that Jews, while undeniably facing malicious anti-Semitism, were still perceived as white, though at the “nether edges of whiteness,” particularly in regard to the purposes of naturalization law and the prominence of Jews in the inner circles of American politics and business (see, Paul Spickard, Almost All Aliens: Immigration, Race, and Colonialism, privately printed (Santa Barbara: Paul Spickard, 2007), 219-20, later published as Almost All Aliens: Immigration, Race, and Colonialism in American History and Identity [New York: Routledge, 2007]). In fact, the “difference” in Jewish whiteness rests on another issue: the racialization of religion. In this context, Weinstock embraced and articulated a vision of Progressive Judaism and of “Jesus the Jew” that sought to marginalize his Jewishness, as a religion, in favor of his whiteness through a perceived heritage of Anglo-Saxonism. Regardless whether or not Jews were (or are), in fact, white or not is irrelevant. The important point is that Weinstock believed that Jews were white and Anglo-Saxon regardless of their religion.
to feel a sense of “dislocation and bewilderment” and that the United States was in a state of crisis.\textsuperscript{26} The nation needed to reform if it were to survive. Out of this perceived calamity, the Progressive movement gained momentum as the fate of each American inextricably linked with the collective fate of classes, corporations, and nations.\textsuperscript{27} While some historians see Progressivism an extension of the Populist revolt, the continuous struggle of liberalism versus conservatism, or democracy versus aristocracy, Progressivism certainly gained momentum at the turn of the twentieth century. Although some historians see Progressivism as a democratic renaissance and therefore a complete break with the backward-looking republican rhetoric of Populists, Progressivism unquestionably gained traction. Whether a moral crusade to resuscitate older Protestant and individualistic values where the right sort of people (a rising new middle class), should rule, ease their status anxiety, and bequeath to Americans a hierarchical and bureaucratic structure in the search for order, continuity, regulation, functionality, rationality, administration, and management, Progressives increasingly turned to the tasks of delivering the American people from their sin.\textsuperscript{28} They sought the eradication of social conflicts, to stand

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against the worst evils of big business (while maintaining a reverence for capitalism), and devoted themselves to a collectivist, interventionist solution that, at its core, held laissez fair as a bankrupt ideology.

Progressive Californians swept to power in 1910 with the election of Hiram Johnson as governor. Progressives in the 1911 state legislature took swift action on economic regulation, challenged the unethical business practices of railroads and utilities and established agencies and legislation to police banks, assess corporate incomes, and turn property tax collection over to counties. Progressives also advocated political reform combating corruption through such measures as the initiative, referendum, and recall. While many of the Progressive reforms in both California and the nation could be seen as an anti-business gang tired of politics and politicians, many Progressives, such as Weinstock and other prominent Sacramentans, were businessmen themselves who used political offices and affiliations to create change. Business went hand-in-hand with their efforts to clean up the image of Sacramento and improve its institutions and infrastructure in hopes of stimulating the economy by attracting new migrants and investors. In the process, they improved the so-called positive cultural, political, and social reform such new blood and capital allegedly sought.\(^{29}\)

Reformers, the reform impulse, and the search for order and efficiency had been growing and gaining momentum in Sacramento since the 1870s as local businessmen and politicians promoted business interests and the creation of a better urban development climate. For example, led by such local stalwarts of industry as Albert Gallatin and Mayor Christopher Green,

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29. Deverell, Railroad Crossing; Deverell and Sitton, California Progressivism Revisited; Mowry, California Progressives; Nash, State Government and Economic Development; Olin, California’s Prodigal Sons; Olin, California Politics; Orsi, Sunset Limited; and Williams, The Democratic Party and California Politics.
a Board of Trade was established in 1873 to promote business. More significantly, in the 1880s, following the mass migration of newcomers into the Southland, Sacramento’s promoters increased their efforts to improve and promote the city so as not to miss the wave of development in California in general. At the heart of this promotional and reform impulse, sometimes leading it and sometimes being led, were the brothers McClatchy of the Sacramento Bee. According to one historian, “Both brothers railed incessantly against anything or anybody that stood in their way. Relentlessly they pressed Sacramento to improve its water supply, pave its roads, clean up its politics, eliminate its vice and crime, and beautify its streets by planting trees.”  

For the McClatchys, as for many of Sacramento’s Progressives, the focus was on the marketing of Sacramento. Along with others, the McClatchys published lavishly illustrated booster pamphlets and were major players in the formation of the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce in 1895 that replaced the Board of Trade and became even more focused on marketing California’s “Capital City.” Sacramento promoters, Progressive or otherwise, took an expansive approach at fashioning an image of the city as they helped create a frontier myth that celebrated early miners, pioneers, and the days of ’49. Sacramento’s “who’s who” turned to the creation of schools, fraternal and social clubs, the establishment of post offices, new buildings, libraries, beautiful Victorian homes and neighborhoods, and large and beautiful churches such as the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, as well as orphanages, hospitals, and sanitariums. Even Charles K. McClatchy (more often referred to as C. K.) embraced the notion that environment and virtue went together as he became an outspoken proponent of trees and heavily promoted the city’s reputation as a “City of Trees.” Progressives like C. K McClatchy held the conviction that, as historian Paul Boyer explains, “...the city should replicate the moral order of the

30. Avella, Sacramento, 68.
village. City dwellers, they believed, must somehow be brought to perceive themselves as members of cohesive communities knit together by shared moral and social values.”\textsuperscript{31} To accomplish this, reformers of the so-called City Beautiful movement created the most visible expression of this belief. They assumed that by transforming the urban landscape to mirror a town or village in the countryside, they would “complement the burgeoning reforms in other areas of society.”\textsuperscript{32} C. K., then, almost predictably, published front-page obituaries and ran numerous articles concerning felled trees in the \textit{Bee}. According to C. K., “A street joke in Sacramento runneth as follows: ‘I see the flag on the \textit{Bee} is at halfmast.’ ‘Who’s dead?’ ‘Another oak tree.’”\textsuperscript{33}

Of the two McClatchy brothers, C. K. has garnered the most attention, at least when discussing Sacramento. C. K.’s brother, Valentine S. McClatchy (more often referred to as V. S.), however, rode prominently across the Sacramento political and business landscape at the turn of the twentieth century. Sons of James McClatchy, founder of the \textit{Sacramento Bee} (1857), V. S. and C. K. bought out their father’s partner and became the sole owners of the daily newspaper in 1884. V. S. became the business manager of the \textit{Bee}, leaving most of the editorial duties to his brother.\textsuperscript{34} In addition to his promotional efforts from his position at the \textit{Bee}, V. S. helped form the California Citrus Fair Association (of Northern California) in 1892, served as a Western Advisory Board member for the Associated Press, and served as a member of the


\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Sacramento City and County Directory}, 1893, 340.
California Promotion Committee (formed in 1902) that published a periodical and distributed booster pamphlets.\(^ {35} \) Besides land investments in Orangevale and Fair Oaks (particularly as he helped to form both the Orange Vale Colonization Company in 1887 and the Fair Oaks Development Company in 1900), he bought and sold land throughout the Sacramento Valley, including land near Rocklin and Loomis and in Placer County.\(^ {36} \) He also became involved in local politics and municipal organizations, helping to form and draft bylaws for the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce. Later V. S. filled offices for various local and state political organizations, including a stint as president of the California State Reclamation Board.\(^ {37} \)

V. S. McClatchy’s name is most often attached to his agenda as a racist bigot. As president of the California Japanese Exclusion League that helped to pass the Alien Land Law in 1920 and the National Origins Act of 1924 and a leader of the California Joint Immigration Committee, McClatchy railed against what he believed to be a Japanese conspiracy to, as he said, “drive out all Americans” in California.\(^ {38} \) McClatchy, like many Californians and Progressives during that period targeted the Japanese with a blatantly racist zealotry. He continually bemoaned what he considered the Japanese’s inability to assimilate, and made such statements as, “The United States [is] destined to become a Japanese Province unless Japanese immigration


\(^{37}\) Lord, \textit{A Sacramento Saga}, 10.

is forbidden absolutely.” McClatchy believed California to be a staging ground for an all out Japanese takeover of the United States. McClatchy’s prejudice in fact, highlights and evokes a racism in Progressivism in general and against the Japanese in California in particular. Moreover, this racism reflected both a booster spirit and a white-biased attempt to manifest such racialized notions into the territorial organization of the American residential landscape.

Like Joseph Widney and many Southern California boosters, Sacramento’s promoters had a racialized view of the world that mirrored a Progressive sense of superiority. In fact, a 1909 Orangevale add in a pamphlet subtitled Devoted to the Interests of Ideal Country Homes included a boast of “No Chinese. No Japanese.” By the end of the nineteenth century, many California and Sacramento boosters balked against almost all things Asian, whether Chinese or Japanese. They fervently embraced the notion of the United States as a “white man’s country” — little wonder then that Weinstock counted the American Jewry as members in good standing. Even Populists in the last decades of the nineteenth century pursued racial uplift with the

39. Valentine S. McClatchy, The Germany of Asia: Japan’s Policy in the Far East; Her “Peaceful Penetration” of the United States; How American Commercial and National Interests are Affected (Sacramento: [V. S. McClatchy], 1919), 21.


confidence of natural superiority. From the strivings of Dennis Kearney and his anti-Chinese Workingman’s Party through the campaigns of V. S. McClatchy, Sacramentans, as well as other Californians, played an active role in shaping the racial order that proved an immovable political object in not only California, but also the United States. In this context, Sacramentans played a role in building a landscape that was predominantly white and meant for whites. It was also a landscape they touted as quintessentially American, democratic, healthy, modern, and refined.

While Weinstock and McClatchy certainly represented two of the more dynamic and outspoken of Sacramento’s promoters, particularly those involved in either Orangevale or Fair Oaks, they were not alone. Thomas B. Hall, a captain in the California State Militia, served as company president of the Orange Vale Colonization Company until it dissolved in 1896. He

42. Postel, The Populist Vision, 173-76.

43. What some have called a “spatiality of racism” or a “spatiality of whiteness,” suburban communities, while not always white in fact, reflect and reflected a construction of identity based on place and imagination whereby suburbia became a generic, but still key defining characteristic, of what it has meant and still means to be white in America. See, Avila, Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight; Lassiter, The Silent Majority; Lassiter, “Suburban Strategies”; Lipsitz, The Possessive Investment in Whiteness; Self, American Babylon. See also, Davis, City of Quartz; Low, Behind the Gates; McKenzie, Privatopia; and Sugrue, The Origins of the Urban Crisis.

Perhaps greater Sacramento’s embrace of the Craftsman style and many of its Chinese inspired aesthetics represents some easing of anxiety or racism toward Asians in the area. With that said, the Craftsman style, launched by several Englishman in the mid-nineteenth century, represented a philosophy that supported craftsmanship, natural materials, simple and pure design, and harmonious family life. Specifically, the Craftsman style, both in Britain and then in the U.S., boomed during the throes of industrialization and rising urbanization. The Craftsman movement and its supporters lamented a decline in rural handicrafts precipitated by a rise in “soulless” machine-made production: the mass-manufacture of goods. An embrace of Chinese-inspired design and architecture via an embrace of the Craftsman movement took place during a time many historians say white Americans expressed anxiety regarding industrialization. Likewise, historians also point out that the Craftsman style represented a rejection of Victorian architecture’s ornate and even prude design. Embracing Chinese-design because of its Chinese influence could therefore reflect a desire for the so-called exotic as much as it represents an embrace of the Chinese per se. Embracing Chinese design and architecture because it reflected an explicit Chinese influence also runs the risk of assuming many Americans knew what Chinese architecture and design looked like. In other words, while an embrace of the Craftsman style could signal an easing of white racial antagonism directed at Asians in Sacramento on the one hand, it could also signal a desire of many to embrace a seemingly more natural and organic style that contrasted with industrialization and Victorianism on the other hand. Finally, the appropriation of Chinese elements in architectural style, which first began in England, could be seen as taking possession — and perhaps marks further turn of the twentieth century attempts at exerting domination — as much as it could be seen as respectfully borrowing. See Leeland M. Roth, Understanding Architecture (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993); Dell Upton, Architecture in the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); and Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780 (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992).
founded the wholesale grocery store Hall, Luhrs, & Company at the age of twenty-three in 1877.
Ten years later, he purchased 3,200 acres seven miles northeast of Marysville in Yuba County, California from his father to rear Holstein cattle and grow wheat. Like McClatchy, Hall became involved with the California Citrus Fair Association in 1892, serving as a founding director. He founded and held controlling interest in Mt. Shasta Mineral Springs Company in 1899 along with future Sacramento Chamber of Commerce leader Frank Miller, Sutter Club president Adam Andrew, and former Sacramento Mayor Eugene Gregory. He started and presided over the National and Central Immigration Association, which published more than 20,000 pamphlets of “The Resources of Northern and Central California.” He served as a prominent civic leader in addition to his business efforts. Sacramento leaders sought Hall’s help in 1892 to draft Sacramento’s third city charter. In the late 1890s, Governor James H. Budd appointed Hall as a member of the auditing board to the Commissioner of Public Works. The Bee praised Hall for devoting “more time, energy, and ability to matters of public enterprise than any other Sacramentan in the few years preceding the publication of this work [1894].” Hall also served on the initial committee to draft bylaws and plan Sacramento’s first Chamber of Commerce. In fact, the code supported the Sacramento promoters’ growth goals through agriculture, as the Sacramento Chamber was designed “to foster trade, commerce and economic interests of the City and County of Sacramento; to induce immigration and the subdivision of lands, and


45. McClatchy & Company, Sacramento County and its Resources, 152.
generally to promote development of agriculture and horticultural resources of Central and Northern California.” Perhaps not coincidentally enough, the first office for the Sacramento Chamber was the same office of the Orange Vale Colonization Company.46

The career of Frederick K. Cox also underscores the links between prominent Sacramentans who played a significant role in the promotion of Orangevale, Fair Oaks, and Sacramento. Cox, a native of England, trekked to the gold rich region of El Dorado County in 1852. He purchased a meat market and entered into partnership with Crawford W. Clarke. In the fall of 1854, the two entrepreneurs opened a market in Grass Valley, Nevada County, where they also extended their operations by buying and selling cattle. The latter branch of their business became so extensive that they sold the market and relocated to the Sacramento Valley, where they controlled one of the most extensive cattle ranches on the Pacific coast. As this region of the country became more densely settled with insufficient land large enough to serve as grazing grounds they purchased widespread cattle ranges in the counties of Sutter, Kern, San Luis Obispo, and eastern Oregon. In control of one of the most prolific cattle industries in California, they secured a princely income that placed them among the wealthiest citizens of Sacramento County. Cox and Clarke took over the “Eureka Ditch” (which ran along the American River west to Orangevale) in 1888 from the American River Ditch Company after orange trees they planted froze during the winter of 1887-88. Beginning in 1888 the North Fork Ditch Company, the name of Cox and Clarke’s new company, served the Orange Vale Colonization Company and extended its services to Fair Oaks and other surrounding areas. Cox fostered other business interests in Sacramento, culminating in his presidency of the California State Bank. He took a profound interest in political affairs too. Elected in 1882, he served as a

Democratic state senator for two regular and two extra sessions of the legislature. By appointment of Governor George B. Stoneman, he served for two decades as a member of the State Board of Agriculture, including a stint as president, and sought to advance the interests of farming classes. He helped draft Sacramento’s city charter in 1892. “Applying honest principles in the affairs of life,” praised the Standard Genealogical Publishing Company in 1901, Cox “has won the confidence of the business community and in a high degree of the public at large.”

The business dealings and political connections of men like Cox highlight the extensive network of organizations and individuals that mark the existence of a Sacramento growth coalition, particularly regarding the promotion and development of Orangevale and Fair Oaks, not to mention greater Sacramento. Cox, for example, helped establish the Sacramento, Fair Oaks, and Orange Vale Railway Company (SFORC), which both linked some of Sacramento’s most influential businessmen and politicians and represented an auxiliary business associated with Fair Oaks and Orangevale that precipitated the regional growth goals of Sacramento’s promoters. The SFORC formed in July 1895 and, in the eyes of the promoters, signified a lucrative financial opportunity that could potentially yield profits in addition to, and well after, the direct sale of land in Fair Oaks, Orangevale, and other places between them and Sacramento. “Such corporation,” said the SFORC’s Articles of Incorporation, is “to also have the right to buy, lease, and operate street railways under franchises granted by any incorporated city on or along the line of its railway, and to use any motive power thereof that may be authorized by the

franchise of such street railway.”48 With a capital stock of $500,000, the investors of the SFORC included not only Cox, but also George M. Mott, Phillip C. Drescher, William Schaw, and L. T. Hatfield.49 Mott and Drescher, who also helped establish the Orange Vale Colonization Company, lent a hand in establishing the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce. Mott had a successful career as the general manager of H. S. Crocker Stationers, while Drescher ran Mebius & Drescher Wholesale Grocers. Schaw, the treasurer of SFORC, helped Hall draft the Chamber of Commerce bylaws and served as vice-president in 1899 and president in 1900. Hatfield, a former volunteer (drummer boy) for the Thirty-ninth Regiment Illinois Veteran Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War, graduated from the law department at Illinois State University in 1871. He moved to Sacramento in 1887 and opened a general civil practice, focusing on corporate and real estate law.50

The relationship of these men certainly did link them and their interests to the most prominent of Sacramento’s social and political bodies and peoples. In addition to an auxiliary business of Orangevale and Fair Oaks like the SFORC, Sacramento’s place entrepreneurs rubbed elbows and organized collectively through such institutions as the Sutter Club and the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce. According to one historian, the Sutter Club was “one of the most venerable social institutions in the city of Sacramento. Because of its membership and its central position in the city, the history of the Sutter Club is essentially a history of the growth

48. SCRC, Articles of Incorporation of the Sacramento, Fair Oaks and Orange Vale Railway Company, case file no. 690, SAMCC, 1.

49. SCRC, Articles of Incorporation of the Sacramento, Fair Oaks and Orange Vale Railway Company, 4.

50. Lord, A Sacramento Saga, 10, 18, 20; “Chamber of Commerce Elects Officers,” Sacramento Bee, January 10, 1899, 8; McClatchy & Company, Sacramento County and its Resources, 149-50.
and development of the city of Sacramento.”

Likewise, “The men who founded the Sutter Club, and their successors, were the builders of Sacramento and, to a significant extent, of California. When they gathered to start the Sutter Club, they were the leaders of virtually every local commercial and professional field. They ran the politics of both parties. They founded the Chamber of Commerce.”

The association of these men to the Chamber of Commerce also facilitated their endeavors to promote the development of Orangevale, Fair Oaks, and Sacramento. Schaw, also a Sutter Club member as well as Drescher, Hatfield, and Cox’s business cohort in SFORC, served as the president of the Chamber. As president, he authorized a favorable special investigating committee to look into the Fair Oaks Development Company (headed by McClatchy) — a committee that included a man with a direct financial interest in the success of the company: Drescher. Schaw also presided over the Chamber when the Sacramento Board of Supervisors met a delegation of Fair Oaks residents urging construction of a bridge across the American River in 1900. Businessmen of Sacramento, Schaw said, were in accord with the petitioners, realizing the bridge would be for the mutual benefit of everyone in the county. He pointed to the widespread advertising done by the Fair Oaks Development Company that benefited the entire Sacramento region. The directors of the Chamber that summer also included Mott (an investor and original charter member of the Orange Vale Colonization Company). Not surprisingly, the Chamber authorized the construction of the bridge and took the


lead role in raising funds not only for the bridge, but also for the railway from Sacramento to Fair Oaks.53

Snapshot biographies of the Sacramento promoters reveal not only the bonds of a powerful and capable growth coalition, but also individual place entrepreneurs who dedicated a lifetime of activity to real estate and business speculation. Primary among these were McClatchy, Hall, and Cox, all champions of pro-growth political activity and booster propaganda. Sacramento’s promoters approached both their growth goals and their Progressive-driven agendas in private investments and activities and through local organizations and politics — well before they assumed state or even federal offices. They had formed the Sacramento Chamber to facilitate the broader marketing of Sacramento as a regional powerhouse and agricultural metropolis that featured a Progressive spirit and modern outlook. They did not hesitate to put government and organizations to use to serve their needs, those they said represented the best for all.

While the Chamber of Commerce helped them to market Sacramento and the Sutter Club to network with others, pool resources, and share information, the city government helped them to run it like a business. The third city charter they drafted in 1892 created an independent mayor to run Sacramento like an executive of a company. An expanded board of trustees, a sort of legislative branch, balanced the power of the mayor. Dividing the city into nine wards, the charter allowed each ward to elect its own trustee and its own representative on the board of education. The charter also gave the mayor the right to appoint a number of officers with consent from the Board of Trustees, including the chief of police and police officers, city

surveyor, superintendent of streets, fire chief and firemen, directors of cemeteries, and employees of the waterworks. The seeming efficiency and order that the third city charter represented, which also signaled management and authority, garnered prominent attention in an 1894 booster publication produced by McClatchy and the *Bee: Sacramento County and its Resources*. Sacramento’s promoters thus formed a powerful and working growth coalition that utilized individual talent, business dealings, and social status, while municipal organizations and government helped them to stimulate growth and to offset costs and assume limited liability.

The imagineering, promotion, and development of the agriburban communities of Orangevale and Fair Oaks represented a publicity campaign promoting an entire metropolitan area — or at least aspiring metropolitan area — as much as it represented a means to profit for a few individuals somehow connected to Orangevale and Fair Oaks. Specifically, the Sacramento promoters’ growth activities and motivations took shape because of their metropolitan desires, not to mention statewide perspective. While perhaps running the anachronistic risk of labeling the Los Angeles and Sacramento areas as metropolitan before they actually were, placing the suburbanization of the agriburbs within the context of contributing to, and being affected by, the metropolitanization of Los Angeles and Sacramento is probably more accurate. With that in

54. Avella, *Sacramento*, 75-76.

55. Many suburban historians take a broader metropolitan perspective to pay more attention to the place of the suburbs in relationship with central cities, competing suburbs, and their region as a whole. John C. Teaford analyzed suburbs in relation to the city to take a metropolitan view in his political history, *City and Suburb*. Lewis’s edited volume *Manufacturing Suburbs* pulls together the latest work of urban geographers to also take a metropolitan perspective to discuss why many manufacturing industries choose suburban locations. In *American Babylon*, Self examines the history of Oakland to elaborate on such issues as the ideology of the Black Panther Party and therefore positions the political economy at the heart of the postwar transformation of metropolitan America. Indeed, these historians, in addition to others such as Sam Bass Warner, Jr., Carey McWilliams, Becky Nicolaides, Lisa McGirr, Eric Avila, and Matthew Lassiter, have all concluded that to best understand the development of suburbs — or cities — it is best to approach the whole metropolis as a unit of analysis (metropolitanization). See Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs*; McWilliams, *Southern California*; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*; Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*; and Lassiter, *The Silent Majority*. See also Kruse, *White Flight*; Kruse and Sugrue, *The New Suburban History*; and Sies, “The City Transformed,” 81-111.
mind, the imagineering, promotion, and development of Orangevale and Fair Oaks were both parts and results of the metropolitanization of Sacramento and a broader publicity campaign to promote the region as a whole to accomplish the land-based elite’s place interests and growth goals.

Packaging the Place of Sacramento

The packaging and promotion of Sacramento began long before Orangevale and Fair Oaks ever emerged in the minds of Sacramento’s boosters. Indeed, those communities were part of a far broader, concentrated, methodical, and ongoing publicity campaign by Sacramento’s place entrepreneurs and growth coalition to profit from the promotion of Sacramento and its surrounding countryside and communities. Expectedly, the Gold Rush and mining figured prominently in publicity campaigns from 1849 forward: “In 1902 output of gold from Sacramento County was $425,894; in 1903 it was $464,157,” read one line in a 1904 booster pamphlet.\(^{56}\) Still, the packaging of Sacramento as a place of agricultural profitability and horticultural excellence began early on as well, particularly in the lavishly illustrated and meticulously detailed *History of Sacramento County, California with Illustrations Descriptive of Its Scenery, Residences, Public Buildings, Fine Blocks, and Manufactories* by Thompson & West publishers in 1880.\(^ {57}\) The Thompson & West publication represented one of dozens of booster pamphlets that emerged between the 1870s and 1910s, all designed to promote, glamorize, and romanticize the Sacramento region. In particular, the themes, elements, and narrative laid out in the Thompson & West publication proved salient in the decades to come. It showed a long-term


\(^{57}\) *History of Sacramento County, California with Illustrations Descriptive of Its Scenery, Residences, Public Buildings, Fine Blocks, and Manufactories* (Oakland, CA: Thompson & West, 1880).
packaging of Sacramento as an agricultural metropolis that boasted the best agricultural landscape with a chance to profit in connection with urban amenities and culture, like booming trade and business opportunities and superior transportation networks unlike anything else on the West Coast. Sacramento’s promoters, therefore, employed the agriburban model of suburbia as a way to profit from the direct investment in such communities and from their inclusion in a broader publicity campaign.

Some of the brash booster publications produced between 1880 and World War I concerning Sacramento include Thompson and West’s *History of Sacramento County* (1880), *Sacramento: The Commercial Metropolis of Northern and Central California* (1888), *Sacramento County and its Resources* (1894), the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce and Board of Supervisor’s *Resources of Sacramento County* (1899), *Souvenir of the Capital of California* (1901), “Northern California: The Story of the Sacramento Valley” in *Harper’s Weekly* (1903), the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce’s *Sacramento and its Tributary Country* (1904), the Sacramento Chamber’s *Greater Sacramento: Her Achievements, Resources and Possibilities* (1912), and *Sacramento Valley and Foothill Counties of California* (1915).58

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among them are similar and recurring, particularly after 1887 (formation of Orangevale), and then again in 1895 (formation of Fair Oaks), particularly in the use of Orangevale and Fair Oaks as examples of Sacramento’s agricultural prowess and superb community types, business savvy, and general sophistication, progress, and modernity. In the boosters’ words, these writings were designed to give “a simple, unadorned statement of facts such as will give those unfamiliar with the region a clear and comprehensive idea of the city and county, its representative homes, its business establishments, its farm and orchard sections, its products, commerce, trade and trade relations, its social and refining features and its importance in the economy and growth of California.”  

Some of the more conspicuous themes and details that germinated from the broad publicity campaign concerning Sacramento included Sacramento’s quality in comparison to not just anywhere U.S.A., but rather Southern California in particular. The packaging and promotion of Sacramento as not only a model place, but rather as the best place both mirrors the representation and promotion of place as a commodity by boosters throughout the nation in general. The juxtaposition of Sacramento with Los Angeles was not without its logic. Los Angeles and Southern California already benefited from a large well-conducted publicity campaign. From the late 1880s, Sacramento’s boosters set out to reap from the Southern California harvest in publicity and migration. Comparing Sacramento to Los Angeles, the

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Growing is California’s Greatest Industry: Sacramento County is the Very Heart of its Greatest Production; Possesses a Climate Unsurpassed for its Equilibrity (Sacramento, CA: Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, [1904]); Winfield J. Davis, Sacramento County, California: Its Resources and Advantages (Sacramento, CA: Board of Supervisors, 1905); William L. Willis, History of Sacramento County, California (Los Angeles, CA: Historic Record Company, 1913); and Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, Sacramento County in the Heart of California, issued under direction of the Board of Supervisors and Exposition Commissioners of Sacramento County (Sacramento, CA: Alvord & Young, [1915]). All titles are at the California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, CA or the Sacramento Room, Central Library, Sacramento, CA.

promoters wrote that the “Valley of Sacramento is a garden and Sacramento is the ‘urbs in horto’ [city in a garden] of it. It is our first glimpse of the celestial flowering kingdom of the Christian world.”60 While many in the Southland made similar statements, boosters in Sacramento claimed that the soil and weather in the Sacramento Valley were better than in Southern California. As the packaging of Southern California had cast that region as the perfect place for the growth of just about any produce possible, Sacramentans claimed Sacramento was just that much better. Not even northern Italy and the Riviera could compare because Sacramento was just that much better with an average temperature of 61.0° and 238 clear days to Italy’s average temperature of 60.0° and 220 clear days.61 Sacramento boosters boasted ad infinitum that produce in the region came to maturity about six weeks earlier than in Southern California thereby giving Sacramento a commercial advantage by reaching the market before Southern California produce had a chance to either enter or saturate the market, adversely affecting value.

The packaging of Sacramento as a commodity placed emphasis on the region’s so-called “natural advantages” and “natural resources,” which, in turn, fostered advantages in agriculture, commerce, socio-cultural life, and community and family life. In addition to the climate and soil, they lauded the region’s mountains, rivers, trees, and even aroma. “The prevailing breezes come laden with ozone from the sea, or bearing balsamic piney odors from the forests of the Sierra Nevada.” Neither tornadoes nor cyclones threatened to ravish the land. Any worries concerning flood or fire were met with assurances of newly built levees, solid buildings, and municipal services. Indeed, entire booster pamphlets, such as the 1880 Thompson and West publication, dramatized the problems of flooding and fire disasters, among other things, with the

60. Sacramento: The Commercial Metropolis, 35

61. Sacramento and its Tributary County, 5.
intention of highlighting Sacramento’s prevalence, progress, and advantages. “Perfect safety,” they claimed, “has been secured.” Mortality rates, not surprisingly, remained lower, particularly in comparison to Southern California. Sacramento enjoyed low humidity, light droughts, and the temperature was never too hot, never too cold. With all that said, boosters in Sacramento exclaimed, “There is no spot on earth where fruit culture can be carried on more profitably, where greater variety can be produced, or where crops are surer than in that portion of the great Sacramento valley occupied by the county of Sacramento.”

In this “richest portion” of the Golden State, boosters explained, “Hardly a foot of its land is not susceptible of successful cultivation, and the major part of it will favorably rank with the best land in the Union.” The key to unlocking the array of benefits within this land, however, was hard work and brains as the boosters extolled the virtues of producerism, progress, and “scientific modes of cultivation.” The boosters boasted in 1888, “They [Sacramento’s lands] but await the application of enterprising labor to render them principalities to their possessors.” As was the case with boosters throughout California massaging the egos of potential migrants, whether already middle class or aspiring to be, boosters in Sacramento praised the intelligence, modernity, and masculinity of Sacramento’s potential future small farmers, particularly within the context of horticulture.

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In fact, horticulture, as prosecuted in California, is an art that demands a rare combination of qualities for perfect success — more, perhaps, than any other profession or calling. When you see a man obtaining, every year, phenomenal returns, you may feel assured that, in addition to being favored by natural conditions, he has intelligence, judgment, practical experience, energy, executive ability, and business sagacity. Any man of these qualities can be assured of phenomenal returns from fruit culture in this county. Fruit-growing is the business of all others which offers a premium to brains and work. A community of fruit growers is a community of able men, — often cultured men — as different from a community of purely grain-growing farmers as can be. And the wealth created and the permanent prosperity insured in a fruit-growing community, the small homes horticulture creates, and the dense population it supports, all make a marked contrast with the results seen in a community devoted to general farming.  

The point in highlighting Sacramento’s natural advantages and resources, of course, was in distinguishing Sacramento as an “agricultural empire” where one could reach and benefit from “perfection in horticultural development.” The natural advantages and resources, such as Sacramento’s American and Sacramento rivers, supported and augmented Sacramento’s agricultural proficiency and best chances to profit. “Think of it! A navigable river winding through millions of fertile acres more than 300 miles, and not only does this magnificent stream afford irrigation and shipping transportation, but as a source of food supply, it is unsurpassed.” Sacramento boosters imagined Sacramento as a premier fruit-growing center as they presented various reports and statistics of profits made, carload shipments, and total tons of fruit produced for market. With rivers already accounted for, the boosters paraded forth Sacramento’s railroad heritage and vast railroad system to proclaim Sacramento as the transportation hub of the Pacific slope, which, of course, best benefited the local grower, not to mention manufacturers and commercial traders. In their words, Sacramento was a “natural distributing point” and had “a practical monopoly on transcontinental fresh fruit transportation.”

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64. McClatchy & Company, *Sacramento County and its Resources*, 34.

As a land imagined to be capable of growing fruit of every kind, not to mention nuts, wheat, alfalfa, and hops, among many other things, the boosters proclaimed that the Sacramento area had established a large, growing, and profitable business sector through a perceptive “business intelligence.” Those same rivers, climatic conditions, prosperous lands, and transportation systems that made agriculture so successful, also provided commercial advantages in a number of economic ventures. That is, agriculture seemed to have spurred both urbanization and metropolitanization. Boosters claimed Sacramento enjoyed the benefits of a bustling site of business as they touted the Chamber of Commerce, banks, retail trades of every kind, factories and mills, manufacturing industries, and the Southern Pacific Railroad Company. Given such advantages and prosperity, they claimed, “panics and speculative excitement never disturb the people of the city” as the boosters painted a fantastical picture of an ultimate economic bubble that could never burst nor be adversely affected.66 Sacramento, as “The Commercial Metropolis” (or, more rightfully, an imagined agricultural metropolis — an agriopolis), benefited from a vast system of railroads, roads and bridges, and, as the boosters liked to claim, a growing population locally and a large base of consumers nationally who were accessible via transportation networks.

Sacramento’s agricultural and commercial strengths sustained a vibrant and sophisticated social and cultural life, which, in turn, contributed to the further agricultural and commercial growth of the region. Not shy in employing the language and imagery of the suburban imagineers, Sacramento’s boosters highlighted Sacramento’s scenery and pastoral feel, including a wealth of trees, shade, flowers, and parks. Be that as it may, in Sacramento, claimed the boosters, a “displacement of the old for the modern” had taken place. The boosters incessantly

boasted of Sacramento’s urban amenities, high cultural life, and infrastructure to demonstrate the area’s modernity and “civilization.” Boosters highlighted churches, schools, asylums and hospitals, fire and police departments, numerous clubs and organizations, such as literary guilds, Free Masons, and Odd Fellows, hotels, libraries, an art gallery, post offices, water supply, sewer system, interurban and intraurban transportation, and lighting and heating. Indeed, “The social advantages of churches, educational and fraternal organizations are numerous,” one booster pamphlet affirmed. And for good reason, as the “solid foundation of real Christianity is the basis of our real civilization.” In fact, Sacramento’s plethora of churches “kept back the scruff” and the population supposedly “comprised the cream of the society of America and Europe.”

Sacramento, besides agriculture, business, and culture, had homes and, more importantly, the republican, civic-minded families living inside. Sacramento was advertised as a “City of Homes.” It was, even better, “a city of homes and flowers, the residence portion being embraced in choice foliage, and the streets well shaded.” Packaging life in Sacramento as “very near [as] approach to the ideal,” the area had both “graceful and classical architecture” (an exemplary body), but it also had a soul, such as the church. “As a rule, present the home life and surroundings of a people to the intelligent stranger, and you give him the master key to their civilization and character, social state and conditions of thrift.” Life in the Sacramento area destined beautiful homes in a modern, yet bucolic, landscape that featured urban amenities, refinement, traditional values, or, as the boosters said, “rural conservatism,” good business, and

67. Souvenir of the Capital, 15; Sacramento: The Commercial Metropolis, 38; Sacramento and its Tributary County, 3; Greater Sacramento, [40]; and Sacramento: The Commercial Metropolis, 18, 38, 18. See also McWilliams, Southern California, 151, 194.
an agricultural industry that could support most men of intelligence, but even men of “average intelligence.”

Within the context of the broader publicity campaign concerning the entire Sacramento area, Orangevale and Fair Oaks were presented as proof, as examples of bloated claims, concerning Sacramento’s self-ascribed superiority. “Besides the bottom and the plain lands, there is still another class of productive land in Sacramento County. This is the rolling land at the beginning of the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. The rolling land lies north of the American River and is no doubt the most picturesque part of all of Sacramento County. It includes the prosperous colonies of Orangevale and Fair Oaks, noted for their production of citrus and semi-tropical fruit. Practically all the oranges grown in Sacramento County come from the pretty groves on the gentle slopes of Orangevale and Fair Oaks.” Orangevale and Fair Oaks were more than just speculative real-estate ventures for a few, they were also talking points for boosters throughout the Sacramento region. “The Orange Vale Colony is a striking illustration of self-supporting small homes,” while Fair Oaks was an example of water supply, and both were of citrus production and the profitability and superiority of small farms in the region.

When discussing the splendor of the Sacramento Valley and its fertility, there would appear a “panoramic view” of Fair Oaks. When there was need for proof of the region’s citrus and fruit dexterity, there was a picture of a prize-winning orange tree in Orangevale. In other words, Orangevale and Fair Oaks were good for both individual place entrepreneurs speculating in real

68.Souvenir of the Capital, 11-12; Sacramento and its Tributary County, 2; Souvenir of the Capital, 7, 13, 3; and Sacramento: The Commercial Metropolis, 47; and McClatchy & Company, Sacramento County and its Resources, 34.

69. Sacramento Valley and Foothill Counties.

70. McClatchy & Company, Sacramento County and its Resources, 60.
estate and a Sacramento growth coalition hoping to reap profit from their promotion. Sacramento promoters designed and advertised Orangevale and Fair Oaks as rural suburbs because to do so made good business sense. Billed as model types of community, the promoters utilized the popular and familiar language of suburbs, urbanity, and agrarian virtue. They were Sacramento’s “subs in horto.”

**Orangevale and Fair Oaks in the Heart of California: The Formation of Agriburbs**

The creation of Orangevale as a settled community resulted from a series of land deals that trace back to California’s Mexican period in 1844. According to the Sacramento firm of Buckley and Taylor in 1895, the Mexican governor of California, Manuel Micheltorena, first granted the land that included Orangevale to Joel P. Dedmond on Christmas Eve in 1844. The land grant, known as the Rancho de San Juan, included more than 19,900 acres. The first land sale occurred in August 1845 to John Sinclair. Sinclair then sold the land to Hiram Grimes in February 1849 for a mere $5,000. While Grimes officially received a U.S. Land Parent on July 9, 1860, he (and soon others) sold off small parcels throughout the 1850s. In 1861, Serranus Clinton Hastings, California’s first chief justice and third attorney general, purchased most of the San Juan grant for $36,000. Hastings eventually sold parts of the land, including portions to prominent business partners Frederick K. Cox and Crawford W. Clarke. Cox and Clarke eventually sold what they owned to a land company that formed Orangevale. Most importantly, however, Hastings sold land to an Irish farmer, John T. Cardwell, in the 1880s. The Sacramento promoters, who included Weinstock and McClatchy, purchased land from Cardwell and other
landholders, and eventually they sold their combined acres to their booster organization, the Orange Vale Colonization Company (OVCC), in 1887 and 1888.\textsuperscript{71}

Five of the company’s trustees appeared before a notary public on September 2, 1887, to place their signatures on articles of incorporation. Valentine S. McClatchy, George M. Mott, Thomas B. Hall, Phillip C. Drescher, and Harris Weinstock each signed the document to create the colonization company. They also announced some lofty goals, which included the construction of bridges, ditches, and buildings, as well as loaning money to cultivate farmlands. The trustees envisioned the creation of a farming community, yet they had an even grander goal of forming an intricate system of suburbs on the fringes of Sacramento’s rural landscape, which would include bridges, buildings, and real estate projects. “As a practical demonstration of the fact an extensive acreage is no longer necessary to support an average family, and land well selected, a comfortable home and living can be made upon a ten or twenty acre piece of land,” said the promoters in 1884. They continued: “a score of the best businessmen in Sacramento, in

\textsuperscript{71} Besides general county histories and histories of the Sacramento region in whole listed above, see the following for more on the history of Orangevale: “Orangevale: A Sacramento Fruit Colony Enterprise,” 
\textit{Sacramento Daily Union}, May 8, 1888, 3; “Wake Up Sleepy Folsom,” 
\textit{Sacramento Union}, May 28, 1889, 2; “Orange Vale’s Water System,” 
\textit{Sacramento Union}, June 16, 1890, 1; “Orange Vale: Making Rapid Progress,” 
1888, formed and incorporated the Orange Vale Colonization Company.” Explicitly, the OVCC not only imagined the community as an agricultural paradise inhabited by Jeffersonian small farmers, but also as a thriving suburb of Sacramento where middle-class urbanites could escape the city’s buzz. The Sacramento Union reported this sentiment in an 1888 article. “There is one especially great advantage to Sacramentans in the opening up and development of these suburban tracts, and that is the facilities afforded business men for enjoying the comforts and privileges of country homes, without interference with their business interests.” The article boasted of plans for schools, churches, transportation routes, and impressive homes. The trustees of the OVCC did not create a mere agricultural colony where farmers simply tilled the soil. More daringly, they used an agricultural model of suburbanization not yet seen in the Sacramento Valley, a place where agriculture and country life drove the promotion and development of a rural suburb.

The OVCC featured thirty-six businessmen from Sacramento, including McClatchy, Weinstock, Mott, Drescher, and Hall, all of whom served as the original directors. Robert T. Devlin, a prominent lawyer with a successful practice, served as a secretary. He helped draft Sacramento’s third city charter, served as a member and president of the Board of State Prison Directors, and in 1905, began a seven-year stint as the U.S. district attorney for the northern district of California. George Katzenstein, listed as a director, also promoted the creation of the Orange Vale Water Company in 1896. He had a prominent business career. Most notably, beginning in 1868, Katzenstein served as manager of the Earl Fruit Company, the most extensive shippers of deciduous fruits in the state. The company and its heads divided the Orangevale land

72. Sacramento County and Its Resources, 60.

into ten-acre tracts and imported fruit trees from Florida.74 The articles of incorporation for the OVCC list their purpose:

To purchase and sell real property; to purchase, construct, maintain, and sell bridges, irrigating canals and ditches; to purchase, appropriate, maintain, and sell water rights and privileges; to purchase, erect, and sell buildings, fences, farms, and other land improvements; to cultivate and farm lands, and to lease, colonize, or sell the same; to borrow money, and to loan money upon ample security; and to do and to perform all and every act and thing necessary to the transaction of a general real estate and colonization business.75

These men advertised small lots to settlers throughout the United States, particularly in Northeastern and Midwestern states, such as Minnesota. They included a morally upright anti-saloon clause for those concerned about principled and proper living. Yet when the national depression, precipitated by the Panic of 1893, largely eliminated migration to Orangevale, the company dissolved in 1896.

Sacramento’s promoters and other boosters, including the two newspapers, the Sacramento Bee and the Sacramento Union, also sought to promote the city’s suburban areas, including Orangevale. Articles appeared intermittently in the two newspapers in the late 1890s and the early 1900s, publicizing the growth of suburban areas. Both newspapers produced large, spirited booster pamphlets that, while designed to promote all of Sacramento County, made sure to focus on the city’s burgeoning suburban areas, particularly Orangevale. The Sacramento Bee published Sacramento County and Its Resources in 1894 and the Sacramento Union published Souvenir of the Capital of California in 1901. The Bee, with McClatchy as an editor, crammed

74. “Orangevale,” Sacramento Union, May 8, 1888, 3; Avella, Sacramento, 75; Sacramento County and Its Resources, 151; Sandul and Swim, Orangevale, 17; “Orange Vale: An Excursion to the Sacramento Colony Near Folsom,” Sacramento Union, June 16, 1890, 1; Irvine, History of the New California, 436-38; Orangevale Water Company, Information Bulletin, 2, 10; see also Buckley and Taylor (Sacramento, California), Abstract of title to the San Juan tract, Sacramento County, California: on which is located the Farm, Field and Fireside's Sunset Colonies, Fair Oaks and Olive Park (Sacramento: Buckley and Taylor, 1895).

75. SCRC, Articles of Incorporation of Orange Vale Colonization Company, case file no. 505, SAMCC, 1.
its pages with sensational stories and pictures of Orangevale. Likewise, the \textit{Union} bragged about the community’s agricultural productivity and even highlighted William Calder’s Orangevale residence, called “The Palms,” as an example of the beautiful suburban homes in Sacramento’s so-called rural-urban fringe. Despite the promotional efforts, Orangevale remained a small, semirural community with a population well under 2,000 until it exploded during the boom years following World War II.

Orangevale, though its name suggests otherwise, produced all types of fruits. Several local histories show that Orangevale emerged as the center of Tokay grape production, a distinction it held until the development of Lodi’s vineyards in the first decade of the twentieth century. Boosters did not limit their praise of the area’s soil to its citrus-producing ability, but also named just about every type of fruit or nut. Almonds, apricots, berries, figs, melons, peaches, pears, pecans, plums, prunes, and walnuts all grew in Orangevale. Still, orange cultivation in the early years expanded significantly.

The OVCC organized in 1887 to rival Southern California’s booming citrus industry. Although farmers planted many types of deciduous fruit trees during the 1880s and 1890s, hopes of competing with Southern California as the citrus center of the world inspired many valley farmers along the eastern foothills to plant oranges. According to Sacramento historian Joseph A. McGowan, farmers planted more than 250,000 orange trees and 50,000 lemon trees north of Sacramento between 1888 and 1891. Orangevale itself shipped twenty carloads of oranges and 200 carloads of deciduous fruits in 1899. Orangevale had 500 acres of oranges planted by 1894 and helped Sacramento County put forth the best display of budded oranges at the California State MidWinter Fair. Orange acreage blossomed to 2,000 by 1915 and reached its peak by 1925. By the late 1920s, however, the community’s orange production dropped, mainly because
consumers preferred orange juice to whole oranges and because a national law affected the sale of oranges not yet considered ripe. Farmers were further devastated when, in the winter of 1932, a cruel frost swept the Sacramento Valley and killed most crops — the “Big Freeze.” This effectively ended Orangevale’s period of agricultural productivity, although a few enduring growers, such as Tom Tomich just off the corner of Greenback Lane, continue tilling the soil in Orangevale today.

The early farming boom in Orangevale had a lasting affect, namely the development of community and social services.\(^76\) Owing to the growth of community services, transportation, and infrastructure, Orangevale survived the lean Depression years between the Big Freeze of 1932 and World War II. Despite nature’s blow, Orangevale’s population exploded in the 1950s and 1960s, thanks to the rise of military bases, a shopping mall, and a nearby defense corporation that offered steady employment. The construction and widening of bridges on Sunrise Boulevard and Hazel Avenue, the development of highways such as Interstate 80, and improvements to Orangevale’s “main street,” Greenback Lane, helped sustain growth as well.

To be sure, while Sacramento’s dreams of suburbanization did not produce a sizeable population in Orangevale at the turn of the twentieth century, they did create the necessary infrastructure that enabled Orangevale to become a bedroom community of Sacramento during the population

boom that followed World War II. Indeed, the population increased 725% during the 1950s, from an estimated 1,600 in 1950 to 11,600 in 1960.

The promotion of Fair Oaks as a colonial farmer’s paradise began much like Orangevale. For all practical purposes, the Fair Oaks colony first began on August 29, 1873 when the real estate firm of Cox and Clarke acquired the large tract of land that became Fair Oaks for $20,500 and began to parcel land out for further purchase. Subsequently, General Charles H. Howard, who publicly spoke of his concern that American farmers might “revert to the European peasant type,” and James W. Wilson, of the Howard & Wilson Publishing


78. Buckley and Taylor, *Abstract of Title to the San Juan Grant*, 44.
Company of Chicago, secured rights to sell land in the tract in 1895. The publishing company contracted with Cox and Clarke to market the land although it does not appear that they received title to the land. The Howard & Wilson Company had the land surveyed and mapped and began to promote Fair Oaks.

Howard & Wilson advertised Fair Oaks as an innovative and growing agricultural colony and promised electricity and the construction of a bridge, suburban railway, and water system “for the homeseekers favor.” “It is a section,” the Chicago publishers wrote, “of sunny skies, sun-kissed fruit and pretty flowers, where bountiful nature has strewed her gifts with lavish hands.” They also highlighted the successes of the neighboring colony of Orangevale and their own previously established colonies in Southern California, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Florida.

Howard & Wilson featured Fair Oaks in their quarterly, Farm, Field and Fireside, as a place with no frosts, perpetually blooming flowers, temperatures rarely above 90 degrees or


80. Buckley and Taylor, Abstract of Title to the San Juan Grant, Sacramento County Planning Department, The Fair Oaks Community Plan, 2; and Howard & Wilson, The Heart of California, 37-38.


below 30 degrees, and a morally upright anti-saloon clause. About 300 settlers resided in Fair Oaks by 1897 and bought land in five, ten, and twenty-acre tracts at an average of $30 per acre — $10 of which went to a fund for the building of a railway. By 1898, however, in the midst of a national depression that had actually began several years before in 1893, few came to Fair Oaks or Orangevale and investment began to diminish. Howard & Wilson withdrew from the colony and took with them unfulfilled promises of a bridge, water system, and railroad service from Sacramento.83

Because of the failure of the Howard & Wilson Company in Fair Oaks, and the dissolution of the OVCC, V. S. McClatchy formed the Fair Oaks Development Company (FODC) in 1900 to both keep the budding citrus colony from failure and to protect his investments in Orangevale and generate profits from the sale of land. With the sale of most of the tract land in Orangevale, the OVCC had dissolved in 1896 after the sale of Fair Oaks’ tracts went to Howard & Wilson and because of Howard & Wilson’s promise to supply a bridge, railway, and water system to the area. With the withdrawal of the Howard & Wilson Company, however, came the need to develop a new group for promoting Fair Oaks and overseeing the construction of a bridge and other services.

McClatchy’s concern for the need to protect his own investment and that of his fellow Orangevale investors had been growing since at least 1899, just a year before formation of the FODC. McClatchy had explicitly become frustrated with the delay of fruit shipments out of Orangevale. For example, in several letters to his groundskeeper in Orangevale, F. E. Linnell,

McClatchy urged for no delays in the deployment of fruit from Orangevale. “We [Hall and McClatchy] also desire to impress upon you our wish that shipments be hurried forward as much as possible, not stopping for any reason so long as there is fruit to be shipped.”84 On one occasion, McClatchy expressed concern over the delay of about 1,000 boxes of oranges, what he called “sufficiently colored for shipment,” not shipping out in a timely manner. “Please understand that it is our [Hall and McClatchy’s] wish that everything be pushed; so far as concerns the crop which is owned by or under the direction of the [OVCC’s former proprietors] committee in any way, it is to be shipped at once.” McClatchy, though, offered the defense that timely shipment benefited the entire Orangevale community. “Permit me to say also that the more Orangevale is built up the more work there will be for those who are there.” He continued: “I say this in the interest of all parties [Orangevale citizens, fruit growers, and investors]. I have no present selfish motive in the matter since I have not offered my own tract for sale.”85

In winter 1900, McClatchy assembled information concerning the shipment of fruit out of Orangevale to various markets as he developed plans to form the FODC. In letters to Linnell and Hall, as well as six identical letters to various Sacramento businessmen, McClatchy inquired if they knew how much fruit from Orangevale they had shipped to aid in his attempts to develop a railroad project to create a line from Fair Oaks to Sacramento.86 At the same time, McClatchy


attempted to foster a relationship with local merchants in hopes that a railway from Fair Oaks to Sacramento could advance such business — he even sent some fifty to seventy-five boxes of navel oranges for sale to Wood, Curtis, & Company, a local grocer. McClatchy and other landowners in Orangevale then sent a letter authored by Hall to other principal owners concerning “the matter of bids for the disposal of the Orangevale orange crop.” Hall announced, “The best interests of the growers, both now and in the future, would be conserved by sending the fruit for sale to Messrs. Sgobel & Day, of New York, whose reputation for ability and integrity is at least equal to that of my firm in the fruit business.” McClatchy, as well as Hall, had clearly grown concerned about his Orangevale investment. With Howard & Wilson now gone from Fair Oaks, McClatchy took the initiative in developing Orangevale’s neighbor. Such an undertaking not only represented a good real estate venture, but also a means to securing vital infrastructure and services in Fair Oaks that would benefit Orangevale as well, particularly concerning fruit deployments, such as a bridge over the American River and rail service direct to Sacramento.

McClatchy drafted a contract for the FODC to acquire the rights to sell the Fair Oaks lands owned by Cox and Clarke in the same month he sent out letters inquiring about the shipment of fruit from Orangevale (April 1900). McClatchy outlined the terms for how the


promotional company would acquire the rights to sell the land, how it would be sold, how the profits would both be split between the parties and also go to paying for land improvements, and the conditions required on behalf of FODC to fulfill the terms of the contract successfully. The construction of a railroad line and a water system that would benefit potential residents emerged as the primary conditions marked out for the FODC.90 McClatchy devised a scheme for which he and his partners in the FODC — McClatchy, L. T. Hatfield, Charles A. Dickinson, Stephen E. Kieffer, and Walter Raymond — bought the rights, for one dollar, to have the “exclusive option to purchase the real property” in Fair Oaks for a period of five years at $30.00 per acre.” McClatchy also secured for the suburban promotional company the rights to control water, the parceling of lots into at least five acres each, “except in town sites, which may be of any quantity,” a right of way to the lands, including “a sufficient right of way for a railroad.”91 Like Ontario’s promoters, Sacramento’s promoters were keen and perceptive businessmen, experts in the law, and talented boosters as they created organizations and companies that mirrored the cutting edge business practices of the day as they strove to maximize profits while limiting their liability.

With an agreement in place between Cox and Clarke and the FODC, the group officially incorporated on September 8, 1900 and set out to promote its investment under the influence of its trustees. Once again, McClatchy and Hatfield joined an effort to benefit from the promotion or development of Fair Oaks. Joining treasurer McClatchy and secretary Hatfield were the

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Reverend Charles A. Dickinson, Stephen E. Kieffer, and Walter Raymond. Dickinson, a preacher from Massachusetts, served as president of the company as well as its front man. He provided the company with a sense of moral authority and wholesomeness. Kieffer, an engineer for the city of Sacramento and a Fair Oaks resident, served as the company’s engineer and manager. He likely provided the company, as well as Fair Oaks proper, a sense of modern technology and science. Walter Raymond served as the vice-president and brought, once again, an outside influence with much needed capital and resources. He co-founded the successful Boston advertising agency of Raymond & Whitcomb in 1879 and ran a prestigious hotel in Pasadena. Thus, while serving as president of Raymond & Whitcomb in 1900, he brought along his advertising expertise and resources to promote Fair Oaks more effectively. He also provided the FODC a sense of entrepreneurialism.

McClatchy immediately set out to draft a promotional booklet for Fair Oaks, which not only helped the promoters’ plans come to fruition, but also helped convince the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce to finance the construction of a bridge at Fair Oaks. The FODC’s

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92. SCRC, Articles of Incorporation of the Fair Oaks Development Company, case file no. 828, California State Archives, Sacramento, California; Fair Oaks Development Company, Fair Oaks, 40. Please note: Adam Andrew, a Sutter Club President, originally signed as a charter member for the FODC on the Articles of Incorporation. Likewise, Walter Raymond is absent from mention on the Articles of Incorporation. Nonetheless, when the promotional pamphlet for Fair Oaks came out in November 1900, only two months after the formation of the company, Andrew is absent as a member and Raymond is present. Likewise, when McClatchy discusses the company in his letter books, he mentions Raymond, not Andrew.

93. Perhaps by mere coincidence, the reverend hailed from Brookline, MA, one of Olmsted and Vaux’s model suburbs. In other words, Dickinson had personally experienced life in a suburb that was touted as the perfect mix of city and country.

94. Fair Oaks Development Company, Fair Oaks, 40; Sacramento City and County Directory, 1901, 304.


booklet — *Fair Oaks, Sacramento, County: In the Heart of the Fruit-growing Section of California* — promoted Fair Oaks as an Edenic paradise and a growing Sacramento suburb. It provided promotion for the entire Sacramento region that pleased the Chamber. The booklet opened:

This modest booklet, then, shall open for you the gate to the Promised Land. It shall tell you how you may become possessed of the home so attractive in your dreams, but far more charming in the reality. For the home it offers you, under the cloudless skies of Fair Oaks, the suburban residence district of Sacramento, in the heart of California, while sheltered by magnificent oaks and looking, as far as the eye can reach, over picturesque swells of orchards of orange, olive, and all kinds of deciduous fruits, and vineyards of Flame Tokay, yet offers all the conveniences of a developed and settled community, in fine residences, water piped under pressure to the door, educational facilities, postal delivery, suburban communication with a large city, etc.97

The FODC, much like Howard & Wilson, rigorously pitched Fair Oaks as an innovative agricultural colony. The company highlighted the fruit market and claimed that the Sacramento region shipped “seven-eights of all the Californian deciduous fruits seen in Eastern markets.” They proclaimed: “Fair Oaks is also in the early fruit belt, much smaller in exact, which grows and ships fruit earlier than all other sections of California.” Land in the “Promised Land” also came cheap for those of “moderate means” and easily rose in value. Furthermore, the booster tract claimed “Sacramento City is a great jobbing centre, supplying the northern portion of the State and Nevada with goods of all descriptions,” and, in a likely appeal to women, who could certainly influence migration decisions, the department stores were “equal to anything in San Francisco.”98


To provide further “proof” of the FODC’s “good faith” and reliability they invited, on the part of the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, a searching investigation into its plans, methods, and responsibility, “because of the injury to Sacramento’s standing that mismanagement of such an enterprise would entail.” The Chamber, in a letter dated October 29, 1900, stated that the FODC had, on five points (land quality, integrity of the title, water rights, integrity of directors and managers, and plans for further development), “good” and “perfect” standing. Concerning the integrity of the directors and managers of the FODC, the Chamber stated, “The Directors and active managers of the company are men of excellent standing, of responsibility, and of well-known executive ability, and are well calculated to inspire confidence in the enterprise.”99 To be sure, the Chamber confirmed that the directors of the FODC were comparable to Weinstock’s men of “thrift, fidelity, industry, brains and conscience.”100

Despite the promotional and developmental efforts of the FODC, the business venture still failed and the booster organization eventually folded. McClatchy cited several reasons for the failure: they did not possess enough capital; they did not have many purchasers; the Southern Pacific Railroad delayed in building a road; and, most importantly, they failed to finalize a water supply deal.101 Without such a deal, the FODC could not fulfill its contract with Cox and Clarke because they were unable to secure a water system, which the deal required them to do.102 The deal between Cox and Clarke and the FODC also depended on the booster organization selling


1,000 acres within the first year and securing the building of a main water pipe within two years. Although the FODC dissolved, they were still, nonetheless, successful in bringing about the construction of a bridge and railway to Fair Oaks that not only serviced the local community in Fair Oaks, but also provided for improved transportation of fruit for landowners, investors, and farmers in Orangevale and the further development of both agriburbs. The freeze of 1932, however, altered the course of both communities’ history. Again, the freeze hit during the depths of the Great Depression and effectively wiped out Fair Oaks and the other surrounding areas as a major producer of fruit in California. Fair Oaks, however, continued to grow, but did not experience a so-called boom until after the Second World War.

The rise of the defense company Aerojet General as a major employer influenced the growth rate of Fair Oaks from 1955 to 1965. In 1957, for example, Sacramento County Planning Department shows that Fair Oaks had over 750 families with one or more members employed by Aerojet — second only to the Arden-Arcade area. The growth rate slowed noticeably but growth did continue because of the increased access to Sacramento by Highway 50 and the construction of the Hazel and Sunrise bridges on the American River. This allowed residents of Fair Oaks to find greater employment in the connecting area and for Sacramentans to relocate to Fair Oaks more easily. Fair Oaks transformed into a bedroom community of greater Sacramento.

**How to Package an Agriburb: Orangevale and Fair Oaks as Rural Suburbs**

The packaging of Orangevale and Fair Oaks as agriburbs took place within a broader metropolitan context, not to mention broader California state promotion. Sacramento’s promoters represented individual place entrepreneurs linked to an expansive growth coalition and publicity campaign concerning the entire Sacramento region. Orangevale and Fair Oaks

served two purposes. First, they were speculative real estate ventures designed to reap profits from the direct sale of land. Second, they were image builders for an entire aspiring metropolis whereby Sacramento’s promoters packaged them as examples of Sacramento’s agricultural superiority, particularly concerning horticulture and citriculture, agrarian security and virtue, and ample supply of suburban homes and middle-class families. A larger conglomerate of Sacramento’s promoters hoped to profit from the trickle-down economics fueled by new investors and migrants into Orangevale and Fair Oaks specifically, as well as new investors and migrants to the greater Sacramento region because of the wider publicity campaign.

The packaging of Orangevale and Fair Oaks as agriburbs also took place within a broader metropolitan context because of the economic motives and Progressive sensibilities of the individual place entrepreneurs. Most histories of Orangevale and Fair Oaks, in fact, mirror the historical account given by one local historian. In his “History of Fair Oaks,” local historian Steve Abbott surmised: “Fair Oaks, California had its beginnings, as did many California towns, as a speculative promotion whose eastern promoters had one thing in mind: profit.” Although the identification of the profit motive is correct, scarce attention goes to the Progressive disposition and lifetime activities of the Orangevale and Fair Oaks place entrepreneurs themselves. Indeed, Abbott focused on Howard & Wilson. Abbott’s focus, to be sure, is problematic in two ways. First, he rehashes an older argument concerning the West as advanced by such prominent historians as Bernard De Voto and Norman A. Graebner. Fair Oaks’ genesis, as the argument goes, resembled the beginnings of many other so-called settlements or boomtowns in the “Old West.” Fair Oaks and other western settlements were nothing more than

mere “colonies” under the control of Eastern influences. The problem here, despite the involvement of the Chicago publishing firm of Howard & Wilson, is that Fair Oaks’ development depended more upon the activities and influences of local promoters. Likewise, as historian Patricia Nelson Limerick has pointed out, the “oppressed colony” narrative of many western areas represented more of a cry for attention. It mirrors an invented “legacy of conquest” more than an Eastern dominance analogous to Great Britain’s imperialist policies on the eve of the American Revolution. Even with Howard & Wilson, who were far from the equivalent of King George III and George Grenville, Fair Oaks’ success depended upon the wider promotion of greater Sacramento and such neighboring communities as Orangevale. The Sacramento Valley, certainly not the domain of eastern promoters and financiers, grew thanks to a consortium of local Sacramento place entrepreneurs. Second, whether the focus is on “eastern promoters” like Howard & Wilson or a local Sacramento growth machine, economic motives become indistinguishable from any other purpose, particularly any humanitarian motive. Again, while not removing the centrality of the profit motive from these boosters’ activities, understanding the development and promotion of Orangevale and Fair Oaks within a broader metropolitan context complicates the simple profit motive narrative.

Sacramento’s promoters, such as Cox and Weinstock, expressed a seemingly genuine concern with the plight of farmers that mirrored national narratives as espoused by farmers and Progressives. The creation of agriburbs, then, based in horticulture, or what historian David


Vaught called the “horticultural ideal,” mirrored an attempt to assuage the concerns over the problems faced by farmers and small farming endeavors.\textsuperscript{107} Moreover, localized promoters imagined Sacramento as a modern agricultural empire that possessed the urban amenities, transportation networks, and commercial fortitude to sustain a matrix of modernized small-farm communities on the outer edges of a metropolitan “Greater Sacramento.” This perspective is precisely what the promoters had in mind in 1901 when they proclaimed:

This means that Sacramento, which has had no accessible show place, will be able to take Eastern excursionists direct to the orange groves, showing them by the way the rich hoplands, orchards, and vineyards of the American River district. . . . It means that the American River district for sixteen miles out of Sacramento City will gradually be utilized for suburban homes, and that the mechanic, for the price of a street car fare, can reach any point along the river within eight or ten miles of the city, and can buy, for less than the cost of a city lot, an acre or two of ground and have his kitchen garden, and orchard, and his cow.\textsuperscript{108}

Although the creative imagining and advertising of Orangevale, Fair Oaks, and even Sacramento itself as an agricultural wonderland does cast the role of the promoters as boosters seeking profits, they cannot be separated from their lifetime of activities and community accomplishments. In others words, it seems plausible that Sacramento’s promoters had no problem — found more-or-less no contradiction — in their marriage of boosterism for profit and progressive reform agendas. They sought to clean up the city, create idyllic communities for farmers and businessmen alike, and transform greater Sacramento — even California, the nation, and the world — into a more rational, orderly, and functional social order devoted to the greater democratization and attainment of equality for most Americans, except, of course, as McClatchy most venomously represented, the non-white.

\textsuperscript{107} See, Vaught, \textit{Cultivating California}, 2

\textsuperscript{108} “A Suburban Railroad to Fair Oaks,” \textit{Sacramento Bee}, March 1, 1901, 4.
The packaging of Orangevale and Fair Oaks as agriburbs also took place within a national context because the promoters utilized the lure and appeal of the rural and suburban ideals so popularized by the suburban imagineers beginning in the 1830s. Suburbia represented the perfect marriage of city and country, home and family, rural democracy and urban amenities. The agriburb went a step further to exploit the “natural advantages” of California. As place-centered resource capitalists, Sacramento’s promoters seized upon a model of suburban community that included agriculture in an area well publicized for “horticultural developments.” The appropriation of the suburban and rural ideals, the employment of the images and language of suburbia, reflected both a practical business understanding, and, perhaps given the Progressive disposition of such promoters as Weinstock, an earnest agrarian-like desire to create an ideal farming community designed to aid the farmer, his family, and his livelihood. As with Ontario, comparing Orangevale and Fair Oaks to the key defining features of a suburb — low residential density, promotion centered on home, family, nature, and urban amenities — reveals how, exactly, the Sacramento promoters, as sophisticated and perceptive businessmen, advertised and designed rural suburbs.

Concerning low residential density, population numbers in Orangevale and Fair Oaks at the turn of the twentieth century remained low. Fair Oaks, in fact, had only approximately 300 residents by 1897. Orangevale and Fair Oaks, listed together under the Mississippi Township by the U.S. Census that included Citrus Heights recorded 630 residents in 1900, 1,225 in 1910, 1,651 in 1920, and remained well under 10,000 until the 1960s, all within an area of more than 9,000 acres.109

The lack of distinction between town and country, between Fair Oaks and Orangevale and Sacramento, is important for two reasons. First, as mentioned before, it has led to historians and other researchers failing to recognize agriburban communities such as Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks as rural suburban types at the turn of the twentieth century. This is particularly so because a common misconception of suburbs is that they resulted from a process of development spreading directly out of an urban core. Orangevale and Fair Oaks, then, like Ontario and other suburbs highlighted by scholars such as Richard Harris, Richard Walker, and Robert Lewis, challenge and, ultimately, explode such conceptions of suburbs and their contiguous location vis-à-vis central cities. Second, Orangevale and Fair Oaks’ noncontiguous location was an important aspect to the appeal of the agriburban model of suburbanization. Fair Oaks and Orangevale needed to connect to Sacramento City but remain separated by a rural physical landscape. That is what gave the communities their appeal. Their non-contiguous location represented a middle landscape that appealed to the agrarian ideal of rustic simplicity and healthy living in a rapidly modernizing and industrial society. Orangevale and Fair Oaks retained a level of urban amenities usually only found in long-settled communities, such as churches, good roads, schools, and social clubs. In addition, Orangevale and Fair Oaks appealed to the success

110. For a more detailed discussion on theories of suburbanization as a process of decanting the core, see Walker and Lewis, “Beyond the Crabgrass Frontier,” 3-5; and Lewis, Manufacturing Suburbs.

111. Harris and Lewis, “The Geography of North American Cities and Suburbs,” 263; Harris and Lewis, “Constructing a Fault(y) Zone,” 622-639; Lewis, Manufacturing Suburbs; and Walker and Lewis, “Beyond the Crabgrass Frontier,” 3-5. Even earlier suburban historians Binford and Jackson acknowledged the existence of noncontiguous suburbs (Binford, The First Suburbs, 18-44; and Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 101).

112. See Vance, “California and the Search for the Ideal.” See also, Allmendinger, Ruffin; Archer, “Country and City”; Boorstin, The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson; Chaplin, An Anxious Revolt; Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness,” 46-47; Danbom, Born in the Country, 65-69; Danhof, Change in Agriculture; Fishman, Bourgeois Utopias, 53-54, 127; Garcia, A World of Its Own, 17-22; Hurt, American Agriculture, 72-77; Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 57; Marsh, Suburban Lives, xiii, 5; Marx, The Machine in the Garden; McClelland, Sowing Modernity; Palen, The Suburbs, 70, 93-94; Peterson, The Jefferson Image; Smith, Virgin Land; Warner, Streetcar Suburbs, 11-12, 14, 45, and 90; and Williams, The Country and the City.
of horticulture in the state following the citrus boom in Southern California a decade earlier.\footnote{113} An article that appeared in the May 31, 1900 issue of the \textit{Union} captured the appeal and spirit of horticulture typical of the period:

Mr. Taliaferro, who owns only an acre of land, has some of the novelties [the many different types of fruit that can grow in Fair Oaks], and is realizing large sales and good prices. Mr. Taliaferro is an expert gardener, and from his one acre, he has sold, for the first month, over $100 worth of fruit.\footnote{114}

In contrast to the appeal of the rural ideal and the representation of Orangevale and Fair Oaks as middle landscapes, they remained relatively close in proximity to Sacramento, approximately twenty miles away. The developers promoted the construction of bridges, roads, and railways that connected those living in Orangevale and Fair Oaks to the “jobbing centre” of Sacramento.\footnote{115} A May 8, 1888 article about Orangevale in the \textit{Union} highlights the importance of this infrastructure to agriburban communities: “If the Townsite is attractive, hardly less so is Orangevale Avenue, as the approach to this model colony is called, which skirts the banks of the American River as far as the Lincoln cut, and is romantic enough for anything. It is a well-graded road, with the picturesqueness of an avenue or park-walk. In its construction it has been found necessary to erect no less than three bridges, which are open to traffic already.”\footnote{116} Orangevale and Fair Oaks thus became the outer poles of Sacramento City and could facilitate the suburbanization of the areas that lay between. In November 1900, the FODC produced their

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brash booster booklet, *Fair Oaks, Sacramento County*. The FODC promoted Fair Oaks as a rural paradise on the one hand and as a suburb close to the city of Sacramento on the other:

Sacramento City is a great jobbing centre, supplying the northern portion of the State and Nevada with goods of all descriptions. It has four large department stores equal to anything in San Francisco, and shopping can be done there as economically and as satisfactorily as in the larger city. The schools of Sacramento, including the Crocker Art School, afford all their advantages to the residents of Fair Oaks.117

Another statement about a railway connecting Fair Oaks to Sacramento perhaps best reflects the promoters’ rural suburban dreams. Under a title heading, “Suburban Railroad,” the FODC promoted Fair Oaks as a rural suburb that included the promise of agricultural productivity and profit:

Railroad communication will be made between Fair Oaks and Sacramento City. The railroad, while intended mainly for quick suburban passenger traffic, will be also so built as to permit of the loading at the orchards of the regulation fruit cars, so that they can be drawn direct to Sacramento, and there attached to the eastbound fruit trains without the loss of time or the expense incurred in double handling.118

Homeownership undeniably emerged as one of the major draws in attracting migrants to Orangevale, Fair Oaks, and the Sacramento region in general as both sites were essential and frequent features in the general publicity campaign involving Sacramento as a whole. The advertising of homeownership reflects the intention of the promoters to characterize Orangevale and Fair Oaks as suburban types because it most categorically fits the suburban ideal. According to the *Bee’s* 1894 publication, *Sacramento County and its Resources*, the “primary object” of the OVCC’s efforts “was to prepare the way and provide homes for the better class of colonists, who were invited to build their homes among our people, and thereby add to the material prosperity of the locality.” The idea of property ownership and building one’s own house appeared


repeatedly as a selling point throughout the Orangevale and Fair Oaks booster literature.

Frequently referring to houses in the language and terms popularized by suburban architects and designers, such as “cottage homes,” “country homes,” “happy homes,” and “self-supporting small homes,” Sacramento’s promoters extended the imagery of successful property ownership to home building. Concerning Orangevale, the Bee stated, “Everything in and around the colony has this end view: the upbuilding and the prosperity of the small homes.”119 This same view was also expressed in another promotional effort about Orangevale as the promoters declared, “Every large American city has a suburb — a place for country homes. . . . We must have a place for country homes [in the Sacramento area], and no more beautiful spot can be found than in Orangevale.”120 The FODC also boasted of homeownership opportunities in the newly established suburban community. On the opening page of the company’s booster publication in 1900, a “modest booklet,” they announced that it “shall tell you how you may become possessed of the home so attractive in your dreams, but far more charming in the reality.”121 They continued by further describing the rural suburban dream of Fair Oaks:

For the home it offers you, under the cloudless skies of Fair Oaks, the suburban residence district of Sacramento, in the heart of California, while sheltered by magnificent oaks and looking, as far as the eye can reach, over picturesque swells of orchards of orange, olive, and all kinds of deciduous fruits, and vineyards of Flame Tokay, yet offers all the conveniences of a developed and settled community, in fine residences, water piped under pressure to the door, educational facilities, postal delivery, suburban communication with a large city, etc. It shall tell you how money put into such a home may yet be made to pay as a business investment, and in a few years maintain the wife and babies as well.122


120. Sacramento Valley Sunbeam.


Homeownership in Orangevale and Fair Oaks as a selling point joined with the benefits of these sites as actual places. Sacramento’s promoters packaged homeownership in relation to the place of Orangevale and Fair Oaks while they advertised and developed amenities and infrastructure that enhanced the quality of these places in comparison to other places such as Southern California. The promoters incessantly highlighted the power of place, its rurality and agricultural prowess, “in terms of horticulture,” they said. They painted a picture of small home cottages and self-supporting farms dotting an aesthetically pleasing bucolic landscape that included a soil perfect for farming and playing and an environment atop the soil perfect for sustaining such farming and play. They promoted Orangevale and Fair Oaks as the manifestation and fulfillment of a geography of the ideal. The natural environment of these agriburbs allowed for the superior growing of almost any type of produce one could imagine, especially almonds, grapes, and oranges. More importantly, these so-called fruits of natural advantage were not only superior in their quality and a commercial advantage for a farmer producing for market, but they also came to maturity quicker than in Southern California, yet another type of advantage for the commercial well-being of a farmer. In an article describing an excursion in the summer of 1890, the *Union* extolled Orangevale’s fertile soil. “All the gentlemen in the party versed in horticulture declared that they had never seen more rapid and healthier growth than the majority of trees and all the vines in the colony tracts shown, though none of them have been in the ground three years, and many but one year.” They added, “... no Southern California colony of equal age ever made so good a showing.” 123 In the 1900 publication of *Fair Oaks*, the promoters also praised superior climate, topography, and soil. They contended that Fair Oaks had just as good a climate, if not superior to, Southern California

and Italy. They added that no “unpleasant extremes of heat and cold” threatened either crop or comfort. Purity of air, healthy rainfall, and nearby rivers and ground water also allowed for the success of farming with or without irrigation.124

“You are interested in California, of course. Who is not?” asked the promoters in the *Fair Oaks* booster booklet. They continued: “You have probably entertained the wish, if not actually the hope, of some day acquiring in that land of sunshine and flowers, far from snow, blizzard, and sunstroke, a home.” In Fair Oaks, the promoters promised that one could live “in God’s own country” and have “a charming home made there for the wife and babies.”125 Orangevale and Fair Oaks’ charm were not only their site for a home among orchards and vineyards atop the best soil, but also for being a natural environment that Emerson, Jefferson, and Thoreau would have envied as these agriburban communities represented an escape from all the so-called maladies spread by increased industrialization and urbanization. Orangevale and Fair Oaks, along the American River, had a “picturesque bluff” and their “thrift and comfort were apparent everywhere, and the scene was one well calculated to enlist the admiration of everyone capable of enjoying the beauties of nature.”126 In fact, said the promoters, “No part of California exceeds these localities in picturesqueness of scenery and fertility of soil. They possess every attraction for those who prefer country to city life, and already have many of the solid advantages so generally desired.”127 Indeed, “its healthful climate,” said the promoters in 1900, “made it possible now for Fair Oaks to become the most prosperous spot in the whole


State of California.”128 “It was spring when we arrived in Fair Oaks,” recalled Robert Broadley on his family moving to Fair Oaks in 1897. “The wild flowers were in bloom, and I thought we had surely arrived in Paradise.”129 And surely it was paradise. Almonds, grapes, oranges, you name it, grew tall, often, and early. People supposedly lived longer than anywhere else as the promoters pointed out through a profile of Victorianno, a 136-year-old Native American from the region.130

Sacramento’s promoters described Orangevale and Fair Oaks with all the symbols of rurality without necessarily assigning them all the symbols of an isolated rural hinterland. Moreover, they infused Orangevale and Fair Oaks with all the symbols of urbanity without the city. Orangevale and Fair Oaks were the perfect mix of city and country so romanticized by the suburban imagineers. Rambles, parks on the beautiful bluffs overlooking the American River, and shade trees of eucalyptus and palm lined the communities’ streets and “picturesque” avenues. One could hunt quail and jack rabbit as easily as one could hitch a ride on the train and go shopping in the department stores that purportedly rivaled anything found in San Francisco, “and shopping can be done there as economically and as satisfactorily as in the larger city.”131 You could even visit the “Metropolitan Theater” via train to Sacramento to take in a show. Rambles and parks laid adjacent to towns with laid out plots, roads, including curvy roads like “Winding Way,” that had steel pipes pumping water underneath for the benefit of both irrigation and “family” and “domestic” purposes. “The force of the water,” reported the Union of

130. Howard & Wilson, The Heart of California, 7.
Orangevale in 1890, is “sufficient to throw an openbutt stream from a hydrant from six to ten feet perpendicularly into the air, and with an inch nozzle to reach the second-story of any building.” Among orchards and vineyards that provided the best opportunity for a farmer to profit handsomely, schools, churches, clubs, transportation routes, good roads, electricity, merchant stores, and a water system offered the “luxuries” and “conveniences” so extolled by Olmsted that made a rural existence not only tolerable, but superior to anything found in the heart of the American city. On top of that, according to the promoters, “These evidences of social life will rapidly multiply.” While Orangevale and Fair Oaks had good roads and avenues comparable to anything found in the city, theirs had shade trees and traversed across a beautiful countryside that likewise served to rejuvenate the soul in a rapidly industrializing society. “Along the pleasant avenues, sixty fee wide,” said the promoters concerning Orangevale in 1894, “were hedges of Monterey cypress, with here and there a dark-leaved eucalyptus, or a bright-green fan palm extending its broad hands over the soil as though in the act of blessing it.” While Orangevale and Fair Oaks had parks in which to take in all Mother Nature had to offer, they had a town center with dry goods stores, a post office, hotel, banks, and a railroad depot, complete with connecting bridges, that could whisk them away at a minute’s notice with

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135. McClatchy & Company, *Sacramento County and its Resources*, 60, 63 (see also 62).
“no trouble reaching the city at about any hour of the day.” While Orangevale and Fair Oaks had the best class of people, a class of entrepreneurs comparable to the supposed best of the city, their residents would not succumb to the evils of the bottle as both enforced temperance. Residents could go to church, join the Woman’s Club, learn in school, but they could never go to the saloon or barroom and they would never have to fear the crime and vice plaguing American cities.

Class status and aspirations provided the final enticement for drawing migration to Orangevale and Fair Oaks, which accompanied homeownership and the rural and urban ideals. While much of the work force in Orangevale and Fair Oaks did consist of Asian Americans and other ethnoracial minorities (despite McClatchy), these agriburban communities remained predominantly white and middle-class. Yet, these white middle-class suburbanites were not simply commuters working in Sacramento City or elsewhere and sleeping at home. Orangevale and Fair Oaks, in other words, were not simply “bedroom” communities. While promoters undoubtedly designed Orangevale and Fair Oaks to appeal to a white middle class or those aspiring to be middle class, residents had to sustain their middle-class lifestyle by tilling the soil as “scientific farmers.”

The railroad, to be sure, facilitated Orangevale and Fair Oaks’s viability as agricultural wonderlands. Reminisces of old-time residents recorded by the local newspaper in the 1950s, the San Juan Record, mention some of the particulars of rail travel in the early history of Orangevale and Fair Oaks. On the one hand, these recollections reinforce the notion of the possibility for commuter travel. Emma E. Bramhall, for example, recalled: “When we first came here to Fair Oaks [in 1902] there was one train a day to Sacramento, which left early in the

morning and returned in the afternoon, leaving Sacramento at 3 o’clock.” She also noted, “There were two ways to drive into Sacramento” down the unpaved road of Folsom Boulevard or drive over the San Juan Grant itself before Fair Oaks Boulevard opened in 1918 and connected to J Street. Civil Engineer and prominent Fair Oaks resident Stephen E. Kieffer wrote in 1902 about the details and importance of the construction of a bridge over the American River at Fair Oaks that linked to a railway. He concluded, “At last Fair Oaks, with a magnificent bridge spanning the river and a convenient train service connecting with the capital city of the State, was leaving behind the “good old days” of the pioneering period and was beginning to look to the future as the great suburban district of the capital city — a place of fine homes.”

Despite the presence of the railroad for commuter travel, the railroad’s importance lay more in line with the service it provided farmers hoping to reach market and turn a profit, at least in the promotional literature. Agriculture in Orangevale and Fair Oaks were the means by which improved socioeconomic status was achieved, the way to ascend to modern middle classdom through agriculture. The railroad allowed farmers to ship more efficiently, cost effectively, and to all points and markets, reportedly, around the nation. Weinstock even worked to make sure they would get both a better deal once in market and better protection in route. So, while providing “communication” between “Fair Oaks and Sacramento City” for “quick suburban passenger traffic,” the railroad also permitted “the loading at the orchards of the regulation fruit cars, so that they can be drawn direct to Sacramento, and there attached to the eastbound fruit trains without the loss of time or the expense incurred in double handling.”


Sacramento’s promoters specifically targeted a middle-class audience, or those aspiring to be middle class, by publicizing an agricultural wonderland that encompassed horticulture, science, and technology. First, the price of land in Orangevale and Fair Oaks, while not dirt cheap, was advertised as low and, more importantly, as a solid “business investment” and, in the case of Fair Oaks, for $125 to $200 per acre for “acreage lots” of five to ten acres, or for “town lots” of one-half to one acre at as low as $250, “Fair Oaks offers the lowest high-grade lands in California.” In the case of Orangevale, the promoters stated: “Not the least important feature of the enterprise is that a person with only a few hundred dollars as a beginning can, by laying aside each month a small portion of his salary or earnings, soon become the owner of a tract in Orange Vale, and thereafter secure freedom from all other occupation, if desired, except the supervision of this property.” Second, the improvement of the land is what brought wealth by way of cultivating orange groves, almond trees, and lush grapes. “As an example of the fecundity of the soil of Orange Vale Colony,” said the promoters, “it may be stated that H. Carmichael sold his first crop of almonds on five acres from four-year-old tress for $625.”

To accomplish this, the promoters fervently advertised how much they invested in the community, providing for not only all of the valued social services necessary for a middle-class lifestyle, but also by providing easier and quicker access to market to provide the income necessary to maintain a middle-class lifestyle. They reportedly hired horticultural experts to oversee and offer sage advice. They convinced Sacramento County to pay for the construction of bridges and even managed to finagle the Southern Pacific Railroad Company to pay for the construction of a road. They built roads themselves too, and they sent sample fruits to various markets to supposedly


wet the appetite for, and enhance the reputation of, fruit grown in the “Heart of California.” In every respect, Orangevale and Fair Oaks were to be, in one historian’s phrase, “bourgeois utopias” of the middle class. The novelty of the Sacramento promoter’s scheme, of course, as it was in Ontario, Fresno, and other places described by other California historians as the “horticultural ideal,” was that suburban middle-class lifestyle was accomplished and maintained through agriculture, the Jeffersonian yeoman farmer tilling the soil and soul. This imagery, and actual development of such community types, is what prompted Charles Howard Shinn to write in 1891, “A California fruit-grower is in some respects akin to the middle class of suburban dwellers near Boston and New York, with this very important difference, that he actually and constantly makes his living from the soil he owns.”

The key to unlocking the harvest of a highly rewarding crop and thereby middle-class lifestyle required more than just an ability to use plow and hoe. It required “brains” and “intelligence” as much as, if not more than, brawn. Knowing when, where, and what to plant were essential as the promoters bombarded their booster literature with information on fruit types, picking and canning information, railroad services and their benefit, and the superiority of the soil and climate in the cultivation of award-winning citrus. Indeed, the mere fact that one showed the intellectual foresight and strength to even locate to Orangevale and Fair Oaks in the first place was a sign of their intelligence as it, according to the promoters, revealed a man, and sometimes woman, of business savvy and acumen. Through hard work a comfortable income and life awaited, to be sure, but hard work included, and depended upon, the application of the mind. Sacramento’s promoters therefore massaged the egos of an aspiring middle-class audience — or group of middle-class people anxious to retain, prove, or defend such status. By working

hard, the agriburbanites of Orangevale and Fair Oaks were producers, a producer class, and not a debtor class that the promoters said of most other farmers in the nation. “The man with modest means can, with brains and energy,” said the promoters in the 1900 *Fair Oaks* publication, “make and maintain at Fair Oaks an attractive home as readily as a millionaire.” By utilizing their intelligence by specializing in the growth of cash crops made possible and more profitable through advancements in horticulture and “scientific agriculture,” agriburbanites reflected the essence of a “most desirable class of residents.”

They were refined, cultured, and, more importantly, totally devoted to family, home, God, education, and democratic citizenship. They loved nature and the garden, but welcomed the machines that provided them with modern “luxuries” and “conveniences,” the very symbols and hallmarks of modernity and middle-class status. In fact, the promoters painted the influx of a “most desirable class of residents” as good for the entire region and justification for the use of County resources in the upbuilding and promotion of Orangevale and Fair Oaks. In other words, theirs was a metropolitan vision of growth good for everyone:

Sacramento is indeed favored by her surroundings, and cannot help but becoming a great center of business and population. It behooves her people of means to foster and encourage all such enterprises as that of the Orangevale Association, and similar ones now being carried out nearer to the city. Every dollar expended in developing enterprises of this character acts as a magnet in attracting hither home-seekers from the East and less-favored sections of the coast, and will in the near future through the increased business and wealth of this community.

**Forgetting Agriburbs**

Why do we fail to talk about California’s agricultural colonization as suburbanization or colonies as suburbs? Admittedly, the discussion is implicitly present in most works concerning

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California’s agricultural landscape at the turn of the twentieth century. So, in many ways, case studies about Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks have simply been a game of connecting the dots. Nevertheless, the lack of discussion concerning the suburban side of agricultural colonies is what reveals a little about the lasting influence of the imagery involving agriburbs. It reveals a particular consequence of the packaging of place as presented by the growth machines of Sacramento and Ontario — one that potentially goes beyond the basic focus on the growth machine outcome of increased taxes, overdevelopment and underdevelopment, and the legitimatization of routinized and organizational systems of greed. It actually reveals much about the power of historical narratives, historical consciousness, sense of place, both individual and community identity, and the nature of public memory in agriburban communities. In short, the suburban side of agricultural colonization has been glossed over and largely ignored precisely because the public memory works of agriburban areas divert attention away from the suburban elements and characteristics of these communities. That is, older histories and public memory works have legitimatized contemporaneous histories and public memory works and therefore further risk structuring future histories and public memory works in agriburban communities. Put differently, the growth machine members crafted an image of these communities whereby they utilized the cultural symbols and language of rural civility and urban sophistication that subsequent interpreters have been influenced by, legitimized, and further propagated to influence others. Ironically, comparable to how a review of the language employed by the growth machine promoters reveals their borrowing of suburban language to reveal further that they were suburbs, the histories and public memory works that divert attention away from the suburban side of agricultural colonization can show these areas were indeed representative of a suburban type.
CHAPTER FIVE
Public Memory and Historical Narrative: The Costs of Packaging Place in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks

The seemingly insignificant happenings in the starting of a new settlement were really of great importance to its growth and development. This is especially true for the Ontario Colony, for these events laid the foundations that have persisted to make it truly the Model Colony.

— Bernice Bedford Conley, 1982

Agriburbs as Narrated Places

The packaging of the agriburban places of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks served as an essential tool in the promoters’ real estate ventures. The commodification of these places infused them with, and was dependent upon, a set of images and narratives. This resulted in the development of material objects to support and reify such narratives and images such as good roads, bridges, Victorian houses, railroad depots, and other “urban amenities.” Commodification also resulted in enormous cultural costs in terms of identity, history, and memory. From the outset, the packaging of the agriburban places of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks evolved from the promoters’ desire to sell their land to garner huge profits. This included a trickle down economic fantasy, to be sure, not to mention aspirations for stimulating so-called socio-cultural benefits for everyone within a larger regional and metropolitan area. Production of agriburban places meant more than just the production of physical objects such as bridges, churches, and schoolhouses, but also the invention of “spatial imageries” that distinguished agriburban places, and the territory in which they lay, from other places to better package them for successful sale. The concept of fashioning and selling the image of cities and other places became an essential aspect of the new urban politics and marketing strategies in many post-industrial and post-

1. Conley, Dreamers and Dwellers, 22.
colonial cities and areas, what geographer David Harvey called the new “urban entrepreneurialism.” According to Harvey, “the active production of places with special qualities becomes an important stake in spatial competition between localities, regions, and nations.”

Packaging places and imbuing them with special qualities is not only a condition of the post-industrial and post-colonial world, but also a condition of real-estate capitalism that has existed since the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Some, in fact, contend that growth machines and the real estate speculation of “community builders” reflected a change within corporate capitalism itself. Capitalism moved away “from manufacturing and entered large real estate operations on a worldwide scale.” French sociologist Henri Lefebvre concluded: “The problematic of space, which subsumes the problems of the urban sphere, has displaced the problematic of industrialization” wherein the “space market” saved capitalism “from extinction” at the end of the nineteenth century. Promoters with an interest in agriburbs transformed place by constructing material objects and narrating a sense of place, attributing to them emotionally and symbolically charged signs and signifiers. This practice helped them to sell better their agriburbs and to promote better the metropolitan region. Agriburbs, as social spaces, represented both physical places and a state of mind. An agriburb, as historian Gyan Prakash explained of


5. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 89, 335.
the modern city, “is constituted by the interplay between spaces and its imaginations.” He continued: “The city is both the actual physical environment and the space we experience in novels, films, poetry, architectural design, political government, and ideology.”

The production of space, the development of actual physical places that one can visually experience, is a process of constructing a physical environment that includes buildings and infrastructure. The production of space, however, particularly when places are commodified, also includes images and narratives — works of the imagination that one can appreciate in the mind’s eye — and not just visual artifacts. Places involve an imaginary flow as much as they engage human and material flow. Places are cultural products shaped by real estate speculation, boosterism, manufacturing, commerce, and ideology. The promoters of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks narrated a sense of place whereby, in the process, they created, and relied upon, a “narrative place” or “a place for stories” to sell their agriburban communities and publicize their metropolitan landscapes better. These promoters relied greatly on suburban ideology, images, and narratives (which encompassed rural and urban images as well) to sell agriburban places that, in turn, required them to provide the material aspects of agriburban communities (which also encompassed the rural and urban ideals). This process led to a pattern in which narrative

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affected the material landscape that in turn influenced the narration of place that in turn affected the material landscape, and so on. The production of agriburban places deeply depended upon the construction and management of stories and images, particularly as they related to the rural, suburban, and urban ideals. Place making in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, therefore, included storytelling, or branding, as much as church, house, road, and school building. Narrative and physical place making relied upon and reified the other to spark sales and foster the Progressive reform agenda of the promoters.

The promoters’ use of literary text and culturally salient and emotionally charged symbols and signs has had long-term effects. According to Scottish philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, “Man is in his actions and practice, as well as his fictions, essentially a story telling animal.”8 Specifically, narration is a way to tell stories, to make sense of events and to connect them, regardless of relative truth, to which the writer Joan Didion concluded, “We tell ourselves stories in order to live.”9 As Didion and MacIntyre allude to, narrative is an instrument in which human beings represent settings, actors, and events of the past to make sense of them in the present. Moreover, several scholars have pointed out that narrative plays a central role in human consciousness, history, and memory, what cultural psychologist Jerome Bruner labeled “narrative cognition.”10 Bruner concluded that the “narrative mode for constructing reality” is


central to being human, or, as historian William Cronon said, “Narrative is a peculiarly human way of organizing reality.”

Narrative and stories greatly shape the way we think, speak, and behave. Several scholars have pointed out that narrative serves as a tool we employ to make sense of various phenomena within the particular cultural, historical, and institutional settings in which we live. As Jerome Bruner explains: “symbolic systems . . . [are] already in place, already ‘there,’ deeply entrenched in culture and language.” In this context, human beings, not to mention whole communities and societies, gather the narratives they use from a “stock of stories,” which is a part of a “cultural tool kit.” In the agriburban communities of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks the promoters were the original producers of narratives, or a “stock of stories,” that many residents and others drew from as they used their “cultural tool kit” to make sense of their lives and the places they lived. In short, sanctification of the narrative and stock of stories created by the promoters took place as a variety of historical narratives concerning agriburbs persistently repeated them.

Narrative and stories about the past are vital elements of “public memory.” According to historian John Bodnar and others such as Dolores Hayden and Martha Norkunas, public memory

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refers to a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand its past, present, and future.¹⁴ Public memory actually emerges from the intersection of “official” and “vernacular” narratives and other cultural expressions. Official refers to narratives of the past that are intentionally manufactured by governments, elites, and institutions to suit their goals and vernacular refers to “an array of specialized interests,” which are typically representative of minorities and tend to be more private than public. The public memory of agriburban areas resulted from circulated narrative stories, which helped to advance what Benedict Anderson labeled an “imagined community” or what Eric Hobsbawn labeled as “invented tradition.”¹⁵ In other words, besides the promulgation of specific narratives, the public memory associated with agriburbs serve as Durkheimian devices of social cohesion, as well an identity formation base.¹⁶

In “Analysis of Multiple Life History Narratives” ethnographer Mark R. Luborsky states that a “themal schemata” applied to several life histories of elderly people and “revealed the use

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¹⁵.  “Imagined communities” is a phrase reflecting a conception — and perception — of what the essential basis is for the creation and maintenance of groups — what centers solidarity and cohesion (see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* [New York: Verso, 1983]).  According to Eric Hobsbawn, “‘Invented tradition’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.”  See Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

¹⁶.  See Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893; repr., New York: Free Press, 1997), 73-130.  Vectors of memory as mechanical devices of social cohesion relate well with Michael Kammen’s assertion, made in *Mystic Chords of Memory*, that “societies in fact reconstruct their pasts rather than faithfully record them, and that they do so with the needs of contemporary culture clearly in mind – manipulating the past in order to mold the present” (Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* [New York: Knopf, 1991], 3).  The mold here is “solidarity through likeness” and likeness is found in a shared past.  The notion narratives about the past, i.e. vectors of memory, aid people in deriving their sense of identities is a main theme of Paul Connerton’s *How Societies Remember*: “The narrative of one’s life is part of an interconnecting set of narratives; it is imbedded in the stories in those groups from which individuals derive their identity” (Connerton, *How Societies Remember* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989], 21).
of key ordering concepts,” what he labels “cognitive templates.”

Essentially, Luborsky hopes to unearth the dominance of particulars in a narrative. He cites anthropologist Michael H. Agar, who first coined the phrase “themal analysis” in 1980 to refer to a “method and theory for the ‘analysis’ of themes in personal narratives.” In *Voices of Collective Remembering*, anthropologist James V. Wertsch, looking at textual narratives, discusses what he called the “schematic narrative template,” which he concluded represented “generalized functions that characterize a broad range of [specific] narratives” — underlying pattern, which people draw on and/or anticipate both reflexively and non-reflexively. According to James V. Wertsch, a “unitary voice” often dominates narratives. Along similar lines, historian Harold Marcuse discusses “recollective paradigms” in “Memories of World War II and the Holocaust” whereby “recollective,” or “recollect” or “recollection,” refers to “the social process of sharing information about the past among members of a collectivity.”

Marcuse, like Agar, Luborsky, and Wertsch, is interested in the appearance of common narrative themes throughout a wide variety of recollections. Marcuse further defines this approach as “reception history,” as “the history of the meanings that have been imputed to historical events. . . . [T]he different ways in which participants, observers, and historians and other retrospective interpreters have attempted


to make sense of events, both as they unfolded, and over time since then, to make those events meaningful for the present in which they lived and live.”

A reception history that utilizes a themal analysis of the many narratives concerning Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ past reveals a “dominant recollective paradigm.” Specifically, following on the heels of those in search of underlying paradigms, patterns, templates, and themes, dominant recollective paradigm refers here to the presence of common and dominant themes that are manifest within — and characteristic of — a large and wide variety of narratives that help shape and are shaped by public memory. Moreover, narratives, particularly concerning stories about the past, are not limited to texts. They include a variety of instruments, or “cultural texts,” what Henry Russo calls “vectors of memory.” Vectors of memory include television, radio, internet, newspapers, magazines, film, memoirs, novels, scholarly works, textbooks, classroom instruction, museums, laws, monuments, memorials, spectacles, and commemorations. In other words, the major themes that comprise a dominant recollective paradigm characterize the various vectors of memory concerning agriburbs like Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks.

The themes that characterize a dominant recollective paradigm were, again, originally produced by the promoters, who themselves drew upon a rich stock of stories and cultural signs

22. Marcuse, “Reception History: Definition and Quotations.”

23. As in hermeneutics, the concept of “cultural texts” entails extending “texts” beyond written documents to include any number of objects subject to interpretation, such as historic sites, museums, and commemorations. See Hobsbawm and Ranger, The Invention of Tradition; Norkunas, The Politics of Public Memory; Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering; as well as Linenthal and Englehardt, History Wars; and Steven Lubar and W. David Kingery, eds., History from Things: Essays on Material Culture (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993).

and symbols. The themes of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ dominant recollective paradigm, in fact, have become fixed and uniform, and so continuously highlighted, that they drown out most any other topics or themes that may be discernable within any specific vector of memory. Specifically, the dominate recollective paradigm characteristic of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ various vectors of memory – which helps to shape, if not reveal, their public memory — has contributed to the suburban side of their agricultural colonization going largely undetected precisely because the themes are, again, rigid and perpetually highlighted. So, while consulting the historical record may actually seem like one of the easiest ways to see if there is truly such a thing as an agriburb, the historical record seems to be the main culprit when one seeks to understand why the suburbanization of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks has yet to be adequately defined.

**The Dominant Recollective Paradigm**

A themal analysis of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ vectors of memory reveals a dominant recollective paradigm that has had three primary effects: (1) it diverts attention away from the suburban side of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ past; (2) it perpetuates four main themes that also reveal much about the socio-cultural environment of these communities throughout their history; and (3) it provides a device of social cohesion, political participation, and identity for a primarily white middle class in search of “community” (i.e., shapes public memory). Specifically, the dominant recollective paradigm is comprised of four major themes: (1) the agriburb site as *sui generis*; (2) the adoration of agriculture; (3) the agriburb site as innovative; and (4) the glorification of a “self-made man,” typically the founder or highly influential and successful businessman. Once more, these themes comprise a dominant recollective paradigm that is not only prevailing, but also one that diverts attention away from the suburban side of these agriburb areas’ origins because the themes are, for the most part, rigid
and perpetually highlighted. In other words, the major themes that comprise a dominant recollective paradigm act as vectors of misrepresentation regarding suburban history.25

**Theme 1: Sui Generis (Unique Unto Itself)**

The argument that most vectors of memory cast Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks as *sui generis* should come as no surprise. The notion a particular community maintains that it is unique unto itself is a common theme found throughout the United States and the world in general. Yet, the devil, as the saying goes, is in the details. Specifically, the ways in which the promoters and subsequent vectors of memory portray these communities as *sui generis* provides further illustrations for how a dominant recollective paradigm diverts attention away from their suburban heritage. The primary elements of the *sui generis* theme are not always exclusively so. Many of the elements for any of the themes within the dominant recollective paradigm can rightfully overlap and properly receive identification within another theme. For example, the promoters, as well as subsequent vectors of memory, tout electricity as what made Ontario both *sui generis* and innovative (the third theme noted above). Nonetheless, the context of how various authors represent electricity overwhelmingly portrays it as innovative. Likewise, citrus made Orangevale and Fair Oaks *sui generis* while also representing an adoration of agriculture. Nonetheless, the context of how various writers boast of citrus in Orangevale and Fair Oaks

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25. A themal analysis of several hundred distinct vectors of memory concerning Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks caused me to conclude that their vectors of memory and public memory divert attention away from their suburban roots. For clarification, I primarily — but not exclusively — focused on vectors of memory that discussed, in whatever capacity, these areas’ early foundational and developmental years (Ontario: 1882-87; Orangevale: 1887-96; Fair Oaks: 1895-1902). While these specific vectors of memory cover a wide range of years, particularly as more time passes, these years of focus are designed to correlate with the years in which these areas’ promoters planned, promoted, and developed the agriburb. Important themes, which comprise a dominant recollective paradigm, such as the adoration of agriculture, are rather salient and are certainly not limited just to the principal years of foundation and early development. A spotlight on such a period, however, is what accounts for the determination and characterization of a dominant recollective paradigm. For the precise sources that constitute the vectors of memory I analyzed see the bibliography. For Ontario, see “Ontario’s Collected Memory.” For Orangevale and Fair Oaks, see “Orangevale and Fair Oaks’ Collected Memory.”
depict it as what explicitly made these communities *sui generis*. Accordingly, the elements highlighted here received demarcation within a theme based on both my own interpretation (thus acknowledging my part in the meaning-making process) and a rudimentary calculated effort (an attempt to overcome my own biases). Consequently, for brevity, the ones occurring with the highest percentage receive attention.

**Ontario as Sui Generis**

The formation and promotion of Ontario as the “Model Colony” is by far the foremost element of the *sui generis* theme. The precise meaning of the “Model Colony” is largely implicit, frequently unarticulated, and without clear-cut definitions. Beginning with an 1883 publicity pamphlet, *Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County, California on the Southern Pacific Railroad*, the promoters stated, “The plan of the colony is of the most advanced and liberal kind.”

In other words, Ontario’s superior planning is what made it *sui generis*. The promoters went on to list irrigation, roadways, and a railway to underscore why the plan “is of the most advanced a liberal kind.” No direct statement, however, connects such amenities to “the most advanced” plan. In fact, the actual phrase “Model Colony” does not seem to have appeared in any promotional material aimed at a broader audience until *Los Angeles Times* editor and California booster Charles Fletcher Lummis published an article, “Ontario,” in his magazine *Land of Sunshine* in 1895. Still, the promoters did run an advertisement in *Harper’s Weekly* in


27. “Ontario,” *Land of Sunshine*, 250. The phrase “Model Colony,” coincides with the arrival of an Australian delegation, which came to Ontario to inspect the irrigation project set up by Chaffey and the landed boosters in 1885. J. L. Dow, an Australian journalist who accompanied the delegation, described Ontario as a model for what Australia could do in Victoria and South Australia in a May 2, 1885 edition of the Melbourne *Age* — the *Land of Sunshine* article appeared in October 1895. See Starr, *Material Dreams*, 17; and Tyrrell, *True Garden of the Gods*, 143.
May 1883, proclaiming “Ontario! The Model Settlement of Southern California.” The promoters published the same ad throughout 1883, beginning in August, in the Los Angeles Times. Several local Ontario historians, however, without the use of citations, indicate that the advertising of a “model” settlement or colony began immediately. Yet, regarding the first use of the term “Model Colony,” I found it to have first occurred in a local advertisement for the December 7, 1884 issue of the Los Angeles Times. Regardless, the phrase “Model Colony,” or even “Model,” whether regarding colony or settlement, did not make any precise connections to what made it “model,” rather implicitly suggesting that the climate and agriculture, among other things, made it so.

Emphasizing — implicitly or explicitly — specific features for what made Ontario a “model” colony or settlement, from those that revere agriculture to those that highlight distinct innovative institutions or infrastructure, is characteristic of Ontario’s public memory and many vectors of memory. For example, Eleanor Freeman, in her 1904 account of Ontario in Ingersoll’s Century Annals of San Bernardino County states Ontario “was the most perfect plan then formulated for colonization.” Once again, various vectors of memory highlight numerous features to suggest why Ontario deserved the distinction of “Model Colony.” In 1981, local historian Bernice Bedford Conley referred to the “happenings in the starting of a new settlement”

29. See the Los Angeles Times, p. 0_1, classified ad, for August 10, 1883; August 11, 1883; September 6, 1883; September 7, 1883; October 23, 1883; October 26, 1883; and October 30, 1883.
30. Rounds, Ontario, 53; and Austen, Ontario.
32. Freeman, Ingersoll’s Century Annals of San Bernardino County, 569.
to explain, “these events laid the foundations that have persisted to make it truly the Model Colony.”33 Here, the implication is that superior planning made Ontario *sui generis*.

Historian Ian Tyrrell, in *True Gardens of the Gods* in 1999, shared how an Australian journalist’s publicity helped brand Ontario as a “model irrigation colony.”34 Labeling Ontario a “model irrigation colony” illustrates how some vectors of memory directly cite what makes Ontario a “Model Colony.” Indeed, when a clear-cut connection is made, irrigation is the most common. Ontario even received the distinction as the “model irrigation colony” when U.S. government engineers erected a scale panorama of Ontario at the St. Louis World’s Fair in 1904.35 In fact, the element of irrigation, as a component of both the *sui generis* and innovative themes, further suggests why historians and researchers overlook Ontario’s suburban roots. Irrigation is so paramount and continuously emphasized that its given prominence at the expense of highlighting other things. In the process, it became not only repetitive, but also standardized.

A more direct set of particulars for why Ontario is the “Model Colony” first appeared in an 1884 booster pamphlet authored by Robert M. Widney, *Ontario: Its History, Description, and Resources; Valuable Information For Those Seeking Homes in Southern California*. Although Widney never called Ontario the “Model Colony,” he did arrogantly call Ontario’s colonization

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33. Conley, *Dreamers and Dwellers*, 22. Perhaps some extreme examples of unqualified expression of Ontario as the “Model Colony” were simply using the phrase in the title of a work, such as 8th-grader Jane Craig’s 1931 essay “The Model Colony” written for a collection complied by Upland Elementary School students or local historian Ruth Austen’s 1990 book *Ontario: The Model Colony*. The title “Model Colony,” in both works, implies the entire work will reveal why Ontario was such. See, Austen, *Ontario*; and Jane Craig, “Model Colony,” in Upland Elementary School, *Historical Essays*, collection of essays written by students of Upland Elementary School (Ontario, CA, privately printed, 1931), 29-34, housed at the Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario City Library, Ontario, CA.


35. See, among many others, *The Ontario Record*, January 17, 1903; Alexander, *The Life of George Chaffey*, 55; Starr, *Material Dreams*, 16; and Rounds, *Ontario*, 78. To be exact, the government decided to present the colony as a model irrigation type in 1903. The model then appeared at the 1904 World’s Fair in St. Louis.
“the most perfect plan.” Still, subsequent authors and vectors of memory repeat Widney’s set of particulars to elaborate, though still implicitly, why Ontario began as the “Model Colony.” Widney cited three features for what made Chaffey’s plan “matured” and the “most perfect plan ever adopted by a colony in this State”: (1) the distribution of water for irrigation purposes to every landowner; (2) the construction of a “main thoroughfare so that it will be a thing of beauty forever”; and (3) the establishment of an agricultural college (Chaffey College of Agriculture). Widney arguably put together these particulars in hopes of augmenting the promoters’ publicity campaign. That Widney and the promoters produced pamphlets with such dramatic flair, including accolades and demarcations of a “most perfect plan,” should come as no surprise. The repeating of such rhetoric in subsequent vectors of memory, which present it as a basic, indispensable, and necessary fact, should astonish some and illustrate the durable power of the original narratives and early vectors of memory about Ontario. In addition, it offers another example of why historians and researchers miss the suburban roots of Ontario’s past.

One hundred years after Widney, his explanation endured. “Ontario . . . was based on four principles,” concluded Kevin Starr in Material Dreams 1990. The “four principles” included “water rights, urban planning, an agricultural college, and the prohibition of alcohol.”

In 1999, local Ontario historian Michael Rounds, in Gem of the Foothills, repeated this narrative. Yet, Starr and Rounds’s works reveal how certain elements of themes can alter, even if subtly, and even be augmented. Specifically, Widney, while discussing temperance in Ontario, particularly as it drew “the better class of people,” did not ascribe temperance to Chaffey’s vision.

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37. Starr, Material Dreams, 16.
38. Rounds, Ontario, 50.
of “the most perfect plan” for Ontario to become the “Model Colony.” The addition of temperance to the set of particulars for what made Ontario “the most perfect plan” is a product of historical development. Author J. A. Alexander first included temperance, at least among the scores of materials I collected, as a particular of “the most perfect plan” in his 1928 biography of Chaffey, *The Life of George Chaffey: A Story of Irrigation Beginnings in California and Australia*. Alexander’s book appeared during the midst of the great “noble experiment” of national prohibition. His inclusion of temperance as a specific particular of “the most perfect plan” is thus understandable and likely reflects his own agenda. The celebration of temperance in Ontario appears in many of the vectors of memory, including a memorial water fountain donated to Ontario by the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in 1904, which still serves to quench the thirst of many Ontario residents and visitors today.

**Orangevale and Fair Oaks as Sui Generis**

Orangevale and Fair Oaks mirror the narrated sense of place at work in Ontario. They received acclaim as the best places in California, and thus the nation, to grow fruits and vegetables. Touted as ideal communities, with perfect weather, Orangevale and Fair Oaks never seemed to get too hot or too cold. They enjoyed perfect soil, full of potential for a seemingly unbounded national market eager to receive their produce and they established a rural lifestyle without want of urban amenities.

According to most vectors of memory shaped from both inside and from outside the communities of Orangevale and Fair Oaks, these places were the best for the growth of citrus. When considering just the vectors of memory not produced locally, the exaltation of Orangevale and Fair Oaks’ superior ability to cultivate citrus as compared to any other place, and hence a

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celebration of their agricultural prowess and past, is what receives the most attention. This thematic narrative contributes to the surfeit of information received by most non-local researchers and, essentially, is what directs them to retransmit such information. Attention to some form of suburban planning garners little mention and, alas, a process of forgetting sets in.

Early histories, or at least booster booklets and publications designed to stimulate migration or investment in the Sacramento area came about as a market strategy of the local growth machine. Very simply, to induce migration and investment, they needed to enhance the image and infrastructure of the Sacramento area, particularly by popular iconographic symbols and signs such as homes, gardens, and transportation. Boosters used Orangevale and Fair Oaks as supporting evidence for the exaggerated claims made about Sacramento. They were invoked whenever promoting the Sacramento region’s agricultural superiority, and, in particular, when discussing the growth and profitability of citrus.

Orangevale and Fair Oaks, in partial fulfillment of the extraordinary claims made about them, had much to be proud of when it came to the growth of citrus. In Orangevale, 2,300 acres were reportedly fenced by 1890, 500 acres of orange trees planted by 1894, and the first crop of oranges coming off the trees the following year.40 Orangevale also had 3,200 acres irrigated by 1913, and by 1915, 2,000 acres in orange trees dotted the land. Orangevale became one of the leading producers of oranges, reaching its peak in 1925.41 In Fair Oaks, while the numbers did not reach the levels reported in Orangevale, citrus dominated with a reported 1,200 acres of citrus, almonds, and olives planted by 1900. The booster booklet of the Fair Oaks Development


41. Hack, “History of Orangevale,” 34, 35, 45, and 54; and Sandul and Swim, Orangevale, 23.
Company in late 1900 bragged: “There are some navel oranges now in the fourth year, and of these trees there are now . . . a carload and a half, say 30,000 pounds – 500 boxes – of fruit which will be shipped between November 15 and January 1, 1901.” Moreover, both Orangevale and Fair Oaks purportedly prospered by an “early citrus section” so their yield was not only plentiful and robust, but also harvested earlier than citrus growing in Southern California. This gave the Orangevale and Fair Oaks citrus growers a commercial advantage by hitting the marketplace early and more often.

The promotion of Orangevale and Fair Oaks, sometimes called “citrus colonies,” served to draw investors from out-of-state, particularly from the East Coast, and, according to one historian in 2003, “burnish” Northern California with the reputation of “a sunshine capital.” As a result, citrus became a leading iconographic symbol, a commercial logo, even a brand, in the promotion of California in general and the Sacramento region specifically. Orangevale and Fair Oaks emerged in numerous contemporary publications in the late nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century as the most favored and likely sites for the cultivation of citrus in the Sacramento Valley. Sacramento boosters used Orangevale and Fair Oaks in a campaign

42. Fair Oaks Development Company, *Fair Oaks* (1900), 34-35. Note: I have chosen to include publication dates in some short form citations to remind the reader of such dates, particularly as such is most useful in a representation history, a genealogy, of how the past has been represented in the present in which people have lived and live after the foundation of Orangevale and Fair Oaks in the 1880s and 1890s.


to compete with the success of citrus in Southern California, to piggyback on Southern California’s success, and take advantage of an already well-orchestrated publicity campaign concerning California in general.

Orangevale and Fair Oaks commonly appeared in booster publications concerning the Sacramento region, not to mention booster booklets and advertisements concerning Orangevale and Fair Oaks directly. They received constant praise for being the “best section” or “best district” for the growth of citrus, particularly as the “ideal location for the cultivation of orange trees,” and, of course, showed everyone that “no finer looking [orange] groves exist in the State than in these two communities [of Orangevale and Fair Oaks].”46 A picture of a citrus tree or grove in Orangevale or Fair Oaks, particularly an orange one, commonly graced books concerning the Sacramento region, such as the picture “Typical California Bungalow, amid Orange Groves” in Fair Oaks for the 1912 publication of Greater Sacramento: Her Achievements, Resources and Possibilities. A picture of a “Blood Orange” in Fair Oaks appeared in the 1904 publication of Fruit Growing is California’s Greatest Industry.47 This image of Orangevale and Fair Oaks as the best places for the cultivation of citrus further received

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46. Orange Vale Colonization Company, A Souvenir of Orange Vale (1894), 6; and Sacramento County Chamber of Commerce, Fruit Growing is California’s Greatest Industry: Sacramento County is the Very Heart of its Greatest Production (Sacramento, CA: Chamber of Commerce, [1904]), 7.

47. Greater Sacramento (1912), no page number; and Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, Fruit Growing is California’s Greatest Industry ([1904]), 6.
distinction, and, thus, served as additional substantiation of fantastical claims, from the announcement of good showings, even prize-winning efforts, at citrus exhibitions.48

The lasting power of Orangevale and Fair Oaks as the loci of citrus and the “citrus belt” of California emerges from the pages of more recent historical narratives composed in the post-World War II era. The Sacramento Planning Department, for example, in their Fair Oaks Community Plan of 1975, determined that citrus had played a major role in the history of the community and its modern character.49 General histories of the region, such as in Sacramento: Indomitable City, distinguish Orangevale and Fair Oaks, as well as Citrus Heights, as the primary sites for the growth of citrus. Three out of the five times the author mentions Fair Oaks and Orangevale he refers to citrus and fruit growing — the other two refer to expansion after World War II.50 Other accounts, such as a 1959 article in the Sacramento Union and a local history of Orangevale published by a resident in 1962, fondly recalled that Orangevale received its name from co-founder and member of the Orange Vale Colonization Company, P. C. Drescher, because of “the flourishing citrus groves.”51

Even more telling, in a search in 2005 for a logo to represent the Fair Oaks Historical Society, one entry urged members to select the logo, “Fair Oaks, Home of the Orange,” which

48. See, “Orange Vale: Making Rapid Progress” (1893), 2; McClatchy & Company, Sacramento County and its Resources (1894), 24; and West, “Northern California’s First Successful Colony” (2001), 28.

49. Sacramento Planning Department, Fair Oaks Community Plan (1975), 2.


depicted a well-illustrated orange tree wrapped with the written portion of the logo on a banner. More striking, the logo came from the leading local historian in the community. The local Fair Oaks historian stated, “This logo should reflect the foundation of our community from its birth in 1895.” He continued: “Some of you have not had the opportunity to study the origins of our town. None of you were here at the beginning, and the oldest of you were only children at the end of Fair Oaks [sic] agricultural Golden Age before the Great Depression.” Therefore, in pushing for the orange logo, he concluded it “is incumbent [sic] on each of us to choose that symbol which most closely represents why people chose to leave the East and how they struggled to make a living during the early years of our history.” They came to “raise agricultural products,” the local historian stated, and no “agricultural product was more seductive [sic] to these aspirants than citrus, the orange foremost among the several varieties.” Finally, “In selecting the orange as a symbol to represent our society, you will be choosing the very fruit that the earliest developers most used in their promotional material and the fruit that was foremost in the hopes of the earliest colonists.” In the end, and likely to the local historian’s dismay, another logo, one featuring a giant oak tree, won the contest. Yet, to be clear, the contest occurred during a time in which the local historian and the Fair Oaks Historical Society were experiencing a high level of tension against, and for, one another.52

Theme 2: The Adoration of Agriculture

The adoration of agriculture found in many vectors of memory concerning Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, like the theme sui generis, is typical of a considerable number of communities in California. Images of California agriculture and its profitability, particularly

horticulture, apply to communities from the northern vineyards of Napa Valley to the orange
groves of Southern California. Boosters throughout California rigorously promoted the state’s
agricultural promise. Moreover, praise for California agriculture has spanned several centuries,
from Spanish Padres admiring the fertile soils in the eighteenth century to large corporations or
cooperatives such as Sunkist and Blue Diamond celebrating the quality and quantity of produce
possible in the twentieth century. Agriculture is thus a common and dominant theme for many
(Eurocentric) communities in California. Such adoration of agriculture, however, diverts
attention away from the suburban side of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ foundations.

**Ontario and the Adoration of Agriculture**

The adoration of agriculture, particularly the orange and citriculture, not only dominated
local accounts and vectors of memory in California, but also larger accounts and vectors of
memory of California in general. Many prominent California historians including Hubert H.
Bancroft, Theodore H. Hittell, Carey McWilliams, Kevin Starr, and Richard J. Orsi highlight the
importance of California agriculture. More importantly, agriculture, in the context of
colonization, dominates most of the historical narratives concerning Ontario. Essentially,
picking any random historical narrative will virtually guarantee reading about agriculture.

The enormous “land boom” in Southern California in the 1880s is not a lost story in the
annals of California history. For example, Glenn S. Dumke cited Ontario’s rapid agricultural
growth in *The Boom of the Eighties* to highlight the affect of the land boom in Southern
California. By 1890, Ontario had a population of 683 while the acreage of fruit registered at

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McWilliams, *California*; Orsi, *Sunset Limited*; and Starr, *Americans and the California Dream*.  

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7,678. The “major part,” according to Dumke, belonged to citrus.54 Earlier, in 1883, Ontario had already shipped 207 train carloads of oranges and lemons and 104 carloads of deciduous fruits and raisins to market.55 Still, the great boom of the eighties really did not begin until 1886. The stunning growth and agricultural prowess in Ontario following the boom receives great attention, though it did stumble during the lean depression years of the 1890s.

“It would be an impossibility for a person to remain more than a few minutes within the limits of Ontario without realizing that here oranges are grown,” asserted one writer for The Ontario Record in 1907.56 Thriving agriculture in Ontario grew exponentially with the completion of the Santa Fe Railroad (1885), reaching Ontario in 1887, and several other lines such as a second Southern Pacific line running to San Diego (1882) and a link with Santa Fe at Cajon Pass (1885), Chino Valley Railroad (1887), and Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad in 1903.57 Several cooperative associations and packing companies also formed, such as the Mitchell and Butterfield packinghouse and the Ontario Fruit Exchange.58 Ontario also began to establish, and participate in, other agricultural “fairs,” reportedly a creation of the promoter Luther M. Holt.59 Again, the growth, while perhaps insufficiently captured in its richness here, contrasted with Ontario’s industrial growth, particularly with the establishment of Hotpoint in

54. Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties, 107. See also, Gentilcore, “Ontario, California and the Agricultural Boom of the 1880s,” 87. For more recent accounts, see, among others, Garcia, A World of Its Own; Sackman, Orange Empire; and Vaught, Cultivating California.


56. The Ontario Record Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Edition, November 1907, 3.

57. See Austen, Ontario, 41; Conley, Dreamers and Dwellers, 3-5; and Rounds, Ontario, 62.

58. See Austen, Ontario, 60-70; Conley, Dreamers and Dwellers, 72-101; and Rounds, Ontario, 84-86.

59. Conley, Dreamers and Dwellers, 95.
enduring result of Ontario’s meteoric rise and lasting viable agricultural production from the end of the nineteenth century through the first half of the twentieth century is a (rightful) celebration and recollection of such. Still, while a stunning number of figures and details favorably receive attention in the vectors of memory, such as how many carloads of grapes shipped out in 1926 (3,300 to be exact), its production and growth proportions dominate, which mirrors the exaltation of agriculture in the pantheon of California history in general. 

The conception of agriculture, specifically horticulture, as the foundation for suburban planning loses some credibility when unclear notions of “colony” guide most vectors of memory chronicling Ontario’s beginnings. While vectors of memory and the public memory of Ontario in general recognize the role agriculture played in the foundation of Ontario, they understand it in terms of “colony” yet quickly move to describe the exceptional number of “urban” amenities Ontario developed regardless. The true legacy of agriculture in Ontario is its rising production, development, and economic importance, not its paramount role in the establishment of the community. Focusing on the suburban side of Ontario’s origins directly challenges that legacy to reinterpret the significance of agriculture in the planning of a unique suburban type. Indeed, the plethora of “urban amenities” accompanying the suburbanization of Ontario — as opposed to developing regardless — is what set the foundation and created the necessary infrastructure and institutions necessary to foster the meteoric rise of agricultural production in Ontario. Such

60. See, among others, Max A. van Balgooy, “A Factory Midst the Orange Grove: Hotpoint and Ontario, California in the Early Twentieth Century,” a senior thesis presented to the faculty of the department of history, Pomona College, Claremont, CA, December 9, 1983, on file at the Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario City Library, Ontario, CA; Austen, Ontario, 49-50; and Conley, Dreamers and Dwellers, 11.

61. Grape information came from footnote, marked with †, in Alexander, Life of George Chaffey, 58.
infrastructure also paved the way for remarkable industrial growth, ultimately leading to the
accelerating urbanization of Ontario in the post-World War II era.

The Adoration of Agriculture in Orangevale and Fair Oaks

The adoration of agriculture found in many vectors of memory concerning Orangevale
and Fair Oaks, like the theme *sui generis*, mirrors Ontario and other boosters’ praise of
California’s fertile soil, including Charles Fletcher Lummis, Benjamin C. Truman, Charles
Dudley Warner, and Edward J. Wickson. In the Sacramento region, unsurprisingly, one could
pick up such titles as *Fruit Growing is California’s Greatest Industry: Sacramento County is the
Very Heart of its Greatest Production* (ca. 1904), *Fair Oaks, Sacramento County: In the Heart of
the Fruit-Growing Section of California* (1900), or *Sacramento, California: The World’s Garden
Valley* (1925). While the adoration of agriculture mirrors a theme of *sui generis* in Orangevale
and Fair Oaks in that both underscore the importance of agricultural produce and production, the
*sui generis* theme centered more intensely on citrus. Nevertheless, while an adoration of
agriculture does encompass all produce, including citrus, it also includes a larger imagery
associated with agriculture and farming. In other words, the adoration of agriculture is much
more than a narrative about fruits, nuts, vegetables, and raisins.

The adoration of agriculture concerning Orangevale and Fair Oaks, as in Ontario,
conjures up powerful and popular images of independent yeoman farmers all cultivating the soul
as much as the soil and, in the process, confirming, achieving and enabling the growth of
America’s democratic spirit, republican form of government, and cultural values. Agriculture, as
dramatized by Jefferson and such romanticists as Beecher, Emerson, and Thoreau, made
Americans more American and brought people, usually men, closer to their natural, and thus
spiritual, selves. While citrus is a type of agricultural, particularly a horticultural endeavor, the
focus on citrus concentrated on the economic profitability of oranges and small farm groves,
sparking McWilliams to famously note, “The orange tree is the living symbol of richness, luxury, and elegance. With its rich black-green shade, its evergreen foliage, and its romantic fragrance, it is the millionaire of all the trees of America, the ‘golden apple’ of the fabled Gardens of the Hesperides.”

The orange thus helped to create what McWilliams called the “orange empire.” Yet the orange, as another type of produce, represented agriculture, that famed and beloved image of small town Americans making a living form the soil, the bedrock of the nation and a republic. Musician John Mellencamp expressed this sentiment most vividly when discussing the continued need for Farm Aid — a musical concert and organization devoted to American “farm families” that began in 1985. “We all see what’s happening with agriculture, what’s happening to our small towns,” said Mellencamp. “They are going out of business. That’s a direct result of the farm problem. We’re still doing Farm Aid because it is contributing. It’s doing a job.”

For Mellencamp and others, then, the “job” is to save some form of a cherished American institution and lifeway that people from Jefferson to singer Willie Nelson have romanticized.

Agriculture and its growth in Sacramento County deserve notice. By 1910, the U.S. Census Bureau had recorded the value of just fruits and nuts in Sacramento County at $2,265,690.00 (roughly $51 million in “purchasing power” in 2007). In 1920, the valuation of fruits and nuts jumped to $6,346,873.00 (roughly $65.5 million in “purchasing power” in 2007; thus, from 1910 to 1920 the growth rate was about 0.28% per year in terms of 2007 relative

62. McWilliams, Southern California, 207.

63. McWilliams, Southern California, 216.

Orangevale and Fair Oaks, particularly in the years leading up to 1910 and 1920, as well as through the 1920s, thus ignited agricultural growth in Sacramento. Nevertheless, in conjunction with their agricultural proficiency, Orangevale and Fair Oaks also represented a “colonization enterprise” that subdivided the land into small lots to allow migrants to enjoy a farming lifestyle without the sacrifice of urban amenities.

“Colonization enterprises,” such as Orangevale and Fair Oaks, reflected what early boosters and authors described as “choice subdivisions” and areas of “productiveness.” They were for “fruit-raising” and, when not called “agricultural colonies,” “citrus colonies,” or even “irrigation colonies,” the promoters and subsequent researchers called them “fruit colonies.”

Yet, such communities retained their association with Sacramento and, as one observer noted in 1999, Sacramento: Gold Rush Legacy, Metropolitan Destiny, “Newer ‘commuter farm’ communities like Orangevale, Fair Oaks, and Carmichael, had crops on small acreages” because of the “the strong public interest in all things agricultural.” In fact, as noted Sacramento historian Joseph A. McGowan concluded in 1967, the image of farming in the area made it seem effortless while robust and lucrative at the same time. “Advertising throughout the nation,”

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66. For references to Orangevale and Fair Oaks as “fruit colonies,” “choice subdivision,” “colonization enterprises,” see, among many others, Avella, Sacramento (2003), 67; Bryan, Souvenir of the Capital of California (1901), 5, 7-8; John F. Burns, ed., Sacramento: Gold Rush Legacy, Metropolitan Destiny (Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media, 1999), 93; Hayes, The Lower American River (2005), 98-99; McGowan, History of the Sacramento Valley (1961), vol. 1, 410; “Orange Vale: A Sacramento Fruit Colony Enterprise,” (1888), 3; Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, Resources of Sacramento County, California (1899), 6; Sacramento County: In the Heart of California (1915); and West, “Northern California’s First Successful Colony” (2001).

wrote McGowan, “they [boosters] hoped to profit from the land sales while the purchasers thought all they had to do was to sit on the front porch and watch the fruit grow. Orangevale, Fair Oaks, Rio Benito, Thermolito, and the Maywood Colonies (Corning) were some of the better-known schemes.”

Orangevale and Fair Oaks were not just any “fruit colony” or “colonization enterprise,” they were, like citrus, the best “fruit districts,” with “fertility of soil,” best “topography,” best climate in the area for early ripening, without extreme heat or extreme cold, and blessed with the perfect amount of rainfall. Orangevale and Fair Oaks, as one anonymous writer stated in 1899, “Has been demonstrated, as nowhere else, that all of the fruits, of whatever name or character, can be raised side by side in the soil.” In *Farm, Field and Fireside*, the Howard & Wilson Publishing Company praised Fair Oaks because the “report of the California State Horticultural Society for 1892, on page 191, says of this section that it is ‘one of the foremost sections of the State, and from a horticultural point of view, the foremost section.’” In fact, Orangevale and Fair Oaks had proceeded to be of such exceptional quality, the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce purportedly took one prominent visitor, Benjamin Franklin Bush, president of Gould


69. See, for example, Davis, *Sacramento County, California* (1905), 13; Fair Oaks Development Company, *Fair Oaks* (1900), 12; Fair Oaks Historical Society, *Fair Oaks* (1995), 8; Howard & Wilson, advertisement for “San Juan Colony” (1895), 5; Howard & Wilson, *The Heart of California* (1897); “Orange Vale: An Excursion to the Sacramento Colony Near Folsom” (1890), 1; “Orange Vale: Making Rapid Progress” (1893), 2; Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, *Resources of Sacramento County, California* (1899), 6, 9; Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, *Fruit Growing is California’s Greatest Industry* ([1904]), 3 (picture of “Young Orchard at Fair Oaks”); Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, *Sacramento, California* (1925), 5, 8; Sacramento Valley Development Association, *Sacramento Valley California* (1911), 43; Wilson, “Among the Cowboys,” *Farm, Field and Fireside* (1895), 756; and Wilson, “Among the Fair Oaks of Sunset Colony,” *Farm, Field and Fireside* (1895), 788-89.

70. Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, *Resources of Sacramento County* (1899), 6.

71. Wilson, “Among the Cowboys,” *Farm, Field and Fireside* (1895), 756.
Lines (Western Pacific), on a trip to Fair Oaks and Orangevale in 1913.\textsuperscript{72} The reason for such a trip, to be sure, was clear enough, for in Orangevale and Fair Oaks, idyllic beauty and weather awaited, as the Orange Vale Colonization Company made clear in 1894. “Shut in and sheltered from the cold winds and fogs of the coast, and protected, by chains of intervening hills and mountains from the chilly blasts of the higher altitudes, here is found a spot free from killing frosts, where flowers bloom and tender plants thrive the year round, in an atmosphere clear and bright, and under a practically cloudless sky.”\textsuperscript{73} So, no wonder that in 1988 the \textit{Fair Oaks Guide} printed the lyrics to a song, “The Home of Fruit and Beauty,” with the chorus:

\begin{quote}
Fair Oaks, Fair Oaks, we render her our duty.
We love her well, her praise we’ll tell.
The Home of Fruit and Beauty.\textsuperscript{74}
\end{quote}

Most accounts that deal with the history of Orangevale and Fair Oaks typically close, or at least reach a climax before a quick end, with the “Big Freeze” of 1932.\textsuperscript{75} The freeze of 1932, as the story goes, was the most devastating event in the histories of Orangevale and Fair Oaks. The freeze effectively wiped out Orangevale and Fair Oaks as major producers of fruit in California. Many growers were unenthusiastic about replanting because of the unforgiving economy and fickle consumer tastes. In Orangevale, for example, the orange acreage, once at 2,000, dropped drastically to 879 in 1935 and then to 473 in 1940. Yet, as illustrated by the \textit{Fair Oaks Guide}\textsuperscript{76}...

\textsuperscript{72} Shaw, \textit{Sacramento Saga} (1946), 287.

\textsuperscript{73} Orange Vale Colonization Company, \textit{A Souvenir of Orange Vale} (1894), 6.

\textsuperscript{74} \textit{Fair Oaks Guide} (1988), 32.

Oaks Guide in 1988 and the Fair Oaks Historical Society’s contest for a logo, the importance and self image of these communities as loci of agricultural activity, prowess, and establishment, dominant the historical narratives. What is more striking is that agriculture, while the basis for these communities and what, in reality, provided for the further establishment of institutions and infrastructure congruent with their development as suburban types, perhaps pales to the impact of growth in population and infrastructure after Word War II. This, of course, is particularly true of histories produced during and after the 1960s, as the size of these communities, as examined in more detail below, exploded. Their agricultural heritage then, while essential in their establishment, is only a part of the story, and not the whole story by any means.

**Theme 3: Agriburbs as Innovative (Ahead of Their Time)**

The perpetual dominance of innovative institutions and infrastructure in many vectors of memory concerning Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks also diverts attention away from their suburban roots. The plethora and multivariate nature of the actual institutions and infrastructure are striking in the context of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ public memory and early self-image as “agricultural colonies.” The self-image and on going representation of these communities’ origins as agricultural colonies contrast with the modern urban amenities they developed early on. Starr, for example, comments that this element demonstrates why Ontario was a community with all the amenities of a city without the city. Indeed, the Ontario promoter Robert M. Widney counted a main thoroughfare as the second of three particulars marking Ontario’s “perfect” plan. Starr, however, identified it as “urban planning.” Conversely, the conception of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks with urban amenities without the city is largely why they were in fact suburbs and, ironically, likely the most glaring reason why historians and researchers fail to identify these communities’ suburban roots.
Ontario as Innovative

The specific institutions and infrastructure highlighted in various vectors of memory include, among others, clubs, irrigation, electricity, and transportation. Churches and schools also receive a fair amount of attention, as does the Mule Car (streetcar/tram), which emerged more prominent in comparison by the end of the twentieth century, especially because of the allocation of public space and memorialization of the Mule Car with an exhibit in the middle of Euclid Avenue. Likewise, the Chaffey College of Agriculture now ranks above churches and schools because of its prominence in early vectors of memory and its connection with Chaffey and the other promoters. Nonetheless, no other institution or infrastructure receives as much praise and mention throughout the entirety of Ontario’s vectors of memory as Euclid Avenue, the “world famous” and “beautiful” street. The typical vector of memory concerning Euclid Avenue claims Chaffey conceived of the thoroughfare as part of his “most perfect plan.” Euclid provided residents of Ontario with a quality road and a “beautiful” thoroughfare lined with Eucalyptus trees. The City Planning Commission of Ontario successfully nominated Euclid Avenue for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places in August 2005.76

A 1997 Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), conducted prior to improvement on California State Route 30, captures the sense of history related to Euclid as well.77 The survey record opens:


77. California State Route 30 is now Interstate 210, which runs west to east from San Fernando to San Bernardino, north of Los Angeles.
Euclid Avenue is significant in three areas: community planning, landscape architecture, and transportation. Each reflect the vision of George and William Chaffey, who designed the avenue and oversaw its construction — a vision continued by citizens of the communities of Upland [formerly North Ontario] and Ontario.\(^7^8\)

More than 100 years earlier, the first promotional pamphlet in 1883 announced, even before the thoroughfare was finished, “Euclid Avenue is the name of a beautiful double drive . . . being a great benefit to the entire settlement.”\(^7^9\) With the 1884 pamphlet, Euclid Avenue rose prominently to serve as a major advertising point by accompanying irrigation, health, profit, and homeownership on the title page. Widney also immortalized “the main thoroughfare” in his three sets of particulars of “the most perfect plan.”\(^8^0\) Euclid, lined with “beautiful evergreens,” also served as the thoroughfare where the streetcar system, including the Mule Car, ran from north to south and connected with the Southern Pacific depot in the heart of downtown Ontario.\(^8^1\)

In 1890, the Lewis Publishing Company’s *An Illustrated History of Southern California* found Euclid worth mentioning along with irrigation and railroads. In 1895, Lummis’s *Land of Sunshine* determined that Euclid Avenue was “now the finest boulevard in California.”\(^8^2\) In 1903, *The Ontario Record*’s “Industrial Review Edition” featured a picture of the now “Famous Euclid Avenue” on the front page, which rhetorically asked in large print, “WHY IT IS THE

\(^{78}\) HABS/HAER, Euclid Avenue, 1.

\(^{79}\) *Ontario, Located in San Bernardino County*, 30.


\(^{82}\) *An Illustrated History of Southern California*, 473; and “Ontario,” *Land of Sunshine*, 247.
In 1907, *Sunset* magazine featured an article “A City of Ten-Acre Lots,” which compared Euclid to “Cleveland’s world famous street [Euclid].”

When J. A. Alexander told the Euclid Avenue story in 1928, he addressed its “beauty,” even its “exotic beauty.” “To-day Euclid Avenue is almost a little bit of Australia set in the heart of California,” claimed Alexander. He continued: “If more Australians knew the serene beauty of Euclid Avenue, with its variegated evergreen tints, there would be fewer imported trees in their home boulevards.” Euclid Avenue thus receives a sort of creation myth, in terms of naming at least. Alexander claims Chaffey named Euclid Avenue “after his favorite study and recreation,” which referred to Euclid — the most prominent mathematician of Greco-Roman antiquity.

The continuous attention to Euclid remained throughout Ontario’s history and diverted attention away from Ontario’s suburban origins. Specifically, Euclid Avenue appears in almost every vector of memory from student essays in the 1930s, to the Ontario Diamond Jubilee Committee’s history in the 1950s, to the Ontario Bicentennial Commission’s celebration in the 1970s, to Rounds’s magisterial work in the 1990s. Such admiration culminated in Euclid Avenue’s nomination to the National Register of Historic places in 2005. Still, Euclid Avenue, antipodal to agriculture in Starr’s “urban/rural interplay” schematic, represents “urban amenities”

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(even “urban planning” for Starr). As noted before, such urban amenities, like Euclid Avenue, but also churches, school, clubs, streetcars, and commercial enterprises, are represented as innovative in that they developed regardless, or even in spite of, Ontario’s beginnings as an “agricultural colony.” At best, the urban amenities are part of a utopian, garden city ideal in which Ontario was “a city without the city.” At worst (or best depending on one’s view), urban amenities within an agricultural colony seem utterly fantastic and earn adoration and lavish recollection. Neither scenario allows for a conception of Ontario as a suburb. This seems so striking precisely because such amenities, along with such things as homeownership, reveal Ontario began as a planned suburb, particularly when compared to general accounts of the suburbanization process, such as Hayden’s Building Suburbia, Jackson’s Crabgrass Frontier, Lewis’s Manufacturing Suburbs, and Nicolaides and Wiese’s The Suburb Reader. 88

Orangevale and Fair Oaks as Innovative

An image of a city without the city, to be sure, constituted an important aspect to the promotion of agriburban areas such as Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks. Yet urban amenities that marked each agriburb as innovative and ahead of its time are, paradoxically, why these communities were suburban types. Nevertheless, urban amenities and so-called innovations seem so fantastical and worthy of recollection, legitimization, and even sacralization precisely because these communities were seen, or imagined, as largely agricultural and semi-rural. Bridges, good roads, libraries, social clubs, stylish buildings, numerous schools, and “village” areas — commercial districts or “downtowns” — were not symptoms and conditions of isolated, 88 The list of outstanding works concerning suburbs is large; however, I found the following the most useful when considering the late nineteenth century: Fogelson, Bourgeois Nightmares; Hayden, Building Suburbia; Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier; Lewis, Manufacturing Suburbs; Marsh, Suburban Lives; Mumford, “Suburbia — and Beyond,” in The City in History; Nicolaides and Wiese, The Suburb Reader; Sies, “The City Transformed,” 81-111; Sies, “Paradise Retained,” 165-91; Stilgoe, Borderland; Teaford, City and Suburb; and Warner, Streetcar Suburbs.
backward looking, rural areas supposedly characteristic of the Great Plains and elsewhere, but signs and symbols of modernity, progress, sophistication, and even refinement. They were hallmarks of suburbia. They marked these communities as middle class. Remarkably, most of the infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, came about because of the capital investment made by the original promoters. Because of speculative real estate capitalism, the innovation that largely marked these communities resulted from nothing less than suburban planning on the part of a local growth machine.

Much of the innovation that marked Orangevale and Fair Oaks as cutting edge was directly attached to agriculture, namely as “colonization enterprises,” as “Sacramento’s Suburban Site for Little Farms.” Orangevale and Fair Oaks combined community life with the cultivation of the soil and, according to the promoters, were a “striking illustration of self supporting small farms.” Fair Oaks, according to the title page of Fair Oaks (1900), was The Paradise of the Fruit Grower, Health Seeker and Tourist. In fact, colonization enterprises, as the word enterprise suggested, meant that the colonies’ founding fathers had taken great pains to make large investments in improvements for the community, such as, in Orangevale, “a church, school, and hotel . . . and the work of beautifying.” An early bridge, for example, “eliminated the community’s [Fair Oaks’] isolation” according to a 2005 history of the area, and made it not only easier to get fruit to market, but also to commute to Sacramento and other surrounding areas. The plethora of so-called innovations that demarcated and then proved that Orangevale and Fair Oaks were not your traditional backwards farm areas included beautiful houses,

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churches, clubs, schools, irrigation and a water company, transportation infrastructure, and commercial businesses.\textsuperscript{90}

At the turn of the twentieth century, the single-family house had become the embodiment of the middle-class ideal for domestic life and, accordingly, the lure of homeownership figured prominently in the promotional literature of Orangevale and Fair Oaks. Indeed, comparable to the rhetoric of romanticists such as Beecher, Downing, and Davis, as well as those laborious suburban planners Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, Sacramento’s promoters situated the homes of Orangevale and Fair Oaks in a semi-rural environment away from the city but full of modern “conveniences” and cultured institutions. In other words, Orangevale and Fair Oaks’ homes seemed innovative and cutting edge for being located in a rural environment without sacrifice of urban convenience. As early as 1900, for example, the Fair Oaks Development Company promised a “charming home made there for the wife and babies.” They promised a suburb:

For the home it offers you, under the cloudless skies of Fair Oaks, the suburban residence district of Sacramento, in the heart of California, while sheltered by magnificent oaks and looking, as far as the eye can reach, over picturesque swells of orchards of orange, olive, and all kinds of deciduous fruits, and vineyards of Flame Tokay, yet offers all the conveniences of a developed and settled community, in fine residences, water piped under pressure to the door, educational facilities, postal delivery, suburban communication with a large city, etc.\textsuperscript{91}


\textsuperscript{91} Fair Oaks Development Company, \textit{Fair Oaks} (1900), 3.
In Orangevale, as in Fair Oaks, promoters offered “self-supporting” homes and “comfortable cottages.” Orangevale and Fair Oaks receive distinction in subsequent literature for offering the “prettiest suburban homes” and “handsome residences” that added an “attractiveness that is ideal.” Moreover, other regionally based booster booklets often used a picture of an “orchard home” in Orangevale or Fair Oaks to promote the Sacramento area, a “city of homes.”

As the promoters in Orangevale and Fair Oaks were busy “planting orchards” and “beautifying” the area, they were also, according to the Orangevale boosters in 1894, “laying out streets and avenues, building roads and bridges.” In other words, Sacramento’s promoters were designing innovative rural-seeming communities that included so-called good roads and transportation infrastructure typically more associated with larger urban centers — and certainly not isolated rural hinterland areas. Orangevale and Fair Oaks’ appeal, as well as a more modern characteristic for otherwise agricultural communities, was their “rural communication with that [Sacramento] city” through the creation of local “good roads” and avenues. On the one hand, bridges, particularly the Fair Oaks (Fair Oaks), Thomas B. Hall (Orangevale), and, to an extent, Orangevale Avenue and Rainbow bridges (Orangevale), in addition to later bridges of the mid-twentieth century (Hazel Avenue and Sunrise Boulevard in Fair Oaks), are fondly remembered because of the “communication” they allowed locals with Sacramento and other surrounding areas.

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94. *Greater Sacramento* (1912), no page number (picture of “Typical California Bungalow . . .”).

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areas. The bridges, particularly the Fair Oaks Bridge, connected to a railroad line, in what the
*Sacramento Bee* in 1901 called “A Suburban Railroad to Fair Oaks,” which “means suburban homes.”
Bridges “eliminated the community’s isolation.” Maps prepared by the promoters to stimulate migration and investment prominently featured them. One article about Orangevale in 1893 highlighted connections with Sacramento as three people made the trip to Sacramento to catch a performance of “Old Homestead” whereby they “expressed themselves as amply repaid for their jaunt.” In Fair Oaks, bridges connected residents to the department stores that rivaled anything, according to the boosters, found in San Francisco, such as Weinstock’s store and Hall’s store, among others. On the other hand, bridges provided access to market so important to carrying on a potentially lucrative farming endeavor. Without access to market, then, even the least cynical of minds would find it hard to swallow the promoters’ many fantastical claims.
Given the importance of bridges, and the railroads they connected to, they became the symbols of these communities, as they connected them to a larger Sacramento saga, and, by implication, a national story.

Among the roads one can still travel in Orangevale and Fair Oaks are Fair Oaks Boulevard, Winding Way, Main Avenue, and Greenback Lane (Orangevale Avenue). Not only

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95. “A Suburban Railroad to Fair Oaks” (1901), 4.


98. Greenback Lane is the current name of the road the promoters named Orange Vale Avenue, which is not to be confused with the contemporary road named Orangevale Avenue. For more, see Sandul and Swim, *Orangevale*, 69-72. Likewise, the present-day Fair Oaks Boulevard section that runs through the commercial district of Fair Oaks originally had the name Howard Avenue — though a contemporary Howard Avenue exists as well in Fair Oaks and was likely a part of the original road. If that sounds confusing, it is. Specifically, the contemporary Fair Oaks Boulevard is a series of streets and roads that are non-contiguous. Therefore, one of the older sections of Howard Avenue retained its original name despite other sections becoming a part of Fair Oaks Boulevard.
are these roads the major thoroughfares of these communities, but also roads that served as leading elements of the promoters’ advertising campaigns. Suburban designers’ focus on good roads and well-planned streets and avenues — of curvilinear design that is (such as “Winding Way” in Fair Oaks) — further mark Orangevale and Fair Oaks as suburban types. Yet, rather paradoxically, the focus on these roads in the promotional literature and subsequent historical narratives is how incredible and cutting edge they were for existing in an otherwise rural-seeming community. Orangevale Avenue, for example, was “the approach to this model colony.” Boosters and subsequent interpreters claimed Orangevale and Fair Oaks were modern and not simple rural farm districts because the roads and avenues were “arranged” and “thoroughly planned.”

Essential to a “thoroughly planned” and innovative community like Orangevale and Fair Oaks, particularly communities rooted in agricultural productivity, were other public amenities such as water and irrigation. Indeed, water insured the cultivation of the soil while churches, schools, and clubs helped to cultivate community members’ souls. Orangevale and Fair Oaks in that case could truly blossom, which eventually required even more services that only commercial businesses could provide. Such services included, among many others, blacksmiths, dry goods stores, and “mail facilities” to reach the outside world. Water, irrigation, and piping received and receive constant promotion in narratives concerning Orangevale and Fair Oaks because they brought, quite literally, life to the communities. In addition, the piping and water company mutual scheme also signified progress. This technological and business progression


signaled the modern amenities of these areas while the celebration of churches, libraries, clubs, and schools marked these communities as both moral and intellectual communities. In other words, they were modern, but not at a sacrifice to tradition and, more importantly, refinement. Indeed, “rural high schools,” such as in Fair Oaks, stated one 1915 source, “are equal to high schools in large cities.” The source also noted that students from rural high schools in the Sacramento area often went on to the University of California, Berkeley to “study any branch of higher learning desired.”

Businesses, and their buildings, are also important in recollections of the past and other reproductions of narratives in Orangevale and Fair Oaks. They are particularly so in recent years because many of these buildings that housed early businesses, such as the Murphy-Scott Building in Fair Oaks (ca. 1901), still stand and service the community. Indeed, the Orange Vale Water Company still exists after 100 years and provides for Orangevaleans off Central Avenue. The presence of these businesses, of long used buildings, provides locals with a sense of continuity with the past. But these buildings and businesses represent a specific past: a past of a small, semi-rural community that did not go without. They, despite being “colonies,” had modern businesses, businessmen, investment, and structures so important to their constitution. Their remnants and memory are reminders of Orangevale and Fair Oaks’ innovation and sense of modernity in an otherwise traditional rural landscape.

Theme 4: The Glorification of Forward-Looking Entrepreneurs

Echoing Carey McWilliams’s praise of the first settlers to California as the best and brightest, Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, as well as other retrospective interpreters, incessantly tout the presence of perceptive and smart businessmen and local pioneers from the

101. Sacramento County: In the Heart of California (1915), 21.
early days of the communities. These pioneers, as patriots, linked locals and the local story to a national saga saturated in themes of nation building, social civilization, and material progress. The story and success of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, in this context, are not just local success stories, but further proof of an advanced and perfecting evolutionary trajectory of the American mind and spirit. The men, and to an extent women, of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks were entrepreneurial enough to seize the good life and laid back enough to enjoy it in a small town American community. They were, as others have imagined them, quintessentially American. As historians such as John Bodnar and David Glassberg have pointed out, this form of ancestral worship is typical of many smaller communities throughout the United States.102

Realizing that their rural, small town character faced and still faces dramatic changes as the United States continually becomes transformed, modernized, and urbanized — or, more rightfully, more suburbanized — such communities have made more of an effort to commemorate ancestors and pioneers of their rural past. This form of what Nietzsche labeled “monumental history” is basic to the economies of imagined communities and the (re)invention of tradition. Ancestral worship of pioneers who were entrepreneurial, progressive, and irreducibly modern within an otherwise rural landscape, speak both to the middle class character of these communities and serve as vectors of misrepresentation in that minority groups are largely forgotten.

**The Glorification of George Chaffey in Ontario**

The glorification of George Chaffey ranks high among the themes comprising a dominant recollective paradigm in Ontario’s public memory. Specifically, George Chaffey has become the

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George Washington of Ontario. Unquestionably so, a statue of him has been erected (though in Upland), and the Ontario Museum of History and Art offers a lecturing tour in which they visit local schools, part of the George Chaffey School District of course, and teach about his life and the founding of Ontario. This is striking because others, such as his brother William, also Widney, Holt, and even later promoter Charles Frankish, had as much to do with the development and growth of Ontario as Chaffey. Finally, as with the other dominant recollective paradigm themes, a focus on Chaffey has diverted attention away from Ontario’s suburban roots.

The focus on George Chaffey was gradual. In fact, George received recognition along with his brother William in both the 1883 and 1884 booster pamphlets, usually referencing them collectively as the “Chaffey Brothers.” This remained the principal way to discuss George until Alexander’s Life of George Chaffey in 1928. George had steadily been acquiring more attention, however, at least in comparison to William, by the first decade of the twentieth century, likely because of his return to California to work on the irrigation project in the Imperial Valley and his homecoming to Ontario in 1898, while William remained in Australia. While Alexander discusses William, the focus of his biography, George, steals the show. Beatrice Paxton Lee also gives William substantial attention in her 1929 master’s thesis, “The History and Development of Ontario,” as do Upland elementary students in a collection of “historical essays” written in 1931. In 1932, George died and, in 1937, the students of Miss Lois Griffin’s class announced Ontario was “George Chaffey’s Model Colony.” Indeed, George Chaffey’s death sparked a


104. Lois Griffin, Ontario, with students from Lois Griffin’s Social Living Class, Chaffey High School, Ontario, CA, 1937, on file at the Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario City Library, Ontario, CA.
moment of memorialization and memory work (i.e., efforts to acquire and disseminate information about the past among members of a collectivity) in and out of Ontario.  

On March 1, 1932, George Chaffey died in San Diego at the age of 84. A March 5, 1932 article in the *Los Angeles Times*, “George Chaffey Buried after Simple Services,” remarked on the importance of Chaffey as a “pioneer founder” and that, “a picked group of singers from Chaffey Junior College sang three hymns.” In this time of mourning, the *Times* continued, “The service was simple. No eulogy was spoken. The landmarks left by the pioneer founder speak his eulogy,” which included a school and, of course, Euclid Avenue.  

Here, within the immediate aftermath of his death, mourners, or at least an anonymous contributor to the *Times*, directly conceived of Chaffey’s contributions to Ontario as nothing less than “landmarks.” On March 10, Chaffey, this time as “A Real Empire Builder,” received yet another honor in the *Times*, with Ontario, as well as Etiwanda and Upland, now “monuments to his genius.” A little over a year later, in November 1933, the Chaffey Union High School began planning a memorial library in honor of their beloved founder, though also mentioning William, and discussed efforts “to have it erected through a $100,000 trust fund.” The next year, Chaffey emerged alongside Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington, Charles Crocker, and Mark Hopkins, a.k.a. Southern Pacific’s “The Big Four,” as well as other prominent western businessmen, such as James J. Hill and Edward Harriman, as “Giants of the West” in a *Los Angeles Times* article.  

105. For “memory work,” see Marcuse, “Memories of World War II and the Holocaust in Europe,” 488.  
1935, the Chaffey Memorial Library at Chaffey Union High School opened its doors with an evening of celebration and keynote speakers, including Vierling Kersey, the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Times ran the same article, “What He Gave / His Monument” on January 28, 1936, 1938, 1940, and 1941 (the birthday anniversary of George Chaffey) and noticeably excluded William by stating, “The citizens of Ontario have paid tribute to the city’s benefactor by dedicating the Chaffey Memorial Library to his [George’s] memory.” By 1951, the Chaffey Historical Room appeared in the Chaffey Civic Auditorium (again, with no mention of William) and Chaffey Day was declared on January 28, 1952, the 104th anniversary of George Chaffey’s birth. Within twenty years, Chaffey’s legacy sharpened and grew, and commemorative efforts moved from a “living memorial” (the library and history room), among others — which are “useful” to community members — to a public event in which the community allocated a day to commemorate him.

The vectors of memory that glorify George Chaffey continued. Perhaps most striking among them is the 1976 Bicentennial Commission’s publication in which George Chaffey appears as the founder of Ontario alongside George Washington as the founder of the United States. Chaffey’s legacy continues to this day as various vectors of memory persist in highlighting the “founding pioneer” of Ontario. Vectors of memory slide Chaffey into both a


111. See, “What He Gave; His Monument” in the following issues of the Los Angeles Times: January 28, 1936, 5; January 28, 1938, 9; January 28, 1940, A2; and January 28, 1941, 6.


113. For more on “living memorials,” see Glassberg, Sense of History, particularly 62.

creation myth, as a pioneer founder, and a social role, as a community builder, which is typically reserved for national heroes such as George Washington. Chaffey essentially became a model citizen of the model colony. He founded the colony, with the “most perfect plan,” engineered incredible irrigation projects, and even started educational facilities and built “beautiful,” “world famous” roads. Comparable to how museum critic Bernard S. Finn argued artifacts relating to industrialization represent social progress, translating Chaffey’s plan of a so-called agricultural colony with urban amenities and modern technologies to mean social progress takes place often.115 Chaffey’s legacy moved from that of one of several founders to an important pioneer who typified a larger national spirit of patriotic nation building in the west, akin to what historian Joyce Appleby labeled the entrepreneurial “self-interested man” or what historian Michael Kimmel called the “self-made man.”116 Chaffey, therefore, as a local pioneer, became linked to a national story and placed within a structure of patriotism — embracing themes of nation building, social civilization, and material progress, what sociologist Diane Barthel called “the saga of social progressivism.”117

The Glorification of Progressive Men in Orangevale and Fair Oaks

The homes and people of Orangevale and Fair Oaks, filled with more than one “charming home” of “wife and babies,” lay adjacent to Sacramento and surrounding communities, a metropolitan patchwork of suburbs, hinterlands, and a growing urban center. Orangevale and


116. Appleby, Inheriting the Revolution; Kimmel, Manhood in America. See also, Rotundo, American Manhood.

117. For more on pioneers and patriots in American public memory and vectors of memory, see Bodnar, Remaking America, particularly pp. 115-37. See also, Diane Barthel, Historic Preservation: Collective Memory and Historical Identity (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 69 (see also, 70-72).
Fair Oaks, as one observer boasting of the quality of life in Fair Oaks in 1895 proclaimed, were near “a great metropolis in the future.”¹¹⁸ Even more telling was that Orangevale and Fair Oaks, as the promoters and subsequent narrative authors remind us, were full of not only far away colonists, but also local, even the “best,” businessmen of the city. “For the people of intelligence, or refinement,” the Fair Oaks Development Company stated in 1900, “particularly if they have families . . . invest[ed] in cheap lands of this [Orangevale and Fair Oaks’] description.”¹¹⁹ Orangevale and Fair Oaks were created “with the purpose of settling” them “with people who would become tributary to, and add to the material prosperity of, Sacramento.”¹²⁰ Orangevale, for example, was “for practical businessmen of shrewdness and independence.”¹²¹ Fair Oaks had “attracted prominent men from the East, and particularly from Boston.”¹²² Fair Oaks had also become “a favorite with Chicago people and a number of wealthy men of that city have built fine homes there.”¹²³ By 1911, one observer concluded, “Both these districts [Orangevale and Fair Oaks] are settled mostly by progressive, energetic Eastern farmers and their success has been phenomenal.”¹²⁴ Orangevale, as well as Fair Oaks, constituted business investments, filled with progressive, even shrewd, businessmen who,  

¹¹⁸. Wilson, “Among the Cowboys,” Farm, Field and Fireside (1895), 789.  
¹¹⁹. Fair Oaks Development Company, Fair Oaks (1900), 5.  
¹²⁰. Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, Resources of Sacramento County, California (1899), 6.  
¹²². “A New Deal At Fair Oaks” (1900), 4.  
¹²³. Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, Fruit Growing is California’s Greatest Industry (1904), 7.  
¹²⁴. Sacramento Valley Development Association, Sacramento Valley California (1911), 43.
according to the *Bee* in 1894, were a “better class of colonists.”

They were also, supposedly, of an urbane, not necessarily urban, East Coast aristocracy, the successful of Boston and Chicago. Orangevale and Fair Oaks, at that time, supposedly attracted “only the most desirable class of residents.”

They were not only moral, but also filled with the spirit of progressivism, business savvy, and shrewdness. They were contemporary and modern, but in search of a farm.

Orangevale and Fair Oaks, as meant for the “better class of colonists,” did not shun those who, while not rich, were willing to work hard. “The man with modest means can,” said the promoters of Fair Oaks, “with brains and energy, make and maintain at Fair Oaks an attractive home as readily as a millionaire.”

In Orangevale, “Not the least important feature of the enterprise is that a person with only a few hundred dollars as a beginning can, by laying aside each month a small portion of his salary or earnings, soon become the owner of a tract in Orange Vale, and thereafter secure freedom from all other occupations, if desired, except the supervision of this property.”

This focus on “working men” making it in Orangevale and Fair Oaks echoed loudly in a 2001 account that concluded with a celebration of the evolution of “working men” by stating that in order “to earn a profit on his small farm, the Colonist needed new knowledge — of scientific methods of land development.”

The celebration of “working men,” “settlers,” “better class of colonists,” and “people of intelligence, or refinement” has been a key defining feature of narratives focusing on Orangevale

129. West, “Northern California’s First Successful Colony” (2001), 27.
and Fair Oaks. On the one hand, highlighting such so-called settlers, such as an 1893 article in the *Folsom Telegraph* or a 1944 Sacramento Chamber of Commerce publication (*Hub of Western Industry*), served as further publicity material for promoters to point out that these communities, and metropolitan region in general, represented progress, modernity, and middle class lifestyle and values. On the other hand, a focus on “pioneers” and early successful and prominent settlers was a form of hero worship and continuity with the past for locals in Orangevale and Fair Oaks. They narrated a sense of themselves through narrating the identities of their ancestors. As their forbearers built institutions, tilled the soil, and linked these communities to a national story of social civilization and nation building, subsequent generations celebrated their “progress[ive] spirit and executive powers.” They had, like W. W. Hinsey of Fair Oaks, who came in 1898, “a stimulating effect upon business activity and growth in general.” The “pioneers” of Orangevale and Fair Oaks had taken an errand into the wilderness whereby they dutifully, and thus patriotically, built an all-American town for an all-American family that, while rooted in an agrarian past, looked to a progressive future. Subsequent generations, who then fondly remember, memorialize, and even worship these early pioneers, see themselves as benefactors and trustees of such a heritage. They were shaped by it, instilled with a sense of maintaining it, and now, particularly through the reproduction of historical narratives, they see it as their task, their errand and their legacy, to carry it forward.

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131. Reed, *History of Sacramento County* (1923), 599.
Memory, History, and Place: The Costs of a Dominant Recollective Paradigm

The study of local history and public memory is important for several reasons. Among them is recognition of the process of forgetting. Other cultural costs are incurred as well, particularly the cultural costs assessable in terms of memory, historical consciousness, sense of place, and, as these phenomena intertwine, the affect on identity and community. While it may be easy to bemoan Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ lack of attention and silence concerning minorities, which is discussed in more detail below, the why and how of the situation seems to provide a more careful and thorough analysis. It adds depth to understanding the process of forgetting the suburban side of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ origins and reveals the lasting influence of the packaging of places. The themes of a dominant recollective paradigm, then, reveal the promoters’ role in laying the foundation of a metanarrative that subsequent interpreters of these agriburban communities’ past have reified and, in the process, legitimated while promulgating.\textsuperscript{132} The effects have not only been to divert attention away from their suburban origins, but also to create what some have called the “invention of tradition,” which is vital to the formation and maintenance of “imagined communities.”\textsuperscript{133}

In \textit{Mystic Chords of Memory}, historian Michael Kammen observed, “Societies in fact reconstruct their pasts rather than faithfully record them, and that they do so with the needs of


contemporary culture clearly in mind — manipulating the past in order to mold the present.” 134

Although his observation sounds rather ominous, a metanarrative, or what some have called a
“dominant tradition,” concerning the past provides the building blocks for the construction and
reconstruction of the past in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks. 135 The process by which these
agriburbs (re)constructed their past occurred within a process of formalization and ritualization.
The depiction of the past in them resulted from routinization and imagined authenticity as much
as it did some purposeful — and, even worse, deceitful — manipulation of the past. 136 The
themes of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ foundation as laid out by their promoters became
sacralized as they emerged to shape a dominant tradition in accounts concerning the foundations
of the community. The narrative of both the promoters and those who since have reconstructed
the past is a teleological story that places the trajectory of agriburban communities, not to
mention the residents, as forward-looking but traditional, backward-looking but modern, and
forever on a course of progress, the very foundation for what Friedrich W. Nietzsche called
“monumental history.” 137

Nietzsche also noted that interpreters of history are, and have been, affected by the sheer
volume and weight of history. Accounts of the past provided by the promoters became the

134. Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory, 3.

135. Wohl and Brown, “The Useable Past.” See also, Blake McKelvey, “A History of Historical Writing


137. Friedrich W. Nietzsche, Untimely Meditations: On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,
translated by R. J. Hollingdale (1874; repr., New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 67-77. Monumental
history is history, which is celebratory, romantic, congratulatory, and exceptional in a positive context. Monumental
history serves life since in its proper amount it inspires or encourages the striving of individuals to better themselves
because it celebrates, “through which alone greatness goes on living” (68). See also, Stanton, The Lowell
Experiment, 37, 57, 67, and, especially, 171.
resources of others, whose work then became the resources of others, and so on. This resulted in what James E. Young labeled “collected memory” as vectors of memory became Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ main archival resource when seeking to (re)construct a historical narrative concerning their past. A metanarrative, then, played a role in a long history of directing people to remember in certain and similar ways, favoring some themes while discarding others, favoring certain people while silencing others, and fostering a dominant recollective paradigm that influences how these communities choose to reconstruct their past in the present. Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks became branded places — for historical consumption — by a dominant tradition. A unitary voice emerged in a metanarrative that, in the process, became authoritative, if only by repetition and as persuasive discourse. As a consequence, any silencing, marginalization, or errors in historical fact were passed down through the years and through various vectors of memory, which then made and make them all the more difficult to overturn. If communities do manipulate the past in the present, as Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks certainly do, then they do so out of an inherited dominant tradition that they further (re)make and legitimize. This phenomenon in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks is comparable to what sociologist Paul Connerton labeled as “structural amnesia.” Specifically, structural amnesia, like collected memory, suggests that what is available

138. See Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering, 50.


140. See Barthel, Historic Preservation, 9; and Glassberg, Sense of History, 26-27.


142. See Connerton, How Societies Remember, 3; and Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering, 50.
concerning the past, such as vectors of memory, affects how communities, not to mention individuals, remember and forget or advance and discard historical information in the present.\footnote{Paul Connerton, “Seven Types of Forgetting,” Memory Studies 1, no. 1 (January 2008): 64.}

The historical narrative concerning agriburban communities thus became standardized, making it easier to forget their suburban origins.

A further consequence of a metanarrative, which likewise relates to diverting attention from agriburbs’ suburban heritage, concerns memory. The issue of memory, particularly what many call “collective memory,” is a fundamental part of, and concern to, historians and other scholars who analyze the “public’s history,” or public memory. Collective memory is a term first coined by the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs who separated it from individual memory — which, in short, does not exist.\footnote{Maurice Halbwachs, The Collective Memory, translated by Francis J. Ditter, Jr. and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), contains the crucial essays, “Individual and Collective Memory,” 22-49, and “Historical Memory and Collective Memory,” 50-87; see also Maurice Halbwachs, On Collective Memory, Lewis A. Coser, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), which contains often cited essays from the section “The Social Frameworks of Memory.” Halbwachs was a student of the famed French sociologist Emile Durkheim and, unsurprisingly, a social determinist.} Collective memory is shared, passed on, and constructed by a group or even whole societies — even nations. En masses, scholars have defined and characterized memory in a variety of ways with a variety of concerns to agree collectively that memory is a powerful force or concern. Some even see some rather serious and dire consequences such as hegemonic control of culture and the destruction of collective memory itself. Scholars thus use memory as a theoretical framework or guideline, or both, that applies well to the work of local history makers and producers of various vectors of memory. This, in turn, and for our purposes, helps further explain how vectors of memory and public memory divert attention from the suburban origins of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ history,
marginalize ethnoracial minorities, and affect more present day public memory works and vectors of memory in these communities.

If collective memory truly is shared, passed on, and constructed by a group or even whole societies, then narrative plays a critical role in that process, particularly as narrative can influence the collective memory of local history. A point of clarification is perhaps needed here. While discussing collective memory, the focus has centered on the social production of memory. As collective memory is a term employed by many scholars across many disciplines, the term seems to be in search of meaning. Be that as it may, collective memory here refers to the formation of a useable past whereby correctness and faithfulness to facts, while noble and highly desired, is secondary because collective memory — as the social construction of a group — forms more out of an agenda or strategy for fostering social cohesion and a sense of community, whether real or imagined. Narrative is therefore a fundamental vehicle for disseminating and promulgating


146. Alon Confino, “Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method,” American Historical Review 102, no. 5 (December 1997): 1386-87. Collective memory, in fact, has been discussed as a more-or-less accurate (or at least a perceived accurate) account of the past, one that typically resides with and even within a particular group who lived and experienced the past and is rarely, if ever, translated into textual narrative or other vectors of memory. To do so would signal the end of collective memory as transfer to historical narrative would signal the group no longer organically remembered the past (a lamentable condition of modernity, claim some). See Halbwachs, The Collective Memory, 78; and Nora, “Between History and Memory,” 8. See also Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering, 3.

147. A list of works concerning the relationship of memory to the construction of a useable past, community, and social cohesion is large; nevertheless, the following have shaped my thoughts the most: Ana Maria Alonso, “The Effects of Truth: Re-Presentations of the Past and the Imagining of Community,” Journal of Historical Sociology 1, no. 1 (1988): 33-57; Blight, “If You Don’t Tell It Like It Was, It Can Never Be as It Ought to Be,” in Horton and Horton, Slavery and Public History; Blight, Race and Reunion; Connerton, “Seven Types of Forgetting”; Farmer, Martyred Village; James Fentress and Chris Wickham, Social Memory (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Glassberg, Sense of History; Hayden, The Power of Place; Hobsbawm and Ranger, The Invention of Tradition; Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1994); Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory; Edward T. Linenthal, Preserving Memory: The Struggle to Create America’s Holocaust Museum (New York: Viking, 1995); Levison, Written in Stone; Marcuse, Legacies of Dachau; Peter Novick, The Holocaust in American Life (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999); Jeffery Olick and Daniel Levy, “Collective Memory and Cultural Constraint,” American Sociological Review 62, no. 6 (December 1997): 921-36; Mona L. Siegel, “‘History is the Opposite of Forgetting’: The Limits of Memory and
collective memory, particularly in the form of texts, monuments, memorials, and other such vectors of memory. Some scholars such as Wertsch and Marcuse have favored terms like “collective remembering” and “recollection” to argue that, in Wertsch’s words, “instead of talking about memories that we ‘have,’ the emphasis is on remembering as something we do.”

In other words, as James Fentress and Chris Wickham explained of what they labeled “social memory,” the focus is on “articulate memory.” Such articulation comes through words, rituals, bodily movements, and gestures. Still, articulation primarily comes through narrative. While Fentress and Wickham focus on oral poems and fairy tales, they help elaborate how memory forms around absorbing images of events we have not witnessed. Here, social memory is not memory that is formed out of having lived through an experience, but rather to encounter some mode of articulation recalling a past event or events. As Iwona Irwin-Zarecka concludes, “A ‘collective memory’ — as a set of ideas, images, [and] feelings about the past — is best located not in the minds of individuals, but in the resources they share.”

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148. Marcuse, Legacies of Dachau, 14; and Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering, 17. See also, Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan’s War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century, as they prefer the term collective remembrances whereby “Collective remembrance is public recollection. It is gathering pieces of the past and joining them together in public.” Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, eds., War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 6.

149. Fentress and Wickham, Social Memory, 47.

150. Susan Crane complicates this by claiming that because “reading” text is a lived experience, it constitutes a type of collective memory in-and-of-itself, though altered (Susan Crane, “Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory,” American Historical Review 102, no. 4 [December 1997]: 1381-82).

concerning Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ past are therefore discussed as affecting the public memory of locals. The promotion of public memory, then, as articulated in and through various vectors of memory, directs locals to remember the past in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks in similar and certain ways and, in turn, reproduce stories about the past that reify, legitimate, and promulgate a metanarrative first articulated by these communities’ promoters packaging of place at the end of the nineteenth century.

A dominant recollective paradigm, which helps to shape the public memory in and of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, also has consequences regarding an individual’s “sense of history” and “historical consciousness.” For clarification, a sense of history refers to historian David Glassberg’s definition of the term in *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life* whereby he defined sense of history as “the intersection of the intimate and the historical — the way past events of a personal and public nature are intertwined.”152 Related to this concept of sense of history is historical consciousness. According to Marcuse, historical consciousness denotes a “hypothetical ‘truer’ knowledge about the past that persists despite psychological needs and recollective attempts to change it.” This reflects “deeper feelings about historical events [which] may be common across multiple memory groups [cohorts of people, such as Ontario], even though they are not explicitly shared.” He also maintained that historical consciousness could be “understood as a general awareness of the present as a product of the past.”153 Historical consciousness, therefore, as well as sense of history, “can be defined as


individual and collective understandings of the past, the cognitive and cultural factors which shape those understandings, as well as the relations of historical understandings to those of the present and the future.”

In other words, a dominant recollective paradigm manifest in multiple and various types of vectors of memory represents “cultural factors” or “cultural texts” (i.e., narrative resources) that individuals and even societies, such as Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, use to construct a sense of history and develop historical consciousness. Moreover, such vectors of memory, as characterized by a dominant recollective paradigm, favor certain points in history, phenomena, and people, not to mention the lack of attention to Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ suburban origins, and thus direct people to remember in certain and similar ways and to forge a common perspective concerning local history.

The various vectors of memory that espouse particular themes that constitute a dominant recollective paradigm in agriburban communities, a dominant tradition or even what Michel Foucault called a “dominant memory,” represent a local history that residents of these areas and


154. “Definition of Historical Consciousness” in “About the Centre,” found on the University of British Columbia’s Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness webpage, www.cshc.ubc.ca. See also Siegel’s “History is the Opposite of Forgetting” and The Moral Disarmament of France in which, though employing the term “collective memories,” she used the term similar to how others discuss historical consciousness and sense of history by defining it as “a convergence between individual recollections and public representations of the past, each of which works upon the other, shaping a social group’s sense of shared experience and identity” (Siegel, “History is the Opposite of Forgetting,” 772; and Siegel, The Moral Disarmament of France, 53).


interpreters analyzing their past draw upon. This has vast community implications for Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks and the individuals residing within them. As Nietzsche concluded: “The history of his town,” any person's town, “becomes the history of himself; he looks on the walls, the turreted gate, the town council, the fair, as an illustrated diary of his youth, and sees himself in it all — his strength, industry, desire, reason, faults, and follies.”

“What is of more interest than a town history,” asked James Davie Butler, Jr. in 1846, “to each man [than] that of his own town?” Individuals, in a quest for a “sense of place,” possess “a natural curiosity about the particularities of one’s own locale.” In their study of *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life*, historians Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen found that most Americans, acting as what they labeled “popular history makers,” take an active role is using and understanding the past. While the primary concern to most Americans was family and religion, much of this actually centered on the location of such families and religious organizations, particularly on a local, even statewide level. Furthermore, in identifying the trustworthiness of sources, most Americans identified museums as first, which, again, given the sheer volume of local history museums and historic sites, verify the potential influence local history and local vectors of memory have in shaping historical consciousness and public memory. In fact, just after family gatherings, Americans said they felt most connected to the

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past by visiting a history museum or historic site. This is because individuals, and even communities, imagine themselves within a framework of the past that they more often than not encounter, and crave, at the local level.\footnote{Rosenzweig and Thelen, \textit{The Presence of the Past}, 17-21, see especially tables 1.2 and 1.3.} Local histories and vectors of memory provide locals with a useable past.\footnote{Wohl and Brown, “The Useable Past.”}

In “The Value of Local History,” Lewis Mumford concluded that individuals look for meaning in history, and to look for meaning is to look for connections. He argued that local history provides a forum whereby individuals can engage the past and make sense of an even larger past of a larger geography (from states to the nation). Local history, then, connects people to the larger world outside, to provide them with knowledge of American life in general. “The point is,” said Mumford, “that history begins at home, inevitably; but it does not end there. With local history as a starting point the student is drawn into a whole host of relationships that lead him into the world at large.”\footnote{Lewis Mumford, “The Value of History,” \textit{Year Book} 12 (Poughkeepsie, NY: Dutchess County Historical Society, 1927), reprinted in Kammen, \textit{The Pursuit of Local History}, 89.} In other words, local history, as depicted in vectors of memory, such as in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, is a primary and effective force in shaping historical consciousness and individual’s sense of history, which, according to Glassberg, contribute “to our perception of the traditions that make our \textit{place} distinctive.”\footnote{Glassberg, \textit{Sense of History}, 126, emphasis added.}

Various scholars have contended that “place” is a powerful force — one affecting historical understanding, consciousness, and memory.\footnote{Keith H. Basso, \textit{Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache} (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990); Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso, eds., \textit{Senses of Place} (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, distributed by the University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1996), 165. How place matters to historical}
understanding, consciousness, and identity is complex. Just the same, theorists and other scholars have essentially conceptualized place as both a human construction and a structural force determining people’s behavior.\textsuperscript{166} While some of the finer details of scholars’ conceptions of place may differ, one recurrent theme among them is that place is truly a powerful force. Place is a cultural production that ordinary people actively manipulate to create their own space. In doing so they can carve out a portion of power for themselves despite the power of elites creating the places in which they live from day to day. Similarly, place can be a cultural production that serves as a tool for cultural transmission and identity formation. While place (or sometimes space) can be an area in which people make and act out their lives, the production of such is essential to the basics of political economy and not only serves as a tool of economic advancement, but also a force in shaping people’s behavior. Likewise, place can be a geographically defined area, while also being a socially perceived landscape, possibly symbolically transmitting cultural values. If all this seems utterly confusing, well, that is

\textsuperscript{166} This stance mirrors general trends in social theory from the 1970s – 1980s, particularly in the works of Pierre Bourdieu, Michel de Certeau, and Anthony Giddens. While risking an oversimplification, Bourdieu’s theories essentially center on what he calls “habitus” which he characterizes as a “structured and structuring structure.” For Bourdieu, habitus acts as an intermediate structure between structural processes and personal life style. At the core of Giddens’s theories is structuration, especially regarding what he calls the “duality of structure.” In short, social structures are “the concrete medium and outcome,” product and condition, of everyday social life as experienced reflexively by individual actors in a particular place at a particular time. Finally, Certeau, who discusses place directly, conceives of place as a built environment received by the “ordinary” person who (likely) had no part in the creation of such built environment. Yet, individuals can manipulate (or, as Certeau would say, “poach”) such places to create their own space. See Bourdieu, \textit{Distinction}, 171; Bourdieu, \textit{The Logic of Practice}, 52; Anthony Giddens, \textit{Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 5; 43, \textit{passim}; and Certeau, \textit{The Practice of Everyday Life}, xix, 100, and 117.

While a discussion of place may seem rather tangential, the negative critiques are rather serious when we consider the consequences being implied. Consider, for example, historian Richard Archibald’s \textit{A Place to Remember}. He commented: “The past is implicit in the present, in each of us, and in the places we inhabit.” He bemoaned changes in what he calls “the physical arrangement of people,” i.e., places, because such changes actually meant the destruction of places that threatened personal and community identity, as well as individuals’ sense of history and forms of social cohesion. For Archibald, destruction of place endangered “democratic institutions and the very foundations of this civilization.” He concluded: “Civic, neighborhood, and familial life all depend upon shared places that are repositories of common memories and shared experiences.”\footnote{Archibald, \textit{A Place to Remember}, 9; 17.} Historian William Leach’s ending remarks in \textit{Country of Exiles} captures well the dire consequences of placelessness:
Everything I have discussed in this book, from the market gateways and highways and the big research universities to the cosmopolitanism of business and the academy, has contributed to the destruction of a sense of place and to the transformation of America into a country of exiles. If the process continues with the same degree of intensity, we can only expect greater reliance on state power — more prisons, more police, more attempts to manage or manipulate minds.169

Yikes! For Leach, the United States is losing its sense of place and on the brink of some Orwellian nightmare. Finally, place theorist Henri Lefebvre is a Marxist who takes the material dimension of Marxist conceptions of historical materialism literally. He concludes the production activity of capitalism results in space, that is, a materiality. Space (or place) then does not magically or inherently spring forth from nature. Rather, the production and reproduction of space results from, and then subsequently influences and constrains, human action and thought. He concludes that the production of space is a high stakes affair precisely because “groups, classes or fractions of classes can not constitute themselves, or recognize one another, as ‘subjects’ unless they generate (or produce) a space.” This last point is important to his vision of liberation from capitalist hegemony whereby he dreadfully concludes that “the production of space — has nothing incidental about it: it is a matter of life and death” wherein revolutionaries of change will need to overcome the “triumph of [bourgeois] homogeneity.”170

In 1997, the geographer Kenneth E. Foote concluded: “human modifications of the environment are often related to the way societies wish to sustain and efface memories.”171

Added sociologist Jennifer Jordan in 2006: “Memory thus shapes the landscape through the day-to-day practices of memorial construction, which range from international debates about art and


170. Lefebvre, The Production of Space, 343; 401-04.; 416; 337; 417.

history to the bureaucracies of local parks departments, historic preservation offices, or property registries.  

Physical landscapes, then, and not just imaginary landscapes, or places, are potent sources and sites for individual and collective memory, historical consciousness, and a sense of history. Place is both a vector of memory directing public memory, as well as the manifestation of public memory, what historian Dolores Hayden labeled “the power of place.” On the one hand, places are “theatres of memory,” “storehouses” of memory, or “sites of memory,” whereby personal and public recollections about the past stand against both a flood of place images and the actual physical and material landscape of place, which encompasses historic sites, memorials, museums, buildings, and preservation projects, among other things. As Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ promoters packaged place, they imparted a sense of place and thereby sacralized it. In turn, subsequent vectors of memory took on the role of reproducers of place that served to reify the original production of place as outlined by the promoters thereby legitimizing it and, in turn, bequeathing to Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks and their citizens a sense of sanctified atmosphere. The historical metanarrative concerning these communities resulted from place making and in turn became an agent in place making, particularly through preservation projects. But this narrative includes the absence of public recollections and vectors of memory regarding ethnoracial minorities. This is nothing less than a form of spatial management as decisions regarding who, what, and how to recollect and remember influences the contours of everyday life. It again directs individuals to remember in certain ways and physically affects how individuals experience life in the everyday structures and material landscape of these communities. “No place is a place,” said historian and novelist Wallace Stegner, “until the

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things that have happened in it are remembered in history, ballads, yarns, legends, or monuments.”

As eluded to already, the dominant recollective paradigm characteristic of and manifest within Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ various and multiple types of vectors of memory, has had an affect on the creation of a metanarrative, public memory, sense of history and historical consciousness, and sense of place and place making. Scholars focusing on the importance of metanarratives, memory, sense of history, and sense of place also center much of their attention on how individual and community identity and cohesion are affected. In other words, the discussion centers on how an individual and community’s identity is shaped, even manipulated, by narrative, memory, history, and place. We have already seen the results thereof. Certain events and peoples are remembered and thereby represented in narrative, others are discarded or marginalized, and historical facts and factual representations of the past are either simplified or distorted, or, even worse, both. In the case of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, the result has been to diminish the contributions of minorities as public recollections and vectors of memory concerning them are remarkably miniscule if not essentially absent. Likewise, the focus on these communities’ agriculture and rurality complete with innovative urban amenities has made any discussion of their suburban heritage as nearly obsolete and difficult to do. This is because to do so would be to stand in the face of a 100-year long flood of narrative, memory, history, and sense of place in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks specifically and California in general. To do so would be to overturn, or at least alter, a narrative, memory, sense of history, and sense of place that provides the glue that binds a community together and shapes identity.

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“Social life structures territory,” wrote geographers Jennifer Wolch and Michael Dear, “and territory shapes social life.” In other words, the social life of any particular territory, in our case agriburbs, includes the use, knowledge, dissemination, and consumption of history, narrative, and public recollections of the past as cultural tools. Such consumption in turn shapes public memory, sense of history, and sense of place. As Rosenzweig and Thelen’s study and survey of *The Presence of the Past* suggests, individuals use the past to construct their identity, and no history is more important, according to scholars such as Carol Kammen, Michael Kammen, Lewis Mumford, Friedrich Nietzsche, among others, than local history. People use the past as a set of building blocks to construct a sense of self. People use the past, particularly of their own locale, as a basis to make identity claims about themselves and their “imagined communities.” “By finding out where those who went before them had come from and what they had passed through,” concludes Rosenzweig and Thelen, “respondents hoped to discover secrets of their own identities.” People use the past to interpret the present and shape dreams concerning the future. As Paul Connerton observed, “The narratives of one’s life is part of an intersecting set of narratives; it is imbedded in the stories in those groups from which individuals derive their identity.” A metanarrative about and within Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, formed and defined by a dominant recollective paradigm, represent a “stock of stories,” cultural tools, in which these communities and their residents constitute themselves and their social formation, marking themselves by (re)producing their past.

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Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks and their citizens, even to an extent outside interpreters, have constructed a version of the past and employed it for self-understanding, social cohesion, and some sense of a teleological destiny. As Cathy Stanton concludes regarding historic preservation and public history in Lowell, MA, “Citizens can imaginatively participate in a narrative that makes sense of the trajectories of their own lives and the changing society around them.” The metanarrative, as espoused by Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ vectors of memory, articulates an overarching and broadly shared civic faith. The vectors of memory, and thus these communities’ public memory, are a form of civic education that teaches civic obedience — even serving to “localize” outsiders, migrants, and those coming of age — and helps to construct civic identities. For example, in tune with the dominant recollective theme of agriburbs as innovative, churches and their history are celebrated in these places and touted as an example of their religious diversity (of Protestant Christianity). But such distinction, while meant to serve as an example of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ refinement, is not of the church per se, of God’s chosen people and their house of worship. Rather the distinction and celebration is of a church, or churches, that housed a moral people in a moral community that, as pioneers and, thus, patriots, helped to lay the foundations of a moral community that extends across time and memory to the present-day citizenry. Likewise, the preservation and celebration of good roads, such as Euclid in Ontario, the agricultural prowess of agriburbs’ small orchards,


the exaltation of entrepreneurs, such as the enlightened and well-meaning George Chaffey, and agriburbs as either the “Model Colony” or “best fruit districts,” all direct members of these communities to remember and currently perceive of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks in like and similar ways. These communities are narrated as unique, exceptional, and modern — but not at the expense of culture of tradition. Their history is rooted in an un-suburban rural heritage that persists in character, though no longer in form, despite rising urbanization and industrialization in or around these communities since the early twentieth century.

In Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, the use of the past has been to reify and promulgate a dominant recollective paradigm that, as a form of self-knowledge and, as Mumford argued, “The beginning of sound knowledge about anyone else,” resulted in a “monumental,” if not “antiquarian” history. This monumental history provides, and has provided, a sense of identity. It constituted, and constitutes, the formation of an imagined community. Specifically, it celebrates agriburbs as *sui generis*, innovative, early residents as exceptional and ahead of their time (thus reflective of these communities’ citizenry), and agriculture as the locus of a small-town community that retains the spirit of a small town despite transforming into a rather large city adjacent to Los Angeles, such as Ontario, or modern suburbs of a large metropolitan area, like Orangevale and Fair Oaks. The cultural costs of such a metanarrative is weighed in the continued and perennial silencing, and thereby marginalizing, of ethnoracial minorities in these communities and to divert attention away from the suburban side of their origins. In this context, I conclude this section with a somber warning provided by historian Blake McKelvey in 1944, as he wrote about historical writing in the Rochester area: “Escape from the past is scarcely more possible for a community than for an individual.” He continued, “New growth is ever occurring
but generally as an outgrowth of vital [invented] traditions or latent capacities. . . . [T]he community’s [invented] tradition (its own story, its history) is then part of its character.”

**Conclusion: Vectors of Misrepresentation and their Consequences**

The four major themes of the dominant recollective paradigm deflect attention away from Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ suburban roots. Celebrating these sites as *sui generis* focused on what made them the “Model Colony” or the “best” places for growing citrus. Rather than highlighting suburban planning in the conception of the “Model Colony” or “colonial enterprises,” these communities came to represent many implicit things, from some generic form of planning a colony to innovative institutions manufactured to supply urban amenities without the city. Indeed, the eminent geographer James E. Vance, Jr., in “California and the Search for the Ideal,” concluded that California’s residential and suburban expansion “showed more force if less pattern.” Again, the implicit argument here is that suburban planning had little to do with California’s residential and suburban experience. The precise way vectors of memory celebrate agriculture in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, which focuses on an abstract notion of “colony,” improvement, and production, pays more attention to the rural side of agriculture and not to the suburban side of urban. The focus on their seemingly innovative institutions and infrastructure stressed how remarkable such institutions and infrastructure were despite Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks originating as “agricultural colonies.” Such representation demotes the role institutions and infrastructure played in the suburban planning of these communities, specifically because such “urban amenities” reflect amenities that would attract a largely suburban population. The glorification of entrepreneurs and founders directs a remembrance of

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pioneers who connect to a larger national story, wrapped in such patriotic themes as nation building, material progress, and so-called social civilization. Consequently, the promoters’ planning of these communities emerge not as suburban by design, but rather as a “Model Colony” or “Fruit Colony” — colonies that began simply as rural communities amid a dry barren land, which required the promoters to provide water, i.e., life.

Taken together, the many vectors of memory focusing on Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks do much to divert attention away from the suburban side of their past. Yet, as this review demonstrates, they can paradoxically provide the information needed to recognize the suburban heritage in these communities. Larger trends and themes in state, regional, and national histories coalesced with, and legitimized, Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ conception of themselves as agricultural colonies, which was and is un-suburban. In general, the lack of a general definition of suburb and suburbanization, as a process, contribute to the lasting power of vectors of memory to divert attention away from potential suburban types and a larger understanding of suburbanization as a process. By seeking to expand on suburbanization, find new suburban sites, and critically analyze vectors of memory, historians and researchers can hope to increase the understanding of suburbia and mold a more definitive understanding of America’s suburban experience.

Lastly, Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, as case study sites, perhaps reveal a bit about the nature of public memory and recollection in (formerly) small-town communities (in and out of California) that have an agricultural past tied to horticulture. Long lasting cultural costs came with the original promoters’ packaging of place at the end of the nineteenth century. Citizens of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks were, and are, directed to remember in certain and similar ways, which affects public memory, sense of history and historical consciousness, sense of place,
and, more importantly, sense of self and community. This has resulted in the sacralization and legitimization of a dominant recollective paradigm that, after 100 years, seems to have become a Mt. Everest whereby any hopes of conquering it will face the full and powerful force of memory, historical understanding, place making, and individual and community identity. Be that as it may, a dominant recollective paradigm in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks represents a form of cultural capital and cultural investment paid into by a select and powerful group of locals who, in the process, exert and exemplify hegemonic (soft) power and control. So to topple a dominant recollective paradigm would not only be a matter of facing a long history of narrative, public memory, historical consciousness, sense of place, and sense of self, but also a matter of engaging the full might and wrath of local elites and the powers that be. That is to say in Orwellian style, as the metal rap group Rage Against the Machine did (“Testify,” 1999): “Who controls the past now controls the future; who controls the present now controls the past; who controls the past now controls the future; [so,] who controls the present now?”180

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CHAPTER SIX

“Who Controls The Past . . . Controls The Future”: Forgetting and Remembering in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks

The past is past, but this section of Fair Oaks with the winding streets, hills and Carmel-like setting, still holds charm.


Forgetting and Collected Memory

“In the practical use of our intellect,” the philosopher and psychologist William James concluded, “forgetting is as important a function as remembering.” For James, forgetting served a practical function since remembering everything one has experienced and learned in life would make people “as ill off as if we remembered nothing.” With an infinite mass of information and life experience one can encounter, accumulate, and sense throughout life, to remember everything — an excessive case of what is sometimes called hypermnesia — would not only be absurd and hardly possible, but also onerous and, ultimately, a hindrance to remembering more easily. Too much information retards recollection and memory, leading to what Nietzsche described as when “man envelops himself in an odour of decay.” With too much information, like a blocked pipe holding back the flow of water, the minds of people clog up and their mental faculties are impeded and, at best, recollection is obstructed or, at worst, prevented altogether. “Oblivion,” as James concluded, “except in certain cases, is thus no malady of memory but a


condition of its health and its life.”\(^5\) Forgetting is practical and, as Nietzsche maintained, to “live life in any true sense is absolutely impossible without forgetfulness.”\(^6\)

Forgetting, like memory (not to mention historical consciousness and place), is both a noun and a verb. Forgetting is not just a simple matter of the absence of memory or recollection (a natural phenomenon that simply is), but also an act, whether conscious or unconscious, whereby information and recall can be erased, lost, or avoided. But, “we generally regard forgetting as a failure,” concludes sociologist Paul Connerton. He argues that forgetting is not just a natural phenomenon or simply a case of failing to do something, but also an active (whether reflexive or unconscious) strategy for dealing with a variety of issues and circumstances.\(^7\) In “Seven Types of Forgetting,” he describes seven ways in which individuals

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5. James, *Psychology*, 301.


and societies forget the past. In other words, like memory, historical consciousness, and sense of place, forgetting, in many ways, is an achievement of some sort. Without engaging the large body of scholarship surrounding conceptions and theories of the mind and the field of pathopsychology here, forgetting, as Connerton and others have argued, is as much a social act or phenomenon as a condition of the individual human mind.

Connerton’s seven types of forgetting include (1) “repressive erasure”: whereby forgetting is like a denial, the result of force, usually of a totalitarian regime. (2) “Prescriptive forgetting”: whereby all parties agree forgetting a previous dispute is in their collective best interest in order to avoid (further) civil conflict. (3) “Forgetting that is constitutive in the formation of a new identity”: whereby forgetting is the result of discarding memories that serve no practical purpose and provides living space for present projects. (4) “Structural amnesia”: whereby forgetting is the result of remembering only what is available in print or other public recollections of the past. (5) “Forgetting as annulment”: whereby forgetting, like James and Nietzsche also discussed, is a reaction to an excess of information. Forgetting is thus practical, normal, and even essential for enjoying a normal life. (6) “Forgetting as planned obsolescence”: whereby “forgetting is an essential ingredient in the operation of the market.” As people consume, they need to discard to consume more, and so on and so forth. (7) “Forgetting as humiliated silence”: whereby forgetting is an overt act of silencing, typically the result of a state apparatus (e.g., the Turkish government’s denial of the Armenian genocide), or even the burying of things that are beyond expression and toleration, “a process of survival,” such as forgetting the

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Holocaust. This last “type” of forgetting, humiliated silence, is a dominant theme for many who deal with the memory of genocide, particularly the Holocaust, slavery, and other tragedies that are often too controversial in the present to lead to an open dialogue.

Forgetting the suburban side of agricultural colonization in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks fits well with how Connerton and others have discussed forgetting. This is also true for the forgetting of ethnoracial minorities and, to an extent, white women in such communities. To forget the low pay, arduous work, and blatant racism and sexism directed at, and for, ethnoracial minorities and women in the past can be seen as repressive erasure. To go beyond the acknowledgement of their mere existence into actually doing something about the lack of attention beyond a simple museum exhibit or a few lines in a book might potentially raise uncomfortable and divisive issues of race and sexism in the present. To discuss the suburban side of agricultural colonization could simply be a form of denial because suburbia may have

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been reduced to an understanding of it in all its negative connotations. In other words, a potentially overwhelming desire not to be associated with suburbia and all its negative connotations influences memory and forgetting.

Forgetting the suburban side of agricultural colonization in California and the role of ethnoracial minorities and women in such communities can also be representative of forgetting as annulment. Forgetting is a reaction to an overload of information, particularly an overload of information regarding agriculture, innovation, and biographies of “great men” and “founding fathers.” With such an intense and immense focus on the themes of a dominant recollective paradigm, to move toward a recognition of the suburban side of their origins and the role of ethnoracial minorities and women is easier said than done. The history and public memory of these communities are essentially un-suburban, non-ethnic, and unequivocally masculine. The dominant focus is on the rurality of agriculture and the urbane sophistication of urban amenities and infrastructure.

The process of forgetting the suburban side of agricultural colonization in California and the role of ethnoracial minorities and women in such communities is perhaps most reflective of forgetting as structural amnesia. In Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks the packaging of place by the original promoters created a metanarrative, as embodied in the themes of a dominant recollective paradigm. This has resulted in cultural costs that influence the daily experiences of people in navigating their lives in a material and imaginary environment. The costs include the construction of community and individual identity, as well as the prospects of fostering social cohesion. Another cost has been the legitimatization, even sacralization, of the themes of a dominant recollective paradigm that influences the reproduction and repackaging of agriburban places and their history, what Connerton called structural amnesia.
Forgetting as structural amnesia is akin to what James E. Young labeled “collected memory” and Marianne Hirsch called “postmemory” as the many vectors of memory concerning agriburban areas became their main archival resource when seeking to (re)construct a historical narrative concerning their past.\textsuperscript{10} In his 2000 study of second generation Holocaust memorials, Young argued many children of Holocaust survivors find it difficult to understand the Holocaust beyond the ways it was passed on to them by their parents. For Young, second generation Holocaust memorials denoted a “vicarious past” derived from a “received history” in the absence of first-hand knowledge and the experience of events themselves.\textsuperscript{11} Also looking to the children of Holocaust survivors, Marianne Hirsch posits the concept of “postmemory.” Postmemory, as distinguished from collective memory and history, is marked by generational distance and personal connection. According to Hirsch, postmemory is “a powerful and very particular form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated, not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation. . . . Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation.”\textsuperscript{12} Structural amnesia, received history, collected memory, and postmemory, all thus represent ways of remembering and representing the past that are nearly impossible for any society or individual to do outside the ways already used to narrate or remember it. Historical narratives of the past

\textsuperscript{10} Young, \textit{The Texture of Memory}, xi; and Hirsch, \textit{Family Frames}, 22. See also Art Spiegelman, \textit{Maus: A Survivor’s Tale} (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986); and Ricoeur, \textit{Memory, History, Forgetting}, especially “Forgetting and Manipulated Memory,” 448-53.

\textsuperscript{11} Young, \textit{At Memory’s Edge}, 3-4.

\textsuperscript{12} Hirsch, \textit{Family Frames}, 22.
concerning Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks have largely resulted from structural amnesia, received history, collected memory, postmemory, or whatever other term one prefers.

The growth machine group who packaged Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, represented by George Chaffey and V. S. McClatchy, narrated a sense of place and history as a market strategy to distinguish these communities from other places to increase sales and profit. They built material value in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, such as bridges and buildings, to help them sell their land. They also created a spatial imagery that helped sell land. This imagery utilized the language and metaphors of popular cultural iconography that appealed, largely, to a white middle class. They succeeded in branding these places and this branding has had long-term effects. It reveals much about the power and saliency of the original promoters’ packaging of place. Specifically, they created a “stock of stories” or “cultural tool kit” that has influenced beliefs about the past that have residents understand their past, present, and, by implication, their future. They helped establish the foundations and themes of a dominant recollective paradigm that is (re)produced and promulgated in various vectors of memory. This has resulted in the diverting of attention away from the suburban side of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ past. It perpetuates four salient themes while fostering a white middle class sense of cohesion, history, and place. Over the years, a dominant recollective paradigm, through a process of formalization and ritualization, fashioned a metanarrative that has become a body of works that can be called collected memory.

The themes of the dominant recollective paradigm espouse a tale of teleological progress — without the sacrifice of tradition — that understandably appeals to residents, who then dutifully retransmit it favorably. It directs residents and others looking to California’s agricultural colonies to remember Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks in similar ways because it
represents a unitary and authoritative voice of a dominant tradition, if only through repetition, persuasive discourse, or a surfeit of information, or some form and mixture of each. Generations of historians and other retrospective interpreters focusing on Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks have been constrained by a dominant recollective paradigm and compelled, if not seemingly forced, to (re)make tradition and promulgate a metanarrative as first outlined by the promoters. These reproducers of place and tradition thus helped and help shape an understanding of the past concerning these communities. In addition, collected memory and knowledge about the past, particularly at the local level, becomes a form of cultural capital that influences the reproduction of historical narratives in the subsequent years following the original production of place, memory, and history.

Representations of the Past and its Price in Contemporary Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks

The influence of a dominant recollective paradigm and of collected memory is not only evident in the saliency of four recurrent themes, but also in a plethora of other historical narratives and representations of the past in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks. As was the case with the four themes of a dominant recollective paradigm, recent reproductions representing the past are largely shaped by and reflect collected memory, diverting attention away from these communities’ suburban origins, marginalizing ethnoracial minorities and women, and further promulgating the paradigm and adding to the surplus of information and power of collected memory. In Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks a white middle class heritage works to preserve, memorialize, and, as a result, sanctify a white middle class legacy. With very little attention or mention of suburban planning and minority groups, a white middle class narrative that celebrates a romanticized agrarian past dominates in not only the telling of history, but also what these places choose to mark as culturally and historically important. This shapes historical
consciousness and memory, hides the history of suburban planning, forgets minority groups, and directs those living in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks to value similar things in similar ways. This also affects the physical and material landscape of these communities and, hence, how — in material form — people experience it in their everyday lives and understand their day-to-day existence.

A Sigmund Freud reference from *Civilization and Its Discontents* captures well the power and potential purpose of culture. “We recognize as cultural,” wrote Freud, “all the activities and resources which are useful to men for making the earth serviceable to them.”\(^\text{13}\) Culture is something that can be employed, acted upon whether conscious or unconscious, and often is used in the service of some purpose or at least accomplishment. History is therefore a cultural production, specifically because it takes the form, more often than not, of narrative. History is not synonymous with the past. Historical narrative then is not the past as it was, but rather a story that takes the raw materials of the past and alters, organizes, and even manipulates it to make a better story — the past is.\(^\text{14}\) Historical narratives in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, which, again, take the form of a metanarrative, a unitary voice identifiable in four major themes of a dominant recollective paradigm, are cultural texts that, when considered together, are collected memory. Comparable to Freud, cultural texts such as those many and various vectors of memory that comprise collected memory in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks are utilized to


legitimate, through repetition, references to the past. Such cultural texts as dominant memory and tradition act to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior, which in agriburbs equates to a white middle class view of the world. The result, as Eric Hobsbawm said of “invented tradition,” is that “the history which became part of the fund of knowledge or the ideology of nation, state or movement is not what has actually been preserved in popular memory, but what has been selected, written, pictured, popularized and institutionalized by those whose function it is to do so.”

The production and reproduction of tradition reflects a particular ideology of class values, lifeways, memory, sense of history, and sense of place in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks. The past has been created and recreated in the present in which people have lived and live to legitimate contemporary personal, social, and political circumstances. “What the public is reading,” said historian Martha Norkunas, “are hegemonic texts reflective of a particular ideology that legitimates the current social structure.” In Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks the production and reproduction of “invented tradition,” of a dominant recollective paradigm, is detectable in these communities’ efforts to preserve, memorialize, and celebrate the past through monuments, spectacle, historical preservation, the local historical society, and walking tours. The celebration and memorialization of the past in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks in more recent years reveals the continued pervasiveness and popularity of a dominant recollective

15. See Michael Walzer, On Toleration (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), especially chapter four and five; and Levison, Written in Stone, 85-86.


paradigm and white middle class body of ideas and beliefs, which continues to divert attention from these communities’ suburban origins and marginalizes minority groups. These more recent activities and cultural productions also represent a variety of diverse types of vectors of memory, besides textual narratives of the past, and include a distinctly turn of the twenty-first century type: cyberspace. These vectors of memory that recreate themes of a dominant recollective paradigm also add to the surfeit of information amassed into an even larger and growing body of collected memory. On the one hand, this overload of information creates a tidal wave so forceful in its impact that to produce a counter narrative that strays too much from the dominant tradition is as difficult as rowing a boat from New York to England. On the other hand, this surplus of information, as representative of collected memory, represents a cultural body of knowledge, a type of cultural capital, on which community members draw, invest, and take their cue from when (re)producing representations and celebrations of the past. Likewise, it represents a shared body of knowledge that community members and others can use to communicate to each other. The (re)production of representations of the past, therefore, of various vectors of memory, can also be the result of community members displaying, even showing off, their mastery of and, more important, adherence to the shared body of knowledge — sacred texts, or collected memory as canonical works. This kind of economic and social activity is largely rooted in the middle class culture of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks and, to a degree, is responsible for much of the more recent (re)productions of the past in these communities.

A Dominant Recollective Paradigm in Contemporary Ontario

Trends in the more recent and more public vectors of memory concerning Ontario, particularly historic preservation, reveal the continued pervasiveness of a dominant recollective paradigm. Such trends offer additional examples of why historians and researchers continue to overlook Ontario’s suburban origins. Then again, such trends also show the persisting influence
of the promoters’ original packaging of place that helped establish a dominant recollective paradigm to begin with. Contemporaneous historical narratives in Ontario further disseminate, and thus legitimate and reify, the themes that constitute a dominant recollective paradigm. Furthermore, the dogged diffusion of a dominant recollective paradigm and its thematic parts comes at observable costs in terms of public memory, historical consciousness, sense of place, and individual and community identity. A primary effect and feature of these costs has not only been the deflection of attention from the suburban origins of Ontario, not to mention Orangevale and Fair Oaks, but also the forgetting — the marginalization — of ethnoracial minorities and women.

One of the more outstanding examples of the persisting influence of a dominant recollective paradigm in Ontario is the erection of the statue of George B. Chaffey, Jr. and the celebration of him as a pioneer and patriot. Chaffey’s legacy and importance in and for Ontario had steadily been growing as early as the late nineteenth century. Notwithstanding the appearance of graduate student theses and local elementary student projects, Chaffey’s legacy and importance really did not receive a major boost until after J. A. Alexander’s biography of him appeared in 1928 and his death four years later. Chaffey’s legacy then metamorphosed from one of several founders to an “Empire Builder” of the West. Whether naming a school or library after him or declaring a holiday in his honor, the admiration, commemoration, and tribute devoted to Chaffey grew conspicuously from the 1930s forward.

Celebrating Chaffey as an innovative, intelligent, and exceptional pioneer founder seemed to be what Ontarians were supposed to be doing. Chaffey became a “founding father” like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin. He emerged as a quintessential American hero distinguished by intelligence, entrepreneurship, refinement, and
finesse. He typified a national spirit of patriotic nation building and manifest destiny. From this legacy, Ontario and hence Ontarians are Chaffey’s progeny. Being an Ontarian is therefore a charge or prescription of sort. Ontarians, by remembering and honoring Chaffey as a pioneer founder, patriot, and entrepreneur, appoint themselves as benefactors for maintaining a “Model Colony.” The erection of the Chaffey Statue on October 15, 2005 attests to this narrated sense of place, history, and community identity — of Ontario, and the people residing within, as the embodiment of material progress and social civilization, what historian David J. Russo labeled in Nietzschean flair as “ancestral worship.”

A celebration of material progress and social civilization not only diverts attention from the suburban origins of Ontario’s past by romanticizing Chaffey’s “most perfect plan” for an innovative “agricultural colony,” but also affects how ethnoracial minorities are remembered in Ontario’s past and, by implication, how they are thought of in the present and future. A focus on material progress and social civilization, on what the sculptor of the Chaffey statue said represented “a vision for what this area could and did become,” forgets the presence and role of minorities. Instead, the focus is on so-called civilization and progress, which as pointed out by historians such as Stuart M. Blumin, Robert Fishman, and Gwendolyn Wright, repeats the nomenclature of white middle-class America at the turn of the twentieth century. While some recent historical narratives have highlighted minorities in Ontario, most concentrate on

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19. David J. Russo, “Some Impressions of the Nonacademic Local Historians and Their Writings,” in Kammen, The Pursuit of Local History, 39. In fact, the celebration of local pioneers has been a salient feature of local history and vectors of memory for a rather long time as the great amateur historian Salma Hale called attention to local “actors” in contrast to a “national” focus on “men of power in 1832. Nevertheless, Hale’s call was not one for including “average” people, especially ethnoracial minorities, but rather a call for highlighting the local powers that be. See, Selma Hale, “Address Delivered Before the New-Hampshire Historical Society,” Collections of the New Hampshire Historical Society 3 (1832), in Kammen, The Pursuit of Local History, 61-65; and Butler, Deficiencies in Our History, 66-75.

minorities’ early role as laborers and not community fellows or co-benefactors. Native Americans therefore receive attention so that material progress and social civilization can come in or arrive. Likewise, Mexicans, Asians, and their descendents are only mentioned when toiling in the fields or operating factory devices. They are distinguished only for their service to the so-called material progress and advancement of Ontario, whether harvesting citrus or grapes, shaping irons at Hot Point, or performing domestic work for Ontario’s “best class of people.” This overall lack of focus on minorities reflects a white middle-class heritage working to preserve a white middle-class legacy.21

Recent preservation efforts in Ontario ignore the potential places and sites possibly important to minorities, particularly a growing — and majority — Mexican-American population (59.9% as of 2000), as well as Asian Americans.22 Ontario’s preservation efforts show one representation of the past — a white, mainly male, middle-class conception of a rural Garden of Eden — predominates. Euclid Avenue, “the most beautiful” and “famous” street was Ontario’s latest National Register nomination. Other sites include the Frankish Building (listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980) and Hofer Ranch (listed on the National Register in 1993). Both receive recognition because of their connections with the early growth and development of Ontario. Specifically, the Frankish Building links with Charles Frankish’s commercial and business shrewdness in early Ontario. He provided Ontario with a sophisticated


business core remarkable for a booming “agricultural colony” in the early twentieth century.23

The Hofer Ranch links to Ontario’s agricultural heritage and, according to the nominator of Hofer Ranch to the National Register, “stand[s] out in a rapidly urbanizing landscape.” Neither structures represent women or minorities nor do they account for a suburban past.24

The Ontario Planning Commission has developed six historic districts featuring mostly bungalows and other homes occupied primarily by the middle class in Ontario’s past.25 The districts are within the older downtown and the Planning Commission hopes to expand on these while also creating six more nearby.26 Implicit but unspoken here is the primacy of middle-class conceptions of aesthetic value and sense of history. While interest in minority workers in Ontario’s early years exists, few vectors of memory have materialized. Most striking is the silence of minority voices and counter memories. As historian Linda Gordon argues, such silence is hard to ignore because it “remind[s] us of hidden assumptions and of the existence of the powerless, the unmobilized, [and] the alienated.”27 While focusing on the silence may risk


26. Personal discussion author had with City of Ontario Planning Department staff on January 30, 2007, City Hall, 303 East B Street, Ontario, CA 91764.

27. Gordon, Pitted But Not Entitled, 211.
imposing ahistorical expectations onto the past, the silence of some groups perhaps “makes the demands of others relatively louder.” That is, while historians may not always be able to recapture the voice of marginalized or “forgotten” groups, they can use the silence to show some of the underlying meanings of the voices that come through loudly. A focus on silence does not affix blame or point fingers at Ontario’s commission officials and staff as if they are members of some Gramscian bourgeois capitalist elite who are villainous and purposely deceitful in controlling and holding down minorities. Rather, the silence of minorities — or, admittedly, the deafness of others — reveals the saliency of a middle-class conception and historical consciousness present in various vectors of memory characteristic of Ontario’s public memory. Nonetheless, the activities of the commission, most notably its drive for the creation of historic districts in a historically white middle-class downtown area illustrates the pervasiveness and dominance of a white middle-class perception of history that seemingly yearns to preserve the rural, non-industrial side of its past. It reveals the power of the promoters’ original packaging of place.

While not capturing the voices of past minorities, some questions with them in mind suggest ways in which Ontario’s vectors of memory ignore many of its citizens and diverse ethnic and cultural history. To start, where did most of the Mexican American and Chinese Americans live? Some sources cite communities in Upland. Still, what places would Mexican Americans and Chinese Americans, who likely built Ontario’s railroad lines and spurs, Euclid Avenue, and street railway, consider worth preserving? Even if they did not live in the Ontario city limits, would they have traveled the street railway or even been forbidden? Which places


would those who worked in the orchards and vineyards, provided laundry services, or worked as servants think had aesthetic value or provided a sense of history? Did a particular community center(s) or gathering place(s) exist where working class, and ethnically and racially diverse minorities, met, conversed, and exchanged information? Such places may have been crucial in developing their sense of self, as well as a sense of collective identity. Even if such places are gone, as Dolores Hayden shows in *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, commemoration and memorialization of “vanquished” places can create public spaces, especially as they do more than simple plaques, or texts in a museum, as Ontario has done. Likewise, the Mule Car, in operation for a scarce nine years, prominently stands protected in a glass showcase in the center of Euclid Avenue, praising the work of two mules in a public space, which, as Glassberg and Hayden have noted, directs a sense of history (historical consciousness) and of place. One may wonder where the public space commemorations of Ontario’s hundreds, to eventual thousands, of agricultural and even early industrial laborers, are. Perhaps allotments of public spaces could establish some form of celebration of Mexican field workers who toiled on Ontario’s many farms, or of Chinese Americans who, in the agricultural and domestic industry, serviced the fantasies of a “better class of people.”

30. Admittedly, if one takes a Gramscian view, then one would suspect marginalized peoples would assume the values of the dominant culture.


While the Planning Commission seeks political support for the preservation of Ontario’s heritage, one has to ask whose heritage they attempt to preserve. Playing cards produced by the commission to educate the public about architecture and preservation underscore this point. Four architectural types are highlighted, one for each suit. Each suit contains a photo for visual representation, lists the years of principal construction, and briefly describes “common features.” The types are Neoclassical Revival (1905-1920), Craftsman (1895-1920s), Mediterranean Bungalow (1900-Present), and Colonial Revival Bungalow (1890-1915). The houses

Image 1. Ontario Planning Commission’s “City of Ontario, CA Celebrates Historic Preservation” Playing Cards

33. The contention the commission is seeking political support for preservation efforts came because of a conversation author had with commission staff, January 30, 2007.
listed are ones usually occupied by the middle class and represent, for the most part, a small window of time in Ontario’s history. Note, however, other than the Hofer Ranch, no agricultural homesteads receive attention, not to mention prefabricated or self-built houses popular among working class peoples. Implicit here is what the commission considers architecture: buildings built only by professionally trained architects for a well-to-do consumer. Indeed, the commission’s mission statement for historic preservation asserts, “The program seeks to preserve & protect the significant architectural, historical, & cultural resources, which reflect Ontario’s unique character & heritage.” Architecture, in this context, does not represent all buildings in Ontario, as evidenced by what the department has sought to preserve already. Likewise, historical and cultural resources reflect physical and conceptual boundaries and lines reserved for the white middle class — their exclusive character and heritage. No mention of a “vernacular” architecture that accounts for the social use of buildings is stated. Based on what has been preserved already, as well as what the commission hopes to preserve in the future, “significant architectural, historical, & cultural resources” are those that are significant to a middle-class notion of an idealized rural past. This point underscores the saliency of the historical narrative as first established by the promoters at the end of the nineteenth century. The adoration of agriculture and urban amenities, which featured “small home cottages,” direct citizens and other interpreters to narrow their preservation and memory work to the homes of the more affluent and white residents of Ontario’s past precisely because they were exceptional, forward-looking and modern, in an otherwise traditional “agricultural colony.”

34. See Hayden, Building Suburbia; Lewis, Manufacturing Suburbs; and Nicolaides and Weise, The Suburb Reader.

35. City of Ontario, Planning Department, City of Ontario Website, www.ci.ontario.ca.us.

36. For more on debates of “vernacular” architecture, see Hayden, The Power of Place, 3-13.
Expanding preservation efforts to include the broader cultural and ethnic landscape and history of Ontario could provide the political and public support the commission desires. For example, because restoring downtown is a high priority of the commission, reinterpreting the importance of downtown to include a more diverse cultural and ethnic landscape would be prudent. Downtown Ontario served as a business center and the culmination of Ontario’s middle-class aspirations of a rural community enjoying urban amenities. Yet, did downtown provide jobs to white middle-class men only — perhaps segregation proved the norm? Did women or minorities run businesses? If so, perhaps Ontario could honor, recognize, and commemorate such, including the creation and dedication of public spaces. If not, perhaps Ontario could reinterpret certain places or an area in general to draw on possible meanings to a more diverse audience today. For example, a public mural placed in the middle of Euclid, or possibly near the run down Hotpoint factory, could feature information and works of art devoted to Mexican Americans, explaining their role in the growth and development of the community. Dolores Hayden successfully completed such a project in Los Angeles concerning Biddy Mason and the role of African Americans in Los Angeles’ past.37

Preservation reflects the needs of the present and preservation efforts in Ontario ought to reflect the needs of a present community whose majority population is Hispanic, as well as address the contributions of women and Asian Americans, to name a few.38 Admittedly, more questions arise than answers. Still, the underlying point is that Ontario’s vectors of memory


38. Preservation and public recollections reveal much about Ontario’s relationship to its past because commemoration mediates between many things: individual testimony and collective remembrance; remembered experience and written works; and remembering and forgetting (Farmer, *Martyred Village*, 3-4). The argument preservation efforts reflect needs in the present relates well with Michael Kammen’s assertion that “societies in fact reconstruct their pasts rather than faithfully record them, and that they do so with the needs of contemporary culture clearly in mind—manipulating the past in order to mold the present” (Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, 3).
continue to perpetuate a white middle-class perception and sense of history. Public commemoration and public memory in Ontario reveal the nature of political power and who exercises it. The building of the Chaffey statue, though in Upland, with markers devoted to highlighting donors, underscores this point. The statue and the markers reinforce a sense of community among the donors and designate their special position in the community as keepers of the public memory. Preservation efforts in Ontario underscore the same thing. Middle-class (mainly) white people are deciding on the use of public resources to preserve a white middle-class sense of history. Because the political power belongs to them, their sense of history and heritage is preserved — as collected memory. Ultimately, such preservation practices not only trivialize and ignore broader cultural and ethnic landscapes, but also divert attention away from Ontario’s suburban roots because they focus on the urban amenities and homes of a white middle class building a rural pastoral ideal.

A Dominant Recollective Paradigm in Contemporary Orangevale

A noticeable lack of historical remembrance and celebrations of the past is a symptom of Orangevale’s more recent activities. While not entirely absent, the dearth of public recollections of the past may have a lot to do with the fact that Orangevale’s population over the span of nearly the past twenty years, from 1990 to 2007, has actually declined in an otherwise growing Sacramento metropolitan region. It declined by -0.014% per year since 1990, from 26,266 to an estimated 25,888, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) estimates for 2005-2007. Yet, if measuring growth from farther back, then Orangevale did grow by 0.26% from 1980 to 2007, while the U.S. grew by 0.33% over the same time span. Moreover, Orangevale remains a largely white community with 89.5% of the population recorded as white in the 2000 census and 88.7% in the 2005-2007 ACS estimates, with 7.8% Hispanic or Latino, 3.4% Asian, and 0.8% Black or African American. Economically, Orangevale, according to the
2000 census, had a median household income of $53,371 as compared to the national average of $41,994. In contrast, Sacramento County, which does not include all the areas of the Sacramento metropolitan area, such as the rapidly growing areas of Roseville and Rocklin and their estimated 150,000 residents, experienced a per year growth rate of approximately 0.32% from 1990 to 2007 — 1,041,219 to 1,373,773 — with 61.4% white, 19.2% Hispanic or Latino, 13.4% Asian, and 10.1% Black or African American.39

The relatively limited growth of Orangevale over the past twenty, even thirty, years, as well as its racial homogeneity, particularly when compared and contrasted with its location within a larger diverse and growing metropolitan and cosmopolitan region, is suggestive. With very little change in demography, not to mention economic trends, infrastructure, and political culture, nothing has fundamentally posed a significant threat to the historically salient cultural, economic, political, or social hierarchies and power structures in Orangevale.40 In other words, because Orangevale has retained a white, conservative, middle class makeup and power structure, the need to affirm its place atop such a power structure, which would include the production of historical narratives, is minimal. No large numbers of non-whites or other groups outside the dominant white middle class population has moved in or made its presence felt in any

39. For population and other figures concerning Orangevale, see Sacramento County Planning Department, Orangevale Community Plan: Technical Report (Sacramento: Sacramento County Planning Department, 1976), 9-10; California, Department of Finance, “Population Totals by Township and Place for California Counties: 1860 to 1950”; U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 4, Orangevale, California CDP, available online at www.census.gov; and U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey, Orangevale, California CDP, available online at www.census.gov. For population and other figures on Sacramento County, see U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Tape File 1, Sacramento County, California, available online at www.census.gov; U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 4, Sacramento County, California, available online at www.census.gov; and U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey, Sacramento County, California, available online at www.census.gov.

40. For example, since 1978, Orangevale, along with other communities in California’s 5th Assembly District, such as Fair Oaks, has elected 6 straight Republicans to represent them in California’s State Assembly, and, since 1966, and for California’s 1st Senate District, has elected 5 straight Republicans to represent them in the State Senate.
overtly public forums or ways. With that said, another Freud reference perhaps adds further insight. “It is always possible,” wrote Freud, “to bind together a considerable number of people in love, so long as there are other people left over to receive the manifestations of their aggressiveness.”

The lack of any great outpouring of public representations of the past in Orangevale may be the result of the lack of pressure to do so or the relative — and thus subjective — sense of satisfaction with contemporary community identity and the stability of various mechanisms of power. In Freudian terms, then, the need to bind together, and, for our purposes, to create representations of the past that perhaps foster and provide a device of social cohesion and sense of individual and community identity, is lacking because of the absence of someone — or some group(s) of people — to hate, or, more likely, I suspect, feel anxious about.

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Despite no largesse of public recollections of the past and historical narratives in Orangevale in more recent years, it would be a gaffe to say that none does exist. The influence

of a dominant recollective paradigm on public memory and collected memory is still evident in
events, community organizations, and cultural resources management. Orangevale holds an
annual community celebration called the Orangevale Pow Wow Days. The name itself is
suggestive, as it references a Native American gathering and festivity. As historian Philip J.
Deloria put it, “playing Indian is a persistent [white American] tradition.”42  Like much of
American mythic history, according to historian Paul Spickard, Native Americans tend to be
treated “like parts of the natural landscape — like antelopes and cougars, if you will, sometimes
threatening and sometimes benign . . . [i]t is this very naturalizing that leads a lot of White
Americans to claim some Native ancestry.”43  In other words, as Deloria and Spickard maintain,
in a postindustrial and postmodern world, white Americans often appropriate Native American
customs and rituals, or at least what they believe to be such (including genealogical claims),
because to be “Native American, unlike to be Black, is to be naturally, primordially part of
America.”44  To be Native American, or, for our present example, to correlate a community
gathering to a Native American gathering is to be somehow more authentically American. Pow
Wow Days started in 1963 as Chuck Wagon Days — another quintessentially American
reference, this time to a romanticized westward movement that echoes the theme of Manifest
Destiny. Not surprisingly, Orangevale had just experienced its largest period of growth, from
1950 to 1960, with an increase of about 6.5% per year (1,600 to 11,600).45  In 1964, the name
Chuck Wagon Days fell to Fiesta Days (perhaps homage to California’s Spanish, Mexican, and

43. Spickard, Almost All Aliens, 7.
44. Spickard, Almost All Aliens, 7.
45. Sacramento County Planning Department, Orangevale Community Plan, 8.
Californio past — and thus a naturalizing claim to the California landscape). Fiesta Days then fell out of use to Pow Wow Days in 1965.46

During Pow Wow Days locals and visitors gather for several days of games, shows, food, and a parade, including those always delicious pancake breakfasts, horse shows, and, for both children and adults, carnival rides. One of the highlights of the Pow Wow Days celebration is the parade. Beginning with the inaugural celebration in 1963, the route traversed one of Orangevale’s historic “good roads,” Central Avenue, also the location of the historic Orangevale Water Company, ending at the Orangevale Youth Center on Hazel Avenue, arguably Orangevale’s second largest thoroughfare. The parade route moved to the main thoroughfare of Greenback Lane by 1965 and then to Oak Avenue in 1971, returning to its current route on Greenback Lane in 1974. Parade members have included an astonishing amount of variety, including representatives from local clubs, emergency services, schools, sports clubs, and children. While the parade features many notable older clubs, organizations, and services, from the Orangevale Women’s Club to the Grange and to the Fire Department, an overt homage to the past per se is not what distinguishes Pow Wow Days. The celebration is not organized with the intent of being an historical narrative or recollection of the past directly. Be that as it may, the celebration is the result of historical narrative and a manifestation of what Orangevale has narrated itself to be in the past, what it imagines itself to be in the present in which people have lived and live, and what it fantasizes about being in the future — to situate its own forward trajectory. Specifically, Orangevale, through Pow Wow Days, projects a self-image of an archetypal American small town that is semi-rural and values community cohesion (real or

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imagined), neighborliness, and, seemingly, an aura of “traditional” simplicity. As one observer said in a 1972 article for the *Sacramento Union*: “Show me a man with a pickup truck, a gun rack, a cowboy hat and a pair of boots, and I’ll show you the spirit of Orangevale.” The observer concluded: “If the man doesn’t live there, he probably wishes he did.”

As suburbia’s critics from Frederick Lewis Allen, to William H. Whyte, to Betty Freidan, to those “Desperate Housewives” on television have made clear, the “Orangevale spirit” could not be further from the so-called negative imaginaries of suburbia. The “spirit of Orangevale” is a romanticized American ideal of a rural community where one could pass through old streets, stop and buy fruit and get a story from old Mr. Tomich just off Greenback Lane, and visit local shops where locals gather to gossip. Forget, for the moment, that SUVs, baseball hats and visors, Nikes, and cell phones long ago replaced pickup trucks, cowboy hats, boots, and gun racks. Never mind, for the moment, that Orangevale is situated within a large metropolitan and cosmopolitan community of about 1.4 million people. In fact, if one extends the area to include the Roseville area, which the U.S. Census Bureau does, then, according the 2000 census, the Sacramento metropolitan region was the 27th largest metropolitan area in the U.S. with 1,796,857 people and, according to a 2007 Bureau estimate, 26th in the country with 2,091,120. Moreover, if one extends the area to run east to include the Gardnerville Ranchos area in Nevada and north to include the Yuba City area in California, which the U.S. Census Bureau does, then


the region, with an estimated 2,187,694 people according to a 2005 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, is the 18th largest Combined Statistical Area in the United States.\footnote{49} Actually, it may be precisely because of such growth bordering Orangevale that the celebration of small town America, of Orangevale as a semi-rural community amid an incessantly mounting urban and metropolitan jungle, has gained such traction and remains such a hallowed event. Indeed, in 1976, the Sacramento Community Planning Department drafted a report for planned growth and spatial management in Orangevale that stated two goals for the community: (1) “To protect and enhance the high quality rural lifestyle available in the Orangevale area”; and (2) “To provide opportunity for bona fide agricultural pursuits in the Orangevale community.”\footnote{50} In other words, at all costs, and despite suspicions to the contrary, Orangevale needed to remain rural and middle class, steeped in fantasies of renewed agricultural prowess. This fantasy and self-image, perhaps, is a contributing reason to why Orangevale has failed to grow much in terms of human population — including diversity. Putting aside other seemingly obvious factors as real estate prices and location via place of work, Orangevale’s “rural lifestyle,” which encompasses Orangevale’s white middle class sense of history and reproductions of tradition, in an otherwise budding metropolitan area of considerable diversity, may not appeal to many people. Specifically, it may not appeal to anyone other than a white middle class in search of a “rural

\footnote{49. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Table 6. Annual Estimates of the Population of Combined Statistical Areas: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005, Annual Estimates of the Population of Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area - July 1, 2005, available online at www.census.gov. A Combined Statistical Area includes adjacent metropolitan (areas of at least 50,000 people) and micropolitan statistical areas (areas of 10,000 to 49,999 people). The Combined Statistical Area, code # 472, is listed as the “Sacramento — Arden-Arcade — Yuba City, CA-NV Combined Statistical Area,” and includes the Gardnerville Ranchos, NV Micropolitan Statistical Area, Sacramento — Arden-Arcade — Roseville, CA Metropolitan Statistical Area, Truckee-Grass Valley, CA Micropolitan Statistical Area, and the Yuba City, CA Metropolitan Statistical Area.}

\footnote{50. Sacramento County Planning Department, \textit{Orangevale Community Plan}, 5.}
“lifestyle” among a predominantly white community that celebrates, overtly, white middle class conceptions of the past in the present.

Long-time community organizations also remain vibrant and active in Orangevale and provide the community with a sense of continuity with the past. Of the many organizations, perhaps none (besides several churches and schools) seem as vibrant and important to the community as the Orangevale Water Company, the Woman’s Club, and the Grange. The Water Company began in 1896 under the leadership of George B. Katzenstein, a member of the Orange Vale Colonization Company (OVCC), and still services the community today. It has also published two impressive historical narratives concerning Orangevale: *Information Bulletin* and *One Hundred Years of Service*. The Woman’s Club, still in existence as well, began in 1913 when locals met at the home of Mary Alice Calder to discuss the formation of a club that put their talents toward building up the community. The Orangevale Grange organized in 1910. Among other things, the Grange has been an indispensable actor and champion of the development of Orangevale, assisting in bringing a library to the area, sponsoring local youth groups, such as the Boy Scouts, helping Orangevale become part of the Citrus Heights Fire District, awarding scholarships to local students, and supporting local events. Together, the Water Company, the Woman’s Club, and the Grange, not to mention churches and schools, such as the Orangevale Open Elementary School (established in 1890), provide community members with a sense of continuity with the past. But, again, they represent a particular past. With the Grange, continuity is rooted in an agrarian past, lifestyle, and the adoration of agriculture. With the Woman’s Club, continuity stems from middle class sensibilities and values. And, despite being one of the most clear and uniquely historically-rooted organizations and social movements planned and maintained by and for women in an otherwise masculine landscape, the Club is an
organization largely devoted to, and characterized, by service. As one Club member, Gertrude Greenhalgh, wrote in 1973, “If a woman is looking for prestige, she can find it in the Woman’s Club which embodies this quality; if she is seeking friendship, the members have much of it to give; if she cares to be involved in the service to fellow men, then this club needs and appreciates her.”51 With the Orangevale Water Company, there is continuity with the so-called colonizers and innovation, with modern technology and business savvy that seems cutting edge in an otherwise small, semi-rural community inclined to forget its suburban origins. Other institutions such as the Orangevale Library (established in 1912) and churches, such the Orangevale Methodist Church (established in 1890), convey and project themes of innovation, refinement, and “traditional” morality.

Orangevale experienced its most substantial growth from the mid-1970s to 1990, about 18,000 in 1975 to 26,266 in 1990 (a growth rate of about 0.46% per year). Orangevale also experienced material growth in terms of buildings, houses, commercial businesses, and infrastructure, such as road expansions. As a result, and in connection with national laws (Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act) and State laws (Section 15065 of the California Environmental Quality Act), such projects and spatial expansions required historic surveys to determine if any historic connection to the past would be adversely affected by such expansion and growth and, potentially, a great cultural loss to the community. Of those that are still on file, or at least those I have found at local repositories, it appears that only three places merited such surveys — at the least because they stood at the risk of potentially being affected by growth projects in Orangevale. Their historical significance, then, ought not to be equated

51. Gertrude Greenhalgh, 1973, originally quoted from paper found in a scrapbook of material, Orangevale Woman’s Club, Orangevale, CA; also in Sandul and Swim, Orangevale, 65.
with actual historical prominence and importance vis-à-vis other places in Orangevale that have never faced the potentially adverse affects of growth projects, such as the Grange Hall.

In 1990, on the eve of Orangevale’s last significant growth spurt, the Sacramento based firm of Historic Environmental Consultants surveyed the Warhaftig House, the Villa, and the Serve Our Seniors Complex. The Warhaftig House, which included a packing shed nearby, was one of the original houses built by the Orange Vale Colonization Company in 1888. In fact, according to the survey’s author, “it was one of the first four constructed by the company in its initial development and promotional activities.”52 In addition, the house may have served as a local headquarters for the Orange Vale Colonization Company. By the late 1890s, Sol (Peter) Warhaftig assumed ownership of the house and the family remained there, including using it as an office for their own fruit packing endeavors, until 1960. The house’s importance, according to the survey, was in its connection to the Orange Vale Colonization Company and the Warhaftig family itself, particularly Peter. The family was “prominent in the development and growth of the Orange Vale Colony and its surrounding area,” particularly as they ran a fruit packing business, which employed local women and girls in addition to family members, and because of Peter’s service to the Orangevale Water Company from 1924 to 1951. In the end, the survey concluded that the Warhaftig House merited listing on the National Register of Historical Places because it “is an important remnant of its [the Orange Vale Colonization Company’s] existence and influence, and represents a principle aspect of the area’s settlement. . . . [A]nd [it] represents

the theme of settlement.” The house was also deemed historically significant because of Peter Warhaftig, “an influential and important figure in the growth and development era of the community” (though the 1950s were far more explosive in terms of actual growth and development). Warhaftig’s chief importance was attached to his connection with the Orangevale Water Company, which “allowed” for Orangevale’s “extensive agricultural development.” Finally, the deteriorating packing shed nearby was deemed historically significant for its association with early agricultural activity. The Warhaftig Houses’ importance, then, lay in its connection to the celebrated and revered colonization company and founders, to an early pioneer (and, thus, patriot), agriculture, and to innovation.

The Villa, a stick-style structure built about 1888, originally stood along the bluffs overlooking the American River. It was used for entertaining the Orange Vale Colonization Company’s investors and clients before it moved to Greenback Lane in 1916 and became a private residence. The Villa again moved and currently rests on Oak Avenue and is privately owned. While the survey concluded that the Villa was important for its association to the Orange Vale Colonization Company and “settlement” of the area, it was not deemed worthy of listing on the National Register for such (because it was moved). Yet, because the Villa was (and is) “a particularly fine example” of a stick-style structure rarely found in the Sacramento area, yet alone a “rural” area, the Villa was deemed historically significant. That is, it was unique — innovative and remarkable — in an otherwise non-urban community in Sacramento.


The Serve Our Seniors Complex consists of a residence, built in the 1910s, a thrift store that dated to the 1920s, an art center with no date of construction mentioned, and a Senior Center Building originally built as a church in the 1950s. In the end, while the structures that comprise the complex lie atop the original acres purchased by J. T. Cardwell in 1881, who then sold to the Orange Vale Colonization Company, the Historic Environmental Consultants concluded, “The historic significance of the property appears to be generally limited in terms of significance.” The survey further concludes: “The structures do not appear to be associated with any persons, groups, or events that have contributed to the evolution or development of the area. . . . The property does not therefore appear to meet eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historical Places.”

Nevertheless, it was enough that the property had been associated with the Anglo-American development and so-called settlement of the area that it received attention in the first place.

**A Dominant Recollective Paradigm in Contemporary Fair Oaks**

Fair Oaks has been far more active in the reproduction of historical narratives, memory, and sense of place as compared to Orangevale. As with Orangevale, the answer perhaps can be found in glancing at the census data. In 1960, Fair Oaks reportedly had 1,622 people and grew by an astounding 6.1% per year until 1970 when the population reached 11,256, while Sacramento County grew at a rate of 0.26% (502,778 to 634,373). While the growth per year dropped to 1.01% per annum from 1970 to 1980, the population nonetheless more than doubled from 11,256 in 1970 to 22,602 in 1980, while Sacramento County grew at only a 0.23% rate per

year (634,373 to 783,381). In the thirty years since, Fair Oaks has grown modestly with growth rates of 0.19% from 1980 to 1990, 0.04% from 1990 to 2000 (28,008), and, in decline, -0.02% from 2000 to the 2005-07 U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey estimates (27,439). During the same time span, Sacramento County, as noted before, grew at a rate of 0.31% (from 1990 to 2007). As of 2000, Fair Oaks’ population was 88% white, 6.3% Hispanic or Latino, 4.2% Asian, and 1.8% African American and the median household income was $63,252 as compared to the national average of $41,994.57.

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Growth Rate From Previous Decade</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Growth Rate From Previous Decade</th>
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Sources: For all of Fair Oaks, as well as Sacramento County from 1990-2007, see footnote #57 below. For Sacramento County, 1950-1980, see U.S. Census Bureau, Table 2, Land Area and Population: 1930 to 1980, 1980 Census of Population.

Table 6. Population and Growth Rate of Fair Oaks and Sacramento County, 1960-2007

While one can easily get lost in the numbers, the raw data reveals some suggestive information that can explain, perhaps, why Fair Oaks experienced a greater outpouring of historical works as compared to Orangevale. Specifically, while Orangevale only experienced a

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growth rate of 0.20% from 1970 to 1980, adding just more than 3,000 people (17,222 to 20,585). Fair Oaks actually doubled in size, from 11,256 to 22,602, and grew at a rate of 1.01% per year.

The epoch of growth is what makes this increase seem significant. As historian John Bodnar has pointed out, the lead up and culmination of the Bicentennial celebration in 1976 resulted in an outpouring of not only national attention and public recollections and celebrations of the past, but also local works and celebrations exalting both the national story and the local story as it connected to larger national themes such as early pioneers cast as patriots and the adoration of small town America.58 Against this backdrop, the Fair Oaks Historical Society formed in the spring of 1975 for the purpose of preserving and presenting Fair Oaks’ history. In other words, at a time in which Fair Oaks was experiencing growing pains, a nationwide spread of nostalgia and patriotism soared. The community ties that bind, the security of localized relations and mechanisms of power, seemed to be threatened, or at least potentially threatened, by a doubling of the local population. Specifically, this occurred during a patriotic era when many Americans looked to the past for meaning in the present. The result in Fair Oaks was a surge in historical recollection and remembrance, organization, and production of historical narratives to counter, alleviate, or cope, or some combination of each, with an explosion in population that potentially could threaten to transform, even dismantle, localized power structures in a time of reverent nostalgia and patriotism. Local Fair Oaks residents, it seems, decided to turn to the production, organizational manipulation, and memorialization of the past to maintain some semblance of the status quo and social order. They seized control of the culture and, more importantly, the cultural production process in Fair Oaks. In the years between 1960 and 1980, the growth rate reached 12.94% (1,622 to 22,602). During that time, Fair Oaks

58. Bodnar, Remaking America.
residents published the most circulated and often cited historical narrative, *Fair Oaks and San Juan Memories* in 1960 and formed the most powerful organization devoted to (re)producing narratives concerning the past: the Fair Oaks Historical Society (FOHS) in 1975.

Some recent activities of the FOHS reveal the continued dominance of collected memory, the process of forgetting, and the promulgation of the themes of a dominant recollective paradigm. Besides running a History Center (a repository and museum), the FOHS published a book, *Fair Oaks: The Early Years*, organized a walking tour, and strengthened and updated the organization with collections management policies and training, and archival cataloging guides and practices. They received training in computer software — even the computer itself — and they have created and maintained a vibrant and very well done website: www.fairoaks history.org. At the website, a visitor can peruse society newsletters, a history of Fair Oaks by a local historian, print out the walking tour map and guide, and peruse, among other things, both primary and secondary sources, including historic photographs and images. The “History of Fair Oaks,” found on the FOHS website, the walking tour, and the “Old Homes of Fair Oaks” section in the society’s newsletter reveal just what the FOHS considers “historical,” particularly as its mission focuses on the “collecting, preserving[,] and presenting [of] the historical record of Fair Oaks and its inhabitants.”

In the “History of Fair Oaks,” written by a local historian, Fair Oaks’ “history,” as with the walking tour and “Old Homes of Fair Oaks” newsletter piece, is distinctly limited in time, roughly the 1890s to 1930s, and in scope — a celebration of agriculture, local pioneers, and early infrastructure and buildings predominantly important to a white middle class. The “History” does begin with a single sentence on the local Native Americans, the Maidu, who occupied the land “for at least 10,000 years we are told.” While Native use of the land, 10,000 years worth, is
acknowledged, Native land use is unfortunately trivialized by such a scant reference and, often, such representations can seem obligatory and have the effect to somewhat marginalize the historical actors and simply recast them as caricatures familiar to the history of most places in the United States. Furthermore, the reference seems more to serve the purpose of establishing a basis from which Fair Oaks’ Anglo-American growth can be highlighted and potentially measured — the triumph of American social civilization and material progress as brought to fruition by Fair Oaks’ pioneers and subsequent generations. The “History” is largely devoted to the “colonization” story, the arrival of “colonists,” the establishment and maintenance of farms, the construction of houses, and the creation of the “physical and cultural needs” of the community, such as a merchant store, churches, and schools. To be fair, however, one sentence informs the reader that much of the labor came from minority groups.

“History” ends with “a devastating freeze” that, in 1932, destroyed most of the crops and agricultural productivity in Fair Oaks. “So[,] Fair Oaks life changed forever,” the author concluded. “But if one takes a slow walk around town, one can see the vestiges of the orange groves, [sic] [and] the olive and almond orchards. Some original buildings hide under several layers of remodeling. A lucky visitor might meet some [white] folks who were born in the 1920s and 1930s and who can tell tales first hand of what life was like when Fair Oaks was fulfilling its original design.” In other words, if visitors were “lucky,” they could visit a quaint semi-rural community steeped in a past of agriculture, which, in end, was its “original design.”

The walking tour, which is a self-guided tour, and the “Old Homes of Fair Oaks” section of the newsletter also reveal a bit about what the FOHS considers not only to be “historical,” but

also “architecture.” One critic of the tour concluded: “the walking tour is a good addition to the publications of the society, but it still covers too many places of interest for a quick tour through town.” Indeed, the tour consists of forty-seven “places of interest,” all of which are located primarily, though not entirely, in the Fair Oaks “Village” area. The observation has merit. The forty-seven sites are perhaps too much for even the most stalwart of Fair Oaks history enthusiasts to take in — at least within a short amount of time. But even more telling, the forty-seven sites run the gamut from a cemetery to old buildings and commercial sites important to the early years of Fair Oaks’ so-called colonization to schools, churches, and houses. Noticeably absent from the tour is any potential site(s) important to minorities, particularly those who toiled in the fields, worked the packing sheds, and served in domestic roles. At least a few images, and family stories, such as those of the Dewey family, exist that do document and thus show the presence and important roles of minorities in Fair Oaks. For example, Fair Oaks had Chinese and Japanese laborers, like the Chinese immigrant Jim Gee who worked for and lived with the Dewey family, domestic servants for the celebrated local “pioneer” Buffum family, and female Japanese immigrants or those of Japanese ancestry who worked at the Fair Oaks Fruit Packing Plant of Pioneer. Admittedly, FOHS and other retrospective interpreters may not know of any sites that were of possible significance to Fair Oaks’ forgotten residents and laborers, who themselves could have likely told a “lucky visitor” of tales from when Fair Oaks fulfilled its “original design.” In addition, it is likely that no such sites remain, or are in good condition. Nevertheless, FOHS, through its walking tour, still managed to demarcate the sites of buildings,


61. See Simpson and Sandul, Fair Oaks, 22, 26, 30, 59, and 127.
houses, and even a tennis court that are no longer there. Indeed, it may seem striking, on the surface of things, that the walking tour memorializes a tennis court while no ethnoracial site, even presence, is mentioned. Yet, when we consider the power of collected memory and of a dominant recollective paradigm, which celebrates Fair Oaks as, among other things, cutting edge in an otherwise rural landscape, the celebration of a defunct and departed tennis court is not at all that striking. It most clearly represents a middle class heritage working to preserve a middle class legacy. Nevertheless, as Dolores Hayden showed in her Power of Place project in Los Angeles, other ways do exist for a community to celebrate minority groups and other forgotten groups besides actual preservation.62 Public art, for example, which Fair Oaks, with the presence of a locally renowned and respected artist responsible for numerous projects in Fair Oaks and adjacent communities, could easily be produced and could supplement, or fill in, for the lack of physical structures. Museum exhibits, more attention in publications, and lectures, which the FOHS sponsors at annual society meetings, could all enhance the current dearth of attention paid to minority groups in Fair Oaks. At the least Fair Oaks and the FOHS could be more blunt and honest to the public about its failures and lack of knowledge concerning minority groups, including women not part of the Woman’s Thursday Club or some early “pioneer” family.63 Indeed, the Hermitage site of Andrew Jackson’s plantation in Nashville took this approach in recent years. They informed visitors, through publications, word of mouth, and billboards on the ground at the Hermitage that they had failed to represent the slaves and slave life of the


Hermitage adequately and were, finally, excavating and working more thoroughly to better understand and represent this reality to future visitors.64

The “Homes of Fair Oaks” piece in the FOHS newsletter began in January 2005. According to the newsletter, “A committee has been formed to record the old homes of Fair Oaks from 1920 through the 1940 [sic].” All the “homes,” not merely houses mind you, have been of a dominant white middle class and do not include possible houses, or “homes,” or at least possible meetings sites or social gathering places in the area in the absence of houses, in which minority groups were somehow connected. The houses include the Massey’s Colonial (built in 1928), the Rose’s Bungalow (1928), Cottage (1921), Farm House (1906 — and thus outside the originally stated period of focus), other Bungalows built in 1907-11, 1921, and 1922, Folk Houses (ca. 1895 and 1890s), Payday Shack (1898), Prairie Style (“after 1907”), Craftsman Prairie (“After 1910), Pioneer (1894), and Craftsman (1915-20). There was even a section on “homes” that burned down, but none included a so-called home of anybody not white. Even if a home associated with a minority family still stands, it did not receive attention like “old homes” that burned to the ground. Without exception, each home belonged to a white family, often associated with cultural leaders in the community, such as “Farmer Bob,” a long-time beloved figure and citizen of Fair Oaks, business owners, such as the home of a local florist, and FOHS members. Such a reality, however, is not such a surprise, as the “Homes of Fair Oaks,” to be fair, does appear in a newsletter designed and intended for group members of a particular club.

The failure to remember, or, more rightfully, the successful effort to forget, “homes” of those outside of the dominant white middle class, or at least sites important to them, further marginalizes the presence and significance of minority groups in Fair Oaks. Moreover, and perhaps most striking, the memorialization of middle class homes is yet another example of how paradoxical an agriburban community’s representation and celebration of the past can be. Specifically, this seems so striking and paradoxical because such middle class houses further demonstrate that these communities actually began as planned suburbs.65

**Power and Cultural Capital in the Reproduction of Historical Narratives**

The memorialization, celebration, and representation of the past and reproductions of a dominant historical metanarrative is understandable, even if it is indicative of a process of forgetting and, thus, marginalization, even erasure, of historical actors, phenomena, and factual details. Nevertheless, while such “hidden history,” to borrow a phrase of Carey McWilliams in reference to minority groups in Southern California, is the result of a collected memory that dominates public memory, historical consciousness, and sense of place, it might not be as villainous as it sounds. Profusely employing such a term as “white middle class” evokes a connotation of some Gramscian-Marxist conspiracy in which an elite works feverishly, and most often successfully, to repress weaker groups. “White middle class,” then, is not a description, but rather an indictment. While much exists to criticize concerning Fair Oaks’, not to mention Ontario’s and Orangevale’s, reproduction of historical narratives and structural amnesia, as I have certainly done, such is not necessarily reducible to such Gramscian-Marxist conceptions of power, motivation, and cultural domination.

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65. All newsletters can be found online under the “Newsletter” heading and “Archives” heading at the Fair Oaks Historical Society webpage, www.fairoakshistory.org.
The (re)production of historical narratives, the process of forgetting, and public memory, historical consciousness, and sense of place are intertwined with so-called mechanisms of power and of the exercise of power. Yet, terms like “power” and “mechanisms of power” have varying connotations. For many, like philosopher Thomas Hobbes, sociologist Max Weber, and political scientist Robert A. Dahl, power is a phenomenon of willed or intended action. Power, in this context, is defined in terms of the capacity or likelihood of actors to achieve desired or intended outcomes whereby power and domination are achieved in a network of decision-making. As sociologist Anthony Giddens pointed out, “power only exists, or is only exercised, when the resistance of others has to be overcome.” Power is a disabling or constraining force that directs the transmission of knowledge, such as historical narratives and other representations of the past, shaping concepts and self-image. Following the Marxist maxim that the “ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas,” power is cast, again, as a disabling and constraining force. It is utilized in a top-down process, usually through the state, whereby the ruling class, say the white middle class, shape ideas, culture, and so-called “bodies of knowledge” to maintain control atop the economic, political, and social hierarchies. Here, power is described in terms of what many who study international relations, such as Kurt Campbell, Michael O’Hanlon, and Joseph S. Nye, Jr. call “hard power.”


maintained by overt acts of coercion, whether they are the utilization of economic power or of military might, to influence the behavior and body of ideas and beliefs of those not in power, or at least not in the top tier of the power structure. This form of power is aggressive and the exercise of it resides in the motivation of one group, typically the ruling and dominant group, to coerce and induce another group(s) to perform a course of action or adhere, if not buy into, the dominant groups’ set of beliefs and culture. Such exercise of power, in Gramscian terms, establishes hegemony and secures the ruling class’ place atop the power hierarchy.

In Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks the exercise of hard power, of a power that is utilized with the intent of repressing or constraining others, can be seen in the marginalization and forgetting of minority groups in historical narratives. It can also be seen in terms of a willed or intended action to remember the four themes of a dominant recollective paradigm, which, then, divert attention from the suburban side of these communities’ origins. The marginalization of minority groups and forgetting of these communities’ suburban origins is an overtly direct and purposeful action on the part of the cultural leaders and local powers that be. It is, it seems, spiteful, and even villainous. In this portrayal of power, those whose function it was to produce historical narratives, such as the FOHS or the Ontario Planning Commission, or even those who, for whatever reason, choose to produce historical narratives, and in whatever form, did so with the intent of promulgating a dominant recollective paradigm, to ignore minority groups, and forget the suburban side of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ past. They purposefully (re)created a metanarrative, manipulated public memory, historical consciousness, and sense of York: Public Affairs, 2004). See also, Janice Bially Mattern, “Why ‘Soft Power’ Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics,” Millennium: Journal of International Studies 33, no. 3 (2004): 583-612; and Yannis A. Stivachtis, “Power In The Contemporary International Society: International Relations Meets Political And Social Theory-A Critical Appraisal of U.S. Foreign Policy,” Journal of Political and Military Sociology 36, no. 1 (Summer 2008): 85-101.
place, and added to the dominance of a collected memory that, by design and by intent, shored up and secured their place atop the localized power structure. In Hobbesian terms, they created and fed a Leviathan, and in Gramscian terms, they created and maintained cultural hegemony. They achieved dominant tradition through coercion.

In contrast to a conception of power as hard power, of power that disables and constrains, others, such as Michel Foucault, Anthony Giddens, Hannah Arendt, Talcott Parsons, and Nicos Poulantzas, view power as a productive force that enables, power as a property of the social community, a medium whereby common interest or class interests are realized.70 Power, or the exercise thereof, is not solely a volunteeristic approach, but rather a structural approach whereby power is an institutional phenomenon that, in Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz’s phrase, succeeds in the “mobilization of bias.”71 While still reflective of the Marxist maxim that the “ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas,” power is comparable to what other scholars, also focusing on international relations, call “soft power.” Soft power is a term describing the ability of a group, usually a political body such as the state, to indirectly influence the behavior, beliefs, or interests of other groups, usually at the lower steps of the power ladder, through cultural and ideological means. Cultural productions, such as historical narratives, are not produced and reproduced with the intent of coercing or repressing others, but rather to


attract. Soft power, according to Joseph Nye, “uses an attraction to shared values, and the justness and duty of contributing to the achievement of those values.”

The (re)production of historical narratives and shaping of an influential collected memory in communities like Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks may indeed result from hard power, but it can also result from soft power (or something, I confess, entirely different, such as individual maliciousness, naïveté, or ignorance). Power is therefore not so much a force of coercion, but a force that seeks to enable those who employ it. As French philosopher and historian Michel Foucault concluded about sexuality and the middle class, power and the exercise thereof can be seen “as the self-affirmation of one class rather than the enslavement of another”—most importantly though, “an affirmation of self.” These “seekers of self-actualization,” to borrow a phrase of geographer James E. Vance, Jr., seek to facilitate their own interests, ideas, and sets of beliefs more than they seek to repress others. It is “constitutive of desire itself,” wrote Foucault, “to the affirmation.” The (re)production of historical narratives, even the shaping of what Foucault called “discourse” (the articulation of collective definition), in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks resulted, in part at least, from the desire of those who produced historical narratives, and thus shaped public memory, collected memory, historical consciousness, and sense of place, to facilitate and realize their own set of beliefs, lifeways, and cultural values. Put differently, as Paul Ricoeur argued, “it was due to the mediating function of

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73. Foucault, History of Sexuality, 123.
74. Vance, “California and the Search for the Ideal,” 186. See also, Foucault, History of Sexuality, 81.
75. Foucault, History of Sexuality, 83, 123.
the narrative that the abuses of memory were made into the abuses of forgetting.”76 Just the same, because those who reproduced historical narratives dominated the so-called discourse concerning representations of the past (i.e., an object of knowledge), they influenced others’ ability to think, speak, and act about the history of these communities. They helped to form and maintain a particular public memory and, in the process, helped to form social understanding in the Durkheimian tradition of a “social brain.” Historical understanding, then, its discourse, became institutionalized and to recognize, articulate, and foster any alternative view of the past in these communities has been difficult in the face of such institutionalized power, influence, and even attraction. Soft power and the attempt at self-actualization and affirmation may have resulted in hegemony and the repression of others, or at least the repression of counter narratives to a metanarrative, but some alleged iniquitous and cruel conspiracy bent on cultural domination may not have caused it all.

If we allow, for a moment, for a conception of power and culture as something that can be institutionalized, then power and culture, particularly culture, can be seen as a form of capital that further helps to reveal how a dominant recollective paradigm, and all the consequences and costs it implies, is promulgated and how power is utilized. It provides an alternate view of how forgetting — as repressive erasure — can be a process of “structural amnesia” and how the reproduction of historical narratives can result form an affirmation of self as much as from a repression of others, even if repression results nonetheless. More importantly, it provides a further understanding of how powerful, influential, and attractive the original packaging of place by early boosters in California was and still is. Because the packaging of place created a metanarrative concerning the history of agriburbs and, as stated ad nauseum, influenced public

76. Ricoeur, Memory, History, Forgetting, 448.
memory, historical consciousness, and sense of place, it established a collected memory that shapes knowledge and understanding concerning the past and, thus, a person and community’s understanding of itself in the present, and, possibly, the future. And, for our purposes, it is yet another example of how and why the suburban side of Ontario’s, Orangevale’s, and Fair Oaks’ past is forgotten.

Culture is a kind of capital that individuals can build up and trade on. Engaging in cultural activities such as visiting an art museum or attending a play and demonstrating cultural knowledge are all forms of cultural capital.77 According to Michele Lamont and Annette Lareau, cultural capital is something that is “institutionalized, i.e., widely shared, high status cultural signals (attitudes, preferences, formal knowledge, goods and credentials) used for social and cultural exclusion.”78 In other words, in Pierre Bourdieu’s words, “There is an economy of cultural goods.”79 Because of one’s class position, social status, family background, place of birth and upbringing, one develops a set of tastes, outlooks, attitudes, and habits, which, as Bourdieu argued, must be invested in the right cultural activities. These, in turn, provide the right sort of status indicators, which reflect back upon the person.

The investment in history as a form of cultural capital and as a form of cultural knowledge is also suggestive to why and how a dominant recollective paradigm is promulgated and further reified. It also is suggestive of how and why it is promulgated, at times at least, with the intention of self-affirmation and self-actualization and not with the intention of repression,


79. Bourdieu, Distinction, 1.
constraint, or even erasure. If we accept that historical knowledge, the knowledge of historical narratives, particularly at the local level, is a form of cultural capital and cultural knowledge, then it can encompass much of the process for the (re)production of historical narratives. As a form of cultural capital and cultural knowledge, historical understanding and knowledge of the past can be employed in communicating with other members of a community or society that places some kind of premium on such knowledge. In our present case, for example, members of the FOHS or the Ontario Planning Commission who place some type of premium on historical knowledge and understanding of the past in Fair Oaks or Ontario can typify this phenomenon. In seeking to (re)produce historical narratives, typically in a collaborative effort (though such could possibly hold true for an individual), members draw on each other for both understanding and knowledge and for communicating their own understanding and knowledge — demarcating, in the process, their own cultural markers of distinction. On the one hand, a large amount of antiquarian historical and factual details can come from group members’ personal life histories or knowledge (e.g., one knows a particular house was built in 1919 and on the southwest corner of the street because one grew up there). On the other hand, the general history of the community is something that is more often than not obtained and shared from a common body of knowledge concerning the history of the community, i.e., various vectors of memory that comprise collected memory.

As with Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ collected memory, the themes of a dominant recollective paradigm that characterize historical narratives in and about the community are a common, and potentially highly respectable, form of knowledge concerning the past. They are familiar and familiarity, even mastery, of the circumstantial details and elements of the themes of a dominant recollective paradigm is essential in displaying to others that one
truly is knowledgeable about Ontario, Orangevale, Fair Oaks’s past and, thus, worthy of a certain status level. In other words, group members interested in these communities’ past discuss the past in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks in terms of agriculture, particularly citrus, innovation, and pioneers. Knowledge of these elements and themes would be a critical part of displaying a mastery, or at least familiarity, of a respected form of cultural knowledge among members of the group. This type of narration, the display of cultural knowledge, then, could be influential in the decision-making about the reproduction of historical narratives, particularly for fellow group members (i.e., the FOHS newsletter or Ontario Planning Commission’s historical preservation deck of playing cards) or the local community (i.e., walking tours or museums). The reproduction of historical narratives that further promulgate themes of a dominant recollective paradigm, then, has more to do with affirming to an individual and others knowledge and mastery of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ past more than it affirms a desire to forget or repress. The reproduction of a dominant recollective paradigm, in this regard, is a confirmation that individuals, or the cultural leaders as a group, truly know the history of the local community and, possibly, their place and position in the present and, hopefully, the future. The reproduction of a dominant metanarrative, then, serves as verification of the status and cultural knowledge of one group of people or particular individuals and might not be reproduced at the expense, or for the purpose, of repressing or enslaving other groups or factual details of the past.

**Vectors of Misrepresentation and the Legacies of a Dominant Recollective Paradigm**

In Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks a dominant recollective paradigm has worked to shape, as well as to be shaped by, public memory, historical consciousness, and sense of place. The dominant recollective paradigm of agriburban communities encompasses four major themes that characterize a metanarrative that has had the effect, as collected memory, to direct people to remember, and forget, the histories of these communities in like and similar ways. Foremost
among the things and phenomena forgotten is the suburban side of these communities’ origins. This further demonstrates the power and lasting consequences of the original packaging of place whereby the promoters in agriburban areas, spurred by market strategies, not to mention, perhaps, some humanitarian motives, created narratives that have cast a long shadow. Specifically, they created an imagery and narrative template for talking about, thinking of, and representing the past in the present for which people have lived and live. As more historical narratives and “stock of stories” were produced and reproduced, which took their cues form the original promoters’ packaging of place, a retransmission of the four themes of a dominant recollective paradigm reified, legitimized, and sanctified the original promoters’ conception of place.

The dominant recollective paradigm in agriburban communities espoused and espouses four specific themes: (1) agriburbs as sui generis; (2) the adoration of agriculture; (3) agriburbs as innovative; and (4) the glorification of progressive, successful, cultured, self-made men. The circumstantial details and elements of each of these themes, both by themselves and collectively, diverted and continue to divert attention away from the suburban side of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ origins. They cast these communities as model colonies, fruit colonies, citrus colonies, irrigation colonies, and, typically, agricultural colonies. The colonial designation has caused many to focus more on the agricultural origins of these communities — though I am not saying agriculture does not deserve attention — rather than the suburban planning activities and strategies of the growth machine cohort that originally helped to plan and create the so-called colonies. The adoration of agriculture, in line with representations of these communities as colonies, romanticizes the rural ideal at the expense of suburban planning. The focus on innovation, then, allows for those looking at these communities’ past to interpret and understand
such innovations as truly innovative, cutting edge, and otherwise remarkable for mere agricultural colonies. Finally, a focus on successful and renowned pioneers works to further divert attention away from the suburban side of these communities’ suburban origins precisely because the focus is on the creation, population, or maintenance, or all, of these communities as innovative agricultural colonies and not as rural suburbs. A focus on pioneers celebrates patriotic themes like nation building and social civilization, conceptions that can possibly serve to affirm, or instill, a faith and image of the United States as progressive, noble, and excellent. This contrasts sharply with negative imageries often associated with suburban planners and growth machine cohorts, particularly if one takes a Marxist, even Gramscian view of suburban planners and growth machines as greedy capitalists focused solely on the bottom line and the retention of cultural, economic, political, and social control.

The cultural costs of a dominant recollective paradigm, amplified when a larger pool of historical narratives largely work in concert to promulgate it, to emerge as collected memory, manifests in numerous ways. Of those highlighted, public memory, sense of history, sense of place, individual and collective identity, and the continued influence on the reproduction of historical narratives in more recent decades reveal just how important local history and representations of the past are to a community and, more importantly, the individuals residing within. Furthermore, a dominant recollective paradigm, which shapes and is shaped by public memory, represents a body of cultural knowledge whereby individuals, groups, and even whole societies can invest a heavy amount of their sense of selves and, possibly, their understandings of social hierarchies and power structures, present composition, and potential trajectories for the future. A surfeit of information, as embodied in more than a hundred years worth of historical narratives in agriburban communities, can further work to marginalize, even trivialize, minority
groups not typically represented, if at all, in historical narratives and current understandings of
the past. Much of this might result from a willed or intended action, while much of this might
also result from the desire of those who reproduce historical narratives to satisfy their own
understandings of the past, as an investment in cultural capital. The result may be no less
unsatisfactory, at least regarding remembering the role of minority groups and the suburban side
of agriburban communities’ past. But, the results might not be the sole result of some
purposeful, even malicious, attempt to misrepresent the past, forget historical phenomena and
factual details, and dominate those on the lower levels of the power hierarchy. Perhaps more
tragically, the devil, as the saying goes, is in the details. A dominant recollective paradigm and
its continued promulgation and influence suggests it has become institutionalized, that it works
to direct people to represent the past in certain ways. To produce counter narratives, then,
becomes, not impossible, but that much more difficult to do, particularly when facing 100 years
of productions and reproductions of the past that portray it in strikingly similar ways. It can also
become difficult when historical narratives, which collectively and concertedly espouse a
dominant recollective paradigm, take the form of a shared knowledge of the past, of cultural
knowledge and cultural capital. Individuals, groups, and societies often make costly investments
in such cultural capital and have shown themselves willing to not only further disseminate that
knowledge, and in the process further reify it, but also potentially react harshly when such
knowledge is threatened (real or imagined). The repression of counter narratives and alternate
understandings of the past thus result not so much out of a desire to constrain or disable, but
rather out of a desire to prop up and affirm.
CONCLUSION

Agriburbs and the Power of Suburban Memory, History, and Place

This citrus belt complex of peoples, institutions, and relationships has no parallel in rural life in America and nothing quite like it exists elsewhere in California. It is neither town nor county, neither rural nor urban. It is a world of its own.

— Carey McWilliams

California’s so-called agricultural colonies were nothing less than rural suburban types that, as Charles Howard Shinn had observed in 1891, included agriculture. These agriburbs included the following: (1) horticulture; (2) close proximity to, but physical separation from, a growing urban center or centers; (3) promotion that utilized the language of suburbia as articulated by suburban imagineers such as Catherine E. Beecher, Andrew Jackson Downing, and Frederick Law Olmsted; and (4) a local consortium of place entrepreneurs tied to, and working through, a metropolitan environment in order to better promote and develop suburbs for profit. Agriburbs, furthermore, have for the most part been described in an impressive body of work that focuses on California’s “agriculture wonderland” despite them not being tagged as unique suburban types. These works unquestionably laid a foundation, if not corroborative evidence, for the detection of agriburbs as detailed here.

From such historians as Carey McWilliams, Kevin Starr, and many others before, in between, and since, an image of California’s rural small farming areas as something not quite rural but not quite urban dominates the literature. A rural small farming area, said McWilliams, “is a world of its own.” In areas where agriculture served as a means of speculation, where a producing class of well-to-do gentlemen farmers tilled the soil and warmed the hearth-stone,

1. McWilliams, Southern California, 207.
3. McWilliams, Southern California, 207.
where “urbanism” invaded rural communities, McWilliams saw “rurban” settlements that combined city and country, what he called “suburban estates.” Starr, too, saw an “urban/rural interplay” that made a new life possible for a middle-class cohort of farmers he called “bourgeois horticulturalists.” Agricultural colonies were quasi-utopian experiments of family farms hoping to evoke the effects of “rural civility” without loss of urban amenities, or the “finer things,” such as good roads, libraries, schools, churches, and social clubs. Other historians such as Cletus Daniel, Matt Garcia, Donald Pisani, Douglas C. Sackman, Steven Stoll, Ian Tyrell, and David Vaught also saw a unique agricultural rural landscape that included an impressive array of urban amenities. Whether labeled a “small farm” ideal, “irrigation colonies,” “citrus colonies,” or communities reflective of a “horticultural ideal,” California’s agricultural colonies were endowed with social urban advantages not commonly found in farming communities and settlements elsewhere, particularly those non-horticultural areas in which extensive — not intensive — large land holdings and costs defined the practice, economy, and way of life of farming for decades. Yet, California’s agricultural colonies were, in short, suburbs, even if not consistently nor prominently called such in the literature.

The attributes most often associated with the rural, urban, and suburban ideals have captured the attention of historians analyzing California’s rural agricultural areas. In turn, these attributes help to substantiate the idea that such areas were indeed suburban types as such


historians as Robert Fishman, Dolores Hayden, and Kenneth T. Jackson, among others, have pointed out the suburban ideal, as it was articulated in the nineteenth century, encompassed the rural and urban ideals, not to mention suburban rhetoric of home and family. On the one hand, historians analyzing California have commented frequently on a romanticization of nature that echoed the sentiments of Emerson and Thoreau, not to mention suburban imagineers like Beecher, Downing, and Olmsted. On the other hand, the seemingly more urbane culture and urban institutions and infrastructure of California’s rural agricultural landscape, which mirrors a celebration of cities as vibrant cultural, economic, intellectual, and social centers, have also impressed historians. When considered together, historians have described a California rural suburban landscape that encompassed images and signs of suburbia that constitutes a suburban ideal in its own right. Comparing and contrasting the rise of the suburban ideal in the nineteenth century, particularly in the wake of the market revolution, to the rise of the California dream in the latter nineteenth century shows that common themes and focal points such as family, home, nature, and health characterized them both. The suburban ideal and the California dream, at least as articulated by the likes of Charles Lummis, Charles Nordhoff, Benjamin C. Truman, and Edward J. Wickson, largely meant the same thing: small cottage homes for the white middle class within a bucolic landscape separated from, but still accessible to, larger urban areas.

The suburban ideal as articulated by the suburban imagineers of the nineteenth century echoed such patriotic themes as republicanism, democratic and virtuous citizenship, and civic participation. Suburbs fostered neighborliness and democracy. The suburban ideal celebrated an

agrarian ethos of rural civility, security, and virtue whereby a large middle class of Americans, in contact with more sylvan surroundings, ensured the further democratization of the United States and leveling of classes and class divisions. Americans, or more rightfully white Americans, were to be a homogenous lot of Christian homeowners dotting the land and thus ensuring the salvation of the republic. An explicit antipathy toward the city underscored the articulation of a suburban ideal as suburbs, in juxtaposition to urban centers, emerged as places of refuge away from the city and all its perceived maladies (real or imagined) and, ultimately, served as a safeguard of America liberties and values. Suburbs, then, were a kind of middle landscape, an escape from the city on the one hand, and a place to set things right on the other.

Suburbs, as a middle landscape, represented the best place for families as they gathered in single-family homes among trees and orchards. In a natural environment, Americans seemed more American than in urban environments. Suburbs were also a perfect mix of city and country in that they did not expel urban amenities in their rejection of city problems like congestion, pollution, and crime. Suburbs embraced the need for commercial, educational, religious, and social institutions more often affiliated with urban centers than isolated rural hinterland areas. Suburbs, according to Olmsted and Vaux, were “not a sacrifice of urban conveniences, but their combination with the special charms and substantial advantages of rural conditions of life.”

Suburbs were a mix of both city and country, urbane but not urban and rural but not isolated. In suburbs, families came together and became the stabilizers of American society. Suburban homes helped to ensure proper gender roles and behaviors as a “cult of domesticity” preached that women helped to build up democratic and moral homes vital to the survival and, ultimately, greatness of the nation. The suburban single-family home became an island community far away

from the virulent troubles of the city, particularly from problems caused by increasing industrialization, immigration, and urbanization. The single-family home became a foundation for middle class identity as it also helped to strengthen patriotism and democratic citizenship. The focus on family, home, health, nature, and cultured refinement epitomized by a large middle class not only characterized the suburban ideal of the nineteenth century, but also the California dream of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A California agricultural colony was the ideal suburban environment with the best possible chance to make a buck, build a home, raise a family, and restore the individual heart, mind, and soul, as well as a more republican society. California, as portrayed by boosters both north and south, catered to a refined and cultured middle class or those aspiring to middle classdom. In California, the middle class could live close to nature and maintain their status as celebrated farmers who tilled the soil. But farming in California did not mean a large estate out in some isolated rural terrain void of civilized social advantages. Rather, California’s small farms, like suburbs, were the perfect mix of city and country. Farming in California meant producerism, home, community, and the achievement of civilized society as the image of the California small farmer, who embraced modern technologies and science, mirrored an image of middle class suburbanites helping to preserve a republic of vigor. The image of California and of the small farmer encompassed themes such as community, health, home, family, and nature, particularly as California was cast as the best site for all such things. California was paradise on earth, an Edenic paradise regained, and if suburbanites were to find a place “where nature offers the greatest number of features,” as Downing had urged them to, then no better place existed than California.10

California’s climate and environment reached very near the ideal and promised great wealth and health for all those who located within. Perfect soil, weather, and climate made the Golden State a land of opportunity, a land that could facilitate the suburban fantasy of democratizing American society through single-family homes dotting the rural landscape. California was nothing short of the manifestation of the American dream. The California dream, then, as articulated by boosters of the latter nineteenth century, mirrored the suburban ideal. Boosters continually praised the state as a site of “happy homes” and for families seeking “the highest desirability in the location of a home.”\textsuperscript{11} With a more healthful climate and refined environment, boosters extolled an idyll place that echoed the suburban imagineers. California, then, emerged as the best location for an ideal suburb: the best place to mix city and country. It had the best rural landscape as compared to anywhere else. California was the archetypal space for experiencing what it meant to be an American with perfect temperatures and fruitful soils.

The California agricultural colony represented this rural suburban idyll. The agricultural colony became largely synonymous with horticulture and suburbs in that the focus centered on a middle class lifestyle among a healthful bucolic landscape that included social urban advantages such as clubs, churches, schools, and infrastructure. Communities such as Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks were such so-called agricultural colonies and, when placed under the proverbial historian’s microscope, reveal, in more detail, the ways in which agricultural colonies in California were indeed unique rural suburban types: agriburbs.

Promoters of the so-called agricultural colonies of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks utilized suburban imagery to package these sites as the best places to live. These promoters were essentially smart and sophisticated businessmen involved in real estate capitalism and

\footnote{11. Wickson, \textit{California Fruits}, 358.}
speculation. Promising a middle class lifestyle in suburban communities made good business sense as such rhetoric served as a centerpiece in a publicity campaign designed to draw migrants and investors. Employing the language and imagery of suburbia served the purpose of facilitating speculators’ fantasies of enormous wealth. In Ontario, as in Orangevale and Fair Oaks, the promoters promised a community of “city conveniences and country health and pleasure; peopled with the intelligent, well-to-do and law abiding.”12 A group of place entrepreneurs, who organized collectively as what has been labeled a “growth machine” by subsequent interpreters who analyze urban areas, infused Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks with the nineteenth century symbols of progress, advance, and modernity. These areas were “model” colonies and the best fruit districts with perfect water supply, connections to rail lines, and access to commercial districts from both within the community and with adjacent urban centers. As agricultural colonies, they had the necessary urban institutions and infrastructure to spell the isolated existence of a farmer and likely appealed to the imaginations of potential migrants and investors alike. Indeed, the brash booster pamphlets produced by the promoters concerning Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks served as corroborating evidence to both bloated claims of agricultural prowess and the plethora of urban amenities. These otherwise backward-looking traditional farming communities, that were still nonetheless the best for farming, included such amenities as transportation and communication technologies, educational, religious, and social institutions, libraries, clubs, prominent buildings and architecture, post offices, banks, a commercial sector, and hotels. “A constant intellectualization has been going on around the farm,” said the Ontario promoters.13 Agricultural colonies such as Ontario,


Orangevale, and Fair Oaks were thus the outcome and medium of such “intellectualization.” They were, in short, the manifestation of the suburban ideal, particularly when compared with descriptions and characterizations of suburbs as conceptualized by suburban historians, Kenneth T. Jackson foremost among them.

Agriburbs were unquestionably a mixture of city and country, a core element of the suburban ideal. As such, they were semi-autonomous enclaves that provided many of the amenities, institutions, and infrastructure to allow them to remain less dependent on cities in comparison to many later subdivisions and surely predate the planning, or evolution, of the “new urbanism” and so-called super suburbs, megaburbs, technoburbs, or edge cities/nodes of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Nevertheless, as the promoters pointed out in Orangevale, agriburbs remained near to cities to allow for travel into the city for such things as theatrical performances and for commuter traffic, what they called “the facilities afforded business men for enjoying the comforts and privileges of country homes, without interference with their business interests.”

The promotion of agriburbs as semi-autonomous enclaves, complete with urban amenities, transportation routes that provided easy access to the city, and the best of both city and country, represented a market strategy on behalf of the promoters seeking profit. They were real-estate capitalists utilizing popular images and narratives, be they...


indicative of a rural, suburban, or rural ideal, in order to stimulate interest in, and migration to, agriburban communities in particular and the metropolitan regions in which they lay in general. In other words, they were smart and sophisticated businessmen operating within, and through, a collective organization of place entrepreneurs.

Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ promoters, as place entrepreneurs, developed these agriburban communities as speculative ventures. This consortium of place entrepreneurs represented a growth machine that sought to reap profits from the sell of land and from the establishment of auxiliary businesses and regional publicity. Their plans of agriburban development represented both a direct profit scheme via the sale of land and an indirect profit scheme through the anticipation of encouraging a trickle down economic scheme — they were “community builders.” Concerning the first, selling agriburban lots represented a classical real-estate investment where profit emerged, hopefully, through capital gains. About the second, expectations for further profit rested on the notion that new investors and consumers would enter the marketplace in conjunction with the rise and development of agriburban communities. Older or previously established businesses, such as newspaper and railroad companies, desired the increase in potential customers and, for newspapers at least, the increased revenue in advertisement such population increase could demand.

The creation of new auxiliary businesses could also potentially cater to the needs of a new population — a new population the promoters hoped would be middle class and thus able to afford much. They therefore saw their own capital investment in agriburban communities as in their own best interest to insure future capital gains beyond the simple grab and sale of land. This last point suggests why other businessmen not directly attached to the sale of land in agriburban communities sought to support their advertisement and development as well. New
blood meant new and more money for a broader regional marketplace. Not surprisingly, then, groups of entrepreneurs in Los Angeles got involved in Ontario, such as the Los Angeles-based University of Southern California or the Riverside-based Press and Horticulturalist publishing company. In Orangevale and Fair Oaks, the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, Board of Supervisors, and newspapers such as the *Folsom Telegraph*, *Sacramento Bee*, and *Sacramento Union* added to these suburban promotion schemes. Regional booster publications also understood the added benefit of touting agriburban communities as they added yet another example of what made the regional area superior to any other. In other words, the promotion of a part was also a promotion of the whole. The promoters of agriburban communities operated upon a larger metropolitan landscape and took a broader metropolitan view when they approached and developed market strategies. They were keen and sophisticated businessmen who were not only real-estate capitalists, but also a cosmopolitan consortium of lawyers, judges, engineers, newspapermen, publishers, department store magnets, politicians, and bankers.

As a cohort of some rather sophisticated businessmen, the promoters of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks showed a sophisticated legal understanding and good marketing sense when they fashioned land corporations to sell land in the agriburbs and auxiliary businesses that could further provide profit. Concerning the first, the promoters sought to develop corporations and trusts, such as the San Antonio Water Mutual Company in Ontario and the Fair Oaks Development Company in Fair Oaks. This made good business sense as corporate capitalism shifted power away from shareholders to directors and managers. The promoters thus established legal institutions offering them limited liability, full power, and a chance to maximize profits. About the second, the promoters put their legal talent to use so they could better and more easily direct capital investment into agriburban communities that resulted in the
construction of bridges, development of municipal services, and the establishment of educational, religious, and social buildings and services. This accomplishment is impressive on two accounts. First, the promoters diffused their own personal costs across a broader consortium of entrepreneurs, which, again, testifies to their business acumen. Second, they were able to develop popular and valued institutions, infrastructure, and services that appealed to migrants and investors interested in otherwise “agricultural colonies.” The creation of such so-called amenities was an outcome of speculative imagination designed to supply middle-class cultural establishments and symbols to settlers who might be even more enticed to move to Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks because of the amenities and thereby increase the likelihood of the promoters turning a profit.

The promoters sought to package agriburban places as the ideal communities to live. Such packaging of place represented a commodification of place. This included fashioning both an imaginary landscape and a material landscape. On the one hand, the promoters packaged these places by describing them as the model places to live as they utilized the language of the rural, urban, and suburban ideals, not to mention California dream. On the other hand, the promoters of agriburban places created a materiality by constructing bridges, roads, buildings, and planting trees, which, in the process, became fodder for their publicity campaigns. This packaging of place has had long-lasting consequences beyond the original market strategy and intent of the promoters to stimulate migration and investment. The original packaging of place by the promoters of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks created a lasting imagery and materiality that continues to influence these communities. The promoters, moreover, created a narrative of place while packing agriburbs for sale. Such a narrative directs recollections of the past in the present, how subsequent interpreters from both within and from without the local community
represent the past, and how community members make decisions about the reproduction of
historical narratives for public consumption in the present in which they have lived and live.

The promoters of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks commodified place as a market
strategy and, in the process, infused them with a set of images and narrative. Such images and
narrative have had enormous cultural costs in terms of memory, historical consciousness, sense
of place, community, and identity. Indeed, packaging places and riddling them with images and
narratives is a condition of real estate capitalism and the activities of a growth machine coalition
— a condition that allows historians and other interpreters to extend this focus on some
consequences of a growth mentality besides taxes and underdevelopment/overdevelopment
(though such things do, to be sure, deserve attention). The lasting impact of the original
promoters’ packaging of place manifests in a set of salient images and narrative production that
reveals place is as much a cultural production as a material one that is shaped by real estate
speculation, boosterism, manufacturing, commerce, ideology, and narrative. The production of
agriburban places burgeoned from the construction and management of stories and images, a
process of storytelling that has had the effect of branding these places in particular and
consequential ways. In other words, the original promoters fashioned a narrative of agriburban
sites that has emerged as a dominant one in directing subsequent producers of narrative
concerning the past of agriburban communities. In the process of reproducing narrative, then,
subsequent historical narratives (i.e., vectors of memory) serve to promulgate the original
promoters’ packaging of place and reify, legitimize, standardize, and essentially, sacralize it. A
unitary voice emerges dominant across narratives across time and brands these communities.
Historical narratives about agriburban sites have become fixed and uniform. They promote
common themes that have also had the effect, rather paradoxically at times, of diverting attention from agriburban communities’ suburban heritage.

An analysis of agriburbs, as rural suburban types, calls into question notions of suburbs as “specters of placeless” and, by implication, places that lack memory and historical consciousness — that they are perhaps more than simply bland places of a lamentable conformity and uniformity that a perhaps simplistic dichotomy of cities (as good) and suburbs (as bad) suggests. In other words, suburbs are complex and dynamic forms of social organization. When looking at the historical narratives of rural suburbs like Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, as well as the physical and cultural landscapes, a sense of place and “warehouse” of memories emerged to reveal a bit about the socio-cultural environment of these places over a 100-year period. In short, a reception history of agriburban communities revealed — in the form of a dominant recollective paradigm and its cultural costs — a very discernable, and historical, sense of place, history, and public memory that is consequential, not the least because it debunks the notion that suburbs are “specters of placelessness.”

A review of a dominant recollective paradigm and its cultural costs in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks revealed a process of forgetting in which historical narratives assumed a unitary voice and perpetuated four dominant themes. Such historical narratives represented a collected memory in which the four major themes, in fact, emerged dominant. Historical narratives, as collected memory, have served to direct reproductions of the past, and thereby place and memory, in Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks. That such is true is not only evidenced by the continued repetition of a dominant recollective paradigm in textual narratives, but also in what these communities choose to preserve, commemorate, and memorialize. A clear

16. Leach, County of Exiles, 28.
and present focus on preserving homes important to a white middle-class sense of history, for example, is common, as is a focus on highlighting innovative institutions and infrastructure, such as churches and schools, not to mention “self-made men” like George Chaffey in the form of a statue. The themes of a dominant recollective paradigm, then, as collected memory, reflect the creation of a metanarrative that has been formalized and directs subsequent reproducers of place and narrative to recall the history of agriburban communities in like and similar ways.

The creation and saliency of a metanarrative reveals, on the one hand, the impact of the original promoters’ packaging of place, to be sure, but also a search for, and maintenance of, a useable past in agriburban communities on the other hand. Indeed, a search for, and maintenance of, a “useable past” in agriburban communities, which represent a unique suburban type, complicates a narrow view of suburbs in general as champions and purveyors of uninterested and bland communities. The maintenance and value placed on reproductions of the past that espouse a dominant recollective paradigm and its four constituent themes is suggestive of an active process of remembering and forgetting in agriburban communities. Specifically, scholars that analyze memory, particularly of “collective memory,” argue that memory is something that is shared, passed on, and constructed by a group or even whole societies and that narrative, such as historical narrative, plays a critical role in that process, particularly as narrative can influence the collective memory of local history. Collective memory, while defined differently at times, refers mainly to the formation of a useable past. Correctness and faithfulness to facts, while noble and highly desired, is secondary because memory — as the social construction of a group — forms more out of an agenda or strategy for fostering social cohesion and a sense of

community. Historical narrative is a fundamental vehicle for disseminating and propagating collective memory, particularly in the form of texts, monuments, memorials, and other many vectors of memory. Collective memory, then, is not memory that is formed out of lived experience, but rather to encounter some mode of articulation recalling the past (though, I suspect, one could certainly argue that encountering historical narratives constitutes some type of lived experience in-and-of itself). In other words, as Iwona Irwin-Zarecka concluded: “A ‘collective memory’ — as a set of ideas, images, [and] feelings about the past — is best located not in the minds of individuals, but in the resources they share.” It is in this context that historical narratives concerning Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ past were discussed as having a “public memory,” one that affected a localized body of beliefs and ideas about the past that helped these communities understand their past, present, and by implication, future. The promotion of public memory, then, as articulated in and through various vectors of memory in agriburban communities, directed locals to remember the past in similar and certain ways and, in turn, reproduce stories about the past that reified, legitimated, and promulgated a metanarrative first articulated by the promoters’ original packaging of place.

18. See Alonso, “The Effects of Truth,” 33-57; Blight, “If You Don’t Tell It Like It Was, It Can Never Be as It Ought to Be,” in Horton and Horton, Slavery and Public History; Blight, Race and Reunion; Connerton, “Seven Types of Forgetting”; Farmer, Martyred Village; Fentress and Wickham, Social Memory; Glassberg, Sense of History; Hayden, The Power of Place; Hobsbawm and Ranger, The Invention of Tradition; Irwin-Zarecka, Frames of Remembrance; Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory; Linenthal, Preserving Memory; Levison, Written in Stone; Marcuse, Legacies of Dachau; Novick, The Holocaust in American Life; Olick and Levy, “Collective Memory and Cultural Constraint,” 921-36; Siegel, “History is the Opposite of Forgetting.” 770-800; Siegel, The Moral Disarmament of France; Tonkin, Narrating Our Pasts; Walkowitz and Knauer, Memory and the Impact of Political Transformation in Public Space; Wertsch, Voices of Collective Remembering, 31-33; Wohl and Brown, “The Useable Past”; Young, Textures of Memory; and Zamora, The Useable Past.

19. Susan Crane claims that because “reading” text is a lived experience, it constitutes a type of collective memory in-and-of-itself, though altered (Crane, “Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory,” 1381-82).

Suburban places, then, such as agriburban communities like Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, seem to represent places that are what some scholars have called “theatres of memory,” “storehouses” of memory, or “sites of memory.” In agriburbs, personal and public recollections about the past stood against both a flood of place images articulated in historical narratives and the actual material landscape of these places, which encompassed historic sites, memorials, museums, historic preservation projects, spectacles, and cultural resources management. As agriburban promoters packaged place, they imparted a sense of place — they branded it. In turn, subsequent reproductions of place, of historical narratives, served to reify and legitimize the original production of place as outlined by the promoters. The historical metanarrative concerning agriburbs thus resulted from place making and in turn became an agent in place making.

While fleshing out a palpable sense of place, memory, and history in suburban areas like the rural suburbs of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, it would be a mistake to say it all turned up as a bed of roses. Admittedly, the primary reasons for pointing out Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks’ sense of place, history, and memory was intentionally twofold. First, it revealed some of the lasting influences of the original promoters’ packaging of place. Second, it paradoxically revealed a dominant recollective paradigm that, while serving well to divert attention away from these rural suburban communities’ origins, further revealed that these communities were indeed unique suburban types: agriburbs. In other words, the focus throughout was on making a case for Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks being representative of unique rural suburbs. In the process, however, suburban communities such as agriburbs emerged as rather complex and dynamic places in which individuals seemed to stake a lot of themselves and their sense of self and community. This all seems to complicate simple depictions of
suburbs as entirely negative, bland, placeless, and lacking memory. While far from being a suburban apology, particularly because a metanarrative, sense of place, and history in agriburbs has grossly misrepresented factual details and marginalized ethnoracial minorities — what I called “vectors of misrepresentation” — suburban community types like agriburbs suggest that maybe, just maybe, suburban communities are not so lacking as many suburban critics like to point out. Indeed, it almost seems as if a unitary voice dominates most accounts of suburbia and has had the effect of becoming collected memory, directing subsequent interpreters to adopt similar and like views and perspectives.

It would be a mistake to say suburbs are entirely wonderful. I too share in many of the complaints about suburbs and suburbanization as detrimental to the environment (though so are cities). They do seem to foster a segregated residential landscape (though popular media and entertainment does so as well — which can also be contributing to some bland uniformity, I suspect). Suburbs do seem to contribute to the way in which resources do, or do not, flow in certain areas spread across a broad metropolitan landscape. The point, then, is not to present suburbs as entirely positive, to produce some type of counter-narrative to the more typical negative narratives concerning suburbs. Rather, the point is to raise concerns about representing suburbs as simply harbingers of placelessness and blandness. Suburbs may very well indeed be responsible for a lot of less than admirable phenomena in the United States, however, they are not always so easily reducible to a simple narrative of suburbs as evil. Suburbs are dynamic and complex forms of social and territorial organization.

In Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, many individuals and organizations seem to take an active role in representations of the past and their production. They seem to find a sense of community and particular meaning in it, even if the result is to divert attention from their
communities’ suburban origins and to marginalize ethnoracial minorities. Be that as it may, agriburbs, as suburban types, suggest that there is such a thing as suburban memory, sense of place, and sense of history. Historical narrative certainly played a central role in this phenomenon, particularly textual narratives. Yet, so too did more public recollections of the past such as museums, memorials, cultural resources management, historic preservation, and spectacle. Public historians and public history practitioners therefore seem rather uniquely situated to flesh out suburban memory, sense of place, and historical consciousness by the mere fact that many of them work in, consult with, or evaluate suburban museums, historic sites, and memorials, among other things. Regardless of who is doing it, though, it does seems that more attention can be paid to the suburbs as extremely dynamic and complex forms of social and territorial organizations that do not necessarily fall back on simplistic and narrow narratives of suburbs as bland, lacking memory, placeless, and altogether horrible places. Individuals, even in suburbs, take a lot of pride and invest a lot of themselves in reproducing historical narratives and representing the past to a public audience. Suburbanites, just like many others it seems, find a sense of community and identity in the history of their communities, and they take an active role in doing so.

Perhaps overcoming a decidedly anti-suburban rhetoric in historical narratives is where suburban history, as a field of study, needs to go, if not already doing so. An understanding that suburban narratives jointly manifest as a colleted memory of suburbia in their own right allows historians and others to recognize that suburban narratives have the power to fashion a negative image of suburbia that likely directs subsequent interpreters to carry such negative narratives forward. Likewise, looking at the transmitting of a negative imagery and narrative of suburbia as a type of capital investment and display of cultural knowledge reveals a potent prompt in the
persistent reproduction of a negative suburban paradigm. Knowing this gives pause to simply repeating negative narratives concerning America’s suburban experience and grants consideration of an alternate narrative template. Suburban revisionists and historians can persist in detailing suburbia’s more positive, as well as negative, attributes. Put differently, suburban historians and chroniclers can properly recover a history of suburban places as complex and dynamic forms of human social and territorial organization, which includes both positive and negative phenomena and consequences. In the process, historians can document the presence of a very real and discernable usable past in suburban communities that many of suburbia’s critics have claimed, or at least have implicitly inferred, did not exist.

Although recovering for suburbs a sense of memory, place, and history, of what is often called a useable past, is a fine suggestion, the primary purpose of this work is to break down the circumstantial details of what made agricultural colonies rural suburban types, what I call agriburbs. Perhaps the agriburbs of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks can serve as models for others to compare. Certainly, other horticultural communities in California, such as those outside Fresno, mirror the promotion and development of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks. Likewise, many other areas, particularly in places such as Florida, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Texas, and Washington, saw the rise of “horticultural pursuits” and rural or agricultural colonization. The agriburb model, then, can serve as a point of comparison for many other areas outside California, and from within, where horticulture served as a primary means to advertise, promote, and otherwise develop semi-rural seeming communities that included urban amenities. In other words, the agriburban model of suburbanization serves as a basis, or at least charge, for reevaluating the essential qualities and particulars of so-called agricultural colonies in the United States.
Horticulture and suburban rhetoric, while seemingly the most important characteristics in the definition an agriburb, were only two aspects of what constituted the formation of an agriburban community. Physical separation from large urban areas while remaining within their cultural, economic, political, and social orbit also played a role, as did a local growth machine working to promote agriburbs. Understanding the history and development of agriburbs thus requires a metropolitan perspective, of placing the development of agriburbs within a broader metropolitan landscape. Suburbs, like agriburbs, did and do not exist within a vacuum and to understand suburban development better, it is best to continue to place them within a metropolitan context. Furthermore, this requires placing growth machine members within a broader context, as they themselves operated upon a larger metropolitan landscape. It requires contextualizing not only the era and area in which they lived, but their actions, as growth machine members, as one set of actions in a lifetime of activity. The result is not necessarily to overturn any idea that the growth machine members were motivated by profit, but rather to suggest that some seemingly more humanitarian motives augmented and conjoined their development of agriburbs for profit. They seemed to be Progressive businessmen or, to turn the phrase, business Progressives. Accordingly, historians and other researchers who focus on suburbs can continue to examine suburban places by taking a metropolitan view that attempts to situate and relate the history of suburbs as they developed in connection to and within a larger metropolitan region. In addition, by taking a metropolitan view of suburbs, cities, and hinterland areas, historians and others can recognize that often the place entrepreneurs they study took a metropolitan, even national, view too that influenced some of their growth strategies and goals.

The history and development of the agriburban communities of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks augment our understanding of the history of California at the turn of the twentieth
century. A coalition of Progressive-minded businessmen developed them for profit — they were harvesting suburbs. These businessman helped to contribute to the economic modernization and eventual metropolitanization of California. Moreover, agriburbs, as planned suburbs, show that much of what we understand to be the suburbanization process in California was not solely the result or consequence of some mere process of decanting the core or population explosion. Rather, agriburbs were the result of a willed and intended action. Agriburbs, like any good nineteenth-century conception of suburbs, were designed to blend the best of city and country. Yet, agriburbs were also designed to blend the suburban ideal and the California Dream, as the two ideals already largely mirrored each other. The agriburb had one key defining characteristic, though, that separated it from other more generalized suburban types: agriculture. More specifically, agriburbs included horticulture and horticulture, or so said many of the Golden States’ most verbose and talented boosters, was best practiced and executed in California. Horticulture defined California’s unique and unrivaled agricultural and rural landscape. Moreover, horticultural communities in California, at least comparable to how Carey McWilliams saw them in Southern California, constituted “a world of its own.” In that context, agriburbs seem to represent a suburban type of their own.
### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**Suburbia**


Often a secondary source can be a primary source in regards to a reception history that pays particular attention to sources as vectors of memory, regardless of their creator or publication date. Be that as it may, instead of forcing primary or secondary source classifications or categories, these sources are considered useful as primary sources, the historical record, and as vectors of memory. In addition, I primarily focused on works that discussed the early foundational and developmental years of Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks because they correlate to the years that a land-based elite promoted these areas as agriburbs. A focus on these years is also what serves as the basis for the determination of a dominant recollective paradigm. The material type is difficult to characterize. Nevertheless, sources that addressed Ontario, Orangevale, or Fair Oaks, as well as principal actors such as George Chaffey or Harris Weinstock, were what ultimately determined their inclusion. Much of the material observably concerns larger themes beside Ontario, Orangevale, and Fair Oaks, such as California or county histories. The agriburb sites, however, are still included, typically, though not always, in 5 to 10 pages. Combining a variety of dates, types, lengths, formats, creators, and topics is what gives a reception history of the agriburbs particular legitimacy. For example, histories that devote a paragraph to the history of Ontario, Orangevale, or Fair Oaks compare with 200-page
magnum opuses, student papers compare to academic publications, government reports compare
to privately published material, and city histories compare to regional histories and state
histories. In addition, material comes from every decade from the 1880s to the 2000s. Given
such, I categorized the sources as follows: (1) Ontario; then Fair Oaks and Orangevale; (2)
chronological order by decades whereby they are alphabetized despite the specific year; (3) other
documents such as media, Articles of Incorporation, and sites of memory.

Ontario’s Collected Memory

Please note that sources relating to Upland or Etiwanda are relevant because Upland was
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These sources are physical sites, cultural resources, or structures in Ontario, which celebrate some aspect of the community’s history. Analyses of these sites show the continuation, and perpetuation, of a dominant recollective paradigm in the telling of Ontario’s history. They are both the articulation of the domination of a particular narrative and vectors for such narrative’s further perpetuation.

Chaffey Community Art Association Museum of Art.
San Bernardino County Point of Historical Interest. North Wing of the J. Filippi Winery, 12467 Base Line Road Rancho Cucamonga, California. Although primarily a venue for art, the museum, like numerous other institutions, organizations, and businesses (not all
of which are mentioned here), are living memorials to George Chaffey because residents — and visitors — are provided a culturally valued institution for their daily use.

Euclid Avenue.
Runs north to South from Upland to Ontario. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Euclid Avenue was listed for both its historical association with the development of Upland and Ontario, as well as architectural, as a doublewide avenue.

Euclid Avenue Fountain.
San Bernardino County Point of Historical Interest. Front of the Ontario Museum of History and Art, 225 South Euclid Avenue, Ontario, CA. The fountain was placed near the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, where, according to a few sources, such as Rounds (Ontario), Chaffey sprayed water on passing train passengers to show of the Model Colony’s irrigation technology and plethora of water.

Frankish Building.
Listed on the National Register of Historic Places. 200 S. Euclid Avenue, Ontario, CA. Site was listed for its associational history with the commercial growth of the community and Frankish as a pioneering “step-founder.”

Hofer Ranch (Ballou Ranch, Ben Haven).
Listed on the National Register of Historic Places. 11248 South Turner Avenue, Ontario, CA. Was listed for its associational history with the agriculture vitality and importance in Ontario, as well as architectural significance for one of the few, if not only, remaining agricultural homesteads in Ontario.

George Chaffey, Jr. Plaque and Statue.
Located in front of Upland City Hall, 460 Euclid Avenue, Upland, CA.

Mule Car Marker and Mule Car.
San Bernardino County Point of Historical Interest. Marker and restored Mule Car are at the intersection of Euclid Avenue (State Route 83) and B Street, in the median on Euclid Avenue, Ontario, CA. The Mule Car, also known as the Gravity Car, was a streetcar that required two mules to pull passengers north toward San Antonio Canyon (in Upland), which took approximately 90 minutes. Then, the mules were placed on a cart in the rear, as the tram relied on gravity to take it downward south to Ontario. The tram is recognized as a technological novelty, as well as a vital transportation mechanism needed in the young colony (operating from 1895 to 1902).
Ontario Museum of History & Art.
225 South Euclid Avenue, Ontario, CA. Museum provides as stunning variety of exhibits devoted to the history of Ontario, as well as galleries to local artists. Larger exhibits include “Road Maps,” which highlight important transportation corridors in Ontario, such as Euclid Avenue, agriculture, particularly citrus and viniculture, and, of course, Chaffey. The museum is also active in touring local schools, providing them with a history of the founding of Ontario and provide lecture nights, such as one recently given by a descendent of the Hofer family commenting on the growth of Agriculture in Ontario’s past (remember the Hofer Ranch is a National Register site).

Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room, Ontario City Library.
215 East C Street, Ontario, CA. The history room is simply an amazing local archive, which houses thousands of photos, originally manuscripts, including Chaffey’s personal diaries and correspondences, and hundreds of materials related to the history of the community. The history room obviously proved invaluable to me, with the vast majority of the work used concerning Ontario coming from there. Still, the Model Colony room further memorializes Ontario as the “Model Colony” and prominently displays a picture of George Chaffey — and William!

Orangevale and Fair Oaks’ Collected Memory

Late Nineteenth Century through Early Twentieth Century

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1980s


1990s


**2000s**


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Articles of Incorporation for Fair Oaks and Orangevale

Sacramento County Recorder Collection. Articles of Incorporation of the California Olive and Fruit Growers Association of Fair Oaks, October 27, 1896, case file no. 716, SAMCC, Sacramento.

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Sites of Memory

The Calder Guest House.

Built in the 1890s, the Calder House is probably the most recognized building in Orangevale today. Beginning in the 1970s, the house has been the site of a restaurant. William Calder, a famous Shakespearean actor who entertained the likes of John Barrymore while at Orangevale, is one of the more prominent names in Orangevale.

Fair Oaks Historical Society and History Center.


Fair Oaks Plaza Muriel by Hugh Gorman.

Local resident and artists public art of the history of Fair Oaks.
Fair Oaks Bluff overlooking the American River.
A favorite site of locals for over 100 years and also a favorite of promoters in advertising images. Recently, the Citizens to Save the Bluffs has worked to purchase the property to conserve the area. The price of the property was $1.2 million. On August 3, 2001, Citizens to Save the Bluffs purchased half the land for $735,000, and Sacramento County became the owner of that half, plus the recreation easement. On January 31, 2002, Citizens to Save the Bluffs purchased the remaining land for $465,000, with the help of a loan from American River Bank for $326,000. The Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District was the signatory on the loan. On December 29, 2005, the outstanding loan balance of $124,705 was paid off, with the help of funds from the Park District, Sacramento County, and community donors. Their remaining obligation is to raise funds for the Donor Recognition Plaza. See http://www.savethebluffs.org.

Greenback Lane, Orangevale and Citrus Heights.
One of the first roads built in Orangevale is also one of the largest today and has possibly one of the most fascinating stories associated with it—Greenback Lane. The legend maintains, according to residents and local historians, that Chinese laborers (presumably from Folsom) built Greenback Lane sometime in the 1860s and 1870s and received payment in America’s first wide-circulating paper money, Demand Notes, or Greenbacks. Greenback Lane, paved in 1916 and for a time a part of the famous US 40 route, remained the only major road in Orangevale until Madison and Hazel avenues became major roads in the 1960s following the large population growth in the region and the construction of Hazel Avenue Bridge.

Fair Oaks Village is the old central business district of Fair Oaks and has served as the main business thoroughfare in the community for over 100 years. In addition to the Fair Oaks Plaza, Slocum House, and Old Library Building (which are mentioned elsewhere), they are also the site of several older buildings, built in the early to mid twentieth century, such as the Bank Building (c. 1910), Community Center (site of the first school house) and Tudor-Style business offices (though they were built in the 1980s). Currently, the Fair Oaks Historical Society offers a walking tour that privileges this area and the Society hopes to nominate the areas as a Historic District.

The Old Fair Oaks Bridge, Bridge Street, Fair Oaks, CA.
Crosses over the American River. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Built in 1907, bridge replaced the original 1901 structure and served as the only major crossing over the American River in Eastern Sacramento County for nearly 50 years.

Marty, Jason, “Old Fair Oaks Bridge.”
Slocum House & Restaurant, 7992 California Avenue, Fair Oaks, CA, 95628. Listed as a California Historical Landmark. The former of Charles Slocum, a prominent businessmen and civic leader in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Today the house is a five-star restaurant.

Spectacles

Fair Oaks Fiesta.
Annually held in May, the Fiesta, or at least some type of local parade and gathering, has been going on since the 1950s. Recently changing the name to “Fair Oaks Spring Fest,” one can go and enjoy frog jumps, the sun run, a car show, parade, food and craft vendors, special entertainment, and children’s games.

Fair Oaks Chicken Festival.
Beginning in 2006 locals and neighbors are invited out to dance, dine, and drink yet again in the center of town. Essentially a replica of Fair Oaks Fiesta, the Festival pays tribute to Fair Oaks’s legendary roosters and chickens that frolic freely throughout the downtown district despite the hustle and bustle of human and automobile traffic.

Orangevale’s “Pow Wow Days.”
Beginning in 1963 as a “neighborhood” parade, residents of Orangevale have also enjoyed an annual parade and fair each spring, “Pow Wow Days.” The parade features floats from local businesses, organizations, and clubs, as well as pancake breakfasts, barbeques, horse shows, dancing, music, crowing of a “queen,” and a carnival complete with rides.

Secondary Sources

Secondary source materials comprise a rather large and diverse body of work. They cover the market revolution, industrialization, memory, narrative, psychology, California, and the suburbs, to name just a few. With all that said, because this study focuses primarily on California, public memory, and suburbia, secondary sources split up into four categories: (1) general; (2) California; (3) public memory; and (4) suburbia. The sought after purpose for such tagging is to allow for easy verification of works cited on the one hand and for the convenient assemblage of major works relating to California, public memory, and suburbia on the other hand. I hope that such aggregations provide any readers or researchers a recognizable, quick, and easy to follow roadmap for some helpful and essential works relating to California, public
memory, and suburbia. Owing to the fact that some works can fit into more than once category, some double citations do happen.

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**Public History, Public Memory, & Narrative:** encompasses forgetting, historical consciousness, local history, memory, narrative, and place (or space).


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