





Promise and Protest: Metropolitan California in the Postwar Era (pt I)



* This lecture is sponsored in part by a collaboration grant from the European Union: "Urbanism and Suburbanization in the EU Countries and Abroad"





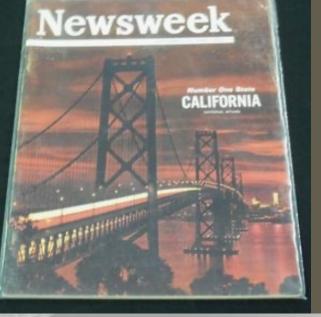






The Postwar Boom: California in an era of abundance





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> CASCADE OF FIRE LIGHTS VOSEMITE AT DUSK

OCTOBER 19 - 1962 - 206

California Population:

1940: 7 million 1960: 16 million 1970: 20 million 1980: 25 million

California surpassed New York to become America's most populous state in 1960. 'Blinded by the light' journalism on the "Golden State," emblem of America's "Affluent Society."



Images of the Affluent Society



U.S. SCIENTISTS **PLOT ORBIT**

happy events.

CLEAR HEADS AGREE: Calvert tastes better Party at your house? Birthday, anniversary, housewars e it a happy event indeed. Delight your guests with the Call for Calvert Rese



New! Rugged nylon jacket with a rich, soft touch...it's "Taslan" textured nylon!

Kitty

Knockout

SHELL

NYLON

Satellite WHY DID U.S. LOSE THE RACE? CRITICS SPEAK UP











OCTOBER 21, 1957

Life Magazine, Oct 21, 1957



OF GOOD THINGS ABOUT PETROLEUM Key

Kick



Kitchen



Sian of a better future for you THE SHELL COMPANIES



ası

"Pictorial Southland" - Images of the "Golden Empire"





Limits to the 'Affluent Society' in California

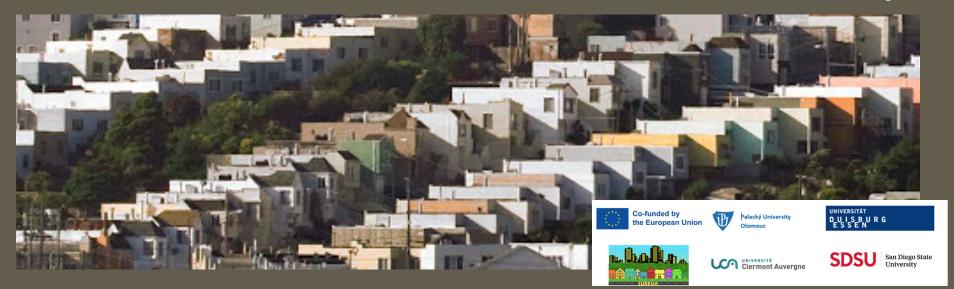
Amidst prosperity in the 1950s, an "other California" of chronic inequality included hundreds of thousands of African Americans, Latinos, and rural Californians of all backgrounds, especially farmworkers, recent immigrants/migrants, who worked in low paid service and laboring jobs.







California's Postwar Suburbia was an emblem of the Affluent Society



Postwar Housing Shortage:

During World War II, more than 15 million Americans moved across county lines, but only 1 million new homes were built. 1945 was the sixteenth consecutive year in which new housing supply fell short of demand.



Wartime housing options in San Diego, CA, 1941







Scenes from the postwar housing crisis:



a shortage as a 25 second, 8125 a mostly flow York apartment. Four adults and three



By 1947, almost half of veterans were living "doubled up" with friends, family, or strangers. Things were especially acute for veterans of color.



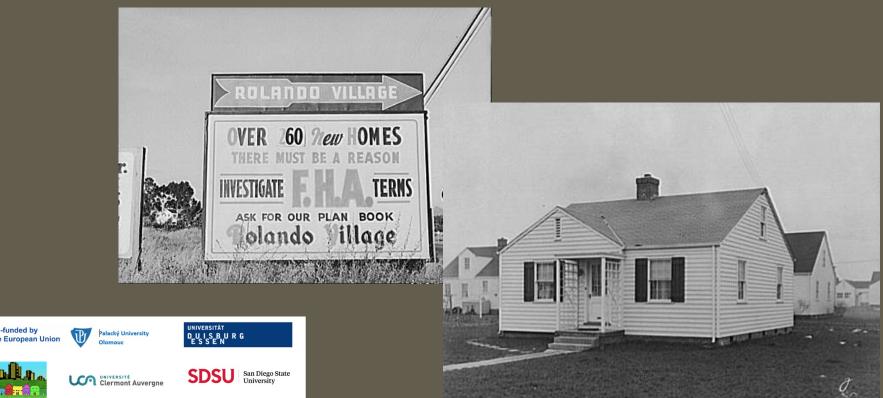
Government Response:

Co-funded by

The response was a partnership b/n government and private business that remade the landscape of the U.S.

FHA and VA mortgage programs stimulated a postwar boom in new home construction, epitomizing the active role of federal government in postwar California.





Key Federal Housing Policies:

FHA (Federal Housing Administration):

- Mortgage <u>insurance</u> for approved borrowers to buy FHA-approved houses
 - (30-yr, fixed rate, low interest loans).
- Low interest loans to builders of FHAapproved homes.

VA (Veterans Administration):

Mortgage <u>guarantees</u> for Veterans to buy VA/FHA approved houses ("no money down", long term, low interest loans).

Consequences:

Government took the risk out of private mortgage lending and building; expanded the supply of credit for private enterprise; revolutionized home lending – e.g., 30-year mortgage -- ; and boosted home ownership by 50%.





HOME, HOME AT LAST ...

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Revolutionizing the Housing Industry for Mass Production

Large home builders experimented with prefabrication of basic components, standardization and assembly line techniques to speed on-site construction.

Right: Roof shingles arriving at Lakewood, 1951 Below: Materials on site, Levittown, NY ca 1949







Levitt and Sons, Pre-Fabricated materials Warehouse, *Life Magazine*, 1950,

Building Mass Suburbia:



Lakewood today

Lakewood from the Air: Developers, Boyar, Taper and Weingart reshaped home building as a mass production industry. (William Garnett, Lakewood, CA, 1950)











Clermont Auvergne



San Diego State University

Builders Competed to Cut Construction Times:



INTENED SLAB DOLLS TURNING UND



in Houston: J. S. Norman Building Colan, From Ciscinnati, Warner-Kuster's sens and General Lowberroot, From Lincol Brue Ion Strains, Frins Odesia, Tex. Commution Co's On Cond and Dev Saves-From Dultan Loland Lee, Harved F. South, J. D. new and Firs & Savathe Has Fairobs. Date total rby vubaria: 2 200 haterian.

Fastest US builder turns bare slab

What's the rish?

With that question on their lips, 11 top home builders (pluto left) were to Savannah, Gia., recently to see what makes the fastest builder in the basiness tick.

Speedy Builder Clayton Powell-he part up most of his men in 14 working days fired back a moviner answer. Said her "It's simple arithmetic. The longer you take to build a house, the more it costs you."

Then Powell, who hunds only four houses at once climin his starts to 80 a year), ticked off five remote why his fait operation pays off:

1. "I same on direct labor. The less time your men work on a house, the more houses they can build in a given time. I need only 14 new on my building poyroll."

2. "I save on supervision. I need only one supervisor because it's easy for one man to stay on top of only four jobs at a time. He has no trouble preventing errors and arricipat-

Fast Builder Powell gets off to a last start-his four-man framing crew uses panels and beam





PLAD AM Wall panels are caned on



men woorse tout us a slad or left in 14 days, the 1.055 so it of irring space plan one can partyr (see detailed plan p 197)

into finished house in only 14 working days

ing the kind of problems that boost costs."

E "I get henter control of men and materials. With only four houses at the works at once, it's easier to coordinate meterals direct labor and subcontractors."

4, "I save an construction financing-can borrow building monry over short terror."

5. "I me up less capital. The faster I build a house, the form I can sell it and get my money out."

"Sounds fine, but how do you build so fast" usked visitmy Builder Ike Jacobs of Firs & Jacobs, Houston, a fast man

w his own right (his houses go up in 28 days), had Powell. "Two things do it. First, the schedole itself, we lise by it. It's our table. Second, components. We don't. hald homes We assemble them from components we hop." Powell owns a half interest in Components Monufacfaring Co.

How do your get your local two office to go along with to close in a house by the end of the first day

your tight schedule?" asked Ed Fischer of Fischer & Frichtet, St Letuis.

"I don't," wild Powell, "I stopped humang rate ax months ago because impection delays fooled up my schedule our rus office is as understaffed as any. But if I could get impectors when i need them, the same schedule woold work for this inserted houses.

"Why not include the slub in your 14-stay schedule?" mant Mickey Norman of J. S. Norman Building Co. Houston. "Because the weather might give me trouble," said Ponell

"I always make sure I have monigh slabs ready to stay ahead of my schedole." "Voulre a fairly hig builder," said Lehard Las of Dullas,

chairman of wasse's Schull-Volume Bucklers' Committee, "but how about the little gay? Said Powell. "The fast-building principle applies no any

builder, whether he builds 10, 20 or 100 houses a super



Postwar builders streamlined and routinized steps in the home building process. (House and Home, 1952)





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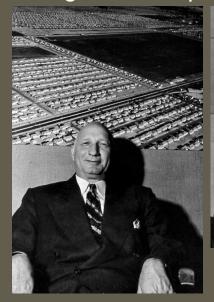
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Building Leaders East and West:

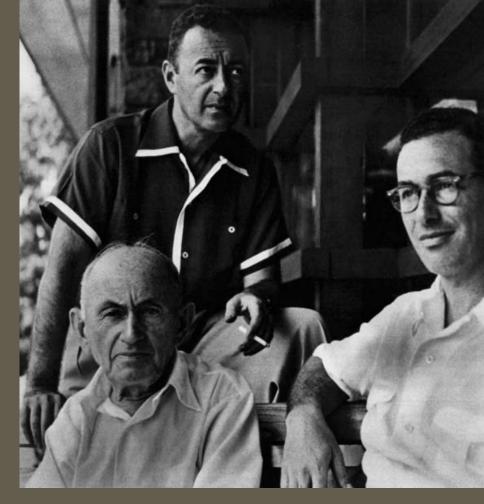
Levitt and Sons, "The General Motors of Housing": The Levitt's built the first of three "Levittowns" on Long Island, New York, from 1947-1951.

California's Mass Production Leaders: The Builders of Lakewood - Ben Weingart, Mark Taper, and Louis Boyar





Ben Weingart and Louis Boyar



Clockwise from top: brothers William and Alfred, and father Abraham Levitt, *Life Magazine*, 1952.





UNIVERSITÄT



Mass Suburbia – East and West





Lakewood, CA – 17,500 homes 'on the grid' Largest postwar suburban community, 1950-53 **Levittown, NY** – above: 17,400 homes and 82,000 residents, seven shopping strips, nine swimming pools, and seven small parks, one of the largest housing development in U.S. history to that time.

EEKEND the new mode first look for those who h DRIVE

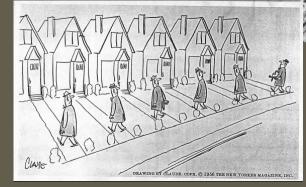


BOOM:

Federal stimulus and private innovation created a **boom** in private housing construction:

- 12 million new homes b/n 1945 and 1955.
- LA 75 % of new homes by 1970
- Suburbanites from 13% second to 37%, 1940-1960

U.S. Homeowners 1940 - 40% 1970 – 65% +





U.S. Housing Starts, 1925-65









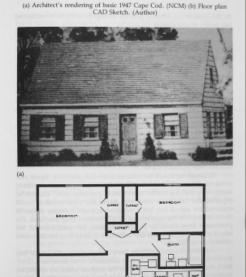




San Diego State University

Making a 'Mass Middle Class'





Lakewood and Levitt houses offered simple shelter at low-cost: initially, 800-900 square feet, two bedrooms, and a television for under \$8,000

By expanding home ownership, postwar suburbia altered Californians' conception of social class, creating a mass, home-owning (and mostly white) "middle class."

LEVITT ADDS 1950 MODEL TO HIS LINE New house has carport, tile bath and a television set—for \$7,990

In a most here in all Same, the country's high prin homelandless, nurvised berr 1960 model hars in an attorphete suggestring an auto show and and with A limitants previous. The effect and the second second second second second second and the second second second second second second and the second second second second second and the second second second second second second and the second second second second second second and second second second second second second and second second second second second second and second second second second second second second and second second second second second second and second se

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The convention practices, however, may come with, White his 1964 hadding program in dome, an Builder Levitt will have ensum in Levittosen wind 2,000 1960 houses. Still, having sold 2000 Gran worth of houses in the past 21 years (Lari, 4, 33, 3048), it is a rather multicly that Levitt a nearly reture and actife down in the subarth.



Truck driver, Bernard Levy and family, Levittown, *Life*, 1950



The Snake in the Suburban Garden:

Racial Segregation and Exclusion:



* FHA insured 1/3 of new homes b/n 1945-1960. To qualify, neighborhoods were required to be racially homogenous.

"If a neighborhood is to retain stability, it is necessary that property continue to be occupied by the same racial class **FHA** <u>Underwriting</u> <u>Manual</u>, 1935 - 1949

* Private builders refused to sell or rent to "non-whites"

By 1960, **just 2%** of FHA insured homes were occupied by 'non-whites.'

Levittown, NY, w 80,000 residents was 100% white in 1960

Lakewood, CA's 67,000 residents included no black families, 1960



Sadly, the small number of FHA/VA housing for families of color offered most of the new housing open to them. Ad for open housing –San Fernando Valley, 1956



Commuters, Park Forest, IL, 1954;

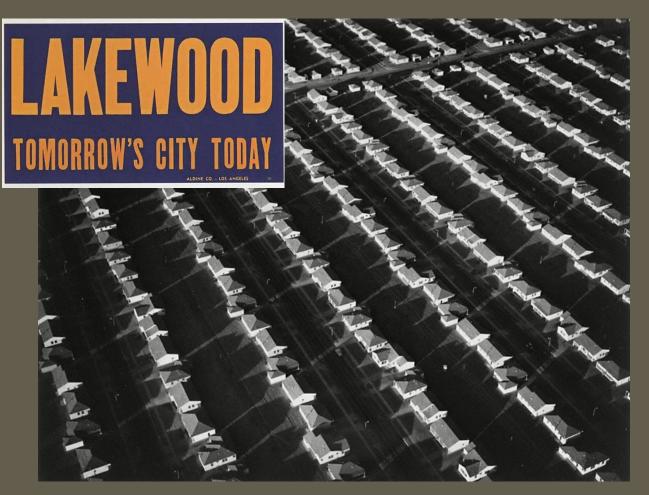
Shipyard Workers, Richmond, CA, 1942



A 'Path not Taken'

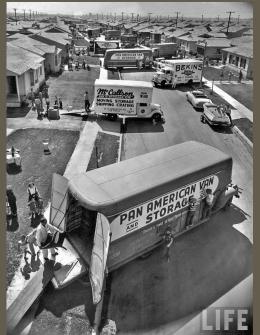
Unlike, mid-century workplaces, these new suburbs fostered community associations and patterns of everyday life that reinforced a sense of social commonality, understood as racial: "whiteness."





Building "whiteness" on the ground: postwar suburbanization created a vast new landscape largely restricted to "whites" – the basis for a new "common sense" of racial privilege and opportunity, alongside expectations of segregation and exclusion among a new generation of white suburban Californians.







Currents of denial affected Californians of color without regard to income, but... Demands for Inclusion were growing. The Postwar California Metropolis became a battleground over race and rights.



Grace and Sing Sheng, denied a home by "vote of the neighbors," South San Francisco, 1952





San Diego State



Willie and Margueritte Mays. Refused a home in SF in 1957, it took the mayor's intervention with others for them to buy a house of their choice.



SUBURBAN CALIFORNIA IN THE **POSTWAR PERIOD: PROMISES AND** PROTESTS (PART 2)

SHALL

OVERCOME



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SOURCES OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVISM IN POSTWAR CALIFORNIA

Traditions of Protest in pre-War CA:

Postwar civil rights movements built on a current of grassroots activism in Depression and Wartime America.

In California, Latinos, African Americans and interracial coalitions challenged social inequality



Mexican American activists: Ignacio Lopez (upper left); Mendez family; Westminster School 1940s (above)

Mendez v. Westminster





Signs of the times: bus terminals Memphis and Portland, 1940s



Labor activist, Luisa Moreno



Pasadena' s "Brookside Plunge," ca 1930s

METROPOLITAN INEQUALITY

City/Suburb Divide



Booming Suburbia -

- LA In 1970: 75% of all metro housing in LA had been built since 1945, most of it segregated and exclusive to whites
- Suburbia attracted lion's share of growth and investment
- Unlike, mid-century workplaces, mass suburbia fostered community associations and patterns of life that reinforced a sense of social commonality, understood as racial – aka "whiteness."

Central Cities falling behind

Californians of color concentrated in older neighborhoods and communities



Problems with Policy:

* FHA insured 1/3 of new homes b/n 1945-1960. To qualify, neighborhoods were required to be racially homogenous.

By 1960, just 2% of FHA-insured loans were occupied by "non-whites," (e.g., African American/ Asian American/ Native Americans)

Lakewood w/ 67,000 residents, was 99% white in 1960.

"If a neighborhood is to retain stability, it is necessary that property continue to be occupied by the same racial class." FHA <u>Underwriting Manual</u>, 1935 - 1949



Ironies of postwar segregation – different patterns expanding at home and at work

METROPOLITAN INEQUALITY II:

Migration and housing discrimination led to growing communities of color in the state's urban areas By1960s: > 85 percent of African Americans and Latinos in CA's cities Native Americans – Rancheria Act, 1958 'Urban Relocation' by members of western tribes

Racial and spatial segregation of 'non-white' Californians in the state's urban areas.

Impacts of **Red-Lining, Disinvestment**, **Urban Renewal**; **Highway Building**, Industrial Decentralization

Asian Americans – battling for inclusion Japanese Americans labored to re-establish lives and livelihoods after Internment

Chinese Americans sought expanded horizons beyond 'Chinatowns,' e.g., Sing Sheng family in South San Francisco



Judy Baca, Impacts of highways and urban renewal, "History of CA," 1974; HOLC redlining map, LA, 1930s



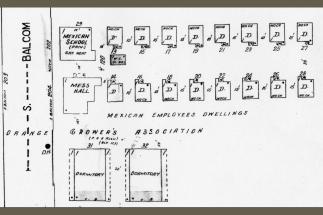


'FACTORIES IN THE FIELDS'

- California's agricultural economy reinforced ongoing, racialized inequality
 - Bracero Program, 1942-1964: 4.6 million Mexican 'guest workers' – mostly in Agriculture, but also in canning and packing, railroads and other industries in metro CA
 - Conditions in postwar farm labor
 - Workers of color Mexican, Filipino, African American
 - Low wages competition with low-paid 'guest workers'
 - Poor housing
 - Poor services healthcare/education
- Growth of Latino communities urban and rural.
 - Base for economic, cultural, political mobilizations



Small business owners, Anaheim, 1940-50s



Orange Growers Association, labor camp, Fullerton, 1940s



Images of men recruited to work through the Bracero program







EXCLUSION IN HOUSING

Housing discrimination was a critical source of post-war inequality.

Discrimination inscribed Race in Urban Space – (e.g. 'white communities' 'black communities,' 'barrios,' 'Chinatowns' etc...), a process scholars describe as the 'Racialization of space.'

White residents and institutions including banks, RE brokers, builders, local governments – 'defended' racialized space by any means necessary.

Tools of discrimination:

Exclusion/steering by realtors, banks Race restrictive covenants

- Red-lining
- Municipal zoning-planning
- Community opposition-intimidation



White mob gathers outside of W.H.Whitson, south L.A., 1949.



Oscar winner, Hattie McDaniel challenged exclusion, pioneering in West Adams, LA, 1940s



Note found at William Bailey home, south L.A., 1952

William Bailey home, Wilshire District, after bombing, 1952

Grace and Sing Sheng, SF, 1952



BATTLE FOR FAIR HOUSING

In this context, growing numbers of African American, Asian American, and Latino families challenged the color line in housing in 1940s-60s.

They challenged neighborhood exclusion on the streets and in the courts.

Racial restrictive covenant suits: Doss v Bernal (1943) - Fullerton Fairchild v Raines (1944) - Pasadena

Bernal family, Anaheim, 1940s

'Pioneering' in white neighborhoods exposed families to dangers unfamiliar to white Californians. - Vandalism, arson, mob attacks, threats and intimidation.

Racial resegregation and disinvestment often affected changing areas.

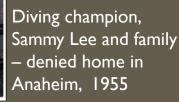
1963: Rumford Fair Housing Act
1964: Proposition 14 – right to discriminate; over-turn
Rumford Act - support from Catholic Church, Ronald
Reagan



Willie and Margueritte Mays, SF, 1957









RISING TIDE OF STATE AND NATIONAL PROTEST

1940s-1960s - Californians were stirred to participation in wider movement for Civil Rights emerging across the U.S.

Targets of Protest:

Statewide barriers to freedom – discrimination in employment, housing, and education, many of them linked to the structure of the postwar city

Growing support for nationwide campaigns for Civil Rights Protests linked to lunch countersit ins (1960), hsg discrim, national Civil Rights bill (1962-64)





Congress of Racial Equality protests against school segregation and job discrimination in CA, 1959, 1962



San Franciscans join national protest against southern segregation 1960s

