

The Challenge of Our Declining Big Cities

Anthony Downs
The Brookings Institution

Abstract

This article describes the population forces that caused U.S. metropolitan areas to grow rapidly after 1940 but caused falling population in many large older cities. It shows why the basic processes that generated the spatial growth and development of American metropolitan areas have also undermined the fiscal strength of many older central cities and inner-ring suburbs. By concentrating low-income households in inner-core neighborhoods, these processes create undesirable conditions that motivate economically viable households and firms to move to surrounding suburbs and not move back.

Three strategies have been suggested for improving these conditions: major structural reform of metropolitan institutions, limited reform of big-city governments, and community development of inner-core areas. The first is the most capable of changing the dynamics causing decline, but it lacks political support because it would require the majority of metropolitan residents to sacrifice some benefits they gain from existing arrangements.

Keywords: Development/revitalization; Urban planning; Populations

Introduction

This article presents a brief historical perspective and a policy overview concerning the current decline of many American big cities and inner-ring suburbs. It emphasizes the challenge of attracting middle-class households to live in those communities.¹

A basic perspective on changes in metropolitan structures

Population trends can best be understood if American cities are viewed as *continuous dynamic social processes occurring in*

¹The term *core area* as used in this article refers to the central city and the inner-ring suburbs of a metropolitan area. *Inner-ring suburbs* are those legally separate communities immediately adjacent to, and contiguous with, the central city of a metropolitan area. *Outer-ring suburbs* are those legally separate communities on the outer periphery of the metropolitan area, usually not adjacent to or contiguous with the central city, and often some distance away from that city.

defined locations, not as locations or places per se. At any given moment, describing a city is analogous to taking a snapshot of many ongoing and constantly changing flows of people, goods, and services. This is particularly true because of the high rates of household mobility in the United States. About 16 to 17 percent of Americans move each year, including more than 30 percent of renters and around 10 percent of homeowners (Downs 1981, chap. 3; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1996 [*Statistical Abstract*]). About three-fifths of those movers remain in the same county, many in the same city.

Private firms are also quite mobile. Each year, many new firms are born and many existing ones die. In addition, existing firms often move from one place to another or establish new branches, thereby reallocating their overall resources in space. Thus, in any particular neighborhood, the local population and economy can remain the same or grow only if at least as many newcomers move in (or are born there, net of local deaths) as initial residents and firms move out. So every city is really the locus of constant movements of people and firms into, out of, around, and within its boundaries.

Historically, many American cities have been the locations for—and provided the means of—achieving upward mobility over time for large populations arriving from elsewhere with few economic resources, and sometimes with relatively few social and human resources. These influxes have come both from abroad and from rural parts of the United States at different times. Certain neighborhoods have performed the vital function of helping these people improve their social and economic status and move to better locations. This function is still crucial in most U.S. metropolitan areas. From 1990 through 1995, 29 percent of net U.S. population growth stemmed from net immigration from abroad—not counting illegal immigration (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1996 [*Statistical Abstract*]).

Viewing cities dynamically has several crucial implications. First, it is impossible to eliminate poverty from large metropolitan areas, each of which will always contain many poor people as long as it continues receiving poor immigrants.

Second, large metropolitan areas necessarily contain thousands of low-quality dwelling units—“slum dwellings”—needed to house many of their poor households, unless the public sector spends huge sums on housing subsidies for the very poor. If poor households are required to pay fully for their own upkeep, many cannot afford to occupy dwellings that are of “decent quality” by

middle-class standards. Therefore, many poor households must live in what are considered substandard dwellings, unless the public sector provides large housing subsidies for them. Most societies cannot afford the subsidies needed to house all their low-income households at middle-class standards. Even the United States—which might be able to afford that outcome—has never chosen to do so. Thus, slums perform the absolutely essential social function of providing housing that many poor people can afford.

Third, at least some concentrated-poverty neighborhoods are necessary functional parts of every large metropolitan area. Not everyone succeeds in rising in social and economic status. At any given moment, a large metropolitan area contains thousands of households still at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder because they have not yet moved up. Moreover, newly arriving immigrants tend to enter a metropolitan area through a few specific neighborhoods—those where housing is less costly or where they can find others of their own ethnic group. These neighborhoods contain disproportionate concentrations of relatively poor households. As households that entered at the bottom of the ladder move up, they tend to move to other neighborhoods with higher average incomes and status. In fact, many affluent immigrants, often from Asia, move directly to the suburbs. This process leaves urban *entrepôt* neighborhoods with long-term above-average percentages of very low income and low-status households. No doubt, this condition makes it harder for persons living in those areas to improve their lots. Yet such concentrated-poverty areas are essential to the overall functioning of the metropolitan area. Over time, the particular neighborhoods serving this function often change, especially when the largest immigration flows shift from one ethnic group to another.

This conclusion does not mean that all concentrated-poverty neighborhoods in cities are necessary parts of the upward mobility process. More than one type of concentrated-poverty area exists in every large city. Many neighborhoods contain mostly poor people who have not recently immigrated and have few prospects for improving their situations. These concentrated-poverty areas are often socially and economically isolated from fruitful opportunities for upward mobility and plagued by negative conditions stemming from poverty; they are dysfunctional enclaves of the so-called underclass.² It would therefore be

² For a discussion of the underclass, see Jencks and Peterson (1991). For a discussion of the process by which destitute households get “left behind” in such areas when better-off households move out, see Wilson (1987).

desirable to transform them radically into a less destructive condition.

Unfortunately, the three implications presented above are rarely stated publicly by elected officials or city planners. Political pressures make it impossible for officials to admit these truths. If they did, residents of the areas concerned would claim that their right to live better lives was being ignored or abandoned.

The dynamics of changes in total population and in population composition in declining cities from 1950 to 1980

Introduction

Among the 189 U.S. cities with 1990 populations over 105,000, 53 lost population in the 1980s. Together, they contained 18.5 million residents in 1990, 16.5 percent fewer than in 1950. Tables 1, 2, and 3 provide some basic data on these 53 declining cities, their metropolitan areas, and their suburbs from 1950 to the 1990s. Fifteen lost more than 20 percent of their population between 1950 and 1990, including 13 that lost population in all four decades. These 15 acutely declining cities have presumably experienced the biggest net outflows of middle-class households (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1995 [*Statistical Abstract*]).

It is useful to divide the population changes in declining cities since 1950 into two sets: those occurring from 1950 to 1980 and those subsequent to 1980. In both eras, what happened in each of these cities should be viewed within the context of the overall movement of population within its metropolitan area, including immigration.

Initial population conditions in 1950

From 1941 to 1945, millions of households moved into these metropolitan areas to work in war production. Yet virtually no new housing had been constructed in the United States during either the 1930s, because of the Great Depression, or the 1940s, because of the war. By 1950, much of the housing in these cities was old and severely overcrowded. Overcrowding was particularly acute in neighborhoods occupied by African Americans. They had been confined to a small number of older areas by

Table 1. Population Changes from 1950 to 1992 in All 53 Large U.S. Cities That Declined in Population from 1980 to 1990

City	Region	Total City Population on April 1 (Thousands)											% Change in Population				
		1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1992	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-92					
Akron, OH	MW	275	290	275	237	223	224	5.45	-5.17	-13.82	-5.91	0.45					
Atlanta, GA	S	331	487	495	425	394	395	47.13	1.64	-14.14	-7.29	0.25					
Baltimore, MD	S	950	939	905	787	736	726	-1.16	-3.62	-13.04	-6.48	-1.36					
Beaumont, TX	SW	94	119	118	118	114	115	26.60	-0.84	0.00	-3.39	0.88					
Birmingham, AL	S	326	341	301	284	266	265	4.60	-11.73	-5.65	-6.34	-0.38					
Bridgeport, CT	NE	159	157	157	143	142	137	-1.26	0.00	-8.92	-0.70	-3.52					
Buffalo, NY	NE	580	533	463	358	328	323	-8.10	-13.13	-22.68	-8.38	-1.52					
Cedar Rapids, IA	MW	72	92	111	110	109	112	27.78	20.65	-0.90	-0.91	2.75					
Chattanooga, TN	S	131	130	120	170	152	153	-0.76	-7.69	41.67	-10.59	0.66					
Chicago, IL	MW	3,621	3,550	3,369	3,005	2,784	2,768	-1.96	-5.10	-10.80	-7.35	-0.57					
Cincinnati, OH	MW	504	503	454	385	364	364	-0.20	-9.74	-15.20	-5.45	0.00					
Cleveland, OH	MW	915	876	751	574	506	503	-4.26	-14.27	-23.57	-11.85	-0.59					
Dayton, OH	MW	244	262	243	194	182	183	7.38	-7.25	-20.16	-6.19	0.55					
Denver, CO	W	416	494	515	493	468	484	18.75	4.25	-4.27	-5.07	3.42					
Detroit, MI	MW	1,850	1,670	1,514	1,203	1,028	1,012	-9.73	-9.34	-20.54	-14.55	-1.56					
Erie, PA	NE	131	138	129	119	109	109	5.34	-6.52	-7.75	-8.40	0.00					
Evansville, IN	MW	129	149	139	130	126	128	15.50	-6.71	-6.47	-3.08	1.59					
Flint, MI	MW	163	197	193	160	141	139	20.86	-2.03	-17.10	-11.88	-1.42					
Ft. Lauderdale, FL	S	36	84	140	153	149	149	133.33	66.67	9.29	-2.61	0.00					
Gary, IN	MW	134	178	175	152	117	117	32.84	-1.69	-13.14	-23.03	0.00					
Honolulu, HI	W	248	294	325	365	365	371	18.55	10.54	12.31	0.00	1.64					
Jackson, MS	S	98	144	154	203	197	196	46.94	6.94	31.82	-2.96	-0.51					
Kansas City, KS	MW	130	122	168	161	150	147	-6.15	37.70	-4.17	-6.83	-2.00					
Kansas City, MO	MW	457	476	507	448	435	432	4.16	6.51	-11.64	-2.90	-0.69					
Knoxville, TN	S	125	112	175	175	165	167	-10.40	56.25	0.00	-5.71	1.21					
Lansing, MI	MW	92	108	131	130	127	127	17.39	21.30	-0.76	-2.31	0.00					
Louisville, KY	S	369	391	362	299	269	271	5.96	-7.42	-17.40	-10.03	0.74					
Macon, GA	S	70	70	122	117	107	107	0.00	74.29	-4.10	-8.55	0.00					
Memphis, TN	S	396	498	624	646	610	610	25.76	25.30	3.53	-5.57	0.00					
Metairie, LA	S	NA	NA	136	164	149	NA	NA	NA	20.59	-9.15	NA					

Table 1. Population Changes from 1950 to 1992 in All 53 Large U.S. Cities That Declined in Population from 1980 to 1990 (continued)

City	Region	Total City Population on April 1 (Thousands)								% Change in Population							
		1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1992	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-92					
Milwaukee, WI	MW	637	741	717	636	628	617	16.33	-3.24	-11.30	-1.26	-1.75					
Minneapolis, MN	MW	522	483	434	371	368	363	-7.47	-10.14	-14.52	-0.81	-1.36					
Mobile, AL	S	129	203	190	200	196	202	57.36	-6.40	5.26	-2.00	3.06					
New Orleans, LA	S	570	628	593	558	497	490	10.18	-5.57	-5.90	-10.93	-1.41					
Newark, NJ	NE	439	405	382	329	275	268	-7.74	-5.68	-13.87	-16.41	-2.55					
Norfolk, VA	S	214	306	308	267	261	254	42.99	0.65	-13.31	-2.25	-2.68					
Peoria, IL	MW	112	103	127	124	114	114	-8.04	23.30	-2.36	-8.06	0.00					
Philadelphia, PA	NE	2,071	2,003	1,949	1,688	1,586	1,553	-3.28	-2.70	-13.39	-6.04	-2.08					
Pittsburgh, PA	NE	677	604	520	424	370	367	-10.78	-13.91	-18.46	-12.74	-0.81					
Richmond, VA	S	230	220	249	219	203	202	-4.35	13.18	-12.05	-7.31	-0.49					
Rochester, NY	NE	332	319	295	242	232	234	-3.92	-7.52	-17.97	-4.13	0.86					
Rockford, IL	MW	93	127	147	140	139	142	36.56	15.75	-4.76	-0.71	2.16					
Salt Lake City, UT	W	182	189	176	163	160	166	3.85	-6.88	-7.39	-1.84	3.75					
Savannah, GA	S	120	149	118	142	138	139	24.17	-20.81	20.34	-2.82	0.72					
Shreveport, LA	S	127	164	182	206	199	197	29.13	10.98	13.19	-3.40	-1.01					
South Bend, IN	MW	116	132	126	110	106	106	13.79	-4.55	-12.70	-3.64	0.00					
St. Louis, MO	MW	857	750	622	453	397	384	-12.49	-17.07	-27.17	-12.36	-3.27					
St. Petersburg, FL	S	97	181	216	239	239	235	86.60	19.34	10.65	0.00	-1.67					
Syracuse, NY	NE	221	216	197	170	164	163	-2.26	-8.80	-13.71	-3.53	-0.61					
Toledo, OH	MW	304	318	383	355	333	329	4.61	20.44	-7.31	-6.20	-1.20					
Warren, MI	MW	1	89	179	161	145	142	8,800.00	101.12	-10.06	-9.94	-2.07					
Washington, DC	S	802	764	757	638	607	585	-4.74	-0.92	-15.72	-4.86	-3.62					
Yonkers, NY	NE	153	191	204	195	188	186	24.84	6.81	-4.41	-3.59	-1.06					
Total population		22,052	22,689	22,342	19,938	18,557	18,272	2.89	-1.53	-10.76	-6.93	-1.54					
Number of cities		52	52	53	53	53	52	Percent change in adjusted total population:					-1.54				
Total adjusted to same number of cities (52)		22,052	22,689	22,206	19,774	18,408	18,272	2.89	-2.13	-10.95	-6.91	-0.74					
								Numerical change in adjusted total population (000)s:					(1,366)				
								637	(483)	(2,432)	(1,366)	(1,366)					

Note: Includes only cities with more than 100,000 residents in 1990. MW = Midwest; NE = Northeast; S = South; W = West; NA = not available.

Table 2. Population Changes from 1950 to 1994 in Metropolitan Areas with Central Cities That Declined in Population from 1980 to 1990

Metropolitan Area	Total Metropolitan Area Population on April 1 (Thousands)										% Change in Population				
	1950 Original	1950 Estimated	1960	1970	1980	1990	1994	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-94			
Akron, OH	410.0	482.8	605.0	679.0	660.0	658.0	677.0	25.31	12.23	-2.80	-0.30	2.89			
Atlanta, GA	671.8	727.1	1,017.2	1,390.0	2,233.0	2,960.0	3,331.0	39.90	36.65	60.65	32.56	12.53			
Baltimore, MD	1,337.4	1,467.8	1,804.0	2,071.0	2,199.0	2,383.0	2,458.0	22.91	14.80	6.18	8.37	3.15			
Beaumont, TX	195.1	235.6	306.0	316.0	373.0	361.0	373.0	29.88	3.27	18.04	-3.22	3.32			
Birmingham, AL	558.9	657.5	747.0	767.0	815.0	840.0	872.0	13.61	2.68	6.26	3.07	3.81			
Bridgeport, CT	258.1	273.3	350.0	402.0	439.0	444.0	NA	28.06	14.86	9.20	1.14	NA			
Buffalo, NY	1,089.2	1,089.2	1,307.0	1,349.0	1,243.0	1,189.0	1,189.0	20.00	3.21	-7.86	-4.34	0.00			
Cedar Rapids, IA	104.3	104.3	136.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	31.26	NA	NA	NA	NA			
Chatanooga, TN	246.5	295.9	340.0	371.0	418.0	424.0	439.0	14.90	9.12	12.67	1.44	3.54			
Chicago, IL	5,495.4	5,179.8	6,221.0	6,979.0	7,246.0	7,411.0	7,668.0	20.10	12.18	3.83	2.28	3.47			
Cincinnati, OH	904.4	1,070.0	1,268.0	1,385.0	1,468.0	1,526.0	1,581.0	18.50	9.23	5.99	3.95	3.60			
Cleveland, OH	1,465.5	1,557.0	1,909.0	2,064.0	2,278.0	2,202.0	2,222.0	22.61	8.12	10.37	-3.34	0.91			
Dayton, OH	457.3	542.9	727.0	850.0	942.0	951.0	956.0	33.91	16.92	10.82	0.96	0.53			
Denver, CO	563.8	615.9	935.0	1,228.0	1,429.0	1,623.0	1,796.0	51.81	31.34	16.37	13.58	10.66			
Detroit, MI	3,016.2	3,167.6	3,950.0	4,435.0	4,388.0	4,267.0	4,307.0	24.70	12.28	-1.06	-2.76	0.94			
Erie, PA	219.4	219.6	251.0	264.0	280.0	276.0	280.0	14.30	5.18	6.06	-1.43	1.45			
Evansville, IN	160.4	260.7	272.0	285.0	276.0	279.0	287.0	4.33	4.78	-3.16	1.09	2.87			
Flint, MI	271.0	309.0	428.0	497.0	450.0	430.0	433.0	38.51	16.12	-9.46	-4.44	0.70			
Ft. Lauderdale, FL	NA	83.9	334.0	620.0	1,018.0	1,256.0	1,383.0	298.09	85.63	64.19	23.38	10.11			
Gary, IN	NA	408.5	574.0	633.0	643.0	605.0	620.0	40.51	10.28	1.58	-5.91	2.48			
Honolulu, HI	353.0	352.9	500.4	631.0	763.0	836.0	874.0	41.80	26.10	20.92	9.57	4.55			
Jackson, MS	142.2	167.9	221.0	259.0	362.0	395.0	412.0	31.63	17.19	39.77	9.12	4.30			
Kansas City, KS	814.4	869.1	1,109.0	1,274.0	1,449.0	1,583.0	1,647.0	27.60	14.88	13.74	9.25	4.04			
Kansas City, MO	337.1	345.2	377.0	409.0	546.0	586.0	631.0	9.21	8.49	33.50	7.33	7.68			
Knoxville, TN	172.9	279.4	342.0	424.0	420.0	433.0	436.0	22.41	23.98	-0.94	3.10	0.69			
Lansing, MI	576.9	599.8	754.0	867.0	954.0	949.0	981.0	25.71	14.99	10.03	-0.52	3.37			
Louisville, KY	135.0	147.5	197.0	227.0	273.0	291.0	307.0	33.56	15.23	20.26	6.59	5.50			
Macon, GA	482.4	559.2	727.0	834.0	939.0	1,007.0	1,056.0	30.01	14.72	12.59	7.24	4.87			
Memphis, TN															
Metairie, LA															

—This city is included in the New Orleans metropolitan area.

—This city is included in the Kansas City, MO metropolitan area.

Table 2. Population Changes from 1950 to 1994 in Metropolitan Areas with Central Cities That Declined in Population from 1980 to 1990 (continued)

Metropolitan Area	Total Metropolitan Area Population on April 1 (Thousands)										% Change in Population									
	1950 Original	1950 Estimated	1960	1970	1980	1990	1994	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-94	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-94			
Milwaukee, WI	871.0	1,024.8	1,279.0	1,404.0	1,397.0	1,452.0	1,456.0	24.80	9.77	-0.50	3.94	0.28	28.80	9.77	-0.50	3.94	0.28			
Minneapolis, MN	1,116.5	1,240.7	1,598.0	1,965.0	2,198.0	2,539.0	2,688.0	28.80	22.97	11.86	15.51	5.87	36.01	22.97	11.86	15.51	5.87			
Mobile, AL	231.1	266.9	363.0	377.0	444.0	477.0	512.0	38.01	3.86	17.77	7.43	7.34	26.71	3.86	17.77	7.43	7.34			
New Orleans, LA	685.4	715.8	907.0	1,046.0	1,304.0	1,285.0	1,309.0	26.71	15.33	24.67	-1.46	1.87	15.00	15.33	24.67	-1.46	1.87			
Newark, NJ	NA	1,593.9	1,833.0	2,057.0	1,964.0	1,919.0	1,934.0	15.00	12.22	-4.52	-2.29	0.78	29.72	12.22	-4.52	-2.29	0.78			
Norfolk, VA	446.2	484.9	629.0	733.0	1,201.0	1,445.0	1,529.0	15.33	16.53	63.85	20.32	5.81	15.33	16.53	63.85	20.32	5.81			
Peoria, IL	250.5	271.4	313.0	342.0	366.0	339.0	344.0	15.33	9.27	7.02	-7.38	1.47	18.31	9.27	7.02	-7.38	1.47			
Philadelphia, PA	3,671.0	4,343.0	4,824.0	4,824.0	4,781.0	4,922.0	4,949.0	18.31	11.08	-0.89	2.95	0.55	8.67	11.08	-0.89	2.95	0.55			
Pittsburgh, PA	2,213.2	2,213.2	2,405.0	2,401.0	2,571.0	2,395.0	2,402.0	8.67	-0.17	7.08	-6.85	0.29	20.31	-0.17	7.08	-6.85	0.29			
Richmond, VA	328.1	367.0	457.0	542.0	761.0	866.0	917.0	24.52	18.60	40.41	13.80	5.89	20.31	18.60	40.41	13.80	5.89			
Rochester, NY	487.6	665.8	801.0	962.0	1,031.0	1,062.0	1,090.0	20.31	20.10	7.17	3.01	2.64	37.72	20.10	7.17	3.01	2.64			
Rockford, IL	152.4	167.0	230.0	272.0	326.0	330.0	347.0	37.72	18.26	19.85	1.23	5.15	39.33	18.26	19.85	1.23	5.15			
Salt Lake City, UT	274.9	413.4	576.0	705.0	910.0	1,072.0	1,178.0	39.33	22.40	29.08	17.80	9.89	24.29	22.40	29.08	17.80	9.89			
Savannah, GA	151.5	188.3	NA	NA	231.0	258.0	276.0	24.29	NA	NA	11.69	6.98	18.80	NA	NA	11.69	6.98			
Shreveport, LA	216.7	270.2	321.0	334.0	377.0	376.0	378.0	18.80	4.05	12.87	-0.27	0.53	16.41	4.05	12.87	-0.27	0.53			
South Bend, IN	205.1	232.8	271.0	280.0	242.0	247.0	255.0	16.41	3.32	-13.57	2.07	3.24	19.80	3.32	-13.57	2.07	3.24			
St. Louis, MO	1,681.3	1,789.6	2,144.0	2,411.0	2,414.0	2,492.0	2,536.0	19.80	12.45	0.12	3.23	1.77	88.80	12.45	0.12	3.23	1.77			
St. Petersburg, FL	409.1	428.5	809.0	1,089.0	1,614.0	2,068.0	2,157.0	34.61	48.21	48.21	28.13	4.30	34.61	48.21	48.21	28.13	4.30			
Syracuse, NY	314.7	465.3	564.0	636.0	723.0	742.0	754.0	21.21	12.77	13.68	2.63	1.62	15.64	12.77	13.68	2.63	1.62			
Toledo, OH	395.6	601.0	695.0	763.0	617.0	614.0	614.0	15.64	9.78	-19.13	-0.49	0.00	36.70	9.78	-19.13	-0.49	0.00			
Warren, MI	1,404.1	1,534.0	2,097.0	2,910.0	3,478.0	4,223.0	4,474.0	36.70	38.77	19.52	21.42	5.94	36.70	38.77	19.52	21.42	5.94			
Washington, DC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
Yonkers, NY	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
Total population	35,945	40,638	50,533	57,563	63,454	67,288	69,315	Percent change in adjusted total population:		6.04		3.01	Percent change in adjusted total population:		6.04		3.01			
Number of areas	52.0	49	49	49	49	49	51	24.33	14.64	9.83	6.04	3.01	24.33	14.64	9.83	6.04	3.01			
Total adjusted to same number of areas (48)	35,840.3	40,533.8	50,395.9	57,772.7	63,454.0	67,288.0	69,315.0	Numerical change in adjusted total population:		9,862.1		2,027.0	Numerical change in adjusted total population:		9,862.1		2,027.0			

Note: Includes only metropolitan areas with central cities containing more than 100,000 residents in 1990. NA = not available.

Table 3. Suburban Population Changes from 1950 to 1990 in Metropolitan Areas with Central Cities That Declined in Population from 1980 to 1990

Metropolitan Area	Total Suburban Population on April 1 (Thousands)							% Change in Population				
	1950 Estimated	1960	1970	1980	1990	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90			
Akron, OH	208	315	404	423	435	51.59	28.25	4.70	2.84			
Atlanta, GA	396	530	895	1,808	2,566	33.86	68.80	102.01	41.92			
Baltimore, MD	518	865	1,166	1,412	1,647	67.05	34.80	21.10	16.64			
Beaumont, TX	142	187	198	255	247	32.06	5.88	28.79	-3.14			
Birmingham, AL	332	406	466	531	574	22.47	14.78	13.95	8.10			
Bridgeport, CT	114	193	245	296	302	68.85	26.94	20.82	2.03			
Buffalo, NY	509	774	886	885	861	52.00	14.47	-0.11	-2.71			
Cedar Rapids, IA			NA					NA				
Chattanooga, TN	165	210	251	248	272	27.35	19.52	-1.20	9.68			
Chicago, IL	1,559	2,671	3,610	4,241	4,627	71.35	35.16	17.48	9.10			
Cincinnati, OH	566	765	931	1,083	1,162	35.16	21.70	16.33	7.29			
Cleveland, OH	642	1,033	1,313	1,704	1,696	60.90	27.11	29.78	-0.47			
Dayton, OH	299	465	607	748	769	55.57	30.54	23.23	2.81			
Denver, CO	200	441	713	936	1,155	120.61	61.68	31.28	23.40			
Detroit, MI	1,318	2,280	2,921	3,185	3,239	73.04	28.11	9.04	1.70			
Erie, PA	89	113	135	161	167	27.54	19.47	19.26	3.73			
Evansville, IN	132	123	146	146	153	-6.61	18.70	0.00	4.79			
Flint, MI	146	231	304	290	289	58.22	31.60	-4.61	-0.34			
Ft. Lauderdale, FL	48	250	480	865	1,107	421.92	92.00	80.21	27.98			
Gary, IN	275	396	458	491	488	44.26	15.66	7.21	-0.61			
Honolulu, HI	105	206	306	398	471	96.76	48.26	30.07	18.34			
Jackson, MS	70	77	105	159	198	10.16	36.36	51.43	24.53			
Kansas City, KS												
--- Part of another city's metropolitan area												
Kansas City, MO	412	633	767	1,001	1,148	53.60	21.17	30.51	14.69			
Knoxville, TN	220	265	234	371	421	20.35	-11.70	58.55	13.48			
Lansing, MI	187	234	293	290	306	24.87	25.21	-1.02	5.52			
Louisville, KY	231	363	505	655	680	57.28	39.12	29.70	3.82			
Macon, GA	78	127	105	156	184	63.87	-17.32	48.57	17.95			
Memphis, TN	163	229	210	293	397	40.32	-8.30	39.52	35.49			

Table 3. Suburban Population Changes from 1950 to 1990 in Metropolitan Areas with Central Cities That Declined in Population from 1980 to 1990 (continued)

Metropolitan Area	Total Suburban Population on April 1 (Thousands)					% Change in Population				
	1950 Estimated	1960	1970	1980	1990	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	
Metairie, LA	388	538	687	761	824	—	27.70	10.77	—	Part of another city's metropolitan area
Milwaukee, WI	719	1,115	1,531	1,827	2,171	38.73	37.31	19.33	8.28	8.28
Minneapolis, MN	138	160	187	244	281	55.14	16.88	30.48	15.16	15.16
Mobile, AL	146	279	453	746	788	16.03	62.37	64.68	5.63	5.63
New Orleans, LA	1,155	1,428	1,675	1,635	1,644	91.36	17.30	-2.39	0.55	0.55
Newark, NJ	271	323	425	934	1,184	23.65	31.58	119.76	26.77	26.77
Norfolk, VA	159	210	215	242	225	19.23	2.38	12.56	-7.02	-7.02
Peoria, IL	1,600	2,340	2,875	3,093	3,336	31.74	22.86	7.58	7.86	7.86
Philadelphia, PA	1,536	1,801	1,881	2,147	2,025	46.25	4.44	14.14	-5.68	-5.68
Pittsburgh, PA	137	237	293	542	663	17.24	23.63	84.98	22.32	22.32
Richmond, VA	334	482	667	789	830	72.99	38.38	18.29	5.20	5.20
Rochester, NY	74	103	125	186	191	44.40	21.36	48.80	2.69	2.69
Rockford, IL	231	387	529	747	912	39.19	36.69	41.21	22.09	22.09
Salt Lake City, UT	32	39	64	89	120	67.24	63.23	38.74	34.83	34.83
Savannah, GA	143	157	152	171	177	24.76	-3.18	12.50	3.51	3.51
Shreveport, LA	117	139	154	132	141	9.64	10.79	-14.29	6.82	6.82
South Bend, IN	933	1,394	1,789	1,961	2,095	19.01	28.34	9.61	6.83	6.83
St. Louis, MO	332	628	873	1,375	1,829	49.47	39.01	57.50	33.02	33.02
St. Petersburg, FL	244	348	439	553	578	89.44	26.15	25.97	4.52	4.52
Syracuse, NY	297	377	380	262	281	42.45	0.80	-31.05	7.25	7.25
Toledo, OH	—	—	—	—	—	26.94	—	—	—	—
Warren, MI	732	1,333	2,153	2,840	3,616	—	82.10	61.52	27.32	27.32
Washington, DC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Yonkers, NY	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total population	18,838	28,201	36,201	44,307	49,472	49.70	28.37	22.39	11.66	11.66
Number of areas	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
		Numerical change in total suburban population:								
		9,363	8,000	8,106	5,165					

Note: Includes only metropolitan areas with central cities containing more than 100,000 residents in 1990. NA = not available.

racially restrictive covenants prohibiting occupancy by non-whites in most newer parts of these cities and their suburbs. Hundreds of thousands of African-American households moved into these neighborhoods from 1941 to 1945 to aid in war production and from 1945 to 1950 because mechanization displaced them from southern cotton harvesting. In 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that racially restrictive covenants were not legally enforceable. Almost immediately, severely overcrowded black households began moving out of the “ghettos” where they had been confined and into surrounding neighborhoods.

The triple population “explosion” from 1950 to 1980

The decades from 1950 to 1980 were characterized by three major flows of population into large metropolitan areas. The first consisted of low-income African Americans migrating into major U.S. metropolitan areas, as noted above. This flow reached its peak in the 1950s but remained high in the 1960s (Farley and Allen 1987).

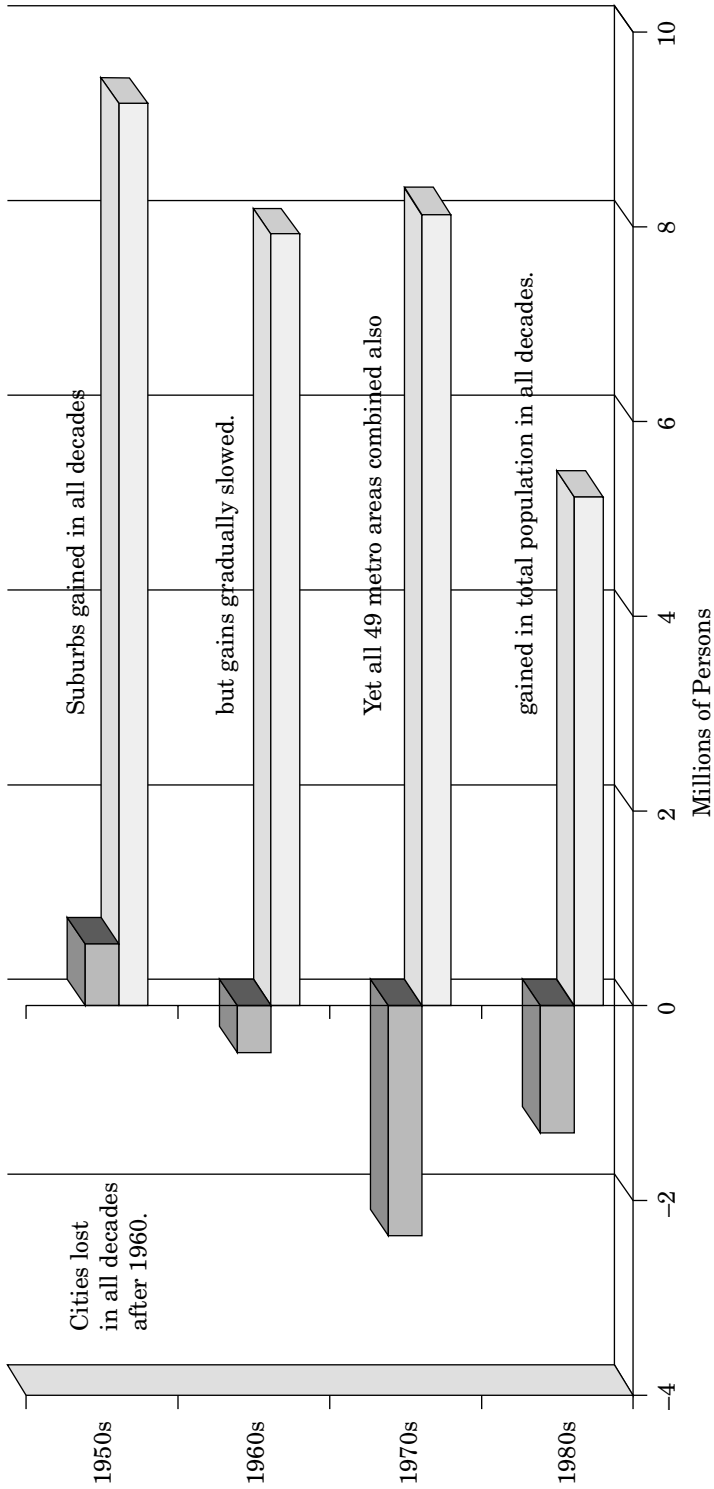
The second flow was a large-scale movement of white young people out of rural areas throughout the Northeast, South, and Midwest. They entered metropolitan areas seeking better economic opportunities than were available in their initial farm-oriented communities.

The third flow was a virtual explosion of births throughout the nation to more than 4.0 million per year in the so-called baby boom period, from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s. Since the death rate did not rise in this period, the rate of natural increase shot upward, especially among African Americans and Hispanics (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1996 [*Statistical Abstract*]).

These three major population flows hugely expanded the total populations of the nation’s major metropolitan areas from 1950 through 1980. Figure 1 shows the gains by decade from 1950 to 1990 in the combined population of the 49 U.S. metropolitan areas with central cities that lost population from 1980 to 1990.³ The biggest gain both absolutely and in percentage terms (24.3 percent) occurred in the 1950s, with subsequent decades experiencing gains that declined in both absolute and relative size. In these metropolitan areas as wholes, the number of

³ Although 53 cities containing more than 100,000 residents in 1990 lost residents from 1980 to 1990, they were located in only 49 metropolitan areas because some of the cities were suburbs in those areas.

Figure 1. Suburban and City Population Changes from 1950 to 1990 in 49 Metropolitan Areas with Central Cities That Declined in Population from 1980 to 1990



middle-class households increased tremendously from 1950 to 1990. Any losses of middle-class households within their central cities therefore occurred because of changes in the spatial distribution of households within these areas.

Other factors influencing spatial settlement patterns from 1950 to 1980

One key factor was a sizable increase in the average real incomes of most households from 1950 to 1973. The median income of families in constant dollars rose 96.6 percent in those 23 years, or about 2.9 percent per year compounded—compared with an overall increase of only 7.1 percent in the 23 years from 1970 to 1993, or 0.3 percent per year compounded (U.S. Bureau of the Census various years [*Statistical Abstract*]). This rise intensified the desire of many households to occupy bigger homes on larger lots. Higher real incomes also enabled more households to purchase and use private automobiles.⁴ At the same time, major networks of high-speed expressways, including the interstate highway system, were built in all U.S. metropolitan areas.

These trends made possible a gigantic peripheral expansion of the territory within these metropolitan areas occupied by built-up settlements, including residences, shopping centers, industrial districts, office parks, and other places of employment. Millions of new housing units and other urban structures were created on vacant land around the edges of these metropolitan areas, which therefore expanded in all possible directions. These new peripheral settlements had much lower average gross densities (persons per square mile) than the older settlements around which they were constructed. This caused a peripheral population explosion in the total number of persons residing in the suburbs of these metropolitan areas. By the mid-1950s, the total suburban population of these metropolitan areas combined had surpassed their total central-city population, which declined in each decade after 1960.

By the mid-1960s, the immense boom in housing and other construction that built these burgeoning suburbs had created far more dwelling units in each metropolitan area since 1950 than additional households that had moved or been formed there, in spite of huge population increases (table 4). This outcome is

⁴ The number of motor vehicles registered per 100 U.S. residents increased from 32.2 in 1950 to 63.2 in 1980 (Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association 1991; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1996 [*Statistical Abstract*]).

Table 4. Average Annual Housing Increases in Metropolitan Areas

Decade	New Housing Starts per Year	Added Households per Year	Surplus of Housing Units over Added Households
1950s	1,596,522	1,016,400	580,122
1960s	1,646,333	1,060,200	586,133
1970s	2,129,600	1,737,500	392,100

Note: Figures include the average number of new housing units started each year (including new mobile homes), the average number of new households added each year, and the surplus of new units over added households. Some of the surpluses were absorbed by losses of existing housing, but a large fraction made net additions to the usable inventory, gradually overcoming the shortages that initially existed in 1950.

evidenced by the appearance of abandoned housing units in many older parts of central cities after about 1965. Abandonment can usually occur only if even the most destitute households have somewhere else to live. Thanks to this massive building of new housing units, the initial overcrowded conditions in these central cities were no longer necessary.⁵ So within existing central cities as well as in new suburbs, households of all income groups spread out at much lower densities than in 1950.

Thus, it was almost inevitable, and surely desirable, that most of these central cities experienced some declines in population from 1950 to the mid-1960s. These declines were not necessarily a mark of urban decay but resulted from the elimination of initial overcrowding and a shift to lower residential densities associated with higher household incomes, lower movement costs, greater household mobility, and massive new housing construction.

The impact of racial discrimination and segregation

The spatial arrangement of households within these metropolitan areas was decisively influenced by racial segregation and discrimination by whites against nonwhites, especially African Americans. Although many African-American households moved into these metropolitan areas from 1950 to 1965, three factors prevented them from occupying newly constructed housing on the fringes.

⁵ This was not true in all large cities. New York City in particular did not experience large-scale new rental housing construction within the city because of continued stringent rent controls. New York City also gained many low-income immigrants from abroad, whose arrival offset outflows of middle-class households to the surrounding suburbs, where the latter occupied the many new suburban homes built in the 1950s and especially the 1960s and 1970s.

One factor was the maintenance of high quality standards for new housing by almost all legal jurisdictions. Such standards prevented newly arrived poor households from constructing their own inexpensive but low-quality housing—shacks—on vacant peripheral land, as occurred in migrations of poor people to urban areas in most of the rest of the world. In addition, many suburban exclusionary laws prohibited manufactured housing, minimized the amount of land available for multifamily housing, and prohibited small detached single-family units. Consequently, most new housing was too costly for poor households to occupy.

The second factor was the almost universal prevalence of racial discrimination by white real estate agents, mortgage lenders, and homeowners against occupancy of housing in all-white areas by black households—with one exception. The exception was black occupancy in all-white neighborhoods immediately adjoining enclaves already occupied mainly by blacks. The strong expansion pressures of the overcrowded African-American populations built up in racially restricted neighborhoods by 1950 could not be resisted by owner-occupants or landlords in adjacent all-white blocks. Therefore, after racially restrictive covenants were outlawed, most all-black areas rapidly expanded into adjoining initially all-white neighborhoods through a process of massive racial transition (Massey and Denton 1993). No stable integration resulted because many whites would not remain in, and most would not move into, neighborhoods occupied by more than about one-third African Americans.⁶ Consequently, once many African Americans had moved into a mainly white area, all other whites refused to move in, and the normal process of about 16 percent neighborhood turnover per year then involved only African Americans moving in.⁷ That soon converted the entire neighborhood to almost wholly African-American occupancy.

Except in these neighborhoods adjacent to all-black areas, racial discrimination by whites prevented black households from entering mainly white areas in any significant numbers. Those few African Americans who tried to move in found it hard to locate units that were available to them or financing for those units.

⁶ A 1976 survey in Detroit showed that, once a neighborhood contained 36 percent black residents, 57 percent of white survey respondents would feel uncomfortable living there, 41 percent would try to move out if they already lived there, and 73 percent would be unwilling to move in if they were not living there (Massey and Denton 1993).

⁷ For discussions of this “automatic resegregation” process and the overall process of massive neighborhood racial transition, see Schelling (1971) and Downs (1981, chap. 7).

And if they did move in, they were often threatened with violence or greeted with such hostility that most soon departed. This behavior by the white population in effect eliminated any possibility of relieving the expansion pressure of all-black inner-city neighborhoods by having additional African-American households move into the same new suburban housing developments then being occupied by whites.

The third factor was a “natural” tendency of newly arriving African Americans to move into neighborhoods where they already had relatives or friends, rather than into areas occupied mainly by whites. This tendency has been observed throughout the world among new urban residents of all ethnic groups.

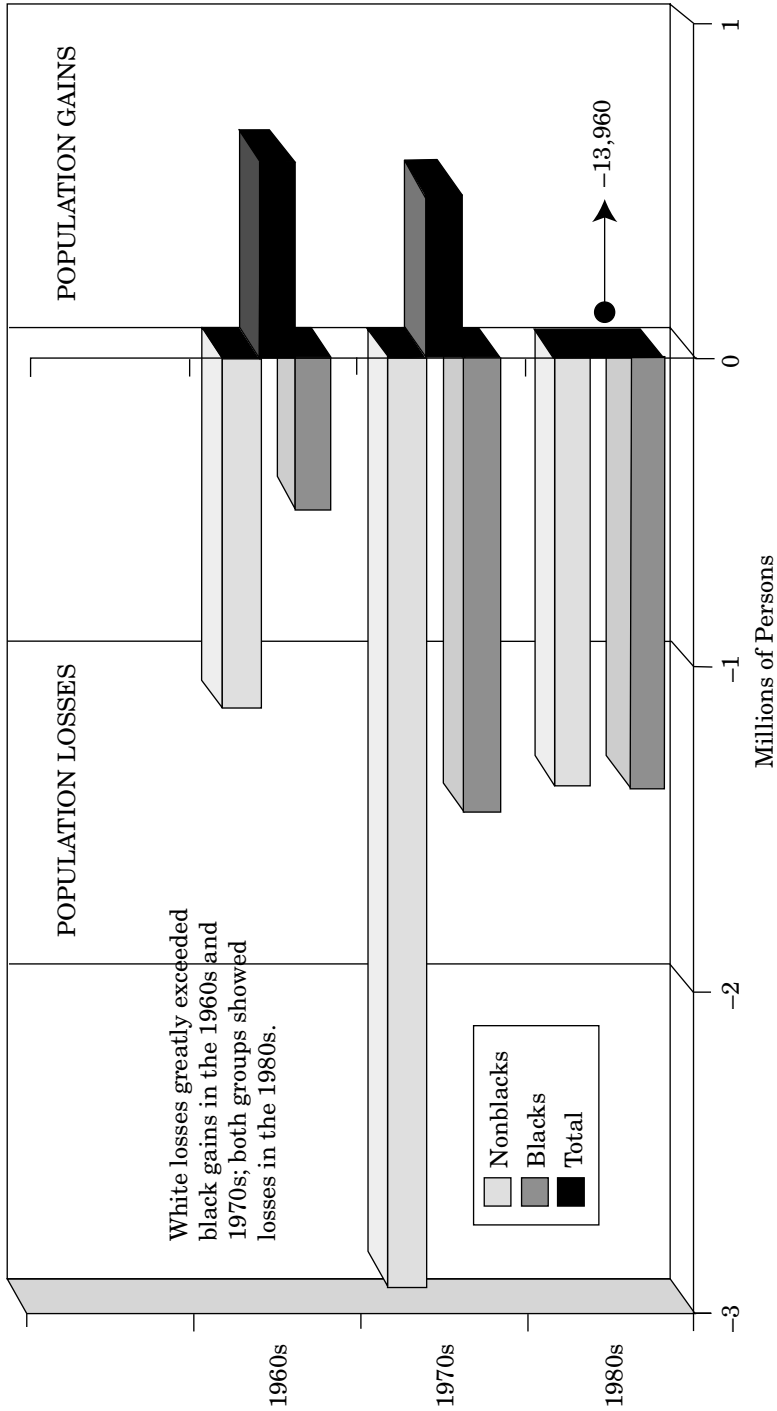
The resulting out-movement of middle-class whites

The process of massive neighborhood racial transition described above contributed to a huge movement of white middle-class households out of central cities. As the African-American populations of these metropolitan areas continued to grow, through both natural increase and further in-migration, African Americans displaced whites in ever-larger parts of these central cities, and of many inner-ring suburbs. These displaced white households were by no means all members of the middle class; many were working class or poor. But they included many middle-class households, too. Some would have chosen to move to the suburbs for reasons other than racial displacement, as discussed further below. There can be no doubt, however, that the rapid expansion of segregated African-American neighborhoods motivated many thousands of white households who had lived in those same areas to move out of central cities.⁸

This process is clearly reflected in population data (figure 2). From 1960 to 1970, the African-American population of the 52 cities that lost population in the 1980s soared by 623,600, or 10 percent, whereas the nonblack population fell by 1.107

⁸ “Although whites were still highly resistant to racial integration in housing, withdrawal to the suburbs provided a more attractive alternative to the defense of threatened neighborhoods and led to a prevalence of flight over fight among whites in racially changing areas. The combination of rapid white suburbanization and extensive black in-migration led to an unprecedented increase in the physical size of the ghetto during the 1950s and 1960s.... In a few short years, the population of vast areas of Chicago’s south and west sides became virtually all black, as occurred on Cleveland’s east side, Philadelphia’s north and west sides, and in most of central city Newark, Detroit, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.” (Massey and Denton 1993, 45–46).

Figure 2. Population Changes by Racial Group in 52 Declining Cities, 1960 to 1990



million, or 6.7 percent.⁹ In the 1970s, the ethnic displacement process slowed down, but the loss of whites accelerated. The African-American population of all 52 cities rose by 486,900, or 7.1 percent, whereas the nonblack population fell by 2.919 million, or 19.1 percent—even though the Hispanic population of these cities, here included as part of the nonblack population, increased somewhat. In the 1980s, the black population of these cities *fell* by 13,960, or 0.2 percent, whereas the nonblack population continued declining by 1.352 million, or 10.9 percent.¹⁰

The above population data lead to two clear conclusions. First, from 1950 to 1980, a major cause of the loss of white middle-class households in these central cities was physical displacement by the numerical and spatial expansion of the African-American population. True, that displacement was also made possible by large-scale construction of suburban housing occurring at the same time. But whites withdrew from cities into the new suburban housing partly because racial segregation in suburbs prevented the rapidly growing black populations in central cities from expanding into surrounding suburbs. Thus, the displacement of white households from central cities by blacks occurred under metropolitan housing market conditions dominated by the racial discrimination and segregation practices of whites.

The second conclusion is that the large-scale out-movement of whites from central cities was not caused solely by such racial displacement. This is shown by the fact that nonblack population losses in these central cities greatly exceeded African-American population gains, often by a factor of two, three, or more (see figure 2). Clearly, some forces other than the spatial expansion of the African-American population within these cities were also causing nonblacks—mostly non-Hispanic whites—to move to the suburbs in large numbers.

⁹ Figure 2 includes data for 52 such cities; data for Metairie, LA, a suburb of New Orleans, are not available for earlier years, so this city has been excluded from these calculations. Some of the black population data are for the category “nonwhite,” as used by the Census Bureau in earlier years. The category “nonblack” includes other minority groups, such as Hispanics and Asians, so it is not equivalent to the non-Hispanic white population, but it is used here to illustrate a basic point, for which it is sufficiently accurate.

¹⁰ Data from tables on large-city population are from the U.S. Bureau of the Census (various years [*Statistical Abstract*]).

Nonracial causes of white outflows from these cities

Several alternative causes of such movements—not mutually exclusive—have been suggested by various observers, as follows (some were discussed earlier):

Mainly exogenous or technological factors

1. Rising real incomes among all groups of households from 1950 to 1973, and among middle- and upper-income households after 1973, caused many households to move out of older homes and neighborhoods in central cities in order to enjoy more spacious and modern dwellings and neighborhood designs in newly built suburbs.
2. Increased use of motor vehicles within cities with streets built in earlier eras intensified traffic congestion and inefficiencies of movement. This led many business firms to move to less congested suburban locations, where they could also operate on larger sites with more efficient one-floor layouts. Many employees of such firms then found it convenient to live in the suburbs near their relocated jobs.
3. Improved highways linking central cities and outlying suburbs, heavily financed with federal funds, plus increased ownership and use of private automotive vehicles, made it easier for households to live in the suburbs and remain employed in central cities. It also became easier for many business firms to relocate from high-density central-city locations to lower-density suburban locations where they could use more efficient physical layouts. (This cause was partly a result of public policies, too.)

Results of public policies

1. The home-purchase financing arrangements offered, with federal help, by savings and loans and banks to households moving into the suburbs were superior to those available for households wishing to stay in the city and rehabilitate older units or build new ones there.
2. Hundreds of thousands of households and businesses were displaced from locations in central cities by federally financed urban renewal and highway construction programs. Many displaced persons and firms discovered that it was

easier and more efficient to move to suburban locations—often along the same highways—than to remain in the central city.¹¹

3. As large central cities struggled to cope with increasing demands for public services, they often raised their property tax rates above those found in surrounding suburbs less burdened with significant fractions of poor households. This increased the incentives for some households and business firms to move to suburbs with lower tax rates.

Social factors

1. As the percentages of minority-group households within central cities increased, the fractions of central-city public school enrollments composed of children from minority-group homes rose even faster, partly because of higher birth rates among major minority groups than among whites. But once many white households found their children attending schools with more than 25 to 33 percent minority students—especially more than 50 percent—they decided to move to suburbs where schools remained almost entirely populated by white students. This movement was greatly accelerated in cities where courts ordered widespread busing of students to achieve more racially balanced enrollments.
2. Rising crime rates within many parts of large central cities created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty about the safety and security of remaining residents of these cities.¹² This atmosphere was—and still is—aggravated by constant emphasis in the mass media on lurid reports of violent local crimes in daily newspapers and TV broadcasts and little note of the positive aspects of city life. Consequently, many households moved to suburban locations to escape big-city insecurities.

¹¹ For an analysis of the impact of urban renewal and highway clearance on cities, see the National Commission on Urban Problems (1969, chap. 6). The magnitude of displacement can be judged partly from the following quotation from that report: “By the end of 1967, no less than 1.1 million dwelling units in the urban renewal areas of the country had been identified as needing either demolition (760,000 units) or rehabilitation (350,000 units).... 404,000 [demolitions] ... had already been carried out” (p. 160).

¹² For data on crimes in cities, see Downs (1994) and DiIulio (1992). For a general discussion of the history of crime rates in cities, see Wilson and Herrnstein (1985).

It is not possible here to evaluate how much each of these forces contributed to large-scale withdrawal of the white population from these cities, beyond that clearly associated with spatial displacement by black population expansion. However, all these hypotheses can be incorporated into a broader explanation of metropolitan-area dynamics, explained below.

How the American metropolitan growth process systematically redistributes viable households and firms and taxable resources away from central cities

Some basic aspects of all metropolitan-area growth processes

Almost every U.S. metropolitan area has been founded on a river, ocean, lake, or other transportation mode transfer point and has expanded outward from that origin as its population has grown. This means that the central point at first contained the highest concentration of economic activities and jobs. Moreover, transportation networks are initially constructed to converge on that point of origin, making it more widely accessible than most other points in the same metropolitan area.

The resulting established agglomeration of facilities in and around the central business district initially creates monopolistic locational advantages for that core. These advantages cannot be fully duplicated at outlying locations, at least in the short run, because no one location has such an accessible site as the established core area, or such an agglomeration of facilities and activities.

As a metropolitan area's total population grows, its settled portions must expand outward from the center unless its average population density continuously rises. The density almost never rises enough to preclude outward peripheral expansion. When transportation was costly and inefficient, the center maintained high density because it was so hard to move to far-out locations. But the development of inexpensive automotive transportation changed that situation radically.

In fact, all urban areas throughout the world expand outward more than upward because it is nearly always cheaper to build on vacant land than to tear down existing structures and replace them with higher-density structures. Since transportation has steadily become more efficient over time, this inside-out expansion has been further encouraged by technological change.

Improved transportation and communications technologies reduce the monopolistic cost advantage of locating close to the core, thereby stimulating outward movement and peripheral development. Increasing central densities rather than growing outward would also go against the historical tide of rising real incomes—which generate desires for more space per household and therefore lower densities.¹³

As population continues to grow and the built-up area expands, outlying centers of jobs and retail activity grow up in addition to the original downtown. This development is further encouraged by improved transportation and communications and by rising real incomes.

Some crucial and nearly unique aspects of the American metropolitan growth process

A crucial, nearly universal, but not inevitable aspect of American peripheral growth was the division of the edges of metropolitan areas into many small legal jurisdictions separate from the original central city. That division resulted from political and legal decisions made by state legislators, local citizens, and local politicians. Other governance arrangements concerning land use could have been adopted—as in other developed nations—but were not.

Fragmented government involved creation of legally separate suburbs, instead of growth within a single legal jurisdiction—though the latter has happened in a few U.S. metropolitan areas where the central city can annex surrounding communities (Rusk 1993). The development of separate suburbs occurred for several reasons. Builders creating new peripheral subdivisions often wanted to control the rules governing their operations in ways different from those prevailing in the dominant city. Residents of areas lying outside the central city's original boundaries often wanted to distance themselves from the problems of the

¹³ Real incomes have historically risen over long periods in the United States for nearly all social groups in all segments of the overall income distribution. However, this was not true throughout the period covered by this analysis—1950 to 1990. From 1950 to 1973, real household incomes rose rapidly for nearly all such groups, as noted later in the text. From 1973 to 1990, real household incomes rose for the upper quintiles in the overall distribution but declined for the lower quintiles. This produced a very slow net increase for the distribution as a whole. However, during the 1950s and 1960s, when some of the largest population movements affecting declining cities took place, real incomes were rising for nearly all groups. See Levy (1987, chap. 4).

city by creating separate jurisdictions in which they could control densities and tax rates. Local residents often wanted to establish higher building, economic, and social standards than they thought were possible under the rules of the central city, so they incorporated separately and adopted more stringent—and better-enforced—housing codes and rules.

Another key feature of American metropolitan growth concerns the high quality standards required for new housing and other construction, as noted earlier. In the United States, local regulations in peripheral communities—and even central ones—almost universally prevent the creation of new very low cost housing units, such as the shacks built in barrios in less developed nations. The resulting high-quality new structures are inherently more modern and up-to-date than older ones, so they attract households and firms with relatively high incomes. Moreover, only households with incomes in the upper two-thirds of the income distribution can afford to occupy such new dwelling units without large public subsidies.

Maintaining high quality standards in new-growth areas has a dual impact on the spatial distribution of households. First, it causes a disproportionate concentration of affluent households in new-growth suburbs. Second, it leads to a disproportionate concentration of poor households in the central city and older inner-ring suburbs where deterioration and obsolescence have reduced the quality—and hence the costs—of older housing.

This situation also results in differential de facto housing quality standards within each metropolitan area. Inside much of the central city and other older parts of the core, standards of housing quality are not maintained among existing units at the high level legally required for newly built units. Such a lowering of standards is necessary to push the actual cost of occupancy down to where low-income households can afford it. If housing codes were stringently enforced at high quality levels, thousands of households would be thrown out on the streets. Moreover, city budgets for code enforcement have often been cut back so greatly that strict enforcement could not be achieved even if it were desired. And many cities did not—and do not—have enough funds for rehabilitating those deteriorated units that the city government has taken over through tax delinquencies or abandonment. In contrast, high quality standards are maintained for all new housing built, most of which is located at the suburban periphery. This de facto dual set of housing quality standards is rarely recognized explicitly because it would seem undemocratic

to admit that lower quality standards are maintained in poorer neighborhoods.

Thus, the disproportionate concentration of poor households within central cities arises from the fundamental institutional structure of U.S. metropolitan areas and of their growth processes. This structure may seem to be natural or a result of free-market forces, but it is neither. In fact, other structures prevail in most of the world (Downs 1969). In very poor nations, the poor build their own brand-new units of very low quality and locate them at all distances from the center, even on the new-growth periphery. In many other developed nations, especially in Western Europe, national governments have subsidized much higher fractions of all new units, permitting poor households to live in new units also on the periphery. This has been true during much of the post-World War II period in Sweden, France, West Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. So the American pattern is unusual.

That pattern has come to be called “suburban sprawl,” and it has dominated American metropolitan growth for the past 50 years. Sprawl is really a particular form of suburbanization with several characteristics that differentiate it from other conceivable forms of suburbanization:¹⁴

1. It has no limits on the outward expansion of additional urban settlements.
2. It divides legal control over land uses, property taxes, and local services among many different bodies, each controlling a relatively small area, with no single body having any responsibility for the entire area.
3. It involves “leapfrog” settlements, in which some new subdivisions are located far from the edges of already-built-up areas.
4. There is no centralized control or planning over how the area develops.
5. Land ownership is relatively fragmented.
6. Different land uses are spatially segregated into separate neighborhoods.

¹⁴This definition of suburban sprawl was taken largely from the remarks of Henry Richmond at the conference “Alternatives to Sprawl” held at the Brookings Institution in May 1995 (see Richmond 1996).

7. There is no unified or centralized allocation of public fiscal resources.
8. There is extensive strip commercial development along major suburban arteries.

Why American metropolitan growth disproportionately concentrates poverty in core areas

The dominant growth pattern of American metropolitan areas sets in motion a major process of spatial resource reallocation that drains fiscal and human resources from older core areas and weakens the ability of governments there to provide key services.¹⁵

As an American metropolitan area's population grows larger, the absolute number of low-income and poor households within it rises. This occurs because since 1969 the poor (as defined by federal standards) have formed a relatively constant proportion of the nation's total population, ranging from 11.4 to 15.2 percent in different parts of the general business cycle (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1996 [*Statistical Abstract*]). Yet the percentage of all poor households in the metropolitan area that live in the core area normally increases because of the concentration process described above. In that case, the absolute number of poor households in the core area must rise as the area grows. But the local governments serving the core area normally have fixed boundaries. Moreover, the average population density usually declines over time for reasons already discussed, plus local resistance to higher densities. Therefore, increases in the absolute number of poor households living in the core usually result in a rising percentage of poor households in the total population of that core area.

From 1980 to 1990, this chain of events caused both absolutely and relatively larger concentrations of very poor households within the core areas of most large metropolitan areas. In 1990, there were about 10 million persons living in census tracts where 40 percent or more of the total population was poor—twice as many as lived in such tracts in 1980 (Jargowsky and Bane 1991; Kasarda 1993; Mincy and Wiener 1993). About 7.5 million of these people lived in central cities, where they constituted about 10 percent of the total central-city population. However, they

¹⁵ This process was described and analyzed at length by Bradbury, Downs, and Small (1982).

were concentrated disproportionately in a small number of very large cities. New York, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia combined contained 2.13 million persons living in extreme-poverty census tracts, or about 28 percent of all such residents of central cities in 1990, compared with 20.8 percent of the nation's total central-city population.¹⁶

The problem of increasing concentrations of very poor households within the core area is aggravated by the differential ability of various firms, households, and other resources to move. Financial capital, most jobs, economically viable firms, and nonpoor households are resources that can freely flow between the core and outlying locations. Therefore, they seek the locations most favorable to their welfare. These resources not only generate economic activity where they are located, but also form a taxable base there. If they move to outlying areas, they both create a large economic and taxable base in those areas and reduce the economic and taxable bases available to the governments responsible for the core (Ladd 1993).

In contrast, poor households, capital sunk in physical structures, and government institutions cannot move freely in and out of the core because of (1) the immobility of existing physical capital, (2) fragmented governance structures, and (3) exclusionary zoning by governments outside the core. The first of these impediments is inherent; the second and third are nonmarket factors created by deliberate public policies.

Negative consequences of the concentration of poverty within core areas

The result of higher and higher concentrations of poverty within the core area is rising social and technical obsolescence in that area, compared with the newer settlements on the outer periphery. Social obsolescence includes poor-quality public schools, badly trained school graduates, and high crime rates and security costs. Another manifestation of social obsolescence is the increasing ineffectiveness of various public bureaucracies supposedly created to help people cope with poverty, including public schools, welfare systems, public housing agencies, police, city administrators, and health care systems. These bureaucracies are basically monopolies, so their members—like

¹⁶ Data on central-city extreme-poverty tract populations are from Kasarda (1993). Data on central-city populations for the entire nation were obtained by the author by telephone in 1990 from Don Starsinik of the U.S. Census Bureau.

all monopolists—come to focus on maintaining their own powers at the expense of the welfare of their clients. The behavior of these bureaucracies tends to reinforce the dependence of their clients rather than liberate their clients' capabilities (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993).¹⁷ Technical obsolescence includes congested streets, obsolete electrical wiring and communications systems, decaying and obsolete water and sewer systems, and deteriorated structures poorly designed for rehabilitation into modern status.

As a metropolitan area grows larger, its core area's intrinsic locational advantages become heavily—often completely—offset by increasing costs from rising social and technical obsolescence. As a result, more and more financial capital, viable firms, and nonpoor households move out of the central core and into the outer periphery. They remove viable resources with them, leaving the core area with lower taxable resources and higher per capita service requirements (Pack 1994).

This process is aggravated by presumed or de facto desires among many white households for segregation from African Americans. Since the percentage of poor persons is much higher among African Americans and Hispanics than among Asians or non-Hispanic whites, the concentration of poverty described above is often accompanied by a concentration of minority-group households in high-poverty areas. This accelerates the withdrawal of nonpoor white households into peripheral areas and increases their desire to erect barriers against the entry of minority-group households into their suburban communities.

The racial aspects of concentrated poverty are likely to become much worse because of future changes in the American population. Between 1995 and 2020, the total U.S. population will rise by 60 million persons, of whom 47 million, or 79 percent, will be African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians.¹⁸ The first two of these groups are now spatially concentrated in central cities and have much higher fractions of poverty than either non-Hispanic whites or Asians. Thus, future demographic changes will intensify the concentration of poverty within the core portions of metropolitan areas—and spread it outward from there—unless the nation succeeds in notably improving the average lot of African Americans and Hispanics. Such increased concentration

¹⁷ This view is based on the earlier work of Ivan Illich, such as *Toward a History of Needs* (Illich 1980).

¹⁸ These estimates are from the middle-series projections in *Current Population Reports* (U.S. Bureau of the Census various years).

is likely even though greater numbers of nonpoor members of these minority groups have recently been moving from central cities into suburbs.

The resulting self-aggravating downward spiral of core-area fiscal and social viability

The departure of many viable firms and nonpoor households from the core area creates a self-aggravating downward spiral in fiscal, economic, and social strength there. The percentage of nonviable firms and poor households rises, and the amount of financial capital willing to invest there declines. Since poor households generate more costly needs for social services per capita than nonpoor households—including police, fire fighting, education, and other social services—this change in the composition of the core-area population raises the per capita cost of delivering adequate services to that population (Pack 1994). At the same time, the departure of many financially viable firms and households reduces the per capita tax base of the governments serving the core area, thereby decreasing their ability to pay for these increasingly costly social services.

In contrast, the movement of many nonpoor households and viable firms from the core area into the suburban periphery increases the overall economic viability of many communities on that periphery, partly by raising their per capita tax bases in relation to those of the core area. In essence, both financial capital and human resources flow in a continuously accelerating process from the core area, with its high costs and severe problems, into the suburban periphery, with its lower costs and lesser problems.

This process of spatial resource reallocation creates an ever-greater inequality of opportunities among residents of concentrated-poverty core areas and certain low-resource suburbs on the one hand and residents of high-resource suburbs on the other. Thus, the growth process created by the structure of American metropolitan areas is fundamentally inequitable and unjust. It inherently reduces the welfare of many poor households to benefit nonpoor ones.

Differential impacts on metropolitan suburbs

However, the results of this process are not uniformly beneficial to suburbs, because the process has several quite varied impacts

on suburbs with different characteristics.¹⁹ Many older inner-ring suburbs find themselves experiencing the same self-aggravating downward spiral as the central city itself. The schools in these suburbs become loaded with children from very poor homes, local crime rates rise, many middle-income households and viable businesses withdraw to farther-out suburbs, and the local governments concerned become fiscally strapped. Farther out, many low-commercial-tax-base suburbs with growing populations also become fiscally strapped, but for a different reason. Many young households with children are moving into these communities, partly in flight from the core area. Educating their children imposes high tax costs on these suburbs, but the suburbs have very few commercial or industrial properties to which to shift those tax burdens. Consequently, their residential tax rates soar, and local citizens resist further improvements in school quality or other public services (Orfield 1997).

In contrast to these fiscally strapped suburbs are the high-commercial-tax-base suburbs in economically favored quarters. Almost every metropolitan area has one suburban corridor or quarter currently capturing most new commercial and industrial activity.²⁰ This “favored quarter” is also usually the location of the highest-quality and highest-price executive homes. That fact is by no means a coincidence, since the executives living there usually determine where their firms will locate. In Atlanta, this is the north-northeast quarter; in Minneapolis, the southeast quarter; in Chicago, the west-northwest quarter; and so on. These rapidly growing suburbs have such high commercial tax bases that they can raise spending on schools and other public services while limiting residential tax rates. They also tend to capture disproportionate shares of overall metropolitan-area public spending on such items as roads, schools, and sewer systems.

¹⁹ This analysis of types of suburbs has been taken from the work of Myron Orfield, a member of the Minnesota State Legislature. His book *Metropolitics* (Orfield 1997) has just been published by the Brookings Institution and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

²⁰ I am indebted to Christopher Leinberger of Robert Charles Lesser Associates for the concept of the favored quarter (Leinberger 1995). This idea also has its roots in the work of Homer Hoyt (1939), an economist with the Federal Housing Administration during the 1930s. Hoyt found that high-income housing could radiate from the core in one wedge—often from the corner of the central business district that contained the financial services industry. Hoyt’s theory was based on the movement of high-rent districts in 142 American cities in 1900, 1915, and 1936.

The absence of incentives for key actors in this process to counteract its negative results

Although the serious negative impacts of this process on society can be perceived when the process is viewed as a whole, no important actors in either the public or private sector are motivated to react to these overall consequences. Each is faced with incentives that are based on its serving the welfare of only a small, parochial part of the entire area. Therefore, it remains in the interest of all groups that enjoy mobility to continue withdrawing from the core area, further weakening its viability.²¹

In fact, certain characteristics of sprawl aggravate this process more than would occur with other forms of suburbanization. Unlike suburbanization within limited boundaries, as now practiced in Oregon, sprawl encourages firms and households to move far out from the core areas of the metropolitan region (Downs 1994, chap. 1; Richmond 1995). Because the new jobs are so far from inner-city areas that workers there neither hear about such jobs nor would be able to travel to them if they heard about them, inner-city unemployment worsens.

This separation also encourages residents of outlying suburban areas to believe that their welfare is totally independent of the welfare of inner-city neighborhoods and residents. Such a misconception makes many suburbanites unwilling to devote any tax resources to inner-city problems.²²

Unlike peripheral growth within some type of overarching fiscal structure, growth in sprawl totally separates the fiscal resources of the new suburban areas from those of the older core areas. The core areas then slowly decline in relation to the service needs of the growing concentration of poor people there.

Unlike growth in the immediate vicinity of already-built-up areas, sprawl requires building more costly infrastructures—especially longer trunk lines—to service a given amount of population because new growth leapfrogs to sites far from existing infrastructure services. The infrastructure costs raise the total

²¹ Myron Orfield has proposed a political coalition strategy discussed later in this article that could be used to counteract some aspects of this outward flow process. However, such a strategy would have to be initiated by a political entrepreneur and would have uncertain prospects of success.

²² For a discussion of why suburbanites' welfare is still closely linked to the ability of central cities to perform their social functions, see Downs (1994, chap. 4).

costs of providing urban living to a population, reducing resources for improving the lot of the poorest residents, most of whom remain in areas not served by this new infrastructure (Burchell et al. 1992).

Major obstacles within declining cities to reversing past middle-class outflows

Mayors and other officials in declining American cities, and most residents thereof, would dearly love to reverse the systematic outflows of viable resources described above. Within declining cities themselves, however, four major obstacles to achieving this goal must be overcome before the overall processes of resource withdrawal can be effectively addressed. These obstacles are high rates of crime and insecurity, poor-quality public schools, white resistance to living in racially mixed neighborhoods, and ineffective public bureaucracies.

High rates of crime and insecurity

Crime rates in concentrated-poverty neighborhoods are much higher than in middle- and upper-income neighborhoods. This is true of both crimes reported to the police and crimes reported in surveys of neighborhood residents. And crime rates in primarily African-American neighborhoods are somewhat higher than in primarily white neighborhoods, other things being equal (Jencks 1991; Kelling 1993; see also Wilson and Herrnstein 1985). These facts are widely known among middle-class households of all ethnic groups. As a result, households seeking to escape from crime and personal insecurity—including many African-American households—move away from neighborhoods with concentrated poverty as rapidly as possible (Rosenbaum 1991).

True, reported crime rates have recently fallen somewhat in many large declining cities and risen in many nearby suburbs. Nevertheless, crime rates in big cities—especially in very poor neighborhoods—remain much higher than in most middle-income suburbs.²³

²³ It is not within the scope of this article to analyze in detail *why* crime rates have fallen recently in some big cities. Possible causes include smaller age cohorts of city teenagers, more intensive community policing and other law enforcement efforts, and the incarceration of larger numbers of criminals. For one comprehensive view, see Kelling and Coles (1996).

Fear of crime is also closely related to middle-class antipathy to big-city public schools. Children attending those schools are often physically threatened or bullied by their classmates or local gangs, and subject to being shot or stabbed at school or on their way to and from school. Fear of crime is also related to white reluctance to live in racially mixed neighborhoods because many whites associate high crime rates with the presence of large numbers of black or Hispanic households.

Fear of crime is therefore probably the biggest obstacle to attracting middle-class households back into declining cities or retaining those that are there now. But fear of crime in cities is just as powerful among minority-group households (Rosenbaum 1991) and is a major reason why so many have moved out of the cities since 1980.

I do not know what effective steps can be undertaken to reduce crime. One possibility is deliberately deconcentrating poor households by enabling many of them to move to scattered dwellings in outlying suburban communities.²⁴ That might reduce crime rates in big-city neighborhoods by decreasing the concentration of poverty there. But this “moving to opportunity” strategy is certain to encounter huge resistance from residents of the outlying suburban communities. Moreover, such a strategy would require large-scale public subsidies to enable poor households to occupy relatively costly suburban dwellings. In the present climate of federal funding cutbacks, that ingredient seems extremely unlikely.

Perhaps more community policing and other big-city strategies could reduce crime in concentrated-poverty areas. Promising progress in reducing crime rates has recently been achieved in New York City by focusing police efforts on maintaining public order, not just on arresting criminals (Kelling and Coles 1996). However, in at least some such areas, the proportion of local residents who habitually use drugs reaches 20 to 35 percent, especially because of crack addiction. It seems extremely difficult to greatly reduce drug-related crimes where a significant proportion of the clientele for local drug dealers consists of local residents themselves.²⁵

²⁴ For detailed discussion of this strategy, see Downs (1973). The basic arguments advanced in that book remain relevant in the 1990s. This strategy is also the basis of the *Gautreaux* decision and the Moving to Opportunity program initiated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1993.

²⁵ The estimate that as many as 20 to 35 percent of the residents of some concentrated-poverty neighborhoods are habitual drug users comes from field

Poor-quality public schools

In general, big-city public school systems provide much lower quality educations for their students than suburban public school systems. This conclusion is supported by higher dropout rates, lower test scores, lower college placement rates, and greater social disorders in most big-city public school systems. This outcome does not result primarily from lower spending per pupil; some big-city school systems spend far more per pupil than surrounding suburban school systems or city parochial systems that produce much better results. There appear to be three major causes for the poor performance of big-city public schools.

The first is the concentration in these schools of students from extremely poor and distressed households in which children are not exposed to positive reinforcements for their education.²⁶ This drawback probably cannot be overcome without a major deconcentration of poverty in certain neighborhoods within declining cities.

The second cause is existing regulations that require public schools to “mainstream” children suffering from various disturbances or handicaps (i.e., to place them in regular classes with nonhandicapped students) and prevent those schools from expelling disruptive students. Requiring the mainstreaming of a small minority of students whose presence in classrooms disrupts the education of the vast majority is a foolish and inefficient practice unfair to the majority of students. If public schools are to compete effectively with each other and with private schools, they must be able to operate under rules conducive to good educational practices. That may require establishing special schools for disruptive students and providing separate training for severely handicapped students.

The third cause is that most big-city public schools are monopolistic bureaucracies dominated by a combination of teachers’ unions and school administrators (Chubb and Moe 1990). In all eras, monopolistic bureaucracies of all types become controlled

workers in a specific Baltimore neighborhood I visited in 1996. Over 30 percent of the babies born to mothers living in that neighborhood were addicted at birth. The specific identity of the neighborhood is not revealed here to avoid placing those field workers in an unfavorable light from the viewpoint of the local residents with whom they work every day.

²⁶ For a discussion of the impact of concentrated poverty on big-city education, see Orfield (1985).

by the interests of the bureaucrats themselves rather than the interests of their clients. In nearly all other phases of life, Americans encourage competition as the most effective way to elicit maximum performance and maximum attention to the needs and desires of clients and customers. A similar approach needs to be taken in regard to big-city public schools. Describing exactly how that should be done—whether through charter schools, vouchers, competition with private schools, or other means—is not within the scope of this article.

The fact that good educations can be provided to poor minority-group children living in concentrated-poverty areas has been proved by the superior performance of hundreds of Catholic parochial schools serving such areas in declining cities. Moreover, those parochial schools operate with per-student spending much lower than that of nearby, ineffective public schools. True, parochial schools elicit stronger parental support and participation than most public schools, since parents must pay at least something to enroll their children. And parochial schools can exercise disciplines and expulsions not possible under present public school regulations. But parochial schools at least demonstrate that concentrated poverty need not lead to poor education.²⁷

Changing the structure of most big-city public school systems will not be easy because unionized teachers form a large and well-organized voting bloc within every declining city. They can generate immense political pressure resisting any changes that upset their present dominance. Teachers' unions have almost universally opposed using vouchers (especially those applicable in private schools), adopting merit pay for teachers, or funding charter or other alternative schools with public money—all tactics that would increase competitive pressure on public schools and their teachers to perform better. But without major changes in existing big-city school systems, the tremendous inequality of educational experiences that now handicaps millions of children living in declining cities will continue to make a mockery of the American value of equal educational opportunity.

²⁷ Caroline Minter Hoxby (1996) calculated that making a \$1,000 per-pupil voucher available on a means-tested basis to all U.S. students and permitting that voucher to be used in private schools—including parochial schools—would substantially improve the student achievement levels of both private school students and the remaining public school students by motivating public schools to become more competitive with private schools (80 percent of which are Catholic). This voucher would attract about 4 percent more students to private schools than go there now (raising their overall share from 10 percent to 14 percent) because private schools now deliver higher student achievement levels than public schools, on average.

White resistance to living in racially mixed neighborhoods

White resistance to living in racially mixed areas—and to sending children to predominantly minority schools—is a major obstacle to attracting white middle-class families back into declining cities or retaining those now living there. Yet the vast majority of middle-class households living in American suburbs today are non-Hispanic whites. Research done in 1976 by Reynolds Farley showed that most white households were willing to live in neighborhoods with a significant fraction of blacks or other minorities—but only if that fraction was well below 50 percent. And only about one-fourth of white households would move into a neighborhood containing 33 percent black households (Farley et al. 1978). Similar surveys conducted by Farley and William H. Frey in 1992 indicated that less than half of the 636 households interviewed would “feel uncomfortable” in a neighborhood containing 33 percent African-American residents. Nevertheless, only 41 percent were willing to move into such a neighborhood, and only 27 percent were willing to move into a neighborhood containing 60 percent African-American residents (compared with only 16 percent of white respondents in the 1976 survey) (Farley and Frey 1994).

Yet in the 53 declining cities combined, the overall proportion of minority-group residents in 1990 was 50.2 percent, and the overall proportion of African-American residents was 39.4 percent. Nineteen of these cities have predominantly minority populations, and 13 have predominantly African-American populations. Even more important, the public school systems in these cities are overwhelmingly attended by minority students. In the 23 of these cities for which 1990 data were available, the average proportion of minority students was 61.8 percent, and 6 cities had more than 85 percent minority students (National Center for Education Statistics 1992). Such dominance of public school enrollments by minority students is typical in most large American cities, not just those with declining populations.

It might appear to be a logical goal for any of these cities to attract white middle-class households back into the city, both because there are so many more white middle-class households in the suburbs and because the arrival of such households might create a more even ethnic balance within many of these cities. Of course, few—if any—public officials would publicly avow such a goal, because they would immediately be accused of being racist. And even if city officials adopted such a goal implicitly, they would have a hard time achieving it unless they focused on

attracting white middle-class households into primarily white neighborhoods within their cities. Even in such neighborhoods, the dominance of public schools there by minority-group students might discourage white middle-class households with children from moving in.

This analysis implies three conclusions. First, white middle-class households are likely to move into, or remain in, declining cities in significant numbers only if they can live in predominantly white neighborhoods. Most declining cities still have some sections that are predominantly white. Second, the white middle-class households most likely to live in declining cities are those with no school-age children: “empty nesters,” elderly households, singles, gays, or young married households without children.²⁸ Third, white middle-class households with school-age children are not likely to move into declining cities, even into primarily white neighborhoods, unless those neighborhoods are served either by relatively inexpensive private schools or by public schools with ethnically balanced enrollments like those found in some so-called magnet schools.

From the viewpoint of declining cities and of American society generally, it would be desirable if white middle-class households were not prejudiced against moving into neighborhoods with substantial proportions of African-American or other minority residents and did not mind sending their children to predominantly minority schools. But it would be highly unrealistic to suppose that this is now the case. Nor do I know of any cogent means of changing existing white racial and ethnic attitudes on these subjects. Therefore, this obstacle to attracting middle-class households into declining cities is likely to remain formidable.

Ineffective public bureaucracies

Big-city governments are run by individual agencies that inherently become bureaucratic because of their sheer size, their lack of competition, and the nonmarketable nature of many of their outputs (Downs 1967). As noted above concerning public school systems, monopolistic bureaucracies almost inevitably shift their behavior to best serve those who run them rather than their clients or customers. That helps explain such anomalies as public housing authorities keeping thousands of units vacant despite long waiting lists of applicants, or public schools that can

²⁸ Note that two other articles in this issue of *Housing Policy Debate*, Lang, Hughes, and Danielsen (1997) and Moss (1997), reach this same conclusion.

be opened only when determined by members of their janitors' union—regardless of what their principals want. City governments are notorious for imposing complex rules and regulations on businesses that want to expand or locate within the city, often motivating those businesses to move elsewhere. City building codes often require obsolete technical ingredients or processes to protect the jobs of plasterers, plumbers, or other tradespeople whose unions exercise powerful political influence (Advisory Commission on Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing 1991, chap. 3).

Several tactics could increase the effectiveness of many such agencies. One is privatizing some or all of their functions, or at least introducing some competition from the private sector for portions of their activities. Another is leadership from the mayor or city council designed to review and reform existing procedures from the viewpoints of the clients or customers, such as businesses considering expansion or relocation. A third is pressure from organized business interests within the city who want to help maintain the city's tax base so that their taxes do not rise as other firms move out.

There is no simple or permanent remedy for ineffective performance by city bureaucracies. But progress can surely be made through vigorous leadership and sustained pressure from private interests within the city. Therefore, this obstacle is more susceptible to improvement than the other three.²⁹

Conclusions

Prospects for overcoming three of these four obstacles to attracting more middle-class households into declining cities seem bleak. Therefore, declining cities cannot realistically count on any significant near-future increases in their middle-class populations (of any ethnic group) as major means of improving their situations. Even retaining the middle-class households that already live there will be difficult. It will require an all-out assault on crime, a major reform of the cities' public school systems, and continuous pressure on other municipal bureaucracies

²⁹ An innovative public-private partnership in Washington, DC recently resulted in establishment of the George Washington University Center for Excellence in Municipal Management, which will help develop the leadership capacity and management skills of the District of Columbia government workforce. The DC business community has provided private funding for the Center and is an equal partner in the effort with the university and the District government.

to improve their services to their true clients and customers. Whether the elected officials in these cities have the energy, the guts, the willpower, and the persistence to undertake these policy initiatives with diminishing fiscal resources remains to be seen.

How could the systematic outflow of viable resources from declining cities be stopped, counteracted, or slowed?

What strategies might be adopted to alter this dynamic process or at least ameliorate its results? There are at least three fundamental approaches: major structural change, reform of big-city government behavior, and community development.

Major structural change

This approach involves trying to alter the basic structure of the growth process in American metropolitan areas. In its full-blown form, the structural changes it pursues include the following:

1. *Counteracting the fragmentation of governmental control over land uses.* The most logical way to do this would be by adopting a single metropolitan-area-wide government that replaced all existing local governments.³⁰ However, that tactic has no political support from either suburban or city residents or officials; hence it will never happen in most metropolitan areas. A more feasible approach is having the state government require all existing local governments to prepare comprehensive land use plans using a standardized planning process that pursues common goals set by the state. Then the state creates an overarching body to coordinate these individual plans—a body that has substantial powers to pressure local governments into revising their plans. This body can be regionwide (as in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota) or statewide (as in Oregon). The importance of this body is enhanced further if it also has operational control over all regional sewer, water, and transportation systems (as in the Twin Cities and Portland).

³⁰ Unified metropolitan government is the solution suggested by David Rusk (1993). However, I believe this arrangement does not have enough political support to be adopted in many more American metropolitan areas than the few that have already adopted it, for reasons stated in the text.

2. *Creating some method for all cities in a metropolitan area to share in all the taxable resources therein.* To counteract the losses of central-city and inner-ring suburban taxable resources that arise from the constant out-movement of firms and households, there must be some mechanism for all cities to tap into all taxable resources, no matter where they are located within the region. The most comprehensive existing example is the property-tax-base-sharing scheme employed in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota. But even that scheme involves only further increases in commercial real estate properties. A broader scheme would place at least some portion of real estate assessed values and sales taxes into a pool to be shared among all communities by some basic formula related to population, poverty levels, or other factors.

3. *Placing limits on the outward spatial expansion of new development.* To keep new job growth within a reasonable commuting distance from inner-city neighborhoods, and to limit excessive costs of creating trunk lines to far-out subdivisions, a metropolitan region could adopt an “urban growth boundary” within which most, or all, future development within a planning period must be located. This tactic also has the advantage of reducing the rate at which peripheral open space is swallowed up by further urban development—a goal that probably has widespread suburban support. Urban growth boundaries have been used most cogently in Oregon. However, this tactic also requires preventing new urban developments from arising immediately outside the metropolitan area by adopting statewide bans on new rural development except at very low densities.³¹

4. *Requiring all suburbs to zone a certain proportion of their developable land for affordable housing—including multi-family units—and creating incentives and penalties designed to encourage those communities to remove other regulatory barriers to such housing.*³²

5. *Developing means of helping low-income households from inner-city neighborhoods move into housing in*

³¹ The Oregon experience is evaluated by Knaap and Nelson (1992). Also see Lang and Hornburg (1997) and Abbott (1997) for a discussion of the politics behind the urban growth boundary in Portland, OR.

³² An earlier analysis of inclusionary zoning that is still relevant is that by Mallach (1984). For an update and comparison on inclusionary housing in California and New Jersey, see Calavita, Grimes, and Mallach (1997).

middle-income suburban communities they otherwise could not afford. This could be done by converting public housing assistance into portable vouchers, using existing federal housing vouchers, requiring inclusionary zoning for a certain number of affordable units in every new suburban subdivision, or creating special state taxes, such as a real estate transfer tax with receipts devoted to subsidizing such housing. This tactic has been successfully demonstrated in the Chicago area for 20 years in the *Gautreaux* decision process, though only at a relatively small scale per year.³³

6. *Creating private, nonprofit regionwide organizations to help enforce existing laws against racial discrimination in housing and lending markets.* These organizations can use testers and bring lawsuits against real estate agents, lenders, and homeowners who engage in illegal discrimination. They can also help minority home seekers find financing for home purchases.
7. *Creating private, nonprofit job information and placement centers* located in or near inner-city areas with high unemployment rates, but also closely linked to major suburban firms. Such centers could provide information about available jobs to inner-city residents and screen potential applicants for suburban employers.
8. *Providing subsidized transportation for inner-city workers* employed in suburban jobs to assist them in reaching jobs at scattered or far-out locations.³⁴
9. *Continuing and expanding so-called enterprise or empowerment zones* within distressed portions of central cities and inner-ring suburbs. Tax incentives and other aids would be provided to firms that located in these zones and furnished new jobs to residents thereof.

One look at these elements indicates how radically their combined adoption would change the existing metropolitan growth process. A crucial part of such change would be creating institutions responsible for the operation of the metropolitan area as a

³³ For an evaluation of the *Gautreaux* project, see Rosenbaum (1991).

³⁴ Hughes and Sternberg (1992) link such transportation subsidies to the job placement centers described in the preceding point, as well as to the provision of day-care centers in inner-city neighborhoods for mothers who work outside their homes.

whole, not just for the prosperity of one small part. The basic idea is not to eliminate local governments, but to place them within some broader framework with two key traits: (1) designating certain persons as responsible for the combined outcomes of all local government decisions in the metropolitan area and (2) equipping those persons with sufficient power and authority to achieve effective results.

Unfortunately, even such radical reforms would not necessarily eliminate the four major obstacles to returning the middle class to the declining cities discussed above. Hence, these structural reforms can be regarded as necessary but not sufficient remedies to the problems of declining cities.

The structural change approach is popular with intellectuals because they regard revising the underlying structure as essential to reversing its results. I have advocated this approach myself in *New Visions for Metropolitan America* (Downs 1994). But it is unpopular with most metropolitan citizens because they benefit notably from the current structure. That is also true of nearly all existing politicians, city and suburban. So this approach is mostly untried and has had little impact on the real world.

Modified version of structural change

Myron Orfield (1997) has both proposed and helped achieve a modified version of the structural change approach in the Twin Cities metropolitan area in Minnesota. He believes that the same approach could be followed in other major metropolitan areas with declining central cities. He advocates forming a political coalition in the state legislature among representatives of three areas: the declining central city, inner-ring suburbs also experiencing decline, and outer-ring suburbs with very low commercial property tax bases and high populations of school-age children.

If representatives of these three areas form a majority in the state's legislature, they could pass state laws creating a tax-base-sharing plan for all communities within the entire metropolitan area. The plan would place some portion of all future increases in commercial and industrial assessed property values into a pool to be shared by all communities within the metropolitan area by means of a standard formula. Most commercial and industrial properties are concentrated in a single corridor or

quarter within each metropolitan area, so communities in the rest of the area do not now benefit much from the area's economic and population growth, insofar as their tax bases are concerned. Under this arrangement, they would share in at least some of the fiscal growth of the favored quarter.

Traditional local fiscal arrangements involve fragmentation of taxable property resources among communities solely in accordance with where those properties are located. Orfield has shown that tax-base sharing could produce a much more equitable distribution of fiscal resources among metropolitan-area communities than the present system. It is also fairer, because the commercial and industrial facilities now concentrated in the favored quarter are usually patronized or staffed by many persons living in other communities, which must bear the public costs of housing those persons (such as school costs) without benefiting from the taxes generated by the shopping or jobs those persons support. Of course, those communities in the favored quarter vehemently oppose this strategy, since it forces them to share the added assessed values they gain from growth. But they can be outvoted in the state legislature by representatives of communities that would be net gainers from tax-base sharing.

For such a coalition to be formed, however, some political entrepreneur must first marshal enough statistical evidence to convince representatives of the potentially gaining communities to stop regarding each other as enemies and start working together. That is an especially difficult transition for representatives from the central city and those from the suburbs, who now regard themselves as having very few common interests. Once such a political coalition has been formed and has successfully passed tax-base sharing of the type described above, it could also initiate other elements of the metropolitanwide structural change strategy described earlier.

Orfield's proposed strategy has the huge political advantage of changing the support base for structural reform from a minority of citizens and politicians within a metropolitan area—those in the central city and especially in inner-city distressed areas—into a majority by bringing in those in suburbs suffering from fiscal difficulties. He has conducted statistical analyses of conditions in several large metropolitan areas proving that communities containing a majority of both residents and state legislators would benefit from this approach; hence, it is not just applicable in Minnesota.

Reform of big-city government behavior

A second basic approach is ignoring the regional nature of the problem and focusing on dismantling or radically reforming the public bureaucracies within declining cities. This strategy is advocated by the Cato Institute and other proponents of slashing big-city tax rates and local government payrolls.³⁵ There is undoubtedly merit in this approach because most big cities do contain dysfunctional bureaucracies that need reform or replacement, as noted earlier. Their behavior often constitutes a serious obstacle to the attraction or retention of viable business in declining cities.

However, the main political advantage of this approach is that it does not upset the nonpoor majority—mostly suburban residents—who believe they benefit from the present structure of regional inequalities, since this remedy costs them nothing. It does not require them to pay higher taxes to help big-city governments or to accept more low-income neighbors or to make any other apparent sacrifices. Therefore, this city government reform strategy readily gains their political approval. That is one reason many conservatives in particular advocate this strategy as an alternative to what they view as costly and most likely ineffective government spending programs—to which they would have to contribute.

This approach has three weaknesses. It does little to offset the social and technical obsolescence of central-city and inner-suburban neighborhoods. Also, it does not stop the outflow of resources into the surrounding periphery. Finally, it does not reduce the gross inequalities of public sector resources emanating from the growth process.

Community development

A third approach stresses the resources intrinsic to concentrated-poverty areas, such as their central locations, the untapped energies and talents of their residents, and the possible collective results of community efforts. This is the approach of the community development movement. The most recent version is set forth in the handbook *Building Communities from the Inside Out* by John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight of Northwestern University

³⁵ This viewpoint is advanced by Moore and Stansel (1993). However, the statistical analysis underlying their conclusions is seriously flawed, as pointed out in detail by Downs (1994, app. B).

(Kretzmann and McKnight 1993). They advocate emphasizing the positive characteristics of each community and its individual and group residents rather than emphasizing problems and needs. However, other advocates of the community development approach call for significant additional public expenditures in low-income neighborhoods financed by the federal government instead of just relying on self-help or “bootstrap” improvements.

The self-help-oriented community development approach also has the political advantage of not upsetting the majority of metropolitan-area residents, since it does not require them to contribute much, if anything, of their own resources to helping solve core-area problems. Perhaps there are some locational advantages of inner-city sites for which purely profit-oriented business firms may find it worthwhile to endure the insecurities and other disadvantages of such sites. This is the contention that Professor Michael Porter of the Harvard Business School is currently advancing (Porter 1997). However, the version of the community development approach based on major additional public spending in core areas would require contributions from suburbanites and others because such spending would have to be financed by higher taxes on people living elsewhere.

Like the preceding strategy, this approach has the weakness of not offsetting the outflow of resources from the core. It also downplays the destructive behavior of many residents in concentrated-poverty areas, such as male sexual hostility toward women, evasion of the responsibilities of parenthood, and disregard of personal and property rights. Furthermore, experience shows that effective community development rarely occurs without at least some help from outside catalysts, such as the Enterprise Foundation, or outside resource contributors, such as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation. Moreover, this approach has great difficulty in reaching a sufficient scale to affect conditions in more than one or a few distressed neighborhoods within a city. And its practitioners—in spite of heroic and time-consuming efforts—can rarely pull together enough economic resources to affect all aspects of life even in those few neighborhoods, in contrast to focusing on housing alone, schools alone, or some other single aspect.

The need for multiple remedies undertaken simultaneously

The extremely brief summaries and critiques of the three major approaches set forth above hardly do justice to either the intentions or the reasonable expectations of their advocates.

Moreover, the presentation is admittedly biased in favor of the structural change approach that I happen to favor. However, more detailed consideration of the advantages and drawbacks of these approaches is not within the scope of this article.

In reality, none of these approaches can work alone. All three are probably necessary to make real progress in improving life in concentrated-poverty areas. The process of decline cannot be reversed if outlying areas can freely drain resources from the core without sharing their tax bases. Core cities cannot work well if dysfunctional public bureaucracies are not dismantled or reformed. And community development cannot work well without some outside economic resources from the periphery to aid local residents in poor areas.

Which approach, if any, is most likely to be adopted?

Unfortunately, the vested interests of the majority of metropolitan-area residents, and of nearly all public officials, would be upset by such a combined strategy because it would reduce their ability to gain benefits from the present institutional structure and growth process.

Even adopting the structural change approach alone would upset the politically dominant majority. It would require members of that majority to contribute resources to attack inner-city problems, and it would rearrange the power structure in each metropolitan area. Moreover, if the structural change approach were to be carried out to its fullest extent, it would require significant federal funding of affordable housing subsidies and major aid to inner-city neighborhoods. But the likelihood of such federal assistance seems remote in this era of federal budget cuts and the devolution of federal policy making to state and local governments. Thus, the structural change approach appears very unlikely to be tried soon in any significant number of metropolitan areas containing declining cities.

This pessimistic conclusion need not apply to the version of the structural change approach advocated by Myron Orfield, however. In those metropolitan areas where representatives in the state legislature from the central city, fiscally distressed inner-ring suburbs, and fiscally distressed outer-ring suburbs combined form a majority of all legislators, a coalition could be formed to adopt tax-base sharing and other regional

arrangements—assuming the governor does not veto such laws.³⁶ The biggest difficulty with this approach is that it requires a strong, well-informed, persuasive, and incredibly persistent political entrepreneur to overcome the entrenched hostility between central-city and suburban legislators in most states.

Adopting only the approach of reforming big-city public bureaucracies would upset most of the incumbent officials who control and manage those entrenched institutions. True, they are only a small part of each city electorate. But they wield disproportionate political power because of their control of these institutions and the benefits these institutions can confer on others, their high degree of organization, and the intensity of their interest in city policies relative to the apathy of most big-city citizens. Political competition against incumbent officials from conservative mayoral candidates might nevertheless generate this approach in a few declining cities, as it has in Jersey City, NJ. But that is not likely to happen on a large scale.

That leaves the community development approach as the most likely to occur, because it would arouse the least opposition from powerful vested interests. But the community development approach itself usually requires initial catalysts and seed money from outside the neighborhoods involved. Also, it can reach only a very limited scale and comprehensiveness within any one city. These limitations make it a weak instrument even for improving conditions within concentrated-poverty neighborhoods. And it does almost nothing to stop the long-range outflow of resources from declining cities generated by the American metropolitan-area growth process.

Conclusions

In modern democracies, the majority of citizens and public officials are willing to sacrifice their own immediate advantages only if they believe that some crisis threatens the continuation of those advantages. The decline of cities and inner suburbs where poverty is concentrated has not yet created a sufficiently visible or severe crisis to stimulate residents of outer-ring suburbs to take effective action. It appears that only after our society has

³⁶ The governor of Minnesota has twice vetoed changes in the Twin Cities tax-base-sharing program passed by the state legislature that would increase the percentage of new commercial and industrial assessed values from each community put into the pool and shared throughout the metropolitan area or otherwise strengthen the ability of the entire process to equalize fiscal resources throughout the area.

moved much farther toward even higher fractions of poorly educated, untrained, unskilled, and often dangerous low-income residents will the sense of crisis become really acute. That might create majority political support for an approach to counteracting urban decline that would actually work. The only other way support could be generated would be through the formation of a majority political coalition in certain state legislatures with jurisdiction over entire metropolitan areas. Meanwhile, it is wishful thinking to believe middle-class households of any ethnic groups now residing in suburbs will return to declining cities in large numbers. Hence their resources will not offset continuation of the systematic outflow of resources from those cities already built into the metropolitan-area growth process.

Author

Anthony Downs is a Senior Fellow in Economic Studies at The Brookings Institution.

The views stated in this article are solely those of the author and not necessarily those of The Brookings Institution, its trustees, or other staff members.

References

- Abbott, Carl. 1997. The Portland Region: Where City and Suburbs Talk to Each Other—and Often Agree. *Housing Policy Debate* 8(1):11–51.
- Advisory Commission on Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing. 1991. *“Not in My Back Yard”: Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Bradbury, Katharine L., Anthony Downs, and Kenneth Small. 1982. *Urban Decline and the Future of American Cities*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Burchell, Robert W., et al. 1992. *Impact Assessment of the New Jersey Interim State Development and Redevelopment Plan, Report II: Research Findings*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, Center for Urban Policy Research.
- Calavita, Nico, Kenneth Grimes, and Alan Mallach. 1997. Inclusionary Housing in California and New Jersey: A Comparative Analysis. *Housing Policy Debate* 8(1):109–42.
- Chubb, John E., and Terry M. Moe. 1990. *Politics, Markets, and America’s Schools*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- DiIulio, John D., Jr. 1992. Crime. In *Setting National Priorities: What Can Government Do?* ed. Henry J. Aaron and Charles L. Schultze, 101–5. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Downs, Anthony. 1967. *Inside Bureaucracy*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Downs, Anthony. 1969. Housing the Urban Poor: The Economics of Various Strategies. *American Economic Review* 56(4):646–51.

Downs, Anthony. 1973. *Opening Up the Suburbs: An Urban Strategy for America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Downs, Anthony. 1981. *Neighborhoods and Urban Development*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Downs, Anthony. 1994. *New Visions for Metropolitan America*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution and Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

Farley, Reynolds, and Walter R. Allen. 1987. *The Color Line and the Quality of Life in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Farley, Reynolds, and William H. Frey. 1994. Changes in the Segregation of Whites from Blacks during the 1980s: Small Steps toward a More Integrated Society. *American Sociological Review* 59(1):23–45.

Farley, Reynolds, Howard Schuman, Suzanne Bianchi, Diane Colasanto, and Shirley Hatchett. 1978. “Chocolate City, Vanilla Suburbs”: Will the Trend toward Racially Separate Communities Continue? *Social Science Research* 7:319–44.

Hoxby, Caroline Minter. 1996. The Effects of Private School Vouchers. In *Holding Schools Accountable: Performance-Based Reform in Education*, ed. Helen F. Ladd, 177–208. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Hoyt, Homer. 1939. *The Structure and Growth of Residential Neighborhoods in American Cities*. Washington, DC: Federal Housing Administration, U.S. Government Printing Office.

Hughes, Mark Alan, and Julie E. Sternberg. 1992. *The New Metropolitan Reality: Where the Rubber Meets the Road in Antipoverty Policy*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Illich, Ivan. 1980. *Toward a History of Needs*. New York: Bantam.

Jargowsky, Paul A., and Mary Jo Bane. 1991. Ghetto Poverty in the United States: 1970–1980. In *The Urban Underclass*, ed. Christopher Jencks and Paul A. Peterson, 251–70. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Jencks, Christopher. 1991. Is the American Underclass Growing? In *The Urban Underclass*, ed. Christopher Jencks and Paul A. Peterson, 28–100. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Jencks, Christopher, and Paul E. Peterson, eds. 1991. *The Urban Underclass*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Kasarda, John D. 1993. Inner-City Concentrated Poverty and Neighborhood Distress: 1970 to 1990. *Housing Policy Debate* 4(3):253–302.

Kelling, George. 1993. Measuring What Matters: A New Way of Thinking about Crime and Public Order. *City Journal* 2(2):21–33.

- Kelling, George, and Catherine M. Coles. 1996. *Fixing Broken Windows*. New York: Free Press.
- Knaap, Gerrit, and Arthur C. Nelson. 1992. *The Regulated Landscape: Lessons on State Land Use Planning from Oregon*. Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.
- Kretzmann, John P., and John L. McKnight. 1993. *Building Communities from the Inside Out*. Chicago: Acta.
- Lang, Robert E., and Steven P. Hornburg. 1997. Planning Portland Style: Pitfalls and Possibilities. *Housing Policy Debate* 8(1):1–10.
- Lang, Robert E., James W. Hughes, and Karen A. Danielsen. 1997. Targeting the Suburban Urbanites: Marketing Central-City Housing. *Housing Policy Debate* 8(2):437–70.
- Ladd, Helen F. 1993. Fiscal Consequences for U.S. Central Cities of the Changing Urban Form. In *Urban Change in the United States and Western Europe*, ed. Anita A. Summers, Paul C. Cheshire, and Lanfranco Senn, 327–70. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.
- Leinberger, Christopher B. 1995. The Changing Location of Development and Investment Opportunities. *Urban Land* 54(5):31–36.
- Levy, Frank. 1987. *Dollars and Dreams: The Changing American Income Distribution*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Mallach, Alan. 1984. *Inclusionary Housing Programs: Policies and Practices*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, Center for Urban Policy Research.
- Massey, Douglas S., and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mincy, Ronald B., and Susan J. Wiener. 1993. *The Underclass in the 1980s: Changing Concept, Constant Reality*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
- Moore, Stephen, and Dean Stansel. 1993. The Myth of America's Underfunded Cities. Policy Analysis No. 188. Washington, DC: Cato Institute.
- Moss, Mitchell. 1997. Reinventing the Central City as a Place to Live and Work. *Housing Policy Debate* 8(2):471–90.
- Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association. 1991. *Motor Vehicle Facts and Figures '90*. Detroit.
- National Center for Education Statistics. 1992. *Digest of Educational Statistics 1992*. NCES 92-097. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- National Commission on Urban Problems. 1969. *Building the American City: The Report of the National Commission on Urban Problems*. New York: Praeger.
- Orfield, Gary. 1985. Ghettoization and Its Consequences. In *The New Urban Reality*, ed. Paul E. Peterson, 174–76. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Orfield, Myron. 1997. *Metropolitics*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution and Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

Pack, Janet Rothenberg. 1994. The Impacts of Concentrated Urban Poverty on City Government Expenditures. Impact paper. University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School Real Estate Center.

Porter, Michael. 1997. New Strategies for Inner-City Economic Development. *Economic Development Quarterly* 11(1):11–27.

Richmond, Henry R. 1995. *Regionalism: Chicago as an American Region*. Portland, OR: MacArthur Foundation.

Richmond, Henry. 1996. Remarks. In *Alternatives to Sprawl*, ed. Dwight Young. Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

Rosenbaum, James E. 1991. Black Pioneers: Do Their Moves to the Suburbs Increase Economic Opportunity for Mothers and Children? *Housing Policy Debate* 2(4):1179–213.

Rusk, David. 1993. *Cities without Suburbs*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

Schelling, Thomas C. 1971. Dynamic Models of Segregation. *Journal of Mathematical Sociology* 1:143–86.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. Various years. *Current Population Reports*. P-25-1104. Washington, DC.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. Various years. *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. Washington, DC.

Wilson, James Q., and Richard J. Herrnstein. 1985. *Crime and Human Nature*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Wilson, William Julius. 1987. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.