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THE LEVITTOWNERS

Ways of Life and Politics in a New Suburban Community by HERBERT J. GANS

PANTHEON BOOKS

A Division of Random House, Inc., New York



Universiteit van Amsterdam
Prof. Mr N.G. Piersonbibliotheek
Roetersstraat 11 - 1018 WB Amsterdam
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Chapter Eight

**SOCIAL LIFE: SUBURBAN
HOMOGENEITY AND
CONFORMITY**



IN PART TWO, MY FOCUS SHIFTS FROM LEVITTOWN TO THE LEVITTOWNERS, and from a historical to a cross-sectional perspective—from the community to the people and the way they live at a specific point in time. Some critics charge that suburban life is socially, culturally, and emotionally destructive, and that the causes are to be found in the nature of suburbia and the move from the city. Testing their charges requires evaluation of the quality of Levittown life and measurement of Levittown's impact on its residents to determine what changes in behavior and attitudes have actually resulted from the move.

Many of the findings on Levittown's impact are based on interviews with two sets of Levittowners, one a nearly *random sample* of 45 buyers in Somerset Park, the first neighborhood to be settled, and the second, of 55 others in that neighborhood who had moved there from Philadelphia, here called the *Philadelphia* or *city sample*. The two samples were interviewed during 1960 and 1961, after they had lived in Levittown two to three years, and this determines the period on which the cross-sectional analysis is reporting. (The random sample was also interviewed just after its arrival in Levittown, thus providing data on the immediate impact of the move as well.) Both samples are small and not entirely random, so that the statistics cannot supply the final

scientific proof that statistics often imply, but they do illustrate what happened to people as a result of moving to Levittown.

THE QUALITY OF SOCIAL LIFE

Perhaps the most frequent indictment of suburban life has been leveled against the quality of social relationships. The critics charge that the suburbs are socially hyperactive and have made people so outgoing that they have little time or inclination for the development of personal autonomy. The pervasive homogeneity of the population has depressed the vitality of social life, and the absence of more heterogeneous neighbors and friends has imposed a conformity which further reduces the suburbanite's individuality. Indeed, studies showing the importance of physical propinquity in the choice of friends have been interpreted to suggest that physical layout, rather than people, determines the choice of friends. Because many suburbanites are Transients or Mobiles, they have been accused of wanting social companions only for the duration of their stay, disabling them for more intimate friendship.¹

Evidence from Levittown suggests quite the opposite. People report an accelerated social life, and in fact looked forward to it before moving to Levittown. The major reason for the upswing is indeed homogeneity, but an equally appropriate term might be "compatibility." Propinquity may initiate social contact but it does not determine friendship. Many relationships are indeed transient, but this is no reflection on their intensity. Finally, conformity prevails, although less as malicious or passive copying than as sharing of useful ideas. In short, many of the *phenomena* identified by the critics occur in Levittown but their alleged *consequences* do not follow. Levittowners have not become outgoing, mindless conformers; they remain individuals, fulfilling the social aspirations with which they came. To be sure, social life in Levittown has its costs, but these seem minor compared to its rewards.

*Neighboring*²

About half the Levittowners interviewed said that they were visiting more with neighbors than in their former residence; about a quarter said less, and the remaining quarter reported no change.³ The greatest increase was reported by the people who

said they had wanted to do more visiting, particularly those who had had little opportunity for it in their previous residence. As one Philadelphian said, "We used to be with the in-laws and with my mother; we didn't bother with the neighbors before." Others had lacked compatible neighbors; people living in apartments had found few opportunities to get acquainted, and those in older or transitional areas had found their fellow residents unsuitable. This was as true of former suburbanites and small-town residents as of those from cities, and affected owners as well as renters. One homeowner explained, "Here in Levittown I have more in common; where we lived before, the neighbors were all my mother's age."

In addition to the desire to do more neighboring, the increase resulted initially from the newness of the community and the lack of shopping facilities and other places for daytime activities. But these reasons were mentioned far less often than the "friendliness" of the neighbors, and this in turn was a function of population homogeneity. One Levittowner, describing her next-door neighbor, said, "We see eye to eye on things, about raising kids, doing things together with your husband, living the same way; we have practically the same identical background." Conversely, the people who reported less neighboring were those who could not find compatible people on the block: older ones, some (but not all) people of highest and lowest status, and those who had difficulties in relating to neighbors, particularly second generation Jewish women from Philadelphia who were used to living among Jewish neighbors.⁴ A handful wanted to continue spending their social life with relatives or preferred to have nothing to do with neighbors.

Of course, some friendliness was built into the neighbor relationship, for people needed each other for mutual aid. In a community far from the city, women are cut off from relatives and old friends—as well as from commuting husbands—so that readiness to provide mutual aid is the first criterion of being a good neighbor. This includes not only helping out in emergencies, but ameliorating periodic loneliness by being available for occasional coffee-klatzsching and offering informal therapy by being willing to listen to another's troubles when necessary. Helping out also offers an opportunity—rare in everyday life—to practice the dictates of the Judeo-Christian ethic, and brings appropriate emotional rewards. The reciprocity engendered by mutual aid en-

courages—and allows—neighbors to keep a constant watch on each other, as they do in established neighborhoods everywhere. One night I drove out of my driveway at a slightly higher than usual speed, and my next-door neighbor came over to find out if anything was wrong, although later he wondered whether in his desire to be a good neighbor he had violated the norms of privacy and was being too nosy. The mutual observation that makes the block a goldfish bowl goes on mainly among adjacent neighbors, for with houses only ten feet apart, they see each other frequently and have to maintain friendly relations if that is at all possible. More distant neighbors could be ignored, however. Indeed, a Levittowner who had moved from a cohesive working class district said, "It's not like Philadelphia here. There you might know someone four blocks down the road as well as your next-door neighbor. Here you don't know people down the road." The block was a social unit only to assure a modicum of house and lawn care, beyond which there was no obligation for neighbors to associate.

Even propinquity did not require visiting. Although a number of studies have shown that social relationships are influenced and even determined by the site plan, this was not the case in Levittown.⁵ Since Levittown was laid out with curved blocks, houses facing each other across front and back, there were relatively few neighbors with whom one had constant and involuntary visual contact. Sometimes, even relationships with directly adjacent neighbors could be restricted to an exchange of hellos. For example, it took more than a year for me to meet the occupants of a house diagonally across the street from mine, even though we had been saying hello since the first weeks of occupancy. Another person told me he had never even met his next-door neighbor. Thus, despite a fairly high building density—five to six houses to the acre—there was no pressure to be sociable. Neighboring rarely extended more than three or four houses away in each direction, so that the "functional neighborhood" usually consisted of about ten to twelve houses at the most, although people did say hello to everyone on the block.⁶ The boundaries of the functional neighborhood were delimited either by physical barriers or by social isolates who interrupted the flow of social relations.⁷

A more systematic test of the propinquity theory was made by asking interview respondents to rank the amount of visiting with their six most adjacent neighbors. If propinquity alone had

TABLE 4
VISITING AMONG ADJACENT NEIGHBORS,
BY AMOUNT OF VISITING

LOCATION OF NEIGHBOR	PERCENT REPORTING				All	Not Visited
	Ranked Amount of Visiting	First	Second	Third		
Next door, right side	31	31	15	14	24	24
Next door, left side	24	38	20	14	26	15
Across the street	36	22	23	23	26	4
Across the backyard	7	7	32	27	17	57
Other *	2	2	10	23	7	N.A.**
N	(45)	(42)	(40)	(22)	(149)	(26)

* This included other neighbors across the street or the backyard when a house faced or backed on two others.
** Not asked.

determined visiting, one or two of the most adjacent neighbors, those on the right and left sides, should have been visited most often. As Table 4 indicates, however, about three quarters of *all* visiting was equally distributed between these two and the neighbor across the street, who was a little farther away, and the latter was actually visited most often. If people's first and second choices are combined, the data show that 31 per cent chose right-hand neighbors, an equal number left-hand ones, 29 per cent those across the street, and the rest other adjacent ones. Thus, distance does not affect choice of the closest neighbors, although it does discourage visiting the less adjacent ones, and particularly backyard neighbors. Because of the 100-foot depths of the lots and the heat of the New Jersey summer, people made little use of the backyards, and the 200 feet between houses reduced visiting considerably.⁸

Some propinquity studies have found that visiting is affected by the location of the front door, and, among women, of the kitchen window from which they can see their neighbors while doing housework. This was *not* the case in Levittown. If the front door had been significant, owners of the Cape Cod and ranch houses should have chosen their right-hand and across-the-street neighbors most often; those of the Colonial houses should have chosen their left-hand and across-the-street neighbors. The data show that Cape Cod owners visited most often across the street, but equally between right- and left-hand neighbors; the ranch owners chose the left-hand neighbors twice as often as their other neighbors; and the Colonial owners showed a slight preference for left-hand neighbors.⁹ In the "kitchen window test," the expected pattern was found only among Cape Cod house owners, but not the other two.¹⁰ Had location been the prime determinant of friendship choice, neighbors should also have been mentioned as friends more than other Levittowners. Respondents said, however, that only 35 per cent of the five couples they visited most frequently lived on their street, and 31 per cent said that none of these favorite couples lived on their street.¹¹ Moreover, propinquity affected some types of social gatherings but not others; baby showers, cookouts, and barbecues drew only nearby neighbors; more formal parties involved mainly guests from other streets and neighborhoods.¹²

Since most of the interview questions were about adjacent neighbors, the findings are only a partial test of the propinquity

theory. They suggest that a sizeable functional distance discourages visiting, but that among adjacent neighbors, people choose not the closest or the ones they see most often, but the ones they consider most compatible. Indeed, fully 82 per cent of the respondents mentioned compatibility as the reason for choosing the neighbor they visited most frequently. If the site plan had forced some neighbors into constant visual contact—as do court or cul-de-sac schemes—they might have reacted by increased visiting (or intense enmity if they were incompatible), but the block layout gave Levittowners the opportunity for choice.

Neighbor relations among adults were also affected by the children, for children are neighbors too, and their mingling was determined almost entirely by age and propinquity.¹³ The relatively traffic-free streets and the large supply of young children enabled mothers to limit their supervision of the children's outdoor play; and the overall compatibility, to give youngsters a free choice of playmates. But children were likely to quarrel, and when this led to fights and childish violence, their quarrels involved the parents. Half the random sample had heard of quarrels among neighbors on their block, and 81 per cent of these were over the children. Adults quarreled most often when childish misbehavior required punishment and parents disagreed about methods. If the parents of fighting children agreed on discipline, each punished his child the same way and the incident was soon forgotten. If they disagreed, however, the parent who believed in harsh punishment often felt that the more permissive parent, not having punished "enough," was accusing the other child of having been at fault. A single parental disagreement might be forgiven, but if it happened repeatedly, an open break between neighbors could result. Of seventeen quarrels about which interview respondents were knowledgeable, nine had been concluded peacefully, but in the other eight cases, parents were still not talking to each other. In one case, two neighbors finally came to blows and had to be placed on a peace bond by the municipal court.

Another type of adult quarrel involved physical disciplining of children by neighbors. Some people believe that only parents should spank their children; others, that neighbors have the right to do so if the child misbehaves out of sight of the parents. When a neighbor punishes another's child, he not only takes on a quasi-parental role but, by implication, accuses the parents of not rais-

ing and watching their children properly. In one such case, where a neighbor punished a little boy for sexual exhibitionism, the parent never spoke to him again.

Basically, differences over discipline reflect class differences in child-rearing. Middle class parents tend to be somewhat more permissive than working class ones, and when two children play together, the middle class child may be allowed to act in ways not permitted to the working class one. Also, working class parents administer physical punishment more freely, since this is not interpreted as a withdrawal of affection, whereas middle class families reserve spankings for extreme misbehavior. Then, as children get older, practices change. The working class child is given more freedom, and by comparison, the middle class child is given much less. He is expected to do his homework while his working class peers may be playing on the streets. Middle class people who observe this freedom, as well as the working class parents' tolerance of childish profanity, interpret it as neglect.

In some cases, middle class families even prohibit their children from playing with working class children. Prohibition is feasible if children are old enough to respect it or if parents supervise the children's play. Younger children cannot be prevented from playing with each other, however, and parental quarrels may result. If the working class children are older and in a minority, as they often are on the block, they may become outcasts, and since they are mobile, may look around for other, similarly discredited companions. Out of this may come a gang that vandalizes hostile middle class society.¹⁴ People of low status experienced (or saw) the most quarrels, for 72 per cent of blue collar respondents reported quarrels in their neighborhood, as compared to only 41 per cent of the middle class.

The repetition of parental conflict over children's quarrels can lead to increasing estrangement, because other values and behavior patterns also differ between the classes. For example, in one case, what began as a series of minor disagreements about child-rearing was soon reinforced by critical comments on the part of the middle class people about the working class neighbor's laxity toward his lawn and his taste for expensive automobiles. All of these disagreements spiraled into considerable hostility over a year's time. Eventually, one of the feuding neighbors may move out—usually the middle class family which has greater resources to go elsewhere.

If the overall social climate of the block is good, other neighbors will try to patch up conflicts between parents. On one block, a child hit another with a toy, drawing blood and requiring a doctor. The mother of the injured youngster admitted it was his fault and suggested to the other mother that the two children be kept apart for a few days. However, she did not punish her child at once, and this was resented by the other mother (of working class background). She, in turn, forbade her child to see the guilty one, and both she and her husband broke off with his parents as well. After about a week, however, the feud ended. Each mother told other neighbors of what had happened, and the woman whose child had provoked the incident finally learned that the other mother thought he had not been properly punished. She thereupon let it be known among her neighbors that the child had in fact been punished on the day of the incident. In a few days the message reached its intended destination, whereupon the mother whose child had been hit invited her neighbor and another, neutral, neighbor to coffee. The coffee-klatzsch resolved the differences, but only because the block's friendly climate had provided for the prior and circuitous communication that allowed the one mother to learn that the guilty child had indeed been punished. Had communication been poorer, other differences between the two neighbors might have been invoked to increase the conflict. Indeed, when the block's social climate is poor, the struggle will be limited to the involved parents, for no one wants to take sides. If a family becomes enmeshed in battles with a number of neighbors, however, that family is likely to be quickly ostracized, regardless of the social climate.

The importance of compatibility is extended also to relationships that do not involve children, and is underscored by the problems encountered by neighbors who differ significantly. One potential trouble spot was age. Although some elderly Levittowners were able to assume quasi-grandparental roles toward the street's children, others were lonely and uncomfortable among the young families, and enthusiastic gardeners were upset when children romped over flowerbeds and carefully tended lawns. The difficulty was exacerbated by the builder's prohibition of fences, a clause in the deed restriction that was later violated on a number of blocks and actually taken to court.

Class differences also expressed themselves in areas other than child-rearing.¹⁵ Upper middle class women—whose concept of

after-housework activity did not include coffee-klotsching, conversation about husbands, homes, and children, or gossiping about the neighbors—rejected and were rejected by the neighbors. So were women who were especially active in organizational life. Perhaps the major problems were faced by working class people who had been used to spending their free time with relatives or childhood friends and found it hard to become friendly with strangers (especially middle class ones). The change was particularly distressing to those who had spent all their lives in the neighborhood in which they grew up. If, when they moved to Levittown, they were sufficiently “open” to respond to friendly neighbors and found others of working class background nearby, they could adapt; if not, they were virtually isolated in their houses. For the latter, a small minority to be sure, life in Levittown was hard.¹⁶ Ethnic differences were also a barrier between neighbors. Groups without a strong subcommunity were isolated, notably a handful of Japanese, Chinese, and Greek families. Some neighbors came with ethnic and racial prejudice, and anti-Semitism, though rare, could be justified by the old charge of Jewish clannishness¹⁷ and by class differences resulting from generally higher incomes among Jews.¹⁸

A final barrier was sexual, and this affected the women whose husbands worked irregular schedules and might be home during the day. A woman neighbor did not visit another when her husband was home, partly because of the belief that a husband has first call on his wife’s companionship, partly to prevent suspicion that her visit might be interpreted as a sexual interest in the husband. This practice is strongest among working class women, reflecting the traditional class norm that people of the opposite sex come together only for sexual reasons, and becomes weaker at higher class levels; in the upper middle class there are enough shared interests between men and women to discourage suspicion.¹⁹ The sexual barrier sometimes inhibited neighbor relations among women whose husbands traveled as salesmen, pilots, or seamen, forcing their wives to associate with each other.

*Couple Visiting*²⁰

Although 40 per cent of the Levittowners reported more couple visiting than in their former residences, the change was not quite as great as for neighboring, requiring as it does the compatibility of four rather than two and more of a commitment

toward friendship as well.²¹ Like neighboring, the increase in couple visiting resulted principally from the supply of compatible people, although it was also encouraged significantly by organizational activity; members of voluntary associations and of the highly organized Jewish subcommunity reported the greatest increase.²² Even the people who had not wanted to do more visiting before they moved to Levittown found themselves doing more if they were in organizations. Whether organizational membership encourages more visiting or vice versa is not clear; most likely, the same gregariousness that induces visiting also makes “joiners,” for the latter have more friends in Levittown than the unaffiliated.

Couple visiting is governed by narrower criteria of compatibility than neighboring, for religiously mixed marriage partners reported more neighboring, but found themselves doing less couple visiting in Levittown.²³ Older people and people of lower status also reported decreases. Evidently, friendship choices were affected by religion, and people who straddled two had trouble finding friends. So did people who straddled the classes, for some Jewish women who had found Jewish organizations not to their liking, wanting more “cultural” activities but not being quite up to the civic programs of the cosmopolitans, reported that their social life suffered.

The patterns of couple visiting in Levittown question two features of the suburban critique—the superficiality of friendships and social hyperactivity. According to many critics of suburban life, the transience of the population induces transient relationships which end with departure from the community. Transient relationships undoubtedly exist; one Levittowner, who had gone back to visit old friends in her former community, returned to report that she no longer had much in common with them and that they had been, as she put it, “development friends.” Other Transients established close friendships, however, and one family, temporarily transferred, returned to the block to be close to friends even though they would have preferred to move into one of Levitt’s newer houses.

The criticism of “development” friendship harbors an implicit comparison with “bosom” friendship, assumed to have existed in the past, but there is no evidence that the comparison is empirically valid. Close friendships, I suspect, typically develop in childhood and adolescent peer groups, and can continue in a

static society where people have as much in common in adulthood as in childhood. But in American society, and especially in the middle class, geographical and social mobility often separates people who have grown up together, so that shared interests among childhood friends are rare. Often, only nostalgia keeps the relationship going. Many Levittowners talk about close friends "at home," but they see them so rarely that the current strength of the friendship is never properly tested. Instead, they develop new friends at each stage of the life cycle or as they move up occupationally and develop new social and leisure interests. Closeness is not replaced by superficiality, but permanent friendships give way to new and perhaps shorter ones of similar closeness.²⁴

Whether or not this relationship is desirable depends on one's values. People today, particularly the middle classes, are more gregarious than those of the past. The working class, restricted in social skills or content to range within a smaller, perhaps closer, network of relatives and childhood friends, comes nearest to retaining the traditional "bosom" friendship. But these people, in my research as in many other studies, report difficulties in making new friends as their life conditions change.²⁵

The critics' charge that suburbanites indulge in hyperactive visiting to counteract boredom and loneliness brought on by the lack of urbanity in their communities is equally mistaken. Coming from academia where the weekend brought parties, and having just lived in an Italian working class neighborhood in Boston where people maintained an almost continual "open house," I was surprised at how little entertaining took place among Levittowners.²⁶ Although people often had visitors on Sunday afternoons, weekend evenings were not differentiated from the rest, a fact that should be obvious from the high ratings of television programs on the air at that time. I would guess that, on the average, Levittowners gathered informally not more than two or three times a month and gave formal parties about once a year, not counting those around Christmas and New Year's Eve. Social life in Levittown was not hyperactive by any stretch of the imagination, except perhaps in the first few months of putting out feelers. I suspect that the critics either confuse the early hyperactivity with the normal pattern once life had settled down, or they generalize from observations in upper middle class suburbs, where partying is a major leisure activity.

Admittedly, the critics could question my assumption that an

increase in social life is equivalent to an improvement in its quality, and argue that it represents instead an escape from pervasive boredom. If the Levittowners had found their social life boring, however, they would either have cut it down or complained about greater boredom. The data indicate just the opposite, for those visiting more were less bored (and vice versa), and besides, if social life had been as dull as the critics claim, why would the interview respondents have been so enthusiastic about the friendliness of their fellow residents?

THE PROS AND CONS OF POPULATION HOMOGENEITY²⁷

The suburban critique is quite emphatic on the subject of demographic homogeneity. For one thing, homogeneity violates the American Dream of a "balanced" community where people of diverse age, class, race, and religion live together. Allegedly, it creates dullness through sameness. In addition, age homogeneity deprives children—and adults—of the wisdom of their elders, while class, racial, and religious homogeneity prevent children from learning how to live in our pluralistic society. Homogeneity is said to make people callous to the poor, intolerant of Negroes, and scornful of the aged. Finally, heterogeneity is said to allow upward mobility, encouraging working and lower class people to learn middle class ways from their more advantaged neighbors.²⁸

There is no question that Levittown is quite homogeneous in age and income as compared to established cities and small towns, but such comparisons are in many ways irrelevant. People do not live in the political units we call "cities" or "small towns"; often their social life takes place in areas even smaller than a census tract. Many such areas in the city are about as homogeneous in class as Levittown, and slum and high-income areas, whether urban or suburban, are even more so. Small towns are notoriously rigid in their separation of rich and poor, and only appear to be more heterogeneous because individual neighborhoods are so small. All these considerations effectively question the belief that before the advent of modern suburbs Americans of all classes lived together. Admittedly, statistics compiled for cities and suburbs as a whole show that residential segregation by class and by race are on the increase, but these trends also reflect the break-

down of rigid class and caste systems in which low-status people "knew their place," and which made residential segregation unnecessary.

By ethnic and religious criteria, Levittown is much less homogeneous than these other areas because people move in as individuals rather than as groups, and the enclaves found in some recently built urban neighborhoods, where 40 to 60 per cent of the population comes from one ethnic or religious group, are absent. Nor is Levittown atypically homogeneous in age; new communities and subdivisions always attract young people, but over time, their populations "age" until the distribution resembles that of established communities.²⁹

Finally, even class homogeneity is not as great as community-wide statistics would indicate. Of three families earning \$7000 a year, one might be a skilled worker at the peak of his earning power and dependent on union activity for further raises; another, a white collar worker with some hope for a higher income; and the third, a young executive or professional at the start of his career. Their occupational and educational differences express themselves in many variations in life style, and if they are neighbors, each is likely to look elsewhere for companionship. Perhaps the best way to demonstrate that Levittown's homogeneity is more statistical than real is to describe my own nearby neighbors. Two were Anglo-Saxon Protestant couples from small towns, the breadwinners employed as engineers; one an agnostic and a golf buff, the other a skeptical Methodist who wanted to be a teacher. Across the backyard lived a Baptist white collar worker from Philadelphia and his Polish-American wife, who had brought her foreign-born mother with her to Levittown; and an Italian-American tractor operator (whose ambition was to own a junkyard) and his upwardly mobile wife, who restricted their social life to a brother down the street and a host of relatives who came regularly every Sunday in a fleet of Cadillacs. One of my next-door neighbors was a religious fundamentalist couple from the Deep South whose life revolved around the church; another was an equally religious Catholic blue collar worker and his wife, he originally a Viennese Jew, she a rural Protestant, who were politically liberal and as skeptical about middle class ways as any intellectual. Across the street, there was another Polish-American couple, highly mobile and conflicted over their obligations to the extended family; another engineer; and a retired Army officer.

No wonder Levittowners were puzzled when a nationally known housing expert addressed them on the "pervasive homogeneity of suburban life."

Most Levittowners were pleased with the diversity they found among their neighbors, primarily because regional, ethnic, and religious differences are today almost innocuous and provide variety to spice the flow of conversation and the exchange of ideas. For example, my Southern neighbor discovered pizza at the home of the Italian-American neighbor and developed a passion for it, and I learned much about the personal rewards of Catholicism from my Catholic convert neighbors. At the same time, however, Levittowners wanted homogeneity of age and income—or rather, they wanted neighbors and friends with common interests and sufficient consensus of values to make for informal and uninhibited relations. Their reasons were motivated neither by antidemocratic feelings nor by an interest in conformity. Children need playmates of the same age, and because child-rearing problems vary with age, mothers like to be near women who have children of similar age. And because these problems also fluctuate with class, they want some similarity of that factor—not homogeneity of occupation and education so much as agreement on the ends and means of caring for child, husband, and home.

Income similarity is valued by the less affluent, not as an end in itself, but because people who must watch every penny cannot long be comfortable with more affluent neighbors, particularly when children come home demanding toys or clothes they have seen next door. Indeed, objective measures of class are not taken into account in people's associations at all, partly because they do not identify each other in these terms, but also because class differences are not the only criterion for association.³⁰ Sometimes neighbors of different backgrounds but with similar temperaments find themselves getting along nicely, especially if they learn to avoid activities and topics about which they disagree. For example, two women of diverse origins became good friends because they were both perfectionist housekeepers married to easy-going men, although they once quarreled bitterly over child-rearing values.

But Levittowners also want some homogeneity for themselves. As I noted before, cosmopolitans are impatient with locals, and vice versa; women who want to talk about cultural and civic matters are bored by conversations about home and family—and,

again, vice versa; working class women who are used to the informal flow of talk with relatives need to find substitutes among neighbors with similar experience. Likewise, young people have little in common with older ones, and unless they want surrogate parents, prefer to socialize with neighbors and friends of similar age. Some Levittowners sought ethnic and religious homogeneity as well. Aside from the Jews and some of the Greeks, Japanese, and the foreign-born women of other nations, observant Catholics and fundamentalist Protestants sought "their own," the former because they were not entirely at ease with non-Catholic neighbors, the latter because their time-consuming church activity and their ascetic life styles set them apart from most other Levittowners. They mixed with their neighbors, of course, but their couple visiting was limited principally to the like-minded. Because of the diversity of ethnic and religious backgrounds, the Philadelphia sample was asked whether there had been any change in the amount of visiting with people of similar "national descent or religious preference"; 30 per cent reported a decrease, but 20 per cent reported an increase.³¹ Those doing less such visiting in Levittown also said they were lonelier than in Philadelphia.

Most people had no difficulty finding the homogeneity they wanted in Levittown. Affluent and well-educated people could move into organizations or look for friends all over Levittown, but older people and people of lower income or poorly educated women were less able to move around either physically or socially. Women from these groups often did not have a car or did not know how to drive; many were reluctant to use baby-sitters for their children, only partly for financial reasons. Heterogeneity, then, may be a mixed blessing, particularly on the block, and something can be said for class and age homogeneity.

The alleged costs of homogeneity were also more unreal than the critics claim. It is probably true that Levittowners had less contact with old people than some urbanites (now rather rare) who still live in three-generation households. It is doubtful, however, that they had less contact with the older generation than urban and suburban residents of similar age and class, with the exception of the occupational Transients, who are far from home and may return only once a year. Whether or not this lack of contact with grandparents affects children negatively can only be discovered by systematic studies among them. My observations of

children's relations with grandparents suggest that the older generation is strange to them and vice versa, less as a result of lack of contact than of the vastness of generational change.

This is also more or less true of adult relationships with the older generation. Social change in America has been so rapid that the ideas and experiences of the elderly are often anachronistic, especially so for young mobile Levittowners whose parents are first or second generation Americans. Philadelphia women who lived with their parents before they moved to Levittown complained at length about the difficulties of raising children and running a household under those conditions, even though some missed their mothers sorely after moving to Levittown. A few found surrogate mothers among friends or neighbors, but chose women only slightly older than themselves and rarely consulted elderly neighbors. As for the husbands, they were, to a man, glad they had moved away from parents and in-laws.

That suburban homogeneity deprives children of contact with urban pluralism and "reality" is also dubious. Critics assume that urban children experience heterogeneity, but middle class parents—and working class ones, too—try hard to shield them from contact with conditions and people of lower status. Upper middle class children may be taken on tours of the city, but to museums and shopping districts rather than to slums. Indeed, slum children, who are freer of parental supervision, probably see more of urban diversity than anyone else, although they do not often get into middle class areas.

The homogeneity of Levittown is not so pervasive that children are shielded from such unpleasant realities as alcoholism, mental illness, family strife, sexual aberration, or juvenile delinquency which exist everywhere. The one element missing on most Levittown blocks—though, of course, in many city neighborhoods too—is the presence of Negro families. Although young Negro women came from nearby Burlington to work as maids, there were only two Negro families in the three neighborhoods built before Levittown's integration, and about fifty in the three built since then. Most Levittown children are unlikely to see any Negroes around them and will not have real contact with them until they enter junior high school. But it is not at all certain that mere visual exposure—to Negroes or anyone else—encourages learning of pluralism and tolerance. Children pick up many of their attitudes from parents and peers, and these are not neces-

sarily pluralistic. If visual exposure had the positive effects attributed to it, city children, who see more Negroes than suburban children do, should exhibit greater racial tolerance. In reality they do not; indeed, the middle class child growing up in a white suburb may be more opposed to segregation than one raised in an integrated city. This is not a justification for segregation, but a suggestion that visual exposure is no sure means to integration.

A generation of social research has demonstrated that racial and other forms of integration occur when diverse people can interact frequently in equal and noncompetitive situations.³² Here the suburbs are at an advantage when it comes to religious and ethnic integration, but at a disadvantage for racial and class integration, for aside from residential segregation, suburban high schools bring together students from a narrower variety of residential areas than do urban ones. Again, mere diversity does not assure the kind of interaction that encourages integration, and a school with great diversity but sharp internal segregation may not be as desirable as one with less diversity but without internal segregation. Judging by life on the block in Levittown, maximal diversity and extreme heterogeneity encourage more conflict than integration, and while conflict can be desirable and even didactic, this is only true if it can be resolved in some way. People so different from each other in age or class that they cannot agree on anything are unlikely to derive much enrichment from heterogeneity.

A corollary of the belief in diversity as a stimulant to enrichment holds that working class and lower class people will benefit—and be improved—by living among middle class neighbors. Even if one overlooks the patronizing class bias implicit in this view, it is not at all certain that residential propinquity will produce the intended cultural change. In Levittown, working class families living alongside middle class ones went their own way most of the time. For mobile ones, heterogeneity is obviously desirable, provided middle class people are willing to teach them, but nonmobile ones will react negatively to force feedings of middle class culture. Neighbors are expected to treat each other as equals, and working class residents have enough difficulty paying the higher cost of living among middle class people, without being viewed as culturally deprived. When working class organizations used middle class Levittowners for technical and admin-

istrative services, they rejected those who looked down on them and constantly tested the others to make sure they measured up to the norms of working class culture. For example, at a VFW softball game, two middle class members were razzed unmercifully for their lack of athletic skill. Children are not yet fully aware of class, so that they can be with (and learn from) peers of other classes, and there is some evidence that in schools with a majority of middle class children, working class children will adopt the formers' standards of school performance, and vice versa.³³

By its very nature, demographic homogeneity is said to be incompatible with democracy, and advocates of diversity have emphasized that a democracy requires a heterogeneous community. However, as the description of Levittown's school and political conflict should indicate, bringing people with different interests together does not automatically result in the use of democratic procedures. Instead, it causes conflict, difficulties in decision-making, and attempts to sidestep democratic norms. If one group is threatened by another's demands, intolerance may even increase. Indeed, democratic procedure is often so fragile that it falls by the wayside under such stress, causing hysteria on the part of residents and the sort of panic on the part of the officials that I described. The fact is that the democratic process probably works more smoothly in a homogeneous population. Absence of conflict is of course a spurious goal, particularly in a pluralistic society, and cannot be used as an argument for homogeneity. On the other hand, unless conflict becomes an end in itself, heterogeneity is not a viable argument for greater democracy.

Critics of the suburbs also inveigh against physical homogeneity and mass-produced housing. Like much of the rest of the critique, this charge is a thinly veiled attack on the culture of working and lower middle class people, implying that mass-produced housing leads to mass-produced lives. The critics seem to forget that the town houses of the upper class in the nineteenth century were also physically homogeneous; that everyone, poor and rich alike, drives mass-produced, homogeneous cars without damage to their personalities; and that today, only the rich can afford custom-built housing. I heard no objection among the Levittowners about the similarity of their homes, nor the popular jokes about being unable to locate one's own house.³⁴ Esthetic diversity is preferred, however, and people talked about moving

to a custom-built house in the future when they could afford it. Meanwhile, they made internal and external alterations in their Levitt house to reduce sameness and to place a personal stamp on their property.³⁵

Block Homogeneity and Community Heterogeneity

Putting together all the arguments for and against homogeneity suggests that the optimum solution, at least in communities of homeowners who are raising small children, is *selective homogeneity at the block level and heterogeneity at the community level*. Whereas a mixture of population types, and especially of rich and poor, is desirable in the community as a whole, heterogeneity on the block will not produce the intended tolerance, but will lead to conflict that is undesirable because it is essentially insoluble and thus becomes chronic. Selective homogeneity on the block will improve the tenor of neighbor relations, and will thus make it easier—although not easy—to realize heterogeneity at the community level.

By “block” I mean here an area in which frequent face-to-face relations take place, in most cases a *sub-block* of perhaps ten to twelve houses. Selective homogeneity requires enough consensus among neighbors to prevent insoluble conflict, to encourage positive although not necessarily intensive relationships between them, and to make visiting possible for those who want it in the immediate vicinity. If Levittown is at all typical, the crucial factors in homogeneity are age and class. The range of ages and classes that can live together is not so limited, however, as to require tenant selection programs. The voluntary selection pattern that now occurs on the basis of house price is more than sufficient, and as the ghettoization of the poor in public housing suggests, formal and involuntary selection has many serious disadvantages. Besides, it is questionable whether planners have the knowledge to go about planning other people’s social relations, and even if they had the knowledge, it is doubtful that they have the right to do so.³⁶ Of course, selection through house price is also a form of planning, but since it is not directly related to tenants’ specific characteristics, it leaves more room for choice.

The emphasis on voluntary selection also copes with another objection to homogeneity, that it crystallizes class divisions and makes people more aware of class differences. Implicit in this objection is the assumption that awareness of class differences is

wrong, and that any attempt to use class as a separating criterion is undesirable. This assumption would be defensible if it were part of a larger program to eliminate or at least reduce economic inequities, but it is generally put forth by people who are uncomfortable about the existence of classes and want to solve the problem by avoiding it.

These observations have a number of implications for site planning. Given the boundaries within which neighboring takes place, the significant social unit in the community (at least, in one like Levittown) is the sub-block—which is not a physical unit. Conversely, the neighborhood of several hundred families which city planners have traditionally advocated is socially irrelevant, whatever virtues it may have in defining a catchment area for the elementary school or the neighborhood shopping center. In fact, in order to maximize community heterogeneity, it might be desirable to eliminate the neighborhood unit and plan for a heterogeneous array of homogeneous blocks, each block separated from the next by enough of a real or symbolic barrier to reassure those concerned with property values. This would encourage more heterogeneity in the elementary school and other neighborhood facilities, and would thus contribute significantly to community heterogeneity.³⁷

Communities should be heterogeneous because they must reflect the pluralism of American society. Moreover, as long as local taxation is the main source of funds for community services, community homogeneity encourages undesirable inequalities. The high-income community can build modern schools and other high-quality facilities; the low-income community, which needs these facilities more urgently, lacks the tax base to support them. As a result, poor communities elect local governments which neglect public services and restrict the democratic process in the need to keep taxes minimal. Both financial inequity and its political consequences are eliminated more effectively by federal and state subsidy than by community heterogeneity, but so long as municipal services are financed locally, communities must include all income groups.

The criteria on which the advocacy of block homogeneity and community heterogeneity is based cannot justify racial homogeneity at either level. Experience with residential integration in many communities, including Levittown, indicates that it can be achieved without problems when the two races are similar in

socioeconomic level and in the visible cultural aspects of class—provided, however, the whites are not beset by status fears. Indeed, the major barrier to effective integration is fear of status deprivation, especially among white working class homeowners. The whites base their fears on the stereotype that nonwhite people are lower class, and make a hasty exodus that reduces not property values but the selling prices that can be obtained by the departing whites. When class differences between the races are great, the exodus is probably unavoidable, but where Negroes and whites have been of equal status, it can be prevented, at least in middle class areas. Yet even if this were not the case, homogeneity is only one value among many, and if any person chooses to move among people who differ in race—or age, income, religion, or any other background characteristic—he has the right to do so and the right to governmental support in his behalf. That such a move might wreak havoc with a block's social life or the community's consensus is of lower priority than the maintenance of such values as freedom of choice and equality. The advantages of residential homogeneity are not important enough to justify depriving anyone of access to housing and to educational and other opportunities.

CONFORMITY AND COMPETITION

The suburban critique is especially strident on the prevalence of conformity. It argues that relationships between neighbors and friends are regulated by the desire to copy each other to achieve uniformity. At the same time, the critics also see suburbanites as competitive, trying to keep up or down with the Joneses to satisfy the desire for status. Conforming (or copying) and competing are not the same—indeed, they are contradictory—but they are lumped together in the critique because they are based on the common assumption that, in the suburbs, behavior and opinion are determined by what the neighbors do and think, and individualism is found only in the city. Both competition and copying exist in Levittown, but not for the reasons suggested by the critics. They are ways of coping with heterogeneity and of retaining individuality while being part of the group. They exist in every group, but are more prevalent among homeowners and, because of the fascination with suburbia, more visible there. But this does not make them suburban phenomena.

Enough of the suburban critique has seeped into the reading matter of Levittowners to make "conformity" a pejorative term, and interview questions about it would have produced only denials. Competition is talked about in Levittown, however, and 60 per cent of the random sample reported competition among their neighbors.⁸⁸ The examples they gave, however, not only included copying, but half the respondents described it positively. "I don't know what competition is," said one man. "Perhaps when we see the neighbors repairing the house, and we figure our own repairs would be a good idea." Another put it more enthusiastically: "Friends and neighbors ask me what I've done, and by our visiting different neighbors we get different ideas about fixing up the house—how we are going to paint. Instead of both of us buying an extension ladder, we go half and half."

In effect, diverging or deviant behavior can be seen as competition, conformity, or the chance to learn new ideas, depending on the observer. One who dislikes behavior common to several neighbors may accuse them of copying each other. If the behavior is dissimilar, it must be a result of competition: "keeping up with the Joneses" or "spending beyond one's means." When the behavior is approved, however, it is interpreted as sharing ideas. The observer's perspective is shaped principally by his relative class position, or by his estimate of his position. If the observer is of *higher* status than the observed, he will interpret the latter's attempt to share higher-status ideas as competing, and his sharing of lower status ways as copying. If the observer is of *lower* status than the observed, his ideas will not be shared, of course, but he will consider the more affluent life style of the higher-status neighbor as motivated by status-striving or "keeping up with the Joneses."⁸⁹ As one blue collar man put it, "There are some who act so darned important, as if they have so much, and I can't figure out what they are doing in Levittown when they have so much." Another blue collar man who had taught his neighbors about lawn care, and felt himself to be their equal, was not threatened: "One or two try to keep up with the Joneses, but generally people are not worried. If one gets ahead and another copies him, we laugh. Our attitude is, all the more power to him. When we can afford it, we make improvements too." In other words, when the observer feels he is equal to the observed, he will see competing and copying either as sharing or as friendly games. And socially mobile people tend to judge the ways of

higher-status people positively, for they can look to their neighbors for guidance about how to live in the suburbs. "Everyone has fixed up their houses, but not to compete," a former city dweller reported. "At first none of us had anything and maybe you saw what others did and you copied it." Needless to say, those who are being copied may consider the mobile neighbor a competing upstart.

Status-striving is generally ascribed to people with more money, more education, and a different life style by those who cannot afford the style or prefer a different one. The same motive is inferred about social relations. Cliques of higher-status people are seen by lower-status observers as groups that coalesce for prestige reasons, and lower-status cliques are viewed by higher-status observers as groups that come together to conform. When relations among neighbors of unequal status deteriorate, the higher-status person explains it in terms of culturally or morally undesirable actions by the lower-status neighbor; the lower-status person ascribes the break to his neighbor's desire to be with more prestigious people. In reality, instances of overt status-striving, carried out to show up the lower status of neighbors, are rare. "Keeping up" takes place, but mainly out of the need to maintain self-respect, to "put the best face forward" or not to be considered inferior and "fall behind." Serious status-striving is usually a desperate attempt by a socially isolated neighbor to salvage self-respect through material or symbolic displays of status, and is dismissed or scorned. One such neighbor was described as "trying to be the Joneses, and hoping people will follow him, but we don't pay any attention to him." Indeed, the social control norms of block life encourage "keeping down with the Joneses," and criticize display of unusual affluence, so that people who can afford a higher standard of living than the rest and who show it publically are unpopular and are sometimes ostracized.⁴⁰

Conforming and copying occur more frequently than competition, mostly to secure the proper appearance of the block to impress strangers. A pervasive system of social control develops to enforce standards of appearance on the block, mainly concerning lawn care.⁴¹ Copying and some competition take place in this process, but neither the Levittowners nor the suburban critics would describe it in these terms. Everyone knows it is social control and accepts the need for it, although one year some of my neighbors and I wished we could pave our front lawns with green

concrete to eliminate the endless watering and mowing and to forestall criticism of poor lawns.

The primary technique for social control is humor. Wisecracks are made to show up deviant behavior, and overt criticism surfaces only when the message behind the wisecracks does not get across. Humor is used to keep relations friendly and because people feel that demands for conformity are not entirely proper; they realize that such demands sometimes require a difficult compromise between individual and group standards. When it comes to lawn care, however, most people either have no hard-and-fast personal standards, or they value friendly relations more. Since the block norms and the compromises they require are usually worked out soon after the block is occupied—when everyone is striving to prove he will be a good neighbor—they are taken for granted by the time the block has settled down.

The demand for compromise is also reduced by limiting block standards to the exterior appearance of the front of the house and the front yard, the back being less visible to outsiders. Interiors, which involve the owner's ego more, are not subjected to criticism. People are praised for a nice-looking home, but there are no wisecracks about deviant taste in furnishings—at least, not to the owner. The same limitation holds for cars and other consumer goods purchased. Although I drove a 1952 Chevrolet, by far the oldest car on the block, no one ever joked with me about it,⁴² but Levittowners who used trucks in their work and parked them on their streets at night, giving the block the image of a working class district, were criticized by middle class neighbors. The criticism was made behind their backs, however, because it affected the neighbors' source of livelihood. In this case, as in some others, social control was passed on to the township government, and eventually, it voted an ordinance prohibiting truck-parking on residential streets.

What people do inside their houses is considered their own affair, but loud parties, drunkenness, and any other noticeable activities that would give the block a bad reputation are criticized. So are parents who let their children run loose at all hours of the evening, not only because they publicly violate norms of good parenthood, but also because they make it harder for neighbors to put their own children to bed. Private deviant behavior is, of course, gossiped about with gusto, but only when it becomes visible, and repeatedly so, is gossip translated into overt criticism.

Even visible deviance that affects block appearance is tolerated if it is minor and if the individual believes firmly in what he is doing. One Levittowner decided that he would buy a wooden screen door, rather than the popular but more expensive aluminum one. He decided, however, to maintain block uniformity by painting it with aluminum color. "People will think I'm cheap," he told me, "but I don't mind that. I know I'm thrifty." I do not know what people thought, but he was not criticized.

Copying also takes place without being impelled by conformity, and then becomes a group phenomenon that occurs in spurts. When one neighbor builds a patio or repaints his house, others are likely to follow his lead, but not automatically. On my block, for instance, one homeowner repainted his house in 1959 but no one imitated him. When another began to do it the next year, however, a rash of repainting occurred. If this had been simply a copying phenomenon, the painting should have started in 1959, especially since the first painter was a popular community leader. What happened in 1960 is easily explained. By that time, houses built in 1958 needed repainting, and when one man, who had an early vacation, devoted his two weeks to it, other men followed his example when they went on vacation.⁴³

People also buy household items and plants they have seen at their neighbors', but only when the item is either widely desired or clearly useful. For example, early in Levittown's history, a rumor spread that the willow trees the builder had planted would eventually root into and crack the sewer pipes, and one man promptly took out his tree. Neighbors who were friends of his followed suit, but others refused to accept the rumor and kept their trees. On my block, the rumor was initiated by a Catholic leader, and within a week, the Catholics had taken out their willow trees, but the others had not followed suit. My own innovation, inexpensive bamboo shades to keep out the blazing sun, was not copied; people said they looked good, but no one imitated me.

COMPETITION, CONFORMITY, AND HETEROGENEITY

Both competition and conformity are ways of coping with heterogeneity, principally of class. When lower-status people are accused of copying and higher-status ones of living beyond their means to impress the neighbors, disapproval is put in terms of

negative motives rather than class differences, for accusations of deviant behavior which blame individuals make it more difficult for the deviant to appeal to his group norms. Such accusations also enable people to ignore the existence of class differences. Class is a taboo subject, and the taboo is so pervasive, and so unconscious, that people rarely think in class terms.

Competition and conformity exist also because people are dependent on their neighbors. In working class or ethnic enclaves, where social life is concentrated among relatives, their criticism is feared more than the neighbors'. Upper middle class people, having less to do with neighbors, conform most closely to the demands of their friends. In Levittown, neighbors are an important reference group, not only for lower middle class people but for working class ones cut off from relatives. Even so, the prime cause of both competition and conformity is home ownership and the mutual need to preserve property and status values. Only 11 per cent of former renters but 70 per cent of former homeowners reported noticing competition in their former residence, but both observed it equally in Levittown. Moreover, whether they came from urban or suburban neighborhoods, they reported no more competition in Levittown than in the former residence. Consequently, competition is not distinctive either to Levittown or to the suburbs.

What, then, accounts for the critics' preoccupation with suburban conformity, and their tendency to see status competition as a dominant theme in suburban life? For one thing, many of these critics live in city apartments, where the concern for block status preservation is minimal. Also, they are largely upper middle class professionals, dedicated to cosmopolitan values and urban life and disdainful of the local and antiurban values of lower middle class and working class people. Believing in the universality of these values, the critics refuse to acknowledge the existence of lower middle class or working class ways of living. Instead, they describe people as mindless conformers who would be cosmopolitans if they were not weak and allowed themselves to be swayed by builders, the mass media, and their neighbors.

The ascription of competitive behavior to the suburbs stems from another source. The upper middle class world, stressing as it does individuality, is a highly competitive one. In typically upper middle class occupations such as advertising, publishing, university teaching, law, and the arts, individual achievement is the

main key to success, status, and security. The upper middle class is for this reason more competitive and more status-conscious than the other classes. Popular writers studying upper middle class suburbs have observed this competition and some have mistakenly ascribed it to suburbia, rather than to the criteria for success in the professions held by these particular suburbanites.⁴⁴ Those writing about lower-status suburbs have either drawn their information from upper middle class friends who have moved to lower middle class suburbs for financial reasons and found themselves a dissatisfied minority, or they have, like upper middle class people generally, viewed the lower-status people about whom they were writing as trying to compete with their betters.

Finally, the new suburbs, being more visible than other lower middle and working class residential areas, have become newsworthy, and during the 1950s they replaced "mass culture" as the scapegoat and most convenient target for the fear and distaste that upper middle class people feel for the rest of the population. Affluent suburbs have become false targets of dissatisfaction with the upper middle class's own status-consciousness and competition, the "rat-race" it experiences in career and social striving having been projected on life beyond the city limits.

The inaccuracy of the critique does not, of course, exclude the possibility that conforming and competing are undesirable or dangerous, or that too much of both take place in Levittown. I do not believe either to be the case. If one distinguishes between *wanted* conformity, as when neighbors learn from each other or share ideas; *tolerated* conformity, when they adjust their own standards in order to maintain friendly relations; and *unwanted* conformity, when they bow to pressure and give up their individuality, only the last is clearly undesirable, and in Levittown it is rare. Tolerated conformity requires some surrender of autonomy, but I can see why Levittowners feel it is more important to be friendly with one's neighbors than to insist on individual but unpopular ways of fixing up the outside of the house. The amount of copying and conformity is hardly excessive, considering the heterogeneity on the block. Indeed, given the random way in which Levittowners become neighbors, it is amazing that neighbor relations were so friendly and tolerant of individual differences. Of course, the working class and upper middle class minorities experience pressure for unwanted conformity, but the

latter can get away from the block for social activities, and ultimately, only some of the former suffer. Ironically, their exposure to pressures for conformity is a result of the heterogeneity that the critics want to increase even further.

NOTES

1. These charges can be found, for example, in Henderson, Allen, Keats, and Whyte (1956), Chaps. 25, 26.
2. Neighboring, or visiting with neighbors, was defined in the interview as "having coffee together, spending evenings together, or frequent conversations in or out of the house; anything more than saying hello or polite chatting about the weather." It was further defined as taking place among individuals rather than couples, and people were asked, "Are you, yourself, doing more visiting with neighbors than where you lived before, or less?"
3. Fifty-four per cent of the random sample was neighboring more than in the previous residence; 16 per cent, less; and 30 per cent, the same. Among Philadelphians, the percentages were 48, 19, and 33, respectively.
4. Thus, one third of the least educated in the random sample, and two thirds of the college-educated in the Philadelphia sample reported less neighboring. Jews from smaller towns who had already learned to live with non-Jewish neighbors, and third generation Jewish Philadelphians did not report less neighboring.
5. The principal post-World War II studies are Merton (1947a); Caplow and Foreman; Festinger, Schachter, and Back; Festinger; Dean (1953); Haeblerle; Blake et al.; Whyte (1956), Chap. 25; and Willmott (1963), Chap. 7. Critical analyses of these studies can be found in Gans (1961a), pp. 135-137 and Schorr, Chap. 1; of earlier ones, in Rosow.
6. Similar observations were reported in English new towns by Hole, pp. 164-167, and Willmott (1962), pp. 124-126. See also Willmott (1963), pp. 74-82.
7. The initial report on this phenomenon was by Whyte (1956), Chap. 25.
8. On narrower blocks, there was more interaction between backyard neighbors, however.
9. Among Cape Cod owners, 22 per cent visited most often with the right- and left-hand neighbor, and 43 per cent, with the across-the-street neighbor. Among the ranch owners, the percentages were 46, 23, and 23, respectively; and among the Colonial ones, 30, 35, 30. The remaining visits were with yet other neighbors across the street or backyard.
10. If the location of the kitchen window had been significant, women