
ers—were being dumped in the United States. But there are no viable U.S. manufacturers of flat panels, Bovard says, and IBM, Apple Computer, and Compaq begged the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) not to impose prohibitive duties. The ITC did so anyway, “largely because Japanese imports prevented would-be U.S. flat panel producers from raising the capital to begin manufacturing.” The ruling prompted an exodus of production overseas. “We were going to produce our new Powerbook laptop computer in Colorado—but instead we are producing them in Cork, Ireland,” said Jim Berger of Apple Computer. “That is entirely because of the flat panel dumping duty.” Thousands of jobs may be lost as a result of the decision, Bovard claims.

The problem goes beyond the high-tech realm, he notes. In 1990, the ITC imposed dump-

ing duties on Japanese mechanical transfer presses used to mass-produce certain auto parts. Only two U.S. companies make such presses. According to John Scicluna of Ford Motor Company, the Japanese presses work twice as fast as the American ones and turn out higher-quality parts.

Because dumping is exceedingly hard to define, Bovard argues, antidumping laws are subject to manipulation. Foreign companies that sell products in the United States for less than they do at home or at prices less than the cost of production and an eight percent profit are considered to be “dumping” under U.S. trade laws. But determining such things as the true cost of production is difficult. In effect, Bovard asserts, the laws give the Department of Commerce the power to place de facto price controls on imports worth almost \$500 billion a year.

SOCIETY

Civilizing Suburbia

A Survey of Recent Articles

The 1990 census made it official: The United States has become a suburban nation. Nearly half of all Americans live in suburbs, only about one-third in cities. Yet some thinkers argue that terms such as *bedroom community* and *suburb* are no longer adequate to describe places that have been transformed from bucolic retreats into centers of commerce and industry. For all intents and purposes, many suburbs have become cities. Robert Fishman, a historian at Rutgers University and author of *Bourgeois Utopias* (1987), calls these areas “new cities” or “techno-suburbs,” while *Washington Post* reporter Joel Garreau has coined the term “edge city” (also the title of his 1991 book on the subject). As Fishman writes (*WQ*, Winter 1990), “The peripheries have replaced the urban cores as the heartlands of our civilization. . . . They have become a new kind of city.”

The defenders of the older urban faith have not been idle, of course, and indeed still domi-

nate the intellectual debate. The prevailing view, articulated by Columbia University’s Saskia Sassen in *The Global City* (1991) and recently in a Woodrow Wilson Center paper, “Urban Impacts of Economic Globalization” (April 1994), is that big cities with strong financial and service sectors still dominate the world economy. Directly attacking the “new city” camp in *American Quarterly* (March 1994), William Sharpe of Barnard College and Leonard Wallock of Hunter College insist that the suburbs of old are all too alive and all too well. Fishman and company are wrong to stress the merely “functional” (i.e. economic) characteristics of the so-called new cities, they contend, because what really matters is that they still lack true urban “diversity, cosmopolitanism, political culture, and public life.” For example, even though the black suburban population grew rapidly during the 1970s, studies show that old patterns of racial and class segregation persist in the suburbs.

Perhaps the most conclusive evidence that

little has changed, in Sharpe and Wallock's view, is the continuing domination of American popular culture by what they see as a "suburban ideology" of exclusion and "female subordination." On TV, for example, outsiders such as the young black star of *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* are made "objects of humor and suspicion." In films such as *Fatal Attraction* (1987) and *Presumed Innocent* (1990), more or less traditional housewives do battle with career women who threaten to steal their husbands and their way of life.

Garreau and Fishman agree that what might be called the urbanity deficit is the central challenge facing the new cities. Replying to Sharpe and Wallock in the same issue of *American Quarterly*, however, Fishman tartly comments that they "cling to a vision of a simpler world" in which a knee-jerk hatred of all things suburban was a sure sign of intellectual sophistication. Using outdated studies, he says, they underestimate the degree of racial integration outside the central cities, even as they ignore the growing divisions within them. He chides the two for confusing what is on TV with what is real, and expresses perplexity at their insistence on drawing a sharp distinction between "merely" functional urbanity and social and cultural urbanity. Places such as Silicon Valley have "displaced the urban factory zones as the places where the most advanced work of America gets done," he writes, and one form of innovation follows the other. Far from reinforcing "patriarchal familism," for example, the new cities have made it easier for married women to work outside the home and have "tended to equalize gender roles."

Writing in *American Demographics* (Feb. 1994),

Garreau argues that a "fourth wave" of change "is bringing edge cities the one thing they lack—civilization." His data base on 37 traditional downtowns and 190 edge cities—locales with heavy concentrations of homes, jobs, and shopping—shows, among other things, that seven of the top 10 spots for nightlife in America are edge cities. (The hottest spot in America, by this measure, is the so-called Stemmons Freeway/Love Field Area outside Dallas-Fort Worth, with three nightclubs per 100 workers.) Diversity? Half of the top 10 concentrations of Hispanics in the country are in edge cities. (See chart.)

Hispanic Neighborhoods

	Nearest major city	Percent Hispanic
1 Miami Airport/West Area, EC	Miami	73.8
2 San Antonio, DTN	San Antonio	73.4
3 Los Angeles, DTN	Los Angeles	67.8
4 Miami, DTN	Miami	62.7
5 Phoenix, DTN	Phoenix	59.0
6 Irwindale-Covina, EC	Los Angeles	53.5
7 Santa Ana Freeway/Santa Ana, EC	Los Angeles	53.3
8 LAX/El Segundo, EC	Los Angeles	52.0
9 San Diego, DTN	San Diego	49.4
10 Coral Gables, EC	Miami	47.0

EC= Edge City
DTN=Traditional Downtown

Fishman and Garreau concede that America's new cities have yet to develop the kinds of public spaces and institutions that sustained the civic culture of the old downtowns. Alas, the old downtowns now lack a functioning civic culture, as well. Breathing life into the public sphere of America's cities—old or new—will not be helped, they suggest, by continuing the old intellectual Cold War of city versus suburb.

The Paradox Of Slavery

"Europeans and the Rise and Fall of African Slavery in the Americas: An Interpretation" by David Eltis, in *The American Historical Review* (Dec. 1993), 914 Atwater, Bloomington, Ind. 47401.

Historians generally agree that the practice of slavery in the Americas was rooted in econom-

ics: Slaves from Africa were used because that was the least-costly source of labor for New World plantations. Curiously, observes Eltis, a historian at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, there was an even cheaper alternative: slaves from Europe. There were plenty of plausible candidates—convicted criminals, prisoners of war, vagrants, and the poor—and the cost of shipping them to the Americas