

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 Using outdated studies, he says, they underestimate the degree of racial integration outside the central cities, even as they ignore the growing divisions within them.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

would have been low. Yet the Europeans did not even consider it. That "dog that did not bark," Eltis argues, may be the key to understanding the slave trade and the system it supported.

When Columbus arrived in America in the late 15th century, Eltis notes, almost all societies in the world accepted slavery as legitimate—but they differed greatly in their ideas about who could be legitimately enslaved. In Western Europe, virtually all natives of the subcontinent, including some who were nonwhite (but few who were non-Christian), were considered ineligible. A much more limited conception of "insider" had prevailed in Roman times, but the definition had become much broader by the 15th century. Not even criminals or prisoners could be turned into chattel slaves, if they were Europeans. Enslavement had become, in European eyes, "a fate worse than death and, as such, was reserved for non-Europeans." And the line dividing "insider" and "outsider," Eltis says, "was never drawn strictly in terms of skin color or race."

Among Africans and American Indians, however, much narrower notions of who should not be enslaved prevailed; immunity was usually confined to those who belonged to one's own tribe or nation. How, it is often asked, could Africans enslave other Africans and sell them into the slave trade? Nathan Huggins, author of *Black Odyssey: The Afro-American Ordeal in Slavery* (1977), has replied that the enslavers saw neither themselves nor their victims as Africans.

Paradoxically, Eltis argues, the more Europeans rejected the enslavement of fellow Europeans, the more likely they were to contemplate enslaving non-Europeans. In a profound sense, Europeans' chattel slavery overseas resulted from the expansion of freedom at home. And yet that expansion—the idea that enslavement of Europeans anywhere was a wrong that needed to be righted—may have been the first step toward abolition of slavery generally.

"The central development shaping Western plantation slavery from the 16th century onward was the extension of European attitudes to the non-European world," Eltis writes. "If, by the 16th century, it had become unacceptable for Europeans to enslave other Europeans, by the end of the 19th century, it was unacceptable to enslave anyone."

Generation X: A Myth in the Making

"The Twentysomethings: 'Generation Myths' Revisited" by Everett Carll Ladd, in *The Public Perspective* (Jan.-Feb. 1993), The Roper Center, P.O. Box 440, Storrs, Conn. 06268-0440.

Much ink has been spilled about today's "Generation X," "twentysomethings," or—courtesy of Neil Howe and William Strauss, authors of *ThirteenthGen.: Abort, Retry, Ignore, Fail?* (1993)—"thirteeners." (They claim that today's young people are "the 13th generation to know the U.S. flag and the Constitution.") By whatever name, this generation is said to be seething with resentment toward baby boomers. "Thirteeners," according to Howe and Strauss, "blame boomers for much that has gone wrong in their world." Ladd, editor of the *Public Perspective* (and a member of the Silent Generation), contends that all this—and indeed most of what is written about Generation X and other generations—is nonsense.

Some studies, such as Paul Light's *Baby Boomers* (1988), are serious and thoughtful, Ladd says, but most who write about the various generations serve up utterly unsubstantiated assertions. Survey researchers have found not the slightest evidence of any generalized Generation X resentment. And when it comes to unhappiness, there seems to be little difference between young and old. In a 1993 survey, 25 percent of those 18–29 years old said they were dissatisfied with their lives, while 26 percent of those 30–44, 28 percent of those 45–64, and 24 percent of those 65 and older said the same.

Most of those who write about generations, Ladd complains, confuse generational experiences and the effects of aging. "For various reasons, social and psychological, individuals as they grow older tend to move attitudinally toward more 'moderate' positions," Ladd notes. (Here, survey research simply confirms what Aristotle had to say on the subject in *Rhetoric*.) The fact that Americans under 30 are less likely to go to church than those over 50 does not mean that the "younger generation" is greatly different and will remain different when its members reach 50. It just means that they are behaving as young people generally do.

For the most part, survey research indicates that generational differences in social and politi-