Downtown, Uptown, Out of Town

Diverging Patterns of Upper-Class Residential Landscapes in Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland, 1885–1935

In a recent *New York Times* article, Robert Sharoff reported on “a throwback to the early years of the 20th century when wealthy Chicago families tended to live in such close-in neighborhoods as Prairie Avenue and the Gold Coast.” For the past five years, wealthy Chicagoans have been constructing “palatial residences of at least 6,000 square feet” in the Lincoln Park neighborhood a mile and one-half north of the Loop (Sharoff 2000: 36). This “return” of the well-to-do to the city contradicts traditional urban theories on elite residential
patterns; the preponderance of these theories projects the upper class universally and continuously seeking the metropolitan fringe for new homes, more and open land, and/or lower density (Burgess 1925; Hoyt 1939; Alonso 1964; Adams 1987; Downs 1981; Luger 1996; Lowry 1960; Hartshorn and Muller 1989; and Knox 1994). These theories, as well as the notion of the recent return of the upper class to the city, mask a long history of continuing elite residence within some cities as well as considerable diversity in upper-class residence patterns and landscapes among cities.

This article focuses on (1) the changing patterns of upper-class residence in three industrial cities, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland, and (2) the upper-class residential landscapes of these cities during the period from 1885 to 1935. Much of the theoretical literature predicted a uniform and universal pattern across metropolitan areas that would lead elites to leave the city for a suburban fringe landscape of large lots and single-family homes for this period and after. Moreover, since some scholars postulated that industrial cities were the most likely to experience upper-class abandonment, the choice of three industrial cities provides a strong test both of the accuracy of this contention as well as the extent to which three similar cities produced uniform elite residential patterns as predicted in conventional theories (Schnore and Winsborough 1972: 124–51). There is little doubt that the cities qualify as industrial centers (Borchert 1967: 301–32; Hays 1974: 6–38). While Pittsburgh, as a key river city, emerged as a major industrial area earlier than Buffalo and Cleveland, which developed later as their respective canals were completed (Erie, 1825; Ohio and Erie, 1832), all three experienced explosive population growth as a result of industrial growth, immigration, and migration. By 1930, Buffalo approached 600,000 residents, while Pittsburgh recorded nearly 770,000 and Cleveland topped 900,000. Although the mix of industries varied, iron and steel were common in all three. Also, each city served as a regional retail and wholesale center for its hinterland, and each received significant numbers of immigrants/migrants from southern and eastern Europe and from the southern United States. Finally, their initial upper classes were disrupted by the emergence of a new industrial elite.

Despite the predictions contained within conventional theories, this study finds significant differences among three cities that presumably shared considerable similarities in their developmental histories; in two cities, for example, the patterns and landscapes vary significantly from theoretical projec-
tions. Cleveland’s upper class followed theorists’ models: by 1930, elites had abandoned their central location on or near Euclid, the city’s “grand avenue,” for several out-of-town suburbs where they established an explicitly suburban “borderland” landscape (Stilgoe 1988: 11). Pittsburgh’s upper class left downtown and Allegheny City and reaggregated uptown in the city’s East End. That uptown landscape emerged as a quasi-urban environment of closely sited, detached homes with its center, Oakland, densely settled and urbanized. Most striking, Buffalo’s elite remained downtown on or near the city’s “grand avenue,” Delaware, throughout the period; while single-family housing dominated this landscape, multifamily housing gained a significant foothold. These varied patterns demonstrate the theories’ limits and suggest that conditions in each city and perhaps, more importantly, the ethos and culture of each city’s upper class had more to do with the emerging patterns. Finally, the three patterns of downtown, uptown, and out of town appear to fit those established by elites in other cities for this period.

This research draws on such upper-class directories as the Social Register and Blue Books. It also utilizes architectural and landscape histories of each city as well as site surveys and historical photographs to determine the content of settlements in terms of their urban or suburban nature and the presence or absence of such urbanizing elements as hotels, apartments, businesses, and other institutions generally associated with cities. The study does not consider the nature of these cities’ upper classes because the theoretical literature on urban form is silent on this issue and because it involves a different kind of research. While such an approach is critical to understand fully the internal class structures that produced the behavior analyzed here, it is beyond the scope of a short article. Rather, the focus here is to analyze upper-class collective behavior through their selection and construction of residential neighborhoods. Unlike much of the earlier theoretical literature, this research demonstrates that urban upper classes exercised agency in the decision-making process that produced their residential neighborhoods, with each city’s elite producing a different “residential ideology” and landscape. Whatever the internal makeup of each city’s upper class, each largely produced a unity in its choice of a residential environment.

This article begins with a brief discussion of the theoretical and historical literature on upper-class residential patterns. It then considers successively the sources used, Blue Books and Social Registers, and their validity as elite
address guides. The paper’s core traces the emerging upper-class residential patterns and landscapes in Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland. The presence of marked differences between each city suggests the presence of elite cultures and proclivities specific to each.

Review of the Literature

Scholars have long been interested in predicting and explaining urban form; their theories have often focused on upper-class residence patterns. In 1925, University of Chicago sociologist Ernest Burgess depicted, via his concentric zone hypothesis, the upper classes moving to peripheral zones in search of new homes. Using Chicago as a model for all cities, he postulated an outer Zone IV, which contained a “residential area’ of high-class apartment buildings or of exclusive ‘restricted’ districts of single family dwellings.” On the very periphery of the metropolitan region, Burgess reported a commuters’ zone—suburban areas, or satellite cities—within a 30- to 60-minute ride of the central business district (Burgess 1925: 50). While he noted the presence of “high class apartment buildings” on the periphery, Burgess ignored the rather significant presence of upper-class residents in single-family homes, apartments, and hotels on Chicago’s near north side (Zorbaugh 1976 [1929]: 8).

Drawing on rent data from the 1930s, land economist Homer Hoyt’s sector theory proposed that class-based residences located within and moved along radials going out of the city. Hoyt (1939: 114), who studied rent patterns for 142 cities, found that “the high rent pole tends to move outward from the center of the city along a certain avenue or lateral line.” As with Burgess, Hoyt concluded that “high rent or high grade residential neighborhoods must almost necessarily move outward toward the periphery of the city. The wealthy seldom reverse their steps and move backward into the obsolete house which they are giving up” (ibid.: 116; see also Adams 1991: 108–26). While Burgess, who based his theory on Chicago, ignored the Gold Coast, Hoyt (1939: 116) did note the “exception to this outward movement” in “the development of de luxe apartment areas in old residential areas.” He found Chicago’s Gold Coast and New York City’s Park Avenue to be “very special case[s], however,” that applied “only to intensive high grade apartment developments in a few metropolitan centers.” Hoyt (ibid.: 118) concluded that this exception took place only after “the high rent single-family home areas have moved far out
on the periphery of the city”; then “some wealthy families desire to live in a colony of luxurious apartments close to the business center.” This implies upper-class abandonment of the city, followed by an infill of exclusive apartment complexes, which differs from the situation that emerged historically on Chicago’s Gold Coast.

Other scholars modified these theoretical constructs but agreed that the upper class would move to the periphery. William Alonso and others advanced a structural theory of urban form that explained “the peripheral position of the rich” as “the result of the structure of market forces rather than the consequence of historical development proposed” by Burgess and Hoyt. Alonso proposed that a random “city which developed so quickly that the structures had no time to age would still show the same basic urban form: low income near the center and high income further out” (Alonso 1964: 229; Hoover and Vernon 1959: 169; Luger 1996). Nonetheless, Alonso also found exceptions to this pattern. In part related to life cycle, he observed that “there is in the United States a substantial minority of the well-to-do that does prefer accessibility to space and this minority lives in luxury apartments or town houses in the central areas” (Alonso 1964: 230).

More recent theoretical formulations also postulate an outward movement of the upper class to the periphery. These include: trickle-down theory (Downs 1981), filter theory (Lowry 1960), and vacancy chain analysis (Hartshorn and Muller 1989).

Historians have largely accepted this theoretical framework. In his seminal survey of U.S. suburban history, Kenneth Jackson concluded that elites led the movement out of the city and that “social change usually begins at the top of society.” He found that “affluent families had the flexibility and the financial resources to move to the urban edges first.” Thus what became “fashion for the rich and powerful later became popular with ordinary citizens” (Jackson 1985: 11). Samuel Hays concluded that “upper-class communities experienced especially observable difficulties in self-maintenance. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, new upper-class residential areas arose . . . but . . . these communities rarely lasted more than one or two generations” (Hays 1974: 12, 21, 26–27).

In contrast to these social science theories and historical studies, sociologist Walter Firey’s classic 1947 study, *Land Use in Central Boston*, argued that the values of upper-class residents produced an effect not explained by
the existing models. His study traced the continuous residence of a significant number of upper-class families in Beacon Hill near downtown from 1805 to 1947. In contrast to Burgess’s and Hoyt’s models, the operative ones at the time of his study, Firey postulated that upper-class families placed a value on neighborhood that gave symbolic meaning superseding its economic value. Beacon Hill’s elite developed a cultural and social system that made it possible to protect it from challenges by other uses. It was “the dynamic force of spatially referred values, rather than considerations of economy, which explains why certain upper class families prefer to live on Beacon Hill rather than in the suburbs or in other in-town districts” (Firey 1947: 133).

Firey also traced the shift from single-family to multiple-family housing on Beacon Hill. The 1947 Beacon Hill landscape that emerged was not the one predicted by structural theorists. Firey (1947: 134) found “two kinds of residents on Beacon Hill: those who live in single family dwellings, and those who live in apartment houses with 5–19 families.” They were not residents who had once abandoned the city for the suburbs and returned for greater accessibility; most apartment dwellers were “older women” who gave up their Beacon Hill single-family dwellings.

Historian John Ingham’s comparative study of iron and steel elites in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Youngstown, and Wheeling provided some empirical support for Firey’s position. Although he did not analyze these cities’ entire upper class, Ingham found that elite residence patterns differed significantly among the cities. In 1931, Pittsburgh still housed nearly three-fourths of iron barons, but the other cities had lost most of these elites to the suburbs (Ingham 1978: 109, 157–61, 176–82, 202–3, 211–12).

Sources: Social Register and Blue Books

The nationally published Social Register and the more local Blue Books emerged at a time when elite social worlds were in turmoil. The ranks of the urban rich exploded in the last half of the nineteenth and the first years of the twentieth centuries as new entrepreneurs in transportation, manufacturing, and finance accumulated huge fortunes. As address books primarily, Blue Books and the Social Register helped sort out those who “belonged” from those who did not; both appear to have emerged from individuals’ informal “visiting lists” (Wecter 1937: 232; Social Register Association 1986: v).
Blue Books appeared first; most became annual publications. The Dau Publishing Company, one of the larger firms to enter the business, produced an “Elite Family Directory” and “Club Membership” directory for Detroit, Buffalo, Newark, New Jersey, Columbus and Cincinnati, Ohio, Richmond, Virginia, Nashville, Tennessee, Rochester and Albany, New York, and other cities. Dau published its 1898 *Official Blue-Book for Buffalo* “for the benefit of an ever increasing number of ladies who value a visiting list at once comprehensive, accurate and complete” (Dau Publishing Co. 1898: 3). In contrast, the locally produced *Cleveland Blue Book: A Society Directory and List of Leading Families* . . . dated to 1885 (Cleveland Blue Book 1885: 204–5). Pittsburgh’s version first appeared for 1887; several different companies produced elite directories over time (Brown-Haven 1889: LXXIX). Although varied over time, Blue Books included alphabetical and address listings, elite club memberships, and extensive advertising.

In many cities the *Social Register* appeared somewhat later: in Buffalo, 1903; Pittsburgh, 1904; and Cleveland, 1910. In some cities, *Social Register* coverage was short-lived: Detroit’s lasted only from 1919 to 1927 (Baltzell 1966: 269; Backler 1974: 13). Founded by Louis Keller and issued yearly by New York’s Social Register Association, the first such register appeared for New York in 1886 (for the year 1887). The association added Newport, Rhode Island, the next year, Boston and Philadelphia beginning in 1890. By 1918, the association had produced directories for 26 cities. At the time the *Social Register* was sold to Malcolm Forbes in 1977, the association was producing directories for only 12 cities (Social Register Association 1986: v; Domhoff 1983: 20–21). Initial volumes carried advertising, but this was dropped after subscriptions had reached 3,000 (Social Register Association 1986: iii).

Of the two publications, the *Social Register* was the most exclusive and restricted. The 1930 Cleveland *Social Register* contained the names of 1,134 families, while the 1931 *Cleveland Blue Book* listed 2,940 “prominent families,” a ratio of just under 1 to 3 (Social Register Association [Cleveland] 1929; Townsend 1931). Acceptance to the *Social Register* required a formal application procedure with recommendations and perhaps committee approval (Domhoff 1983: 22–24). While the *Social Register* did include some families on the basis of ancestry, despite limited resources, the association was notorious for excluding anyone who was not white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant, regardless of their wealth, pedigree, or social status (Baltzell 1966: 269–71;
This focus on WASP elites, then, left out a significant number of other upper-class members, including German Jews and Christians as well as Irish Catholics (Hammack 1982: 79). In contrast, Blue Books not only included many more families, they were somewhat more likely to include a wider range of racial, ethnic, religious, and social groupings. If the Social Register’s criteria remains unclear, the Blue Books’ are murkier. Cleveland’s first Blue Book provided some insight into the selection process:

If, at any time, patrons feel disappointed in not finding the addresses of their friends, they may be assured that those friends persistently declined to honor the book with their names, or because, after continued endeavor, we failed to obtain personal interviews, or to secure responses by mail or telephone . . . Whenever a revised edition is called for by the ladies, the Publisher will immediately respond, knowing that future success will be comparatively easy, the importance of the work then being fully known and appreciated; individual names will be readily given and the ladies will not hesitate to mention names which they will expect to find in this book, as a few have kindly done in this issue. (Haven 1885: iii–iv)

The two directories often shared many names in common. The Buffalo Blue Book 1931 contained the names of 3,117 entrants, while Buffalo’s 1931 Social Register listed only 1,317; as with Cleveland, this represents a ratio of about 2.4 to 1. Tabulation of the actual number of overlapping names found 25% of Blue Book entrants in common with the Social Register and 58% of the social registrites shared with the Blue Book. Of the 881 members of the elite Buffalo Club in 1931, the Blue Book listed 90%, while the Social Register carried only 28% (Otto Ulbright Co. 1930; Social Register Association Buffalo 1930). Reviewing Detroit’s Social Secretary, geographer Stephen Higley (1995: 6) concluded that while it “may include all of Detroit’s upper class (as defined locally) . . . for the most part, it is a listing of Detroit’s upper middle class.” To the extent this is true, as the data above also seem to suggest, then the Social Register is more exclusively a listing of a largely WASP upper class, while the Blue Books report most of these as well as parts of other upper classes and the upper-middle classes.

These sources have other limitations. Social Registers and Blue Books identify the “ascribed” upper class as opposed to the elite who “achieved”
their status and are more typically found in Who’s Who (Baltzell 1966: 267). Nonetheless, scholars have widely used both “address books” to identify the upper class. Firey (1947: 71) concluded that “in spite of all these deficiencies the Social Register does provide a reasonably adequate index of upper class status . . . we cannot go far wrong in relying upon it for an estimate of upper class locational processes.” Sociologist Digby Baltzell (1966: 267) found that the Social Register reported upper-class members, “a group of families, descendants of successful individuals (elite members) one, two, three, or more generations ago, who are at the top the social (subjective) class hierarchy.”

Other scholars also have recognized the registers as a valuable guide to the upper class. Reviewing sociologists’ and geographers’ use of the directory, Higley (1995: 30) concluded that the Social Register’s “credibility as a listing of the American upper class is unassailable... it has been used repeatedly as the authoritative designator of the American upper class.”

Fewer scholars have commented directly on Blue Books, although several studies provide strong support for this source (Backler 1974; Kawashima 1992). Moreover, Blue Books represent a broader spectrum of upper- and upper-middle-class members. As Higley (1995: 127) noted, “the upper middle class is drawn to the upper-class neighborhood for reasons of status and landscape predilections similar to the upper-class. The numerically superior upper middle class (approximately 18–20 percent of the U.S. population) provides the critical mass to support the wide array of services required by the affluent.” Since sociologists have estimated that the Social Register “covers less than 0.5 percent of the national population,” the combination of upper and upper-middle classes residentially provides a larger target to identify and evaluate their residential landscapes (Gilbert and Kahl 1993: 211–12).

Downtown: Buffalo

As a terminus of the Erie Canal, Buffalo grew rapidly as a trans-shipping point for grain moving from Ohio to eastern markets. “By the middle of the 1840s the foundations of a highly diversified manufacturing economy were in place,” but not until the years after the Civil War did “Buffalo’s economy shift... irrevocably toward industry” (Goldman 1983: 63, 71). By 1930, Buffalo’s population growth, fueled by immigration and migration, rose to 573,000. Rapid industrialization, especially in iron and steel, automobiles, cereal production,
and meat packing added significantly to employment opportunities and produced large fortunes, the latter for a growing upper class (Goldman 1983: 126–75).

Buffalo witnessed the “emergence of a distinct class of . . . citizenry . . . relatively early in the community’s history.” Largely “New England in origin and Protestant in religious faith, this class was composed mostly of businessmen, some lawyers, and a scattering of doctors and clergymen” (Walter 1958: 160). If in the 1830s the upper class lived downtown on or near Niagara Square, “the prosperity of the 1850s and 1860s stimulated much construction on Delaware Avenue” north from the Square (Kowsky 1994: 40). From the end of the Civil War, Delaware Avenue began its “glory period . . . as the city’s premier residential street” (Kowsky 1994: 45). Nevertheless, Buffalo’s upper classes also lived on nearby streets and even in adjoining neighborhoods, as with Johnson Park in the West Village area from the 1850s (Buffalo Architectural Guidebook Corp. 1981: 125). During the 1850s and 1860s, Allentown, bordering on and west of lower Delaware Avenue, emerged as an elite neighborhood; after 1900, Johnson Park and Allentown experienced decline from encroaching business (Buffalo Architectural Guidebook Corp. 1981: 100). See Figure 1.

The 1900 Buffalo Society Blue Book listed 2,375 families; of these, 99% lived in the city and 1% in suburbs. By far Delaware Avenue housed the largest number of these families, 332 total, or 15%; Johnson Park claimed 4% (Buffalo Society Blue Book 1900). The 1906 Social Register reported a similar division with 96% of its entrants living in the city (754 families) and only 4% in the suburbs. Not surprisingly, Delaware Avenue gained a high percentage of entrants with almost one-quarter of Buffalo’s upper class living there (Social Register Association [Buffalo] 1905). See Table 1.

The 1928 Blue Book reported little change in the distribution of Buffalo’s upper classes, although the number of families listed had increased by more than 500 since 1900. Nearly 94% of Buffalo’s elite remained in the city, although Delaware Avenue’s share declined by almost half (Buffalo Blue Book 1928). Two years later, the 1930 Social Register reported a somewhat larger suburban population of 11%, equal only to that of Delaware Avenue in the city (Social Register Association 1929). Buffalo retained 89% of social registrites. Although lower Delaware Avenue and Allentown began to lose population, upper Delaware and the area above North Street became more
fashionable. Thus the larger Delaware Avenue area housed nearly 83% of the city’s elite, all within three miles of Niagara Square. Despite the presence of North Park, a suburban, uptown area laid out in the 1880s and 1890s with curvilinear streets and old English street names, much like Cleveland’s fashionable suburb Shaker Heights, only 6% of Buffalo’s social registries had selected this in-city neighborhood by 1930 (Buffalo Architectural Guidebook Corp. 1981: 188–90). Elites did not begin to leave the Delaware Avenue area south of Delaware Park until after World War II (Banham 1981: 61).

Buffalo’s upper-class residential landscape further contrasted with that hypothesized by Burgess, Hoyt, and the structuralists. Builders sited Delaware Avenue houses relatively close to the street, while those on nearby streets also had shallow setbacks. The vast majority of dwellings in and north of the Allentown area were large, single-family homes. Delaware Avenue acquired the largest and most impressive mansions; a 1904 writer for House Beautiful

**Figure 1** Map of the North Side section of Buffalo. Map by Matthew Rollins.
Table 1  Buffalo upper-class residence patterns, 1900–1930

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1906</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1930</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City proper</td>
<td>2,344 (99)</td>
<td>754 (96)</td>
<td>2,695 (94)</td>
<td>871 (89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburbs</td>
<td>31 (1)</td>
<td>31 (4)</td>
<td>186 (6)</td>
<td>110 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>2,375 (100)</td>
<td>785 (100)</td>
<td>2,881 (100)</td>
<td>981 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = number of households; % = percentage of households listed in the source with address in the city’s metropolitan region. (See note 12.)


reported “the dwellings on this famous street have the character of country houses. They are surrounded by broad lawns, shaded by fine trees, and inclosed by hedges and high fences of ornamental iron” (Robie 1904: 6). This overstates the larger landscape established by the ensemble of area house sites vis-à-vis the street and neighboring houses.

Over time this neighborhood also developed several sets of distinctly urban blocks, the Midway, row houses, Mayfair Lane, and apartment and hotel developments; the latter included high rises. As early as 1885, along North Pearl Streets, developers introduced a set of row houses (Buffalo Architectural Guidebook Corp. 1981: 120). In the early 1890s on lower Delaware, builders constructed the Midway, a “block of neoclassical row houses . . . unique in Buffalo for its grandeur and continuity of design” (Buffalo Architectural Guidebook Corp. 1981: 134–35). Individually “built by business and professional people” and fronting on the sidewalk, the Midway produced “the most urbane streetscape in the city” (Buffalo Architectural Guidebook Corp. 1981: 135; Kowsky 1994: 54). By contrast, in 1928, along Mayfair Lane just off Delaware Avenue and North Street, a developer re-created “an Olde English hamlet in the midst of a modern industrial metropolis” by carving a mini-superblock of 20 houses situated in groups of two and four on either side of a narrow pedestrian lane (Buffalo Architectural Guidebook Corp. 1981: 121, 120).

Buffalo also developed such urban institutions as elite apartments and hotels.15 In 1930, 12% of social registrites lived in multifamily units. Buffalo’s upper-class hotels and apartments emerged in the late 1920s and claimed
sites on Delaware Avenue (Campanile Apartments, 1929) or nearby (800 West Ferry Apartments, 1929) (Buffalo Architectural Guidebook Corp. 1981: 156, 151). Similarly, hotels provided housing for some of Allentown’s elite residents, as did the downtown Statler Hotel on Niagara Square. See Table 5.

Moreover, Buffalo’s upper class disproportionately remained in the city as compared to other groups in the metropolitan area and similarly were underrepresented in the suburbs. In 1930, the suburbs housed 30% of the metropolitan population but only 6% of the 1928 Blue Book entrants and 11% of 1930s social registrites. See Table 6.

Buffalo’s upper-class residence patterns and landscape, then, contrasted sharply with that projected by conventional theories. Located close to downtown in largely single-family housing, they contradicted Burgess’s suburban high-rise apartments and housing, Hoyt’s fringe developments and “high-grade apartment developments in a few metropolitan centers” (Chicago or New York only), and the structuralists’ projections of most elites on the periphery save a minority who select “luxury apartments or townhouses in the central areas” (Hoyt 1939: 118; Alonso 1964: 230). Pittsburgh also presented problems for conventional theories.

Uptown: Pittsburgh

Although Pittsburgh began largely as a commercial center at the confluence of two rivers, by 1850 it had become “Iron City,” with a population of 46,000 and economic activity “completely dominated by the production of iron products” (Reiser 1951: 191; Swauger 1978: 267–68). In the 1850s, 60% of Pittsburgh’s elite merchants and manufacturers “lived and worked downtown” (Tarr 1989: 227, 1978: 3–4), “on or near Penn Avenue... cheek by jowl with... commercial and industrial areas” (Ingham 1989: 272; Jucha 1980: 34, 130). The young city’s elite were native-born, and many were Scots-Irish Presbyterians (Rishel 1990: 40, 67, 166–67; Ingham 1978: 21–24).

A new upper-class residential area also emerged across the river in Allegheny City; by 1850 it housed 30% of the region’s elite in a landscape that was a “highly compact, densely urban, upper class area, not unlike similar enclaves in Philadelphia, Boston, New York, and other seaport cities” (Tarr 1989: 227; Ingham 1989: 274; Jucha 1980: 49–51). “Like elegant Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, or Boston’s Beacon Hill, it was urban” (Ingham 1978:...
In 1907, Pittsburgh annexed Allegheny City; by World War I, the elite neighborhood had experienced decline (Ingham 1989: 275). See Figure 2.

From 1880 to 1920, Pittsburgh emerged as the world’s greatest steel-producing center; by 1930 its population had risen to nearly 670,000 (Ingham 1989: 270). The city’s shift from iron to steel production dramatically changed its social ecology, workplace, position of workers, and economic organizations (Couvares 1984: 80–95). The 1900 Blue Book reported Allegheny City still housed 18% of the region’s elite, while Allegheny City and Pittsburgh together claimed 79%; the suburbs already accounted for 21% (Brown-Haven 1900–1901). Although in 1900 suburbs here claimed more residents than for the other two cities, Pittsburgh continued to house its upper class within the city. The 1915 Pittsburgh Blue Book listed 76% of elite households residing in the city (Polk 1914). Moreover, the city’s share dropped only 6% over the next 15 years (Social Register Association [Pittsburgh] 1929). See Table 2.

Unlike Buffalo, however, where elites eschewed suburban uptown developments and remained within three miles of Niagara Square, Pittsburgh’s
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Table 2  Pittsburgh upper-class residence patterns, 1900–1930

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1915</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1930</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City proper</td>
<td>3,442</td>
<td>2,694</td>
<td>2,119</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(79)</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>(70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadyside</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>333</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squirrel Hill</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>277</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,764</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(40)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburbs</td>
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<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(26)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
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<td>3,523</td>
<td>2,849</td>
<td>1,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
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<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = number of households; % = percentage of households listed in the source with address in the city’s metropolitan region. (See note 12.)

upper class quickly settled on uptown sites in the East End that began at 2.5 miles from downtown and extended nearly 6 miles to the city line. Beginning before annexation to the city in 1868, wealthy Pittsburghers established country estates and suburban enclaves in the East End (Jucha 1980: 36–37). The area quickly became the upper-class residence area; by at least as early as 1900, it housed most of the region’s upper class with three-quarters of the urban elite and nearly 60% of the metro region’s elite (Brown–Haven 1900).

By 1929, the East End had increased its dominance as an upper-class residential area, housing 69% of such families; the Downtown and South Side wards housed less than 1%, with Allegheny and the North Side having only 3%. Between 1900 and 1929, the suburban population increased marginally (21 to 26%). The largest suburb, Sewickley, housed 63% of elite suburbanites but was not an East End suburb (Polk 1929).

While the East End landscape in 1868 was a mix of country and suburban elements, this “idyllic image” did “not last for long” as “the very suburban qualities held in balance between the virtues of country living and city amenities, were to be undermined by the suburbanites themselves” (Jucha 1980: 96). In Oakland, the neighborhood closest to downtown, urban elements emerged as early as 1889 with the acquisition of Schenley Park and the location of the Carnegie Institute and Public Library on Forbes Avenue three years later.
Franklin Nicola's elegant, high-rise Schenley Hotel (1898) produced an urban density and scale atypical of suburban neighborhoods (Jucha 1980: 167). While Nicola's 1905–20 development of Schenley Farms, including 96 detached, single-family homes for upper-class residents, suggested a more suburban landscape, central Oakland's extensive apartment development and the relocation of numerous public and private cultural, medical, educational, and social institutions made Oakland a “second downtown” (Toker 1986: 79–130). Pittsburgh’s elite quickly adopted these institutions, including 58 Blue Book households in 1900 who resided in the Hotel Schenley (Brown-Haven 1900); in 1930, 21 social registrites claimed it as home, while the massive Schenley Apartments (1923) nearby housed another 37 (Social Register Association [Pittsburgh] 1929). Elites selected apartments elsewhere in Oakland (23) as well as at exclusive social clubs (9). By 1930, Oakland's multifamily residential facilities and other institutions produced an urban environment (Toker 1986: 79–130; Jucha 167–68).

Oakland was not the only urbanized East End elite neighborhood. Shadyside emerged as “Pittsburgh’s premier residential suburban district” in the late nineteenth century (Jucha 1980: 2–3). As early as 1900, it housed a majority of the East End’s upper class; Oakland was second with about 20% (Haven-Brown 1900). Although by 1930 the newer East End suburban neighborhoods of Squirrel Hill and Point Breeze increased their share of elites at the expense of Oakland and Shadyside, they later housed the largest contingent of social registrites (Social Register Association [Pittsburgh] 1929). Shadyside, a railroad and streetcar neighborhood built largely between 1880 and 1905, acquired an urbanlike landscape due to its preautomobile, pedestrian nature and the decisions of its developers who provided a diversity of lot sizes attractive to upper and middle classes alike. Builders sited single-family homes and even some mansions relatively close to neighboring structures and to the streets; by 1920, it “could no longer be considered suburban” (Jucha 1980: 164, 133–66, 318).

Shadyside increasingly experienced higher densities resulting from new apartment, rowhouse, and private street construction. Small stores and shops added an additional urban element. As in Oakland, these developments did not repel but attracted elites; in 1930, the Kenmawr Hotel housed 21 social registrites and apartments elsewhere claimed another 13. Shadyside was not alone in attracting urban institutions; Squirrel Hill experienced apartment
construction that housed at least 7 social registrites (Social Register Association [Pittsburgh] 1929).

As with Buffalo, Pittsburgh’s upper class remained disproportionately urban and underrepresented in the suburbs compared to the general population. By 1930, greater Pittsburgh’s population was 66% suburban; only 34% resided in the city. In contrast, 70% of its upper class continued to reside in the city. See Table 6.

Although they differed, Buffalo’s and Pittsburgh’s upper-class residential patterns and landscapes both deviated from the conventional theories. If Pittsburgh’s elite apartment and hotel development outside of the downtown area conformed somewhat to Burgess’s theory, their location in an eastern sector along a radial supported Hoyt’s projections in part. None of the theoretical models, however, predicted the urbanized East End, with elites remaining in the city while other classes departed. Cleveland, on the other hand, provides an example of a city that more closely followed the conventional theories.

**Out of Town: Cleveland**

By the 1880s, Cleveland’s emergence as an industrial city was already well under way. From a population of just over 160,000, the city exploded to over 900,000 by 1930. These changes and the wealth created by the increased use of industrial production and poorly paid workers expanded the number of potential entrants to Cleveland’s upper class (Miller and Wheeler 1997: 69–125). Iron, steel, automobiles, oil, chemicals, and other industries fueled urban growth and wealth-making (ibid.: 77–82). The city’s early elites came from Protestant New England backgrounds (Ingham 1978: 54).

From as early as the 1850s, Cleveland’s emerging upper class tended to settle along Euclid Avenue near downtown, although Franklin Boulevard in Ohio City and Jennings Road in Tremont provided alternative elite residential areas on the west side of the Cuyahoga River. Ultimately Euclid Avenue became the city’s “grand avenue,” housing a significant number of Cleveland’s upper class and providing the symbol of the city’s wealth (Cigliano 1991, 1994: 93–97). Moving east from Public Square, wealthy residents built ever larger and more elaborate homes as development steadily moved east along Euclid Avenue. As in Buffalo, Cleveland’s elites concentrated in the section closest to downtown from East 9th to East 40th streets. Eventually, “more than 260
residences lined the linear landscape between Ninth and Ninetieth streets” (Cigliano 1991: 122).

The neighborhood had, in part, a country atmosphere. Euclid’s biographer, Jan Cigliano, found that the north side and parts of the south “were closer in overall presentation and plan to the country estates of Great Britain and France than to such American enclaves of wealth as those of Philadelphia’s Rittenhouse Square, Boston’s Back Bay, or New York’s Fifth Avenue” (ibid.: 90).22 She errs by calling Euclid Avenue a borderland, “where houses are so far apart that even in winter they cast shadows only on their own lots,” but Euclid’s north side anticipated this suburban landscape with its expansive grounds and deep setbacks of “100 to 300 feet of rolling, treed lawns” (Stilgoe 1988: 11; Cigliano 1991: 93).23 To Cigliano, Cleveland’s emerging upper class differed from that of eastern cities where “the esteemed professions of medicine, religion, and literature were well represented among the established elite families.” In Cleveland most were businessmen and lawyers (Cigliano 1991: 27). Similarly, “wealthy Clevelanders, many of them natives of rural villages, established a precedent for the Avenue’s countrified development for the rest of the century” (ibid.: 93). Euclid Avenue more closely approximated the contemporary landscape emerging outside the city, which was marked by “numerous handsome and costly suburban residences, set in the midst of tastefully kept grounds,” than it did New York’s Washington Square or Fifth Avenue (Lake 1874: 118).

Cleveland’s first Social Directory... 1885 listed 1,805 families living within the city. Euclid Avenue had the largest concentration (22%), with 17% on parallel Prospect Avenue. The neighborhood framed by these two streets and others adjoining them housed 61% of the city’s elite; suburbs accounted for only 1% (Haven 1885). See Table 3.

Although Euclid Avenue “reached its peak of elegance and vitality in the 1880s and 1890s,” the 1900 Blue Book revealed the beginnings of a pattern of movement from both the grand avenue and from the city itself (Cigliano 1991: 10). While Cleveland still claimed 90% of those listed in the Blue Book, Euclid Avenue’s percentage declined from 22 to 17%, and Prospect Avenue went from 17 to 10%. At the same time, uptown, on the east end of Euclid within the city’s boundaries, a new elite residential area began to emerge (Wade Park/University Circle), with about 1% of Blue Book listees residing there. Suburbs experienced the most rapid growth in elite populations, rising
Table 3  Cleveland upper-class residence patterns (Blue Book), 1885–1931

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>1885–1886</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1915</th>
<th>1931</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td>N (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City proper</td>
<td>1,784 (99)</td>
<td>1,695 (90)</td>
<td>1,631 (66)</td>
<td>539 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euclid Ave.</td>
<td>391 (22)</td>
<td>317 (17)</td>
<td>272 (11)</td>
<td>53 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wade Park</td>
<td>12 (1)</td>
<td>125 (5)</td>
<td>281 (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,393 (77)</td>
<td>1,366 (72)</td>
<td>1,234 (50)</td>
<td>205 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburbs</td>
<td>21 (1)</td>
<td>185 (10)</td>
<td>845 (34)</td>
<td>2,401 (82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland Heights</td>
<td>28 (2)</td>
<td>224 (9)</td>
<td>1,028 (35)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Cleveland</td>
<td>98 (5)</td>
<td>280 (11)</td>
<td>146 (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaker Heights</td>
<td>86 (4)</td>
<td>685 (23)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>59 (3)</td>
<td>255 (10)</td>
<td>542 (19)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>1,805 (100)</td>
<td>1,880 (100)</td>
<td>2,476 (100)</td>
<td>2,940 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = number of households; % = percentage of households listed in the source with address in the city’s metropolitan region. (See note 12.)
Sources: for 1885–1886, Haven 1885; for 1900, Townsend 1899; for 1915, Townsend 1914; for 1931, Townsend 1931.

from 1 to 10% in just 15 years; East Cleveland had the largest concentration, with 5% (Townsend 1899). See Figure 3.

What began as a trickle in 1900 became a substantial suburban migration by 1915. Euclid Avenue’s share declined to 11% of Blue Book addressees; Prospect Avenue fell from 17 to 4% over 30 years. Within the city, only uptown Wade Park grew to 5% (Townsend 1914). Suburbs now housed one-third of Blue Book addressees. East Cleveland again led all suburbs with 11%, matching Euclid Avenue. Nearby Cleveland Heights housed 9%. The more selective Social Register provided a more conservative view of this suburban movement, suggesting that the older and more traditional upper class was more likely to remain in the city. The 1913 Social Register reported that the Euclid Avenue neighborhood housed 56% of Register families and uptown Wade Park had 12%; out-of-town suburbs accounted for 23% (Social Register Association [Cleveland] 1912). See Table 4.

Although Buffalo and Pittsburgh largely retained their respective upper class by 1930, Cleveland’s upper ranks largely abandoned the city over the next 15 years. The 1929 Blue Book anticipated this shift by its new subtitle, A Social Directory of Cleveland, Ohio and Suburbs (Townsend 1929). By 1931,
only 18% of Cleveland’s Blue Book elite remained in the city. Euclid Avenue, once the center of upper-class life, dropped to 2%. Uptown Wade Park’s share grew to nearly 10% but failed to attract a large share of elites, as Pittsburgh’s East End did. Even in nearby East Cleveland, which 15 years earlier housed the largest suburban cluster, the elite population declined. Nevertheless, the suburban upper-class population grew dramatically, from 34% in 1915 to 82% in 1931. Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights, at 35 and 23%, respectively, became the metropolitan area’s dominant upper-class residential cluster (Townsend 1931). The 1930 Cleveland Social Register reported a less precipitous decline, with the city housing 29 compared to the suburbs’ 71% of elites (Social Register Association [Cleveland] 1929). Only three years later, however, Cleveland’s share dropped to 20% (Social Register Association [Cleveland] 1933).

Although Buffalo’s and Cleveland’s residential landscapes, on and around Delaware and Euclid avenues, respectively, had considerable similarities, these changed over time as Clevelanders moved progressively outward to newer homes on large lots and Buffalo’s elite increasingly accommodated to
Table 4  Cleveland upper-class residence patterns (Social Register), 1913–1934

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>1913</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1934</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N  (%)</td>
<td>N  (%)</td>
<td>N  (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City proper</td>
<td>717 (77)</td>
<td>269 (29)</td>
<td>187 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euclid Avenue area</td>
<td>527 (56)</td>
<td>89 (10)</td>
<td>14 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wade Park</td>
<td>107 (12)</td>
<td>147 (16)</td>
<td>98 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>83 (9)</td>
<td>33 (3)</td>
<td>75 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburbs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland Heights</td>
<td>220 (23)</td>
<td>649 (71)</td>
<td>747 (80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Cleveland</td>
<td>92 (10)</td>
<td>320 (35)</td>
<td>323 (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaker Heights</td>
<td>51 (5)</td>
<td>18 (2)</td>
<td>12 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18 (2)</td>
<td>185 (20)</td>
<td>217 (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>937 (100)</td>
<td>918 (100)</td>
<td>934 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = number of households; % = percentage of households listed in the source with address in the city’s metropolitan region. (See note 12.)
Sources: for 1913, Social Register Association [Cleveland] 1912; for 1930, Social Register Association [Cleveland] 1929; for 1934, Social Register Association 1933.

greater density and multifamily housing. Even at the outset, the siting of many Euclid Avenue mansions with deep, grassy, treed front yards implied an early predisposition to suburban landscapes. As they began to relocate from the Euclid Avenue area from 1900 on, Cleveland’s upper class repeatedly selected suburban settings in uptown Wade Park, more than four miles from the square where developers introduced a curvilinear street pattern and suburban style homes. Wade Park Allotment, laid out and developed by Jeptha Wade III, shared important elements with Nicola’s Schenley Farms in Oakland: both planned for a varied residential area for the upper-middle, well-to-do, and very wealthy populations (Johannesen 1979: 97; Toker 1986: 119). Yet Nicola’s plans embraced “a city beautiful and model suburb,” while Wade’s goals were more limited (Toker 1986: 109; Johannesen 1979: 97–101). Most obviously, where Wade Park limited building heights to four stories, Nicola introduced a high-rise hotel very early and followed up with his massive Schenley Apartment development in 1923 (Johannesen 1979: 125). Finally, despite the many similarities between Cleveland’s and Pittsburgh’s uptown neighborhoods, the differences suggest diverging values and attitudes about appropriate upper-class landscapes. Both Wade Park/University Circle and Oakland
became major cultural, educational, and medical centers for their metropolitan region, but Cleveland’s uptown never developed the extent, range, or density of upper-class multifamily residential buildings or other activities as did Oakland, and its layout remained much more suburban than its Pittsburgh counterpart.26

Residential Wade Park, in layout and house site, anticipated the suburbs; with houses “designed for a different scale of entertaining and living, many of them partook of the character of an indigenous suburban type” (Johannesen 1979: 97). The plan segregated residentially the upper classes by street, while architects introduced an additional suburban element through “a basically horizontal look, with the long facade facing the street” (ibid.: 97). In contrast, Shadyside, Pittsburgh’s premiere upper-class neighborhood, contained, cheek-by-jowl with its estates and mansions, “city lots” with only a 20- to 25-foot front and 100-foot depth on which speculators built modest homes for the middle class (Jucha 1980: 80). Thus, as Pittsburgh’s elite accommodated itself to the growing density and urbanism in Oakland and Shadyside, most of Cleveland’s elite either left Wade Park or never even stopped on their way to the suburbs.

The upper-class experience in East Cleveland was also instructive. This suburb, which had attracted the largest number of suburban elites from 1900 to 1915, quickly lost its initial dominance after 1915, as it became the region’s most densely settled community, with a third of its population living in apartments; in each case it exceeded even Cleveland. At the same time, Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights, both with lower densities and fewer apartments, became the new communities of choice (Borchert 1996: 287–92).

This adversity to density and multifamily living is borne out by the small number among the Cleveland elite who actually selected to live in such housing and neighborhoods. In contrast to Buffalo and Pittsburgh elites, who increasingly selected multifamily housing over the time period, with each city having more than 9% so housed by 1930, multifamily living reached its peak in Cleveland in 1915 at 9%. By 1930, less than 6% had selected apartments, hotels, or social clubs as places of residence. While Pittsburgh’s East End elites selected a variety of apartment and hotel buildings in several different neighborhoods, Cleveland’s elites lived in only four buildings, all located on the city’s eastern edge at either Wade Park or Shaker Square. See Table 5.

If adverse to apartment and hotel living, Cleveland’s elite seem equally
Table 5  Hotel, apartment, and club residents, by city, 1915 and 1930

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cleveland</th>
<th></th>
<th>Pittsburgh</th>
<th></th>
<th>Buffalo</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>N (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>228^a (9)</td>
<td></td>
<td>59^a (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>191^a (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>266^a (9)</td>
<td></td>
<td>238^a (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>43^b (4.6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>136^b (12)</td>
<td></td>
<td>115^b (12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = number of households living in multifamily housing (apartments, hotels, social clubs) in the city; \( \% \) = percentage of households listed in the source with addresses in the city.


Finally, unlike Buffalo’s and Pittsburgh’s elites, whose residential choice of city living put them behind the curve in comparison to their region’s population distribution, Cleveland’s upper class, following traditional theory and Jackson’s interpretation, led their metropolitan population in the flight to the suburbs. While only 25% of Cleveland’s metropolitan population was suburban, 71% of the city’s social registrites lived in suburbia. The 29% with city addresses clustered at the city’s very eastern edge, while 75% of the region’s population lived in the city. See Table 6. Cleveland’s elite, if not those of Buffalo and Pittsburgh, fit the conventional models for residential patterns and landscape.

Conclusions

Traditional theory largely predicted that upper-class residents would continue to move to the urban periphery in search of new homes and more space;
Table 6  Percentages of elite and general population residing in urban and suburban districts of selected cities, 1930

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Elite Population, 1930a</th>
<th>Metropolitan Population, 1930b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Urban</td>
<td>% Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data for elite population 1930 is based on the percentage of households listed in each city’s Social Register that resided in the metropolitan region. The metropolitan population 1930 is based on the entire population enumerated in the 1930 census.

aData for Buffalo elite population are from Social Register Association [Buffalo] 1929; for Pittsburgh elite population, from Social Register Association [Pittsburgh] 1929; for Cleveland elite population, from Social Register Association [Cleveland] 1929.

bMetropolitan district data for all three cities are from Table 4 of U.S. Bureau of the Census 1932: 10–13.

only a few theorists note the continuing presence of elites within cities and then largely paint them as anomalies. In contrast, Walter Firey postulated that Boston’s Beacon Hill elites successfully sustained an urban neighborhood near downtown because of that area’s symbolic importance to their lives. Clearly Firey’s work suggested some limits with the theoretical literature, although he did not pursue his research beyond Boston, which could be dismissed as an old East Coast city, deeply embedded in its own past and traditions.

What this study suggests is that Boston is not necessarily an aberration. The upper classes of two of three newer industrial cities produced patterns that conflict with conventional theories. In Buffalo, elites chose to remain close to downtown, while in Pittsburgh they selected an uptown, in-city location. In both cases other residents, in conflict with conventional theory, skipped over these areas for suburbs. These two cities’ elites disproportionately lived in the city and not in the suburbs. Moreover, in contrast to the conclusions of Baltzell and Hays, some upper-class city neighborhoods persisted beyond the first two generations. While it would be difficult to find neighborhoods with the staying power of Beacon Hill (more than 1.5 centuries), Buffalo’s longtime enclaves approached the century mark, and Pittsburgh’s East End persisted for the 50 years covered here (Firey 1945: 144; Kowsky 1994: 61–63).

A recent study, drawing on the 1988 Social Register, suggested that these
patterns continued to impress themselves on the behavior of successive generations of their city’s upper classes. Cleveland’s elite continued their suburban ways; by 1988, only 3% (14 households) of social registries remained in the city, and all resided at the eastern suburban border. More striking, once Clevelanders found a defensible and acceptable suburban landscape, they stayed put; the major elite cluster in 1930 (Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights) still housed nearly half of the county’s upper class as late as 1988 (Higley 1995: 74, 93–94, 165–67).

Similarly, Buffalo’s and Pittsburgh’s upper classes continued their urban inclinations; 70% of Erie County’s social registries had Buffalo addresses, and Pittsburgh retained 44% of Social Register households. This was more than the largest suburban cluster of Edgeworth, Sewickley, and Sewickley Heights (Higley 1995: 162, 92–93, 169). Most striking, the East End still housed 40% of Greater Pittsburgh’s upper class and its three neighborhoods: Oakland, Shadyside, and Squirrel Hill accounted for 9, 12, and 16%, respectively (ibid.: 92). Even Boston’s Beacon Hill had nearly 5% of the metropolitan region’s population.

On the other hand, the Cleveland pattern suggests that some elites did behave as conventional theory predicted. Moreover, Higley’s 1988 finding “reveals an upper class that is overwhelmingly suburbanized” (Higley 1995: 130). Even in 1988, however, 11% of the entire U.S. Social Register population resided on Manhattan’s very urban Upper East Side (ibid.). A comparison of Cleveland’s pattern against those in eastern, river, and midwestern industrial cities indicates that the Cleveland experience is atypical for the period under study; Buffalo’s and Pittsburgh’s patterns suggest that this judgment is problematic for the period after 1935 (Borchert 2000: 20–26; Schnore 1963: 76–85; Schnore 1964: 164–76; Harvey 1973: 173).

Although the analysis here does not permit a definitive judgment, the data on the three cities suggest the universal laws on urban location are problematic at best when it comes to predicting upper-class residence, but a variation of Firey’s notion of culture has some explanatory utility. Firey demonstrated, as Jackson suggested, that more than any other group, the upper class had agency and the resources to act on their desires; they were not fully bound by powerful economic or other forces. While even upper-class power and wealth could not, in theory, outbid all land uses, Firey shows upper-class efforts succeeded in defending Beacon Hill from incursion by a variety of forces. In this
case, the elite’s cultural proclivity was toward an urban, downtown location, an area that had been occupied by previous elites for many years. Clearly, elites exercised some control over their residential landscapes. Upper-class desires, however, appear to be discrete by city; based on the diversity of their responses, they appear to have expressed no single, national residential response or ideology.

Buffalo’s Delaware Avenue elite, Boston’s Beacon Hill, and Cleveland’s Euclid Avenue all faced challenges from other land uses (Kowsky 1994: 55–63). Buffalo’s upper class slowly conceded lower Delaware Avenue to “the pressures of commerce and government” but reestablished themselves in the upper Delaware Avenue area (Kowsky 1994: 57). Cleveland’s elite fought briefly and unsuccessfully to save their “grand avenue” from similar forces. Some moved uptown, but most quickly chose to abandon the city for suburban Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights (Cigliano 1991: 309–29). In the selection of successive residential landscapes, Clevelanders repeatedly showed a predilection for suburban or even country estate environments (Tittle and Gottlieb 1999). Whether this proclivity came from upper-class Clevelanders’ rural and small town origins and their limited number of learned professions, as Cigliano suggests, is not fully clear, but Clevelanders’ continuing commitment to single-family suburban and country housing led them out of the city long before most elites elsewhere (Borchert 2000: 20–28). The similarity of each successive landscape suggests the presence of a cultural imperative that grew out of particular conditions and experiences. It was not a universal or shared class perspective held uniformly by elites in other cities. If this were the case, then Buffalo’s, Pittsburgh’s and Boston’s elites would have responded in similar fashion.28

The Euclid Avenue landscape was much more like that of suburban and country estates in setting than that of its counterparts in Buffalo and Pittsburgh. While Cleveland’s upper class voted with their feet, Buffalo’s and Pittsburgh’s accepted, accommodated to, and perhaps even welcomed an increasingly urbanized landscape. Despite changes and threats of change, elites in these cities persisted in Allentown, the upper Delaware Avenue area, Oakland, and Shadyside. Despite the relatively similar historical circumstances of the elites of these three cities, Buffalo’s and Pittsburgh’s constructed and maintained more urban residential landscapes within their city’s boundaries, while upper-class Clevelanders repeatedly selected suburban style environ-
ments as they moved uptown and then out of town by 1930. The cultural patterns that encouraged and supported a more urbane and urban environment had been nurtured in early Pittsburgh and Buffalo and continued in their respective elite’s choice of residential landscapes in later years. Most important, Pittsburgh’s and Buffalo’s upper classes could have left the city, as did Cleveland’s; they chose not to do so by 1935 and have persisted in this choice to a considerable extent in more recent years. In 1988, Pittsburgh’s and Buffalo’s elites remained more urban than Cleveland’s upper class had been in 1930.

Finally, a set of general patterns emerge from these residential patterns. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to test, elites seem to have adopted one of three landscapes when they confronted a changing city. In Buffalo, Chicago, and Boston, elites remained near downtown in significant numbers; Chicago’s near-north-side Gold Coast and Boston’s Beacon Hill have persisted, even if each is no longer a dominant residential site (Zorbaugh 1976 [1929]: 46–68; Firey 1947; Higley 1995: 87–89; Borchert 2000: 20–28). Other cities’ elites more closely approximate Pittsburgh’s uptown movement, including New York City (Upper East Side), Philadelphia (Chestnut Hill), Cincinnati (Walnut Hills and Hyde Park), and Toronto (Rosedale), although their landscapes vary considerably. In contrast, Detroit’s elite left the city in the period after 1930, later than Cleveland’s. Although the data is far from clear, Newark, New Jersey, experienced a rapid elite abandonment perhaps predating even that of Cleveland (Backler 1974; Borchert 2000). This diversity makes a single universal theoretical explanation unlikely; it does, however, seem to conform more closely to the actual historical experiences of these cities than conventional theories have predicted.

Notes

The authors wish to thank the three anonymous readers for their excellent critiques of an earlier draft and Gladys Haddad, Bill Jenkins, David Hammack, and Walter Leedy for their comments on earlier work on this subject.

1 The terms elite and upper class are used here interchangeably for stylistic reasons.

2 Statistics for apartment dwellers are always an understatement due to the difficulty in identifying apartments by street address. For a brief discussion of site survey methods, problems, and a case study, see Borchert 1997: 25–43, 215–18, especially note 6. For each city the research involved analysis of historical photographs as well as field observation over several years.
3 Despite the presence of several fine studies on this topic, including one that covers two of the cities studied here, there is no comparable work for the third (Jaher 1982; Ingham 1978, covering Cleveland and Pittsburgh). See also note 28 below.

4 Although Burgess listed Zorbaugh’s study as a “project underway,” he ignored the implications of the Gold Coast elites near the city center and its mixed residential landscape of single-family housing, tall apartments, and hotels. Ultimately Zorbaugh did not break from Burgess’s ecological theory; he concluded the Gold Coast was a “natural area” produced by “the economic rather than of the cultural process” (Zorbaugh 1976 [1929]: 231–32, n.1).

5 Anthony Downs concluded that middle- and upper-income people move to newer housing and that low- and moderate-income people then occupy the housing abandoned by the upper classes (Downs 1981). Filter theory predicts the shift of housing from higher-income occupancy to lower-income residents as buildings age (Lowry 1960: 362–70; Lucy and Phillips 2000: 166).

6 Sociologist Digby Baltzell speculated that “in large cities such as New York or Philadelphia, the fashionable blocks rarely last for more than two or three generations” (Baltzell, 1971: 178; Hays 1974: 12). In his study of the Pittsburgh neighborhood, Shadyside, historian Robert Jucha supported Hoyt’s formulation by concluding that suburban growth “had spread out of the city in a linear direction rather than in concentric circles” (Jucha 1980: 74). In contrast, Gerald Gamm’s recent study of Catholic and Jewish residential patterns in Boston found that parish institutions tended to root Catholics in the city while Jews and Protestants, lacking such organizations, were more likely to flee to the suburbs. His analysis begins in the 1920s but ignores such persisting upper-class Protestant enclaves as Beacon Hill and Back Bay (Gamm 1999).

7 While Zorbaugh reported of the Gold Coast that a “localization of ‘society’ with its self-consciousness and common tradition, would seem to be a community” as Beacon Hill was by its political efforts to maintain itself, he nevertheless concluded, as Chicago urban breakdown theory required, that the Gold Coast “can scarcely be called a community” (Zorbaugh 1976 [1929]: 65, 68; Matthews 1977: 149). Firey does not cite Zorbaugh’s study.

8 The first of these, beginning in 1886, was done by Cleveland’s Blue Book compiler, Martha Brown-Haven. In later years the national city directory publisher, R. L. Polk and Company, took over the production of The Pittsburgh Blue Book: An Elite Directory and Family Register (Polk 1914). Others included The Pittsburgh Social Secretaire (Evans 1920) and Prominent Families: Pittsburgh, Suburban Districts and Adjacent Towns (Index Company 1906).

9 Forbes combined these into a single national edition (Domhoff 1983: 20–21).

10 Pittsburgh’s case contradicts this to a small degree. Analysis of a sample of prominent Pittsburghers who were in the 1930 Social Register revealed seven Roman Catholics (Harper 1931–1932). Bertha Florsheim Rauh, Pittsburgh’s director of public welfare, was the sample’s only Jewish Pittsburgher in the Social Register.

11 The Cleveland Blue Books listed several Jewish and African Americans, includ-
ing clothing manufacturer Paul Feiss and African American author/lawyer Charles Chesnutt. A sample of about 300 prominent Pittsburghers revealed that the Pittsburgh Blue Book (1929) listed eleven Catholics and six Jewish residents, including department store owner Edgar J. Kaufmann (Harper 1931–32).

George Bedeian’s University of Pittsburgh history seminar paper, “Social Stratification within a Metropolitan Upper Class” (1974), provides the most complete analysis of these sources for a single city, comparing Pittsburgh’s Social Register, Blue Book and Social Directory of Greater Pittsburgh, the latter published only in 1904 and 1905. While he finds the Social Directory the most exclusive, Bedeian considers the Social Register to be more exclusive than the Blue Book. An additional methodological note needs brief comment here. Both Blue Books and Social Registers contained a significant number of names with addresses outside the city’s metropolitan area; often these were in major urban centers in the United States and abroad. For example, the 1930 Buffalo Social Register contained 100 entrants (9%) with out-of-town addresses. We have excluded them from the analysis, as did Firey, on the assumption that they lived “too far . . . to be considered as effective participants in” the city’s social life (Firey 1947: 75).

Sociologists Dennis Gilbert and Joseph Kahl (1993: 62–63) note that “the Social Register, an elite directory . . . proved to be the most successful and enduring effort to specify the socially elect . . . By 1940, over three quarters of the families covered by Lundberg’s study of America’s great fortunes (most accumulated between the Civil War and World War I) were listed in the Social Register.”

Historians also have used the Social Register extensively, including David Contosta, Michael Ebner, David Hammack, John Ingham, Frederic Jaher, and Kathryn Jacob. Sociologists have made even more extensive use of the publication, including Baltzell, Firey, Domhoff, C. Wright Mills (1959: 53–57), and Zorbaugh (1976 [1929]: 8, 47–50). Geographers relying on the Social Register include Higley and Backler.

For a fine history of the hotel as a downtown institution for the elite, see chapter 2 of Paul Groth, Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States (1994).

Hoyt did not include Buffalo in his study of 142 cities, although it did fit his notion of elites moving in sectors along a major thoroughfare such as Delaware Avenue. The city did not, however, fit his prediction that the upper class would move to the periphery.

Ironically, Swauger (1978: 265) argues that in 1815, the preindustrial Pittsburgh elite reversed the theoretical notions of preindustrial cities because of their “preference for peripheral homes,” which was limited “by the inconvenience of poor transportation.” Whatever their initial proclivities, they demonstrated considerable persistence within the city and an urban environment during the twentieth century.

The following year, another elite directory reported 80% of families with city residences (Index Company 1916).

Sewickley’s location, 12 miles north and west from downtown, seems to conflict sharply with Hoyt’s sector theory, Jucha’s comments notwithstanding.
Toker (1986: 80), an architectural historian, pronounced Oakland “one of the best pieces of cosmetic urbanism in the country.”

Because the western portions of Euclid were already extensively developed and increasingly encroached upon by business expansion, virtually all new-home construction on Euclid took place farther east. The construction of Samuel and Flora Stone Mather’s home at 2605 Euclid represented the most significant exception. It was Euclid Avenue’s largest home and, by 1912, one of the last to be completed (Cigliano 1991: 195–99).

Much of the south side and adjoining streets, Cigliano notes, did fit a more urban pattern.

The concept of borderland comes from Stilgoe 1988: 11; Cigliano 1991: 93. Cigliano’s photograph of “country estates on the north side” illustrates that, despite the deep setback, Euclid Avenue estate lots were relatively narrow, making them appear as if their large homes almost touched each other (Cigliano 1991: 92, fig. 77). Her reference to Stilgoe’s borderland does fit with the new landscape many of Cleveland’s elite selected when they left the city; see his chapter on Shaker Heights (Stilgoe 1988: 239–51).

Because volumes are not always available for each year, we selected volumes as close to the 1900, 1915, 1930 dates as possible.

Ironically, Wade and Nicola were both native Clevelanders.

This may be due to Pittsburgh elites’ local orientation, as opposed to Cleveland’s elite, who were “the most genuinely cosmopolitan” and “the least community oriented” of Ingham’s five cities, which helps account for the diverse patterns (Ingham 1978: 228–30). It is unclear how Buffalo’s elite fits here, since there is no comparable study. Nevertheless, the antiurban and clearly prosuburban proclivities of Cleveland’s upper class suggest an explanation for Ingham’s description of their persistent movement: “constantly shifting neighborhoods certainly did little to implant a sense of community or sense of place among the upper classes . . . Cleveland’s neighborhoods deteriorated faster, with new ones being built more quickly” (ibid.: 230). Once they settled in Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights, however, they demonstrated the staying power of Buffalo’s and Pittsburgh’s elites in their preferred residential neighborhoods.

This supports the findings of Frederic Jaher and Ingham that urban elites from different cities did not behave as a unified social class (Jaher 1982: 729–30; Ingham 1975).

Additionally, the presence of a large proportion of upper-class residents in downtown areas, as in Chicago, suggests that urban population size alone does not account for the differences reported for these cities.

Newark, New Jersey, also may have experienced very rapid and extensive elite abandonment. The sources are very contradictory, a condition not shared by the other cities. Making analysis more difficult, Newark was part of the larger New York metropolitan region and a much older city than Cleveland. The 1897 Elites of Essex County,
New Jersey listed only 17% of households with Newark addresses (Sloat 1897?). The 1914 New Jersey Blue Book, however, placed 40% of the area’s households in Newark, while the 1930 Essex County Social Register gave only 13% with Newark addresses (Dau Publishing Company 1914; Blackmer 1930).

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