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**Building Progress and Middle-Class Values into Workers’ Homes: Minimal
Bungalows of California, 1900-1930**

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Abstract. In the early 1900s, industrialists developed huge new factory areas in American cities, prompting the creation nearby of large new blue-collar residential districts. Simultaneously, middle-class reformers and commercial retailers were learning how to further a subtle revolution in the ideas, technologies, and social practices for workers’ homes. Northern California’s “minimal bungalows”—small houses, often less than 800 square feet (74 square meters)—compared to earlier worker-built cottages, record how home buyers, reformers, retailers, and builders promoted and adopted notions of a single, visually uniform, and permanent national home culture for working class America. The resulting minimal bungalow neighborhoods of 1900-1930 represent new rules for house interiors linked to parallel ideas and practices at the larger scales of yard, streetscape, block, and district.

Houses are complex bundles of ideas. Hence, houses can be a record of reform and revolution as well as resistance to these forces.¹ In the decades before 1900, small, self-built workers' cottages dominated America's blue-collar urban areas. These homes, usually found within walking distance of large industrial workplaces, were so common in American industrial neighborhoods that we could call such areas "cottage districts."² Then, in the boom years from 1900 to 1930, industrialists built large swaths of ever-larger factories along the railroad entrances to American cities. These new workplaces prompted American housing developers to create literally hundreds of new blue-collar residential neighborhoods near the new factories. These later developers (and their home buyers) overwhelmingly rejected the traditions of workers' self-built cottages and instead promoted a house type that we might call the "minimal bungalow," and their neighborhoods, "minimal bungalow districts."³

The contrasts between these two house and neighborhood types show the degree to which cultural ideas, social norms, and political reform objectives overlapped and were reinforced by commercial sales campaigns with rules set by middle-class arbiters. These contrasts also reveal how the interior details of building types, including plumbing and utilities, show striking spatial correspondences with larger-scale street and neighborhood forms—all different ways in which Americans were "thinking" their homes.⁴ Let us look first at one workers' cottage area: West Oakland, California.⁵

Workers' Cottages and Cottage Districts

Within the city of Oakland, California, West Oakland is a district located just across the Bay from San Francisco. In 1869 West Oakland became the West Coast terminus of the first transcontinental railroad in the U.S., and the location of maintenance and construction shops which, along with the train crews, soon employed over 5,000 people. The area rapidly gained other workplaces, making West Oakland a busy industrial neighborhood. Nearby, in a new deepwater port, maritime work began to flourish.

To house the influx of new immigrant workers and their families, individual carpenters and house owners, themselves, built *workers' cottages* (fig. 1). Hundreds of these cottages survive in Oakland, today; nationwide, millions of such homes are still in use. They are almost always built of wood, with an initial size of just two to four rooms. From the front, cottages appear to be permanent dwellings. The front portion of the home, the starter cottage of two to four rooms nearest the street, is often very solidly-built, as probably required to secure a formal mortgage from a savings and loan institution or an informal vest pocket loan from a neighborhood business person. However, from the back, cottages look like an assemblage of temporary shacks. Over time, cottage owners dramatically alter their homes by making significant self-built additions. Windows, doors, and other elements are often scavenged from older structures.

In workers' cottages, the various additions have been—and are—practical solutions to immediate problems, rather than a search for visual elegance. A single cottage room may have interior walls of three different materials, resulting from three

different building phases. Because of these additions, we must say that workers' cottages were "begun" in a particular year, rather than "completed" at any one time. Even after a century of additions, workers' cottages typically remain small homes of fewer than 800 square feet (approximately 74 square meters).

The upper floor of a cottage on Chester Street in West Oakland has a fairly informal present-day arrangement of five rooms. The first two rooms show clearly in the roof line, as well as a succession of other roof shapes that indicate later building campaigns (fig. 2). City tax records and closer examination of the cottage itself reveal how a succession of different owners built this cottage in six stages between 1875 and the present. Gradual changes continue to be made. An Irish immigrant family of four, whose breadwinner was a laborer with the railroad, lived in the original two rooms, built about 1875. The next owner, a ferry boat fireman, added a rear kitchen ell 12 years later. A third owner enclosed the kitchen porch, about 1900. The fourth stage of construction probably dates from World War II, when employment in the district surged; the rear ell and enclosed porch were torn down and re-built in a slightly larger, two-room rear wing; at the same time, the house was also raised and a downstairs flat added. In the 1970s, yet another owner built a new three-fixture bathroom and rear laundry room and passageway, also adding a closet and extra space to the rear bedroom. In the most recent stage, the owner enclosed the rear porch. All of these changes result in a dwelling still tiny by American standards, only 790 square feet (73 square meters). The lower flat is the same size.⁶

Given their incremental construction, the spaces inside workers' cottages typically display mixed uses and spatial informality. These ideas about domestic space are very

different from those displayed in middle-class houses of the same years. In a worker's cottage, circulation is ad-hoc: there are typically no purpose-built hallways; one room simply opens onto another. In the floor plan of the cottage on Chester Street, one bedroom is at the front; the other is in the back (fig. 3). Both open directly onto the kitchen. There is no bedroom hall or transition space signaling the more private zones of rooms used for sleeping. Nor do cottage builders specialize rooms by their shape, size, or details. Rooms that open directly from a kitchen or rear laundry porch are all the easier to rent out to single laborers. The kitchen of a workers' cottage usually has served as sitting room and dining room, and often as a sleeping room as well. If there is a parlor, for years at a time it may have served as a bedroom, or it too may have been rented out.⁷ As for plumbing, workers' cottages today have a toilet, a sink, and a bathtub—however, all three fixtures are rarely in the same room; if they are, they are part of a new bathroom added after 1960, as is the case for the cottage on Chester Street.⁸

Like cottage interiors, the street views of cottage districts typically have very little spatial uniformity, which can be seen in the figure-ground plan of the city blocks adjacent to Chester Street (fig. 4). The setbacks of cottages from the sidewalk, which in middle class areas would be uniform, instead vary from zero to 30 feet (9 meters). Land uses in the cottage district were—and still are—as mixed as the cottage interiors. Large-scale workplaces, small foundries, workshops, and stores are scattered throughout the district and located directly adjacent to cottages.

The lot lines surrounding cottages are also informal. In West Oakland, lots started with a uniform width of 25 feet (seven and a half meters). However, individual buyers have privately negotiated slightly wider or narrower lots; other owners casually

incorporated into the front half of their lot some of the side yard of the adjacent house, especially if it had burned down. Like the practical, individual solutions to interior space needs, the plot patterns and fences show gradual, on-going adjustment. For these casual adjustments, few legal records exist. Hence, in cottage districts such as West Oakland, individual owners clearly have organized change (and have thought about their neighborhoods) at the scale of the room and plot.

Minimal Bungalow Districts

Investments in East Bay industries multiplied from 1900 to 1930, due to the rapid expansion of population in the American West, the opening of the Panama Canal (which further spurred commerce), and the Bay Area's growing trade with the nations around the Pacific Rim. Owners of two additional railroad lines—as well as multiple shipyards, canneries, lumber mills, and petroleum processing plants—created an arc of large industrial establishments that extended from the port of Oakland, through West Oakland, and northward along the Bay for about five miles, into the blue-collar neighborhood of West Berkeley, which is downhill from the city of Berkeley's commercial district and university area (fig. 5). Investment in workers' housing followed alongside the new factories.⁹

The design historian Carma Gorman has documented several city blocks of homes built by a large-scale Bay Area development company. Between 1925 and 1927, the developer sold 41 West Berkeley bungalows with identical plans and minor variations in façade design. A house on Jones Street is typical (fig. 6).¹⁰ These houses show the new building type of the *minimal bungalow*, built all at once, and in a form meant to be permanent. The interiors of these houses, plus their yards, streets, and blocks, present

strong contrasts to the cottage and cottage district. At first glance, the floor plan of the house on Jones Street might appear similar to the worker's cottage in West Oakland. Both are two-bedroom housing units, both today have kitchens with running water and a rear laundry porch. But Gorman succinctly describes the distinctiveness of the interior design on Jones Street: "What the plan lacks in size, it makes up for in social and spatial subtlety."

The Jones Street houses are small houses—only 684 square feet (64 square meters) in area. Yet, in spite of small size, their interior plan is packed with radical new ideas that closely follow middle-class spatial and social rules of specialization, hierarchy, and separation (fig. 7). The entry sequence is more controlled. Interior circulation is also more controlled; both bedrooms are in a single zone of the plan, rather than scattered. The bedrooms are set apart from the living room by a tiny hallway, marked by an arched opening. The rear bedroom is slightly larger than the other, has a larger closet and has a more private position, all of which indicate it is a "master bedroom," even in a four-room house. There is a cramped but thoroughly modern three-fixture bathroom, adjacent to the bedrooms, that was part of the house from its inception.

As with workers' cottages, small size is still a defining distinction in minimal bungalows. Their much more famous middle-class counterparts start at about twice the size—1,200 square feet (92 square meters), or more. Minimal bungalows, as noted above, are 600 to 800 square feet (56 to 74 square meters).¹¹

The developers of West Berkeley's bungalow blocks were clearly thinking not room by room, nor lot by lot, but at the scale of the whole house and whole block. The homes are carefully arranged in whole-streetscape patterns (fig. 8). The developers

bought locations on which open lots faced each other across a street. The setback of houses was a uniform 15 feet (4.6 meters) from the front property line. In the 1990s, the lots, fences, and gardens of the West Berkeley sample blocks remain regular and legal. There are no informal borrowings across lot lines. Wider lots maintain a density of 10 units per acre (4 units per hectare), about half the density of West Oakland.¹² These larger lots and lower densities mean more light and separation for the houses, and more importantly, allow room for access to rear-yard garages supplied by the developer, showing that the Berkeley buyers were assumed to own automobiles as early as 1925. Many corner lots were initially reserved, perhaps for more expensive houses or for corner stores that were not given the expected zoning variances. Later, non-matching houses filled these spaces.

Building Progress and Reform into Blue Collar Housing

The contrasts between the cottage and minimal bungalow house types and housing districts reveal several different layers of meaning about the ways that Americans were re-thinking proper homes before and after 1900. We might simply say that the changes were part the top-down imposition of twentieth-century modernity—middle- and upper-class reformers building progress and reform into blue-collar housing.¹³ However, the adoption of the new ideas about small homes was being done by at least four different (and not always concurring) groups of people: buyers, reformers, retailers, and builders.

The ideas that, so far, have proved most illusive are those of the people who bought and lived in the new minimal bungalows. Clearly, the houses in West Berkeley prompted a selective migration of skilled blue collar workers, most of them already

automobile owners and probably American-born migrants from small towns. They seem to have shared the home values of middle-class Americans, since over two generations, they have made only minor additions to their homes; two thirds of the dwellings in the West Berkeley sample are still their original size; the rest did not see major additions until the 1980s. To move up domestically, one moved to another house rather than expand an existing home. One set of owners, the machinist Horace Baugh and his wife Lucille, bought their West Berkeley minimal bungalow in 1925 and lived there until 1938; then they moved four blocks away to a larger house.¹⁴

Buyers like the Baughs brought with them abstract ideas about the spatial rules of modernity—separation, hierarchy, and specialization—that they were learning at work and at leisure. Horace Baugh, as a machinist, would have worked eight to ten hours a day in highly organized new factory spaces. His subliminal workplace lessons were probably most dramatically learned in places such as factory assembly crane bays, specialized for rapid movement of materials and sub-assemblies. Other work places of the East Bay—railroad shops, shipyards, laundries, and canneries—also imposed highly engineered time schedules and flows of projects. Women who worked as maids or washerwomen in fancy houses could observe first-hand thoroughly modern middle- and upper-class home spaces that were so different from workers' cottage spaces.

The men and women of neighborhoods like West Berkeley were learning spatial lessons at leisure, too. Spaces like dime movie theaters, and especially the new downtown movie palaces were far more specialized environments than the all-purpose upstairs meeting halls whose varied activities the movies often replaced. After 1900, even the major streets of blue-collar neighborhoods, and the traffic flows on the streets,

were more hierarchical and specialized than their 1880s counterparts. Observing the radically new spaces of rail transportation, from the passenger railroad cars where so many Oakland workers toiled as porters, or car cleaners, to streetcars (still in the 1920s used only occasionally by wage workers for special excursions) taught new, modern kinds of space.¹⁵ From the age of the trees in the back yards, the new West Berkeley cottage owners also appear to have been early adopters of the idea of the “habitable” back yard—a back yard as leisure space, not simply a place for ash cans, kitchen gardens, and laundry yards.¹⁶

The ideas of a second group of people involved in changing housing, Progressive-Era health and housing reformers, have been more fully documented. Early reforms were led by Victorian-era public health campaigners, based on ideas such as the germ theory of disease. These strategies often led first to better infrastructure for low-income areas: better sewer and water service; regular garbage collection; better police protection; widespread street paving and storm water drains; rodent abatement; and tuberculosis inspections. Reformers wrote and enforced tougher building codes, further shaping the city.¹⁷ Such improvements were uneven; in rough-and-tumble Oakland, hazardous self-building details like precarious back stairs with no landing at the top, or treads and risers of different sizes, survive to the present.

However, in Berkeley, increasingly powerful University and business leaders not only wrote and enforced tough building codes, but also fought for and gained statewide permission to impose land-use zoning. Zoning attacked, head-on, the idea of mixed land uses—indeed, any mixture of production and consumption realms—and promoted thinking about strict separation and specialization at the whole-neighborhood scale of

development.¹⁸ Progressive Era reformers saw minimal bungalows and their relatively wide lots as a good match with the national reform ideals of detached single family houses and lower housing densities as the only proper American housing forms.

Indeed, for Progressive leaders, density of any kind was an urban evil. The nationally influential New York housing expert Lawrence Veiller, along with photographs of slum problems caused by overcrowding, included in his campaigns for housing reform a photograph of an elegant seven-story apartment house in Albany, New York, juxtaposed with older, three-story single-family row houses. To this photo, Veiller attached the caption, “Even the rich may suffer,” exemplifying reform abhorrence of apartments and flats, or any other multi-unit housing types.¹⁹

Using photographs of worst-case slum units and disheveled, dirty, and disorganized interior rooms, reformers exhorted their colleagues and the public that “teaching the tenant was needed.” In the midst of blue-collar neighborhoods, settlement house reformers launched ambitious programs for teaching immigrants middle-class ways of life. In the early 1900s, California’s statewide reforms were led by a Commission on Immigration and Housing, the CIH. The CIH actively promoted settlement and school classes for adult immigrants, in which well-meaning matrons taught workers basic workplace skills, child-rearing and health practices, and cultural rules. For immigrants and teachers in settlement classes, the CIH distributed brochures with standard English lessons that taught middle-class values. For instance, one lesson included practical ideas about the home:²⁰

This house has three rooms.

This room has two windows and one door.

The rent is too high.

The landlord must mend the roof.

For adults, these lessons were occasional. For children, compulsory primary schools were five-days-a-week places to learn and to practice new values. We know that through the 1920s, many West Oakland children showered or bathed not at home, but at school.

Retailers were a third group of people active in weaving new ideas into reformed homes. Retailers provided education about proper American domestic life less officially than the settlement houses and the CIH, but more widely. Shopping—or at least window-shopping—helped to create desire for change and new products. (The CIH, in fact, was founded and directed by a wealthy department store owner.)²¹ Advertisements in newspapers and union newsletters also brought commercial items into working-class view. Many West Oakland housewives worked nights as cleaning ladies in the nearby downtown department stores, so if they could not afford to shop or window-shop, they nonetheless had close familiarity with middle-class material culture.²² Sears Roebuck and Company sold both houses and interior furnishings in retail packages, catalog style, as did local lumber yards.

Just to make sure immigrants understood consumer joys, the CIH had a reading lesson about them:²³

I shall be happy tomorrow.

I shall have money.

I shall go to the store.

I shall buy cloth.

I shall make a dress.

I shall like my dress.

I take off my dress.

I put on my nightgown.

The lines of this lesson reinforce not only the happiness of paychecks, buying cloth, and making a new dress, but also remind immigrants not to sleep in the same clothes that they have worn during the day. They were to take off their day-time clothes and wear clothing specialized for sleeping. This specialization of clothing was yet another, and very personal, way that commercial arbiters of taste helped to make specialization of activities and times a reality in the new, modern American experience.

A fourth group of people involved in re-thinking the worker's home was composed of developers and builders of housing, who left clear trails of their ideas in built environments as well as in house deeds. The developer of the West Berkeley minimal bungalows was a firm named the Alameda Investment Company, or AIC, headquartered in Oakland. Its principal owner held large tracts of land for development in five California counties. The AIC specialized in selling houses on the installment plan.²⁴ The AIC not only provided modern, complete, built-all-at-once minimal bungalows in West Berkeley. They also placed restrictive covenants—more typical of middle and upper class housing of the same period—on each of their individual bungalows, with the following language included in each property deed:²⁵

. . . prior to January 1, 1930, no building shall be erected or placed upon the land herein conveyed to be used or which shall be used for any other purpose than that exclusively of a dwelling house, together with the necessary outbuildings connected therewith and that no such dwelling

house erected or placed upon said land shall cost less than \$2,000.00 nor shall any part of any building be within 15 feet of the front property or street line.

This language ruled out mixed use and any work uses of yards or buildings, and shows the goal of whole streets, blocks, and districts of uniform appearance and cost. The new minimal bungalow neighborhood was to be a single-use consumption sphere with no shacks or self-built houses that differed markedly in cost from the houses the AIC offered for sale. The even building-front line, fifteen feet back from the sidewalk, was another indication of a desire for uniform, permanent form—a very middle-class way of thinking about the American residential street—that the developers assumed their new home-buyers wanted.

In more concise language, but with severely damaging social effects, the deed restrictions go on to exclude certain racial groups:

. . . prior to said date [January 1, 1930] no person of African, Mongolian, or Japanese descent shall be allowed to acquire, own, rent or use the said above described property of any part thereof.

Since the 1960s, the racial aspects of covenants have become the more frequently noted deed restrictions in the United States. However, racial covenants are congruent within the developers' desires for newly sorted-out land uses and other kinds of uniformity. The five-year time period for the restrictions—rather than requiring them for the life of the house—was insurance on a corporate investment, protecting the AIC while they sold the rest of the nearby homes. The probable assumption was that once the neighborhood was solidly uniform architecturally and completely white racially, social pressures and

informal real estate practices (in which sales agents would not show area houses to racial minority buyers, and bank lenders also rigidly reinforced the status quo) would keep the neighborhood white.

Taken together, in their different arenas of practice the buyers, reformers, retailers, and builders of minimal bungalows all seemed intent on furthering the goal of a single, uniform, shared, and national home culture for America. The buyers of the new minimal bungalows were voting, with their housing dollars, for the new forms of houses and blocks. Not present in the West Berkeley neighborhood were the buyers who preferred older types of houses and others who could not afford the new house forms. They were elsewhere, largely in older near-to-downtown districts like West Oakland, or at other, less expensive industrial edges of the metropolis.²⁶ Meanwhile, retailers pushed the steered diffusion of new home ideas at the scale of furnishings and clothing. Reformers and developers hoped to replace the old city, which underwent constant transition, with a permanent new city that would be finished and complete.

Visual uniformity, as a value, seemed to stand for the unreachable goals of cultural and social unity, and suggested order in an otherwise chaotic urban world.²⁷ A close reading of built spaces shows that progress and middle class values were ideas and practices of house interiors, linked to parallel ideas and practices at larger scales. Minimal bungalow areas represented not only a new house type, but also a new type of yard, streetscape, block, and district.

In conclusion, we must remember that in the United States, millions of workers' cottages (remnants of the "old city") and minimal bungalows (harbingers of the "new city") survive today. These contrasting types of houses and neighborhoods not only

shelter and locate domestic activities. They are also bundles of ideas and power relations that affect individual identities and the relationships of households to neighborhoods and cities. Studying ordinary, often overlooked houses and blocks helps us understand, literally, the inner workings of how social groups—both high-income and low-income—use urban space to create and change urban societies and cultures.

Notes

Acknowledgements. This article owes very much to the architectural and urban historian, Marta Gutman, who in 1995 originated and then co-directed, with the author, a large study of West Oakland, cited below. Field measurements and individual building plans were prepared by Benjamin Chuaqui and Sibel Zandi-Sayek; additional drawings are by Renu Desai and Matt Wittman. Seth Lunine provided key research assistance. Thanks also to colleagues who commented on an earlier draft of this chapter: Daniel Abramson, Eric Avila, Lizabeth Cohen, Margaret Crawford, Alice Friedman, Jane Kamensky, Paula Lupkin, Martha McNamara, Anne Whiston Spirn, and Ellen Stroud.

¹ The concept of houses as bundles of ideas paraphrases American studies scholar Carl Smith, lecture at the University of California, Berkeley, April 6, 2006.

² Workers' cottages—and other small homes owned by workers—are only beginning to receive attention in scholarly literature of the United States. See Robert G. Barrows, “Beyond the Tenement: Patterns of American Urban Housing, 1870-1930,” *Journal of Urban History* 9,4 (1983): 395-420; and James Borchert, “Social Landscapes of a Streetcar Suburb,” in *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes*, Paul Groth and Todd W. Bressi, eds. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997): 25-43. See also Joseph C. Bigott, *From Cottage to Bungalow: Houses and the Working Class in Metropolitan Chicago, 1869-1929* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001) and Carolyn S. Loeb, *Entrepreneurial Vernacular: Developers' Subdivisions in the 1920s* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001): 55-87.

³ The descriptions of these homes and neighborhoods are drawn from Paul Groth, “Workers’ Cottage and Minimal Bungalow Districts in Oakland and Berkeley, California, 1870-1945,” *Urban Morphology* 8,2 (April 2004): 13-25.

⁴ On interior building details as social keys to building types, see also Paul Groth, *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994): 26-167.

⁵ For the field report of the West Oakland and West Berkeley research see Paul Groth and Marta Gutman, “Workers Houses in West Oakland,” in Suzanne Stewart and Mary Praetzellis, eds., *Sights and Sounds: Essays in Celebration of West Oakland*, Report for the Cypress I-880 Replacement Project (Oakland, California: California Department of Transportation, CALTRANS, with the Anthropological Studies Center, Sonoma State University, 1997): 31-84. The initial West Oakland research was supported by a grant from CALTRANS.

⁶ Groth and Gutman, “Workers Houses in West Oakland,” pp. 70-73.

⁷ The bedroom closets shown in the floor plan of the Chester Street cottage have been added recently; initially these rooms did not have built-in closets—again, signaling the potential for informal changes of use. On parlors with multiple uses, Bertha Rosas, interview with Marta Gutman and Paul Groth in Oakland, California, 27 March 1995. Life in West Oakland in the 1880s and 1890s was also captured by the neighborhood’s most famous resident, the writer Jack London, whose novel *The Valley of the Moon* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1999; originally published in New York by MacMillan, 1913) describes details of his childhood in West Oakland.

⁸ The phrase “three fixture bathroom”—used to distinguish middle-class bathrooms from the plumbing arrangements found in workers’ cottages—comes from Benjamin Chauqui, “The Adoption of the Bathroom in the Working Class Dwelling: The Case of Jingtowntown” (seminar paper, Department of Architecture, University of California, Berkeley, 1993) in collection of Paul Groth.

⁹ On patterns of transportation and industry in the East Bay, see James E. Vance, Jr., *Geography and Urban Evolution in the San Francisco Bay Area* (Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies, 1964), esp. pp. 1-41.

¹⁰ The West Berkeley research relies heavily on Carma Gorman, “The Colonization of Home: West Berkeley’s Zone of Emergence and American Middle-Class Family Values in the Mid-1920s,” seminar paper, University of California, Berkeley, 1993, in collection of Paul Groth. Gorman notes that the construction dates for the 41 houses cluster between 1925 to 1927.

¹¹ A recent spate of books about middle class American bungalows include Dominic A. Pacyga and Charles Shanbruch, eds., *The Chicago Bungalow* (Chicago: Chicago Architecture Foundation and Arcadia Publishing, 2001). Loeb, *Entrepreneurial Vernacular*, pp. 19-54, 88-213, is especially good on the modestly-sized developer houses of Ford Homes in Dearborn, Michigan, and Westwood Highlands in San Francisco, California.

¹² In 1912, in a typical area of West Oakland, fire insurance mapping surveyors recorded 23 units per acre (9.3 units per hectare), including flats and back yard cottages. The West Berkeley density is for 1929, and was much the same in the 1990s.

¹³ A useful entry point to the modernity literature is still Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982). An elegant definition of the spatial aspects of modernity is unfolded gradually in David Harvey, *Paris: Capital of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

¹⁴ The Baughs appear to have moved to the East Bay in 1925; Horace Baugh's employment varied from machine operator, machinist, and laborer. *Polk-Husted Directory Company's Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda Directory* (Oakland: Polk-Husted Directory Company, consulted for the years 1925 to 1940).

¹⁵ These ideas are developed at greater length in Paul Groth, "Learning Modernity: 'Almost Modern' Houses and Neighborhoods, 1880-1930," book chapter presentation at the Warren Center for the Study of American History, Harvard University, March 2005. On the new, modern spaces of the railroad, see John R. Stilgoe, *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983).

¹⁶ On the American history of the habitable back yard, see Chris Grampp, *American Yard, California Garden* (Staunton, Virginia: Center for American Places and the University of Chicago Press, forthcoming).

¹⁷ Roy Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums: Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890-1917* (Pittsburgh : University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962); Martin V. Melosi, *The Sanitary City: Urban Infrastructure in America from Colonial Times to the Present* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

¹⁸ Berkeley was one of the first cities in the United States to institute city-wide land use zoning. See Marc Weiss, *The Rise of the Community Builders: The American Real Estate Industry and Urban Land Planning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987).

¹⁹ See Lawrence Veiller, *A Model Housing Law* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1920).

²⁰ *The Home Teacher* [a pamphlet with 40 lessons in English vocabulary and handwriting] (Sacramento, CA: California Commission on Immigration and Housing, 1916): 41, included in the CIH *Second Annual Report* (Sacramento: CIH): 187.

²¹ The CIH founder inherited and then expanded a chain of large retail stores. As a Harvard undergraduate and in his immediate post-college years he worked in settlement houses in Boston and New York. This exemplifies how fluid the lines could be between reformers and employers. Groth, *Living Downtown*, pp. 234-236.

²² The literature on consumerism and department stores is vast; for a useful entry point, see William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993).

²³ *The Home Teacher*, p. 31, included in the CIH *Second Annual Report*, p. 177.

²⁴ The Alameda Investment Company was incorporated in 1906 and remained listed in business guides until 1939. The AIC engaged “in the business of building homes, which it sells on the installment plan, and in financing homes on the installment plan for responsible individuals who own unimproved property.” *Walker’s Manual of California Securities and Directory of Directors* (San Francisco: H. D. Walker, 1925):

347. The president of AIC, Stewart S. Hawley, managed two other development companies, and was a director in a number of related firms.

²⁵ Alameda County Deed #4270/1820, Alameda Investment Company to H. A. Baugh, et al., August 31, 1925, for 962 Cedar Street, Berkeley, California. From Carma Gorman, “The Colonization of Home.”

²⁶ See Richard Harris, *Unplanned Suburbs: Toronto’s American tragedy, 1900 to 1950* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), and Becky M. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

²⁷ Influential early studies of the Progressive Era desire for order in a chaotic world are Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York: Vintage Books, 1955) and Robert H. Wiebe, *Businessmen and Reform: A Study of the Progressive Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962). See also Greg Hise, “The Minimum House,” *Magnetic Los Angeles: Planning the Twentieth-Century Metropolis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997): 56-85; Richard Harris, “The Impact of Building Controls on Residential Development in Toronto, 1900-1940,” *Planning Perspectives* 6 (1991): 269-96; and Stanley Buder, *Visionaries and Planners: The Garden City Movement and the Modern Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1. Varied setbacks of worker's cottages on Fifth Street in West Oakland, a streetscape begun in the 1870s. Note front yards converted for parking automobiles (photograph by the author, 1995).

Figure 2. Worker's cottage on Chester Street, West Oakland, begun ca. 1875. The first two rooms are at the front (right), with several later additions to the rear (photograph by the author, 1995).

Figure 3. Plan of the worker's cottage on Chester Street and its surroundings. The fireplace and closet in the front two rooms are additions, perhaps from 1887. The three-fixture bathroom and rear hall are post-1970 additions (drawing by Benjamin Chuaqui and Sibel Zandi-Sayek).

Figure 4. Ground plan of four typical blocks in West Oakland's cottage district, 1911-1912. Hatched lines designate commercial and light industrial buildings; tracks of a freight-car sorting yard of the Southern Pacific Railroad are shown to the south. Source: Sanborn Insurance Maps (drawing by Renu Desai).

Figure 5. The East Bay cities of Berkeley and Oakland, showing industrial areas and locations of sample blocks of the cottage district in West Oakland and the minimal bungalow district in West Berkeley (drawing by Matt Wittman).

Figure 6. Minimal bungalow and its back yard garage on Jones Street in West Berkeley, built in 1925 (photograph by the author, 1995).

Figure 7. Plan of the minimal bungalow on Jones Street and its surroundings in West Berkeley. Note the small hallway separating the bedrooms from the living room (drawing by Sibel Zandi-Sayek).

Figure 8. Ground plan of typical minimal bungalow blocks in West Berkeley, 1929. A small bungalow court (lower right) shows the proximity of old densities. Source: Sanborn Insurance Maps (drawing by Renu Desai).