Edging Toward Equity?
Justice, Scale, and Movement-building in the New Regionalism

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There’s Something Happening Here . . .
From Living Wage to Labor Voice

The Problem

Local decision makers often approve projects submitted by developers without considering the costs and benefits to communities and without requiring developers to address these impacts.

1. Low-wage jobs with no health benefits.
2. Workers have no voice or power on the job.
3. Lack of affordable housing.
4. Lack of housing space in urban neighborhoods.
5. Toxic pollution from bad development is damaging our health.
6. Creation of unsafe and unhealthy neighborhoods due to lack of proper land use planning.
7. Developer-friendly land use planning process that prioritizes sales tax revenue over community benefits.
8. Large public subsidies provided to developers with no benefit to the community.
9. Large national chain stores driving local small businesses, lower job quality standards, increase traffic congestion, and provide no incentives to strengthening the community's long-term well-being.
10. Development that is not aligned with mass transit facilities perpetuates social dependency and increases personal transportation expenses.

The Partnership for Working Families National Network Map
Growing Interest . . .

Attendees at Regional Equity Conferences, 2002 and 2005

Total attendees, 2002 and 2005 combined

- 1 - 2
- 2 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 40
- 40 - 60
- 60 - 100
- More than 100

Key Questions For Today

- What is the emerging regional equity perspective and how do we unpack it to understand it?

- Will it amount to a social movement – and what are its broader possibilities?

- What are the contradictions, challenges, and tensions that lie ahead as this arena develops?
An unusual starting point: the wake of the Los Angeles civil unrest

- A sense that this was the epitome of economic and social dissolution/fragmentation
- A recognition that the problems of poor communities could not be addressed in isolation from regional opportunities – and that maybe regional recovery also relied on such incorporation

Coming to Regionalism

What is the New Regionalism?

Convergence of multiple trends leading to a surge of regions as basis for civic action and policy

- Economic Forces — Regions important for economic success

Increasing Variation in Regional Economic Performance, Top 25 MSAs
Growing in Tandem?

Growth in Private Employment, Los Angeles and the Bay Area, 1974-1989

Tale of Two Recessions

Loss in Non-Farm Employment Over Two Recessions as Percent of Initial Employment, Los Angeles and the Bay Area
What is the New Regionalism?

Convergence of multiple trends leading to a surge of regions as basis for civic action and policy

- Economic Forces — Regions important for economic success
- Environmental Concerns — “Smart Growth” requires confronting fragmentation and promoting regional cooperation
- Design Concerns – Regional approaches could be consistent with New Urbanism / compact development
- Equity Strategies — Improved opportunities within regional context

Traditional Economic Tradeoffs – and the New Regional Challenge

- Too much equity, not enough incentives; too much inclusion, too much decision-making chaos

- Regional tradeoff? Inequality and spatial / racial segregation can trigger under-investment, damage social capital, & erode consensus
Previous Studies in U.S.

- Savitch et al. (1993) and Barnes and Ledebur (1998): wider city-suburb income gaps associated with regional stagnation in income and jobs
- Voith (1998): city-suburb links persist even when controlling for other factors and simultaneity
- Pastor et al. (2000): per capita income growth faster where poverty gaps and segregation lower, even controlling for other factors and utilizing simultaneous model

Newest Work:

- Utilizing weighted regression approach to 341 metro areas in the U.S. 1990-2000

   Per capita income growth related to:
   (+) regional education
   (-) manufacturing concentration
   (+) central city presence
   (-) previous income
   (?) region of U.S.
   (-) measure of inequity, including ratio of city to suburb poverty, concentration of poverty, income distribution, black-white segregation
Regression Results


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% working-age residents who are college-educated, 1990
Manufacturing concentration in central city, 1990
% of metro population in central city, 1990
MSA unemployment rate, 1990
Ratio of city to suburban poverty, 1990
Percent of poor residents in high poverty neighborhoods, 1990
Ratio of income at sixtieth to the twentieth percentile, 1990
Index of dissimilarity (black-white) at metro level, 1990

Number of observations: 326, 327, 327, 327
Adjusted R-squared: 0.420, 0.419, 0.407, 0.418

*** significant at the .01 level, ** significant at the .05 level, * significant at the .10 level

Are Business Leaders “Getting It”?!

- Chicago Metropolis 2020 – launched by Commercial Club under slogan “One Region, One Future” with availability of affordable housing as one location factor
- Joint Venture Silicon Valley – including equity in its indicators report as one measure of success and commitment
- Fund for Our Economic Future, Northeast Ohio – with widespread participation and minority entrepreneurship as measures


**Ties With Environmental Concerns**

- Confronting urban sprawl and preserving open space requires regional cooperation
- The best way to constrain outward growth is strengthening existing communities
- Improving planning requires challenging the fragmented decision-making processes driven by inequality

**What is Regional Equity?**

"Achieving regional equity means considering both people and place. A competitive and inclusive region is one in which members of all racial, ethnic, and income groups have opportunities to live and work in all parts of the region, have access to living wage jobs and are included in the mainstream of regional life. It is also one in which all neighborhoods are supported to be vibrant places with choices for affordable housing, good schools, access to open space, decent transit that connects people to jobs, and healthy and sustainable environments."
Motivation for Regional Equity

- Changing demographics
- Changing opportunity structure
- Less crowded arena and potential for new alliances

Changing Suburban Demographics

Figure 1. City and Suburb Rates by Ethnic Group for Top U.S. Metro Areas, 1980-2000

Data from U.S. Census for all metropolitan areas with populations greater than 500,000 in 2000.
Changing Immigration

Increase in Immigrant Flows, Top 103 MSAs

- Central Cities: 34%
- Suburbs: 61%

Percent of Census Tracts in "First Suburbs" Exceeding 20% of Residents in Poverty, 1970-2000

- 1970: 2.7%
- 1980: 4.7%
- 1990: 6.7%
- 2000: 8.6%

Data from Robert Puentes and David Warren, One Fifth of America: A Comprehensive Guide to America's First Suburbs, Brookings Institution, February 2006
Manuel Pastor

Orfield’s Categories in Southern California

Southern California: Places by Metropolitan Area Classification - 2000 Census Place Shapes

Southern California Places by Metro-Type
- Affluent Job Center
- Affluent Residential Enclave
- Aging Suburb
- Developing Suburb
- Central City
- Unincorporated or No Data

County Lines
Major Highways

City and Suburb Types, 2000

Southern California Communities by City and Suburb Type, Demographics, 2000

% of population in urban type
- Central City
- Aging Suburb
- Developing Suburb
- Affluent Job Center
- Affluent Residential Enclave

% white
% African American
% Latino
% Asian Pacific
% Other
Creating a Literature

- David Rusk, *Cities Without Suburbs*, 1993

What’s Different If We Go This Route?

Three Quick Examples:

- DreamWorks Initiative in Los Angeles – regional jobs, community access
- Bethel New Life and community development in West Chicago – building alliances and doing transit-oriented development
- Northwest Indiana Interfaith Federation – from closing crack houses to promoting MTOs
What’s Different If We Go This Route?

And there are more . . .

- LISC and MOSES in Detroit – combining community development, community organizing and statewide reform

- Community Benefits Agreements at LAX -- $500 million with signatories ranging from schools to labor to the Nation of Islam

Unpacking Regional Equity - Scale

- Where do you identify the problem?
- Where do you identify the solution?
- Where do you seek to organize?
Unpacking Regional Equity – Types

- Community development regionalism
- Policy entrepreneur regionalism
- Social movement regionalism

Traditional Community Development Model

- Drought
  - Lack of investment
  - Departure of jobs

- Leakage
  - Lack of retail
  - Departure of middle class

- Sharp Distinction
  - Place-based strategies
  - People-based strategies
New Way to Develop Fruitvale Transit Village Bethel New Life

Main focus is changing the rules of the game.

Main actors to influence are key policy makers, often governors or key mayors

Main tools are accessible research, new framing, and information on policy alternatives

Tendency to drift to “center” – other regionalisms with equity and race as stealth concerns
Social Movement Regionalism

- Main focus is building power to change structures as well as rules
- Main actors to influence are communities and constituencies who in turn can move policy
- Main tools include research, framing, and policy alternatives but focus is on organizing
- Tendency to see regional equity or regional organizing as key to restoring progressive coalition

Scale, Consciousness and Organizing

Levels of Social Consciousness by Spatial Scale

Because the scope and scale of the problems and conditions that we are trying to address have moved beyond the local and community levels, it is imperative to organize and build alliances at the regional level. In order to do this, it is also imperative that we move the consciousness of people to those levels.
Scale – Is It Just Organizing?

- Region as the right scale for organizing – Justice for Janitors as example
- Region as the right scale for addressing policy – IAF and Project Quest for workforce development
- Region as the cause of the problem and traditional planning concerns central – Gamaliel
- Region as the building block for a national movement – Building Partnerships, Gamaliel, SCOPE

Is This a Social Movement?

- Classical and Marxist theories of relative deprivation
- Resource mobilization and political opportunity
- “New Social Movements” – non-class, identity politics, challenge with finding the whole
- Framing / social constructionist theories: story, ideology and understanding of everyday experience, optimistic vision
“Metropolitan organizing is about changing the rules of the game so that those who have not, will have…Metropolitan organizing is the new civil rights movement, and we must be persistent.”

Reverend Cheryl Rivera, former executive director of the Northwest Indiana Interfaith Federation:

Unpacking Regional Equity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept of region</th>
<th>Community Development Regionalism</th>
<th>Policy Reform Regionalism</th>
<th>Social Movement Regionalism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INSTRUMENTAL.</td>
<td>FUNDAMENTAL.</td>
<td>FUNDAMENTAL.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Arena to secure resources and supports</td>
<td>Strategic scale to focus federal, state, and local policy intervention</td>
<td>Strategic arena for organizing to build power to influence economic and development decisions making and develop alternative institutions</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Arena to expand scopes of services and development</td>
<td>Interested elites at regional level who might accept changes resisted at state and national levels</td>
<td>Attempt to use this to build build up to national scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy Goal</td>
<td>Physical, economic and social revitalization of neighborhoods</td>
<td>Policy reforms to change the &quot;rules of the game&quot;</td>
<td>Increased power and influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix of strategies</td>
<td>Project and program development Facilitation of private and public investment</td>
<td>Advocacy of particular regional policies Use of research and influential reports</td>
<td>Direct organizing (Policy research in-house and targeted at certain efforts) Advocacy Leadership Development</td>
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Unpacking Region Equity

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<td>Motive forces</td>
<td>Recipients of housing and services. Those benefiting from reinvestment in marginalized neighborhoods</td>
<td>Opinion makers, including press. Decision makers, especially elites.</td>
<td>Working people and their families. Low-income, communities of color.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stressed middle class, particularly those in older suburbs.</td>
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<td>Form of organization</td>
<td>Professional nonprofit. Coalitions and partnerships</td>
<td>Professional nonprofit;</td>
<td>Membership organizations (residents, community leaders, and workers); Coalitions and alliances</td>
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Social Separation
- Residential segregation by race and class
- Pockets of poverty and unskilled workforce
- Lack of retail in inner city communities
- Private transportation with poor city-suburb connections
- School systems with large disparities in test scores and amenities
- Environmental disamenities distributed by race and class
- Significant gentrification and displacement due to "successful" redevelopment
- Public infrastructure with few localized benefits
- "Zero-sum" politics and focus on "business climate"

Social Cohesion
- Expanded mix-income housing opportunities throughout region
- Minimal city-suburb gaps and high levels of basic skills
- Investor interest in meeting retail demand
- Regional transportation systems with mix of public and private
- School systems committed to improvement in resources and outcomes in all communities
- Adequate open space opportunities for all communities
- New opportunities for local home ownership for long-time residents of distressed communities
- Public infrastructure that includes local ties and benefits
- Business leadership for broader social good and environmental sustainability

Signs of Separation & Cohesion
### Policies for Separation & Cohesion

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<th>Social Cohesion</th>
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<td>Employer consortiums with community partners to improve workforce skills</td>
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<td>Lack of inner-city investment programs and no requirement on hiring or contracting</td>
<td>Partnerships to generate retail investment in central cities, including minority business development</td>
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<td>Unified transportation planning across jurisdictions, and support for public transit</td>
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<td>Fewer or coordinated districts and adequate targeted funding</td>
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<td>Environmental targets for &quot;hot spots&quot; and brownfields redevelopment</td>
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<td>Equitable development strategies that promote both mixed-income and residential stability</td>
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<td>Subsidies for public investment with no accountability goals</td>
<td>Community benefits agreements between business and communities</td>
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<td>“Boundary-crossing” leadership groups with broad measures to judge region</td>
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### Tensions and Tightropes

- The role of race – understanding the dilution of power and voice
- The role of conflict – it’s not all collaboration and consensus, and “uncommon common ground” requires hard conversations
- Projects, policies, and protest – what the balance of transactions and transformations?
Tensions and Tightropes

- Weak market and strong market cities – how much can you push where?
- Optimal level of fuzziness versus a complete lack of clarity – is it the time to better identify the agenda?
- City-suburb alliances are more heralded than real – and the policy favorite of regional tax sharing is not gaining traction

Tensions and Tightropes

- Regional equity and equitable development essentially embrace the market – old ideologies die hard
- Issues of measurement and gauging success will bedevil the field – place or people debate will continue
- Capacity and selectivity – community groups need to be lazer-sharp in focus and may need to add analytical and policy capacity
Returning to Los Angeles

- The election of a new mayor who is well-versed in social justice, well-supported by business, and making regionalist gestures . . .

- Where it all came apart, can it all come together once again? And what will it mean to govern and win?

Possibilities & Promise

- New ways of doing well and doing good, fusing competitiveness and inclusion

- New ways of tackling some of the more intractable social and economic problems confronting metropolitan America

- New ways of building relationships and overcoming difference face-to-face, race-to-race, space-to-space