

South Central Farmers and Shadow Hills Homeowners: Land Use Policy and Relational Racialization in Los Angeles

Laura R. Barraclough

To cite this article: Laura R. Barraclough (2009) South Central Farmers and Shadow Hills Homeowners: Land Use Policy and Relational Racialization in Los Angeles , The Professional Geographer, 61:2, 164-186, DOI: [10.1080/00330120902735767](https://doi.org/10.1080/00330120902735767)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00330120902735767>



Published online: 09 Apr 2009.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 327



View related articles [↗](#)



Citing articles: 11 View citing articles [↗](#)

South Central Farmers and Shadow Hills Homeowners: Land Use Policy and Relational Racialization in Los Angeles*

Laura R. Barraclough

Kalamazoo College

This article draws from the recent relational turn in geography to develop a model of relational racialization. It argues that racism functions through the legal and discursive production of linked, interdependent, and unequal places. By comparing two social movements in Los Angeles, the South Central Farmers and the Shadow Hills homeowners, I examine two spatial discourses through which race is relationally reproduced: unequal abilities to mobilize the entitlements of “property rights” and unequal claims to represent hegemonic forms of local heritage. When materialized and naturalized in land use policy, these discourses re-create racial disparities in wealth and poverty and reproduce the qualitative nature of the physical places on which racism depends. **Key Words:** heritage, Los Angeles, property, race, relational space.

本文借鉴了最近地理关系理论而创建了一个种族关系模型。该模型认为，种族主义通过法律和漫生的效应，在相连的，相互依赖和不同等的地方发生作用。通过比较发生在洛杉矶的两个社会运动，分别是中南部农民和影山房主，作者研究了种族空间关系被重建的两种空间论述：不平等的变动所谓的“物产权，” 和不平等的要求代表地方遗产的霸权形式。当这些不平等的权利在土地使用政策中被物化和实现的时候，这些论述会重新制造在财富和贫穷上的种族差别，以及再造种族主义所依存的那种具有特定性质的物理地区。关键词：遗产，洛杉矶，物产，种族，关系空间。

Con base en el reciente giro relacional en geografía, este artículo desarrolla un modelo de racialización relacional. Se arguye que el racismo funciona a través de la producción legal y discursiva de lugares entrelazados, interdependientes y desiguales. Comparando dos movimientos sociales de Los Ángeles, el de los agricultores South Central y el de los propietarios de vivienda de Shadow Hill, examino dos discursos espaciales, mediante los cuales la raza es reproducida relacionalmente: habilidades dispares para movilizar la titularidad de “derechos de propiedad” y pretensiones desiguales para representar formas hegemónicas de herencia local. Cuando estos discursos se materializan y naturalizan en políticas de usos del suelo recrean disparidades raciales en términos de riqueza y pobreza, y reproducen la naturaleza cualitativa de los lugares físicos en los cuales se apoya el racismo. **Palabras clave:** herencia, Los Ángeles, propiedad, raza, espacio relacional.

On the evening of 13 July 2006, two very different groups of activists in Los Angeles mobilized to protect their interests in agriculture, open space, sense of community, and economic security. At the corner of 41st and Alameda Streets in the southern part of the city, the South Central Farmers and their supporters staged a candlelight vigil to protest their eviction by Los Angeles police on behalf of the site’s legal owner, developer Ralph Horowitz, from

the fourteen-acre community garden they had been working for over a decade. The city had initially acquired the land by eminent domain in 1985 for a trash incinerator, but abandoned its plans following public protest by the Concerned Citizens of South Central Los Angeles (www.ccscla.org). After the Los Angeles uprisings in 1992, the site was contracted to the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, which operated the land as a community garden divided into

*The author thanks Laura Pulido, Don Mitchell, and the anonymous reviewers for their very helpful comments on earlier versions of this article.



Figure 1 Aerial view of the South Central Farm in May 2006, prior to its demolition. Source: Google Earth, created by author.

plots farmed by more than 350 families (South Central Farmers Feeding Families 2006). During its operation, the South Central Farm was believed to be the largest urban garden in the United States. Its farmers were mostly Latino immigrants, many from indigenous communities in Mexico and Central America. Access to the land enabled these families to provide food for their families, supplementing poverty wages, and to continue indigenous and holistic health care practices, particularly important because many lack health insurance. In a part of the city where open space and parks are in short supply, the South Central Farm also offered a communal green space and a safe place for children to play (F. Flores, personal communication, 2 April 2006). Yet the farmers held no legal title to the land, forcing them into constant battles to retain their rights to use it.¹ Although their lawyers have filed yet another appeal, the future of the South Central Farmers is uncertain (see Figures 1–3).

On the same evening in mid-June, a much less publicized mobilization around land use

policy took place in the horse-keeping community of Shadow Hills, in the north end of the San Fernando Valley approximately 35 miles from the South Central Farm (see Figure 4). Shadow Hills is one of only four neighborhoods within city limits where horses can be legally stabled on individual properties. City Councilwoman Wendy Greuel, who has represented the area since 2002, called the meeting with her constituents to discuss a motion she had recently presented to the council, which proposed increasing the minimum lot size for all future development from the existing designation of 20,000 square feet (approximately one-half acre) to 40,000 square feet (almost one acre; Los Angeles City Planning Department 2002). According to those who support the motion, the increased lot size is necessary to preserve the community's semirural, semiagricultural landscape and lifestyle and to ensure that all future residential subdivisions enable homeowners to keep horses in their backyards. The most recent residential subdivision, built in 2003, had complied with the existing minimum lot size,



Figure 2 Poster on the fence surrounding the South Central Farm. Source: Photo by Jonathan McIntosh, 2006; used through Wikimedia Creative Commons license available at http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/South_Central_Farm.



Figure 3 *The South Central Farm in fall 2007, slightly more than one year after the farmers' eviction. Source: Photograph by Wendy Cheng, used with permission.*

but because of the neighborhood's hilly topography, many of the lots did not have enough flat space to actually keep horses. Unlike the South Central Farmers, however, the vast majority of Shadow Hills homeowners are not dependent on the productive use of land for the survival of their families. Although some families keep chickens, pigs, goats, and other small livestock on their properties, they do so primarily as pets for their children or to maintain the feel and aesthetic of a "rural lifestyle" (see Figures 5–7). Shadow Hills is a majority-white, upper middle-class community, and most residents are professionals or small business owners who enjoy their neighborhood because of its quiet, "rural" atmosphere within commuting distance of the city.

Whereas the South Central Farmers's case was covered extensively in the local media and attracted significant celebrity support and political commentary, Greuel's meeting in Shadow Hills and her motion to the City Council were never reported in the press. This divergent coverage reflects the reality that, in the media and popular imagination, the struggles of the South

Central Farmers and the Shadow Hills homeowners are perceived as wholly unrelated; and that the activism of relatively wealthy, powerful white homeowners is so entrenched and normalized as to be decidedly un-newsworthy. In this article, I argue that we must see these struggles over land and power as fundamentally and inherently linked. Drawing on insights from the recent "relational turn" in geography (e.g., Boggs and Rantisi 2003; Massey 2004b), I develop a model of relational racialization, with particular attention to how normative models of land use planning reproduce patterns of racialized wealth and poverty. The protection of privilege in one community, Shadow Hills, demands the concentration of poverty and pollution in another, South Central. Together, the spatial and economic forces that produce these two distinct kinds of places coalesce toward the reproduction of racial categories, defining what it means to be white, black, or Latino and to be economically secure or poor in contemporary Los Angeles. Clearly, there is much more involved here than the fight over a community garden or creating lots big enough to keep



Figure 4 Map of Los Angeles County, highlighting Shadow Hills and the site of the South Central Farm in relationship to downtown Los Angeles. Cartography by Mike Pesses, used with permission.



Figure 5 Dirt roads are an important part of the “rural” landscape and horse-keeping lifestyle in Shadow Hills, not only for their aesthetic value but also because they are softer on horses’ hooves and slow down automobile traffic, creating safer conditions for riders on horseback. Source: Photo by author, 2006.

horses. The struggles of these communities are dialectically linked in a regional battle over the social production of space, class, and race.

Race is an inherently relational and ongoing social construction, in that a racial identity category only has meaning through constant rearticulation of what it is not; that is, “the other,” which varies with time and place. As Doreen Massey explains, “Identities are forged in and through relations (*which include non-relations, absences, and hiatuses*). In consequence they are not rooted or static, but mutable ongoing productions” (2004a, 5, emphasis added). Moreover, race is produced at least in part through the construction of places that shape the life chances and experiences of those who occupy and use them, either by choice or by force. David Delaney (2002) suggests that “Space [is] an enabling technology through which race is produced . . . the terri-

torial division of continuous social space into dichotomous ‘insides’ and ‘outsides’ facilitates the polarization of a continuous range of colors (browns, beiges, tans, and pinks) into ‘white and black’ and hence the freezing of identities into ‘we’ and ‘they’” (7). By extension, systems of racial categorization are produced through the ongoing reproduction of racialized places that are related to—indeed, dependent on—each other.

A primary implication of understanding racialization relationally is that the production of a specific place does not just shape the experience of the racial group with which it is associated but instead participates in the reproduction of the entire material and ideological system of racisms, past and present. This means, for example, that what appears to be a “black place” is thoroughly marked by historical and contemporary structures of white



Figure 6 *This backyard is typical of properties in Shadow Hills, most of which have a barn or pipe corrals in which to keep their horses. Source: Photo by author, 2006.*

supremacy such as restrictive covenants, redlining, mob violence, and institutionalized environmental racism. Simultaneously, in the same way that literary scholar Toni Morrison (1992) argues for an Africanist presence in (white) “American literature,” “white places” (although they are rarely marked as such) are fully inscribed by, or perhaps haunted by, the racial “other” through the constant practices of exclusion on which they depend for their literal and symbolic value (Kobayashi and Peake 2000; Pulido 2000; Duncan and Duncan 2001, 2004; Hoelscher 2006; Schein 2006; Vanderbeck 2006). Every landscape is thus marked by, and offers clues to, not just its own history but also, and more profoundly, the layered accumulation of historical racial formations that are simultaneously local, regional, national, and global.

Legal systems such as land use planning play a distinctive geographical role in processes

of relational racialization because they do not merely reflect, but rather actively reproduce, systems of categorical racial inequality (Delaney 2002; Blomley 2003). Apparently mundane land use practices such as zoning, real estate development, and mortgage lending actively construct racial categories by producing unequal places, and systems of places, into which phenotypically distinct bodies are sorted (see Schein 1997). The landscape itself is a particularly powerful agent of racialization because it disguises the historical dependencies and exploitations through which it and its constituent social relations have been produced (Mitchell 1996; Schein 2006). As Richard Schein has recently argued, “The cultural landscape is especially adept at masking its complicity with processes of racialization when it is enacted as part of other, seemingly benign narratives of American life,” such as historic preservation, “which is usually invoked as something beyond



Figure 7 Although most lots in Shadow Hills are approximately one-half acre, there are still a good number of very large lots, such as the one pictured here, of ten up to seventy acres in size. Source: Photo by author, 2006.

assail, as a cultural value that is not somehow tainted by the political” (2006, 10). Through such practices resources are channeled to some neighborhoods, enabling the accumulation of wealth and power, even as environmental hazards and unwanted land uses are channeled to others, propelling the concentration of poverty, poor health, and other dangers. Land use planning thus constitutes an act of systemic racism or, in one formulation, “the state-sanctioned and/or extra-legal production and exploitation of group differentiated vulnerabilities to premature death, *in distinct yet densely interconnected political geographies*” (Gilmore 2002, 261, emphasis added).

In short, normative state-sanctioned spatial practices, and the qualitative nature of the places that they produce, are a primary force that collectively give meaning—specifically, a spatial referent—to the systems of socially con-

structed human differences that we recognize as “race.” The racialization of space achieves its own momentum, setting the geographic framework within which activists struggle to maintain or improve their social status and quality of life. As a result, white people can mobilize presumably nonracial spatial values easily and credibly to reproduce both the systems of racialized place making and the actual qualities of the places themselves. Non-white people (or those occupying places racialized as non-white) are hard-pressed to mobilize such spatial values and discourses, given that concepts like property rights or local heritage have been given value precisely through their exclusion.

Although all racialized places are produced through some variant on relationships and practices of dependency, exploitation, and exclusion, our task is to pinpoint what the specific

spatial relationships are and how they work in a given time and place. In Los Angeles under American rule (as in many, if not most U.S. cities), exclusionary housing practices, the locational decisions of the state and business with regard to industry and toxic waste, and economic redevelopment strategies—to name just a few spatial practices—have produced places of racialized economic privilege that are not only linked to but, more important, fundamentally dependent on the (re)production of places of despair and racialized poverty. In recent years, profound economic restructuring has increased the extent and concentration of poverty in Los Angeles and the spatial, economic, and racial gaps between rich and poor. Unlike other urban regions that have suffered from wholesale deindustrialization and high unemployment, Los Angeles has retained a significant manufacturing base. However, the quality of those jobs has changed from middle-wage, unionized manufacturing of defense and durable consumer goods to low-wage, nonunionized work in manufacturing and assembly, particularly of clothing, furniture, and electronics (Bobo et al. 2000; Bonacich and Appelbaum 2000). Coupled with extensive low-wage service sector work, these transformations have earned Los Angeles a dubious distinction as capital of the working poor. Although overall employment increased by 2 percent in the 1990s, working poverty increased by 34 percent (Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy [LAANE] 2000, v), and the overall poverty population increased by one-third. As poverty has grown, it has also become more spatially concentrated. The proportion of all neighborhoods classified as “extremely poor” (with more than 40 percent of residents in poverty) increased by over 80 percent (Strait 2006). As a result, according to 2000 census data, Los Angeles is the most economically segregated region in the country—only 28 percent of its neighborhoods are middle-class or mixed-income (Cleeland 2006; see also Bobo et al. 2000, 18).

Moreover, these economic and spatial transformations are distinctly racialized. Convulsive bouts of deindustrialization and reindustrialization have coincided with (and been propelled by) substantial increases in the size of the Asian American and Latino populations alongside a similarly large and rapid decline in the non-Hispanic white population. In 1970, Los An-

geles was 71 percent white, 15 percent Latino, 11 percent black, and 2.5 percent Asian American. By 2000, the white population had declined to 31 percent, the Latino population increased to 37 percent of the city’s population, and the Asian American population had grown to 11 percent; the black population remained stable (Grant 2000, 51–52). Growing diversity has not been accompanied by equality; quite the opposite has been the case. Despite their demographic decline, white workers, and especially white men, remain overrepresented in professional and technical services, particularly finance, insurance, and real estate, as well as entertainment (Grant 2000). On the other hand, African Americans have been disproportionately affected by the loss of durable manufacturing jobs, suffering higher rates of unemployment. Latinos have disproportionately filled the new manufacturing and low-skill service jobs and therefore are overrepresented among the working poor (Grant 2000; LAANE 2000). Median incomes for African American and Latino households in Los Angeles trail those of whites by nearly \$25,000 (Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy 2003, 58). In 2000, although Latinos made up only 40 percent of the city’s workforce, they accounted for 73 percent of the working poor (LAANE 2000, vii). Racialized economic divisions are literally mapped onto social space in Los Angeles, which was more segregated between whites and non-whites in 2000 than in 1940 (Ethington, Frey, and Myers 2001).

The contrast between the South Central Farmers and the Shadow Hills homeowners clearly illustrates the dramatic and increasing gaps between rich and poor, white and non-white, citizen and immigrant, and homeowner and tenant that characterize life in contemporary Los Angeles. Shadow Hills is a disproportionately white place, with a non-Hispanic white population of nearly 80 percent in a county where whites are just 29 percent of the total population. By contrast, the census tract surrounding the South Central Farm was 88 percent Latino, 11 percent African American, and just 1 percent white. Correspondingly, Shadow Hills has a significantly higher median household income, much lower rates of poverty, and higher rates of homeownership than both Los Angeles County and South Central (see Table 1 and Figures 8 through

Table 1 Indicators of economic security: South Central Farm and Shadow Hills census tracts relative to Los Angeles County

	South Central Farm census tract	Shadow Hills census tract	Los Angeles County
Median household income (in U.S. dollars)	21,886	73,884	37,388
Percentage of families living in poverty	39.8	4.4	17.8
Percentage of residents who are homeowners	35.0	86.0	38.7

10).² Shadow Hills residents are also overrepresented in high-wage service jobs and enjoy much higher educational levels.

Using the South Central Farmers and the Shadow Hills homeowners as a comparative case study, in the remainder of this article I examine in detail how the racial dynamics of wealth and poverty in Los Angeles are reproduced through normative acts of land use planning and racialized spatial discourses. I first outline the historical practices that produced South Central Los Angeles and the suburban San Fernando Valley (with a focus on the case study community of Shadow Hills) relative to each other as constitutive places within the city’s racialized economic system. Then, drawing on archival and ethnographic

research from the Shadow Hills and South Central Farmers’ struggles, I consider how history repeats itself through the reproduction of relationally racialized landscapes. There are certainly many factors worth exploring,³ but in the interests of space I examine the two processes that have been most significant to the struggles of the South Central Farmers and the Shadow Hills homeowners: (1) the concept of property rights, long a racially biased concept but perceived, constructed, and protected as neutral by the local state; and (2) unequal abilities among activists to claim that they represent the “heritage” of their neighborhood or the city as a whole, despite the legacies of racially exclusionary access to the spaces where “heritage” was historically cultivated.⁴ Taken together, these two struggles illustrate that racism functions through the spatial organization of linked, interdependent places that systematically reproduce relational privileges and disadvantages.

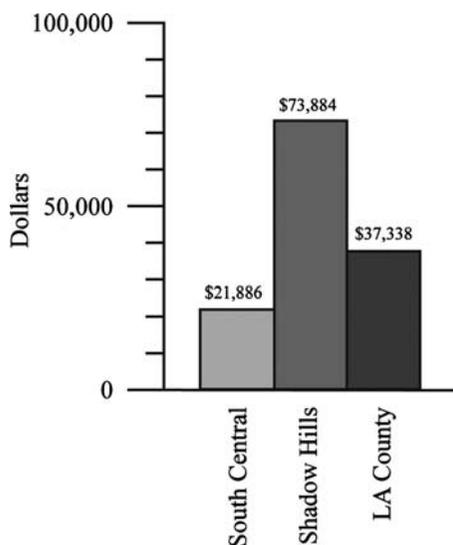


Figure 8 Median household income of South Central Los Angeles and Shadow Hills, relative to Los Angeles County, in 2000. Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000, Summary File 4).

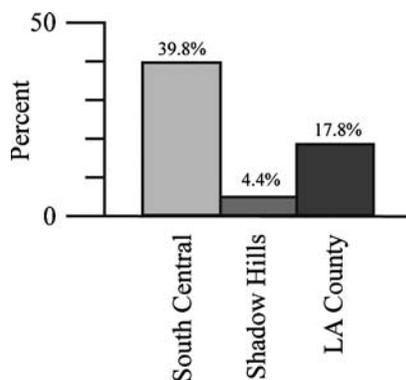


Figure 9 Rates of poverty in South Central Los Angeles and Shadow Hills, relative to Los Angeles County, in 2000. Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000, Summary File 4).

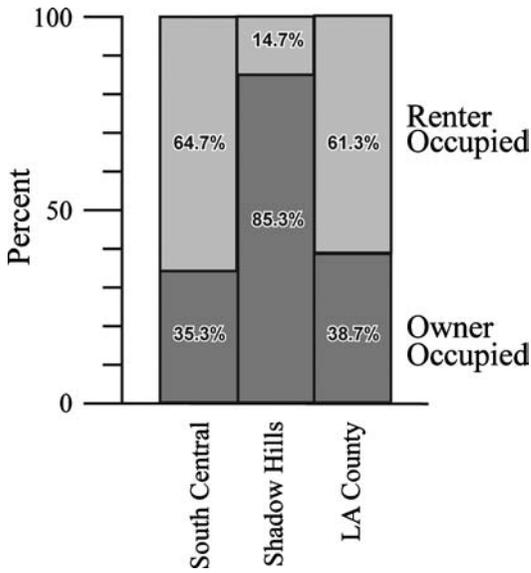


Figure 10 Rates of homeownership in South Central Los Angeles and Shadow Hills, relative to Los Angeles County, in 2000. Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000).

“Ghettos” and Gentleman Farms: Histories of Relational Racialization in Los Angeles

Urban geographers and historians have made much of Southern California’s sprawling, polynucleated urban development (e.g., Scott and Soja 1996; Dear 2000, 2001; Hise 2001), yet it is important to emphasize that the city’s dispersed geographic form was both cause and product of its formative white supremacist ideology, which intentionally produced segregated and unequal places (e.g., Pulido 2000; Deverell 2004). At the turn of the twentieth century, planners in Los Angeles advocated for the creation of dispersed, self-contained industrial zones surrounded by worker housing and social and recreational facilities as a way to lure capital investment. They hoped that such land use patterns would avoid the haphazard development of East Coast cities as well as the social and cultural chaos (especially contact between people from different racial groups and genders) that centralization and high density were thought to induce (Hise 2001). Working-class homeownership in low-density neighborhoods, they argued, would reduce labor discontent and encourage greater economic productivity, contributing to the success of industrial capitalism in what was still a sleepy agricultural

town. Their vision was more or less successful. Sprawling industrial suburbs sprung up around the county in places like Southgate, Torrance, and Bell, making Los Angeles simultaneously an industrial giant and a “city of homes” (see Fulton 1997; Nicolaidis 2002).

This was also a deeply racialized vision. City boosters and planners imagined Southern California as a “white spot,” the homeland for the progress of the Anglo-Saxon race, and widespread homeownership was intended to lift working-class whites into the ranks of the middle class. Non-whites occupied a central yet contradictory position within this vision, for their labor was critical to the success of industrial capitalism in Los Angeles but threatened to undermine the racialized tenets of the city’s self-conception (Wild 2005). Formal and informal mechanisms of segregation were thus crucial to the production of the sprawling geography of white privilege in Los Angeles and to the maintenance of the city’s racially exclusionary image, while still allowing its economy to be powered forward by non-white and immigrant labor. Before World War II, South Central was the largest of several segregated black districts in Los Angeles, consisting primarily of middle-class homeowners (Sides 2003). During the war, as black migrants from the U.S. Midwest and South came to work in the city’s

many defense plants, these neighborhoods became increasingly crowded because restrictive covenants prevented the new, largely working-class migrants from finding housing anywhere else. Persistent civic neglect, compounded by the postwar outmigration of much of the community's middle and upper middle classes and of middle-class industrial work, increased the isolation of the city's poor African Americans, erupting in the Watts uprisings of 1965.

In the ensuing decades, South Central's historic zoning for industrial land uses, based on its proximity to the central business district and rail transportation, ensured that during convulsive bouts of deindustrialization and reindustrialization South Central retains a significant manufacturing base even though, as already described, the qualitative nature of that work has changed significantly (Bobo et al. 2000; Bonacich and Appelbaum 2000). Freight rail lines along the Alameda corridor connect the port at Long Beach with the vast industrial districts in southeast L.A.—sometimes called the “hub cities” of Los Angeles—that produce, assemble, and distribute manufactured goods to global consumers. Simultaneously, South Central's historic development as a working-class and largely African American area has made it an attractive destination for new immigrants, especially low-income Latinos, seeking affordable housing that has been artificially depressed in value by years of segregation and discriminatory lending practices. As a result, the neighborhoods of South Central Los Angeles are home to both the manufacturing facilities of global firms, who have been enticed by various government incentives to locate there (see Wilson 2006), and hundreds of thousands of working-class, mostly non-white families struggling to eke out a living. Not surprisingly, South Central neighborhoods are among the most polluted in the country (Pulido 2000; Huerta 2005), and residents, particularly children, have higher blood lead levels and suffer disproportionately from asthma (Rothenberg et al. 1996; Macy et al. 2001). The area has also attracted a significant number of Korean immigrants who have opened shops and liquor stores, filling a void left by corporate neglect of the area but also provoking racial and economic tensions, most notably evidenced by the uprisings of 1992. Historic processes of segregation and industrial zoning have thus given

way to, and have actively shaped, the contemporary concentration of poverty among diverse immigrants and African Americans in the disproportionately polluted, underinvested, and impoverished neighborhoods of South Central Los Angeles.

In stark contrast, Los Angeles's suburban valleys were historically envisioned and planned as a collection of “little farms.” Boosters promoted the idea that suburban farmers could profit from their investments in urban and industrial growth in the manufacturing districts of South and Central Los Angeles while still enjoying the purported psychological benefits of rural living on their suburban homesteads (see McWilliams 1946; Starr 1985, Ch. 5; Garcia 2001, Ch. 1). Concomitant with the disenfranchisement of existing Mexican ranchos through legal fraud and economic displacement of the cattle-based economy (Almaguer 1994; Pitt 1998), planners subdivided “little farms” of one to ten acres where “gentleman farmers” grew citrus and other crops, not so much for subsistence but to cultivate the republican virtue promised by myths of yeoman farming and to counteract the supposedly contaminating vices of Los Angeles's urban growth industries and ethnic diversity. The Valley's suburban little farms were never intended for the city's black, Latino, and Asian populations. Indeed, the suburbs depended on their exclusion. Non-whites were deliberately excluded from the ideals of suburban farming through Alien Land Laws, which forbade land ownership by “aliens ineligible for citizenship” (at that time, Asian immigrants) and segregation of Mexican agricultural workers into *colonias* adjacent to the groves (Garcia 2001). A host of other legal mechanisms sanctioned by the federal government and common to other parts of the country, such as restrictive covenants and redlining, concentrated non-whites in the central parts of the city, including South Central (Sides 2003; Wild 2005).

The San Fernando Valley's vast agricultural areas were ideal for residential subdivisions and suburbanizing industry during and after World War II, when Los Angeles experienced its most explosive economic and demographic growth. Beginning in the 1950s, key industries, particularly aerospace, located on the suburban fringe in search of larger, cheaper lots and to escape congestion. White workers followed industry,

creating a residential construction boom enabled by Federal Housing Administration and Veterans Administration home loans as well as the economic exigencies of the Cold War (Scott 1996; Pulido 2000; see also Jackson 1985). Yet, as in the semiagricultural past, new housing was almost exclusively reserved for white workers (Davis 1990, Ch. 3; Scott 1996). Davis (1990, Ch. 3) has estimated that only 3 percent of the housing produced in Southern California during this period was made available to non-whites. New tracts of suburban homes soon produced a powerful political force in Los Angeles—suburban homeowner associations, often set up by real estate developers—who took as their primary charge the protection of “property rights” and property values as Los Angeles County became more racially diverse (Davis 1990, Ch. 3).

Shadow Hills, located in the northeast end of the San Fernando Valley, exemplifies the Valley’s historic trends. In 1907, the California Home Extension Association subdivided, promoted, and sold Shadow Hills as a community of “Little Farms Near the City,” and for the first half of the twentieth century, “gentleman farmers”—middle-class white Midwestern migrants who worked in real estate, publishing, or contracting but enjoyed Shadow Hills’ rural atmosphere—dominated the community. A group of lawyers and engineers formed the Shadow Hills Civic Association (later the Shadow Hills Property Owners Association) in 1952 to advocate for protection of the community’s rural lifestyle and, implicitly, its racial and economic homogeneity.

In 1962, fearful that the rapid subdivision of former agricultural tracts elsewhere in the San Fernando Valley would soon besiege their neighborhood, Shadow Hills activists successfully pushed the City Council to establish “horse-raising” zones in neighborhoods with at least 1 million square feet of agricultural zoning and where 90 percent of property owners voted for it (e.g., Butts 1961). Because of the requirement for prior agricultural designation, urban and industrial neighborhoods like South Central, where people of color were overwhelmingly concentrated, simply were not eligible to create horse-keeping districts. In the new horse-raising zones, horses could only be kept on lots with a minimum acreage of

20,000 square feet; effectively, then, because the whole neighborhood would become part of the horse district, all new lots would be just less than one-half acre (Los Angeles City Ordinance 122.934 1962). Ninety-eight percent of Shadow Hills residents signed the petition, and on 20 September 1962 the ordinance was approved by the City Council’s unanimous vote. A year later, when the City Planning Commission was drafting its master plan, Shadow Hills was the first and only horse-keeping district in the city. First implemented in 1968 and still on the books, the Shadow Hills Community Plan vows to protect the area’s vaguely defined “rural atmosphere” and retains the area’s single-family residential zoning and minimum lot sizes (Los Angeles City Planning Department 1991, iv). The plan made no provision for industrial zoning, in part because homeowner activists argued that there was sufficient industrially zoned land in nearby Sun Valley and San Fernando—the historic Mexican *colonias* in the San Fernando Valley—and in Pacoima, the only neighborhood in the San Fernando Valley with a black population larger than 1 percent (Meeker 1964; Roderick 2001). Thus, it was only by intentionally relegating industrial uses to the Valley’s historically non-white neighborhoods that Shadow Hills and adjacent white communities could preserve their single-family, low-density landscape and rural lifestyle—a set of unequal relations to which city planners have repeatedly committed themselves in the decennial reviews of the community plan.

Since the implementation of the horse district and the community plan in the mid-1960s, Shadow Hills homeowners, their elected officials, and city planners have relentlessly modified and tightened the neighborhood’s land use policies. Table 2 illustrates the most important of these amendments and revisions. Although intended to preserve possibilities for horse-keeping, these policies effectively restrict new development and increase the property values of those who already live there, as many as half of whom to this day do not own horses but simply enjoy the “rural atmosphere.” Studies show that the local state’s protection of permanent open space significantly raises property values (e.g., Irwin 2002). Therefore, the state’s continued willingness to preserve large lots in Shadow Hills directly contributes to the ever-increasing economic privilege of this

Table 2 Summary of major land use policies and minor amendments implemented in Shadow Hills since 1963

1963	"Horse-raising" district implemented in Shadow Hills
1965	City Planning Commission adopts "Open Space Maintenance District" in mountainous areas of the city, including Shadow Hills, to reduce density
1968	Sunland Tujunga-Lake View Terrace-Shadow Hills-La Tuna Canyon Community Plan Adopted; advocates for protection of "rural" atmosphere
1972	Special City Services Tax of \$10 annually is imposed on Shadow Hills Horse-Keeping District to pay for trail maintenance and special services; on protest by horse owners, the fee is reduced to \$6
1973	Horse-Keeping Ordinance amended to allow property owners to keep up to two additional horses (such as those belonging to a friend or neighbor) on their lots, provided there is no more than one horse per 5,000 square feet
1973	City Council reduces agreement needed to create a new "horse-keeping" district from 90 percent to 75 percent
1978	Shadow Hills horse-keeping district is expanded by 315 acres
1982	City Council passes "landmark" ordinance requiring developers to obtain special permits before constructing next to a horse-owner's property
1990	City Planning Commission amends Shadow Hills Community Plan to decrease density in hillside areas from "extremely low" (one home per 20,000 square feet) to "minimum" (one home per 40,000 square feet)
1997	City Planning Commission amends Shadow Hills Community Plan to cluster development in flat areas
2002	Scenic Corridor Plan passes; severely restricts development within a designated "scenic corridor" that includes Shadow Hills hillsides
2006	Councilmember Wendy Greuel introduces motion to L.A. City Council to study possibility of increasing minimum lot size to 40,000 square feet on all future development

historically exclusive community. Effectively, each new or revised land use policy reproduces the multiple benefits associated with white privilege (Pulido 2000) and channels home-equity-based wealth to those who can continue to buy property in California's bloated real estate market.⁵ These privileged few include those who had earlier, racially exclusive access to the housing market and can convert capital gains into investment in new properties; those who have received large inheritances, often based on the sale of property bought during an earlier era; and those who occupy the upper stratum of the contemporary two-tier service economy—all conditions disproportionately associated with the shrinking number of white people in Los Angeles. As Shadow Hills homeowners successfully resist unwanted developments, those projects are either sited elsewhere—typically in lower income black and Latino communities with fewer political and economic resources—or scrapped altogether. Their activism thus directly affects the distribution of opportunities and resources not only in their neighborhood but throughout the region.

These deeply embedded, historic systems of racialization are continuously reproduced through normative and purportedly neutral systems of land use planning. Taking contemporary social movements in South Central Los

Angeles and Shadow Hills as illustrative case studies, I focus here on unequal abilities to claim the "rights" associated with property ownership and the alleged need to protect the city's suburban semiagricultural heritage. These two processes illustrate the importance of relational geographies and invisibly racialized spatial values to the reproduction of racialized wealth and poverty.

Racially Unequal Claims to Property Rights

The success of the Shadow Hills homeowners and the failure of the South Central Farmers to gain access to open space and its associated benefits both hinge on questions of property—who owns it, who can claim legitimate rights to it, and who can or cannot use it as a resource for economic security. Land ownership is a critical indicator of economic security, because it is the single largest dimension of most households' wealth portfolios (Oliver and Shapiro 1995), yet rates of property ownership among Los Angeles's racial groups are stunningly unequal. In 2000, 51 percent of white households in Los Angeles were homeowners, whereas only 31 percent of black households and 27 percent of Latino families owned their homes (Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy 2003, 65). Homeownership is positively correlated with

higher levels of education and higher incomes, as well as U.S. citizenship, characteristics that are associated with native-born whites in contemporary Los Angeles and disassociated with foreign-born Latinos (Painter 2000). Homeowners tend to be more politically involved in their neighborhoods and to be taken more seriously by local politicians. Historian Phil Ethington (2000) has also shown that white homeowners in Los Angeles consistently own the top quartile of home values, regardless of where they are located, demonstrating that whiteness itself and the racial exclusivity associated with white neighborhoods command higher property values. Therefore, property rights are by no means racially neutral, having been thoroughly shaped by the historical land use policies previously described. Yet they are largely regarded as such by the local state and by homeowners themselves, and the rights of property owners are overwhelmingly privileged in the land use planning process.

Shadow Hills homeowners successfully invoke their rights to the state's protection of their property values and their perceived entitlement to live in a "good" neighborhood free from industrial development and high-density housing, both of which they associate with low-income communities of color. In voicing their opposition to proposed developments, particularly mixed-income or low-income residential projects, contemporary residents articulate a meritocratic and "color-blind" belief that their current property values, and thus their individual wealth, are solely a result of their hard work. They rarely acknowledge the exclusionary housing policies and government-funded programs and the generations of non-white labor that have allowed them to accumulate wealth based on their rather arbitrary racial categorization as white (McGirr 2001; Nicolaidis 2002; Lassiter 2004). They typically react defensively and with hostility to development projects that are perceived to threaten the values of their homes and neighborhoods. In Shadow Hills, this threat was most often raised by proposals for apartment buildings, which many residents equated unequivocally with low-income housing. For example, during our interview the past president of a local social organization referred to a mixed-income apartment building proposed for the nearby neighborhood of Lake View Terrace, on the western

border of Shadow Hills, as an example of the changes she feared would destroy the area's rural atmosphere. She asked me rhetorically,

Why would they do that to somebody's property values? I mean, we've worked so hard to get where we are . . . why would they do that?

Similarly, in explaining to me why she opposed the same development, the owner of a small Web development and digital photography business claimed that as Americans,

It is a philosophy we struggle with. It is a Christian value to provide for the poor. But it is the American way of life to care about and protect our property rights. And if you have worked really hard and made something of yourself, it is perfectly okay to want to spend your money on your horses. . . . People who work their whole lives deserve to enjoy their wealth.

Embedded in these statements are the assumptions that poor people do not work hard and thus are poor because they are lazy, and that the poor do not deserve the same benefits and protections as do wealthy people, who have successfully demonstrated their strong work ethic and deserve the protection of the state on that basis. These are individualized, cultural interpretations of disparate wealth and poverty that ignore the institutional and systemic forces creating unequal life chances.

Similar concerns and discourses emerged in neighborhood protests against a proposed baseball academy for Los Angeles youth proposed in 2002 that would have been partially funded by Major League Baseball. At a meeting to organize a protest against the academy, many complained that the facility would bring children to the northeast San Fernando Valley from across the city, often referring to these children as "at-risk youth." Organizers encouraged residents to try to delay or prevent the project by resisting the requisite zoning change the project would entail and handed out a list of suggestions to help local residents write effective letters to local officials. Understanding the exclusionary connotation of appeals to property rights, the authors recommended that activists instead articulate discourses of (purportedly race-neutral) meritocracy and community character. One of the suggestions on the handout was:

We have to have reasons that they consider valid. If we simply state that we don't want it [the Baseball Academy] because there might be crime or drive our property value down, they consider the arguments prejudiced. . . . Instead of saying that the property [the Baseball Academy] will drive down our property values, emphasize that we have worked hard to get where we are. Use statements that talk about "homeowner pride" and community identity. Let them know that you moved to an area that promised to increase your standard of living where you could give back to and empower the community.

Largely because of homeowner opposition, neither the mixed-income housing project in Lakeview Terrace nor the Major League Baseball Academy was ever built. Potential working-class residents lost out on the possibility of more affordable housing, and low-income youth lost out on a potential recreational opportunity because of the political power of property owners as a constituency and discourses about property rights.

The sanctity of property also held sway at the South Central Farm, where legal owner Ralph Horowitz's property rights ultimately trumped the rights of 350 families to feed themselves. Contestations over property and ownership were visible in the landscape of the South Central Farm itself. On the day after the eviction, *La Opinión*, the largest Spanish-language newspaper in Los Angeles, reported that

Los surcos de las hortalizas quedaron aplastados por los rastros de llantas, y un nuevo cartel con la leyenda "Propiedad privada, cerrado al público" acompañaba a los que dejaron los campesinos con consignas como "Salven el huerto" y "La tierra es de quien la trabaja." [The grooves of the gardens were crushed by the traces of tires, and a new poster with the proclamation "Private property, closed to the public" accompanied those left by the farmers with claims like "Save the garden" and "The land belongs to whoever works it."] (Ortega 2006, 1)

Horowitz defended his property rights through reference to his financial investment in the land, explaining to a reporter from the *Los Angeles Times*, "I'm paying the insurance, I'm paying the taxes, I'm paying the mortgage payments" (Green 2004, 18). He went on to note that "[This] is kind of like someone moving into your parent's backyard and pitching a tent and

saying 'Look, we are going to stay here'" (Ailworth 2004, B3). Defenders of Horowitz's legal property rights likewise confirmed his right to do whatever he wanted with the land. As Joe Hicks, former Executive Director of the Los Angeles Human Relations Commission during the Riordan administration, saw it:

The fact is that it is his property, no matter what these organizers say; the fact is that it is a valuable piece of land in a part of the city that is becoming increasingly more valuable. It is his property, he's got a right to sit there on it and let weeds grow if he wants to. (KCRW 2006)

City officials, most of whom outwardly expressed their support and compassion for the South Central Farmers, ultimately remained committed to hegemonic conceptions of property rights to justify the farmers' eviction. Jan Perry, City Council representative for the South Central area, publicly lamented the destruction of the South Central Farm but declared it a rather open-and-shut case of property law, which she presented as neutral:

De verdad es una situación muy triste. Los tribunales han determinado este tema de derechos de propiedad y los agentes del Sheriff del condado están ejecutando esa orden judicial. Ésto continua siendo un tema legal sobre la propiedad privada y desalojos, sobre lo que no tenemos jurisdicción. [It really is a very sad situation. The courts have settled this issue of property rights and the county sheriff's agents are executing that judicial order. This continues to be a legal issue about private property and evictions, over which we have no jurisdiction.] (Ortega 2006, 1)

City officials adhered to and confirmed the political and especially racial neutrality of the ownership model, which "assumes a unitary, solitary, and identifiable owner, separated from others by boundaries that protect him or her from nonowners and grant the owner the right to exclude" (Blomley 2003, 2).

The South Central Farmers pursued two basic strategies to challenge dominant and invisibly racialized conceptions of property. On the one hand, they worked through the courts to challenge Horowitz's legal claim to the property, focusing on the legal details of the specific parcel of land and repeatedly contesting the terms of the sale through appeals. For example, attorney Dan Stormer argued that the city's

sale of the land to Horowitz in 2003 for the same price which for they bought it in 1985—just over \$5 million dollars—constituted, in effect, an illegal gift of at least \$10 million to a millionaire and major property owner. Simultaneously, the farmers articulated an alternate vision of community ownership based on self-determination and years of labor spent improving the land, both at the farm itself and in the larger industrial districts of South Central Los Angeles. Their arguments explicitly critiqued a model of property that generated tremendous profits to outside investors and owners simply because they had invested money in the land and possessed legal title. Instead, they argued that ownership accrues through both financial and symbolic investment, such as love for the community and self-determination. According to lead organizer Rufina Juarez,

I think the importance is that over the last fourteen years it developed into what was the need of the community. And it wasn't like we said, "Let's write this program, let's create 350 plants and everybody will grow traditional plants." It wasn't like that. It was something that started from the very bottom, with families—without knowing that in a sense they were creating a model of a project. (Juarez 2007)

Andrea Rodriguez, who had worked a plot at the South Central Farm for more than ten years, explained the reasons for the farmers' struggle by appealing to the importance of land access among the working poor of South Central. She expanded the notion of property to include values of fresh food access and the organic development of a cohesive sense of community that could be channeled into political struggle.

Muchas personas no comprenden nuestra lucha, y es porque no entienden que este es más que un terreno, es el lugar donde las familias se unían, donde se creaba un ambiente comunitario en media de esta gran ciudad. [Many people don't understand our struggle, and that's because they don't understand that this is more than a piece of land, it is a place where families unite, where a community atmosphere is created in the middle of this great city.] (Rico 2006, 1)

In other words, the South Central Farmers fully understood the social and economic impacts of the urban state's aggressive pursuit of global capital through land use policies that are favorable to outside investors but detrimental

to those who live and work on the land. Their analysis was by necessity more structural and, indeed, more relational than the arguments articulated by the Shadow Hills homeowners, who were invested in denying the links between their privileged neighborhood and the concentration of poverty in South Central.

Racially Unequal Claims to Heritage

Through its emphasis on protecting and celebrating selective elements of history, concepts of heritage are always prone to preserving the unequal social relations of the past. Indeed, one person's concept of heritage may well be another's experience of exclusion, slavery, or disenfranchisement (Hoelscher 2006). Over the last half-century, as homeowner activists in Shadow Hills have struggled to secure land use planning decisions that not only preserve but actively create a rural landscape mediated by the urban state, they rely on recurrent and fundamental discourses about the valley's semiagricultural past, absent any analysis of how that past was implicated in the economic and racial segregation of Los Angeles and unequal accumulation of wealth. They are able to do so in credible and legitimate ways, for they represent racially, economically, culturally, and geographically the communities who historically had racially exclusive rights to claim that vision of the past. The South Central Farmers, by contrast, are not empowered to claim that their struggle preserves locally revered forms of heritage, from which they were and are physically, economically, and symbolically excluded.

Current Councilwoman Wendy Greuel, who represents Shadow Hills and numerous other San Fernando Valley communities, ran her election campaign on a commitment to preserving the valley's unique horse-keeping and semiagricultural lifestyle. For example, on 31 July 2002, just a few months after her election, Greuel and fellow council member Ed Reyes introduced a motion to the Los Angeles City Council for a citywide study of horse-keeping regulations.

The horsekeeping tradition of Los Angeles is as old as the city itself. However, that tradition has been under attack in recent decades from a variety of forces. . . . Accordingly, there is a serious need for comprehensive review of the

horsekeeping regulations that affect Los Angeles residents and for action by the City Council to protect and strengthen *horsekeeping rights*. (Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council 2006, emphasis added)

Greuel and Reyes thereby moved that a meeting of the Planning and Land Use Management Committee be held in the equestrian areas of the city, rather than in the usual downtown chambers. Approximately 250 residents, overwhelmingly white and middle-aged or elderly and many wearing their characteristic cowboy boots, jeans, and hats, crowded Greuel's field office in October 2002. The president of a local social equestrian organization appealed to Greuel and Reyes, arguing that "Horse keeping *was* the San Fernando Valley," and another activist claimed, "We are the most rural agricultural areas left in the city." The land use chairman of the local property owners association argued that "most of our urban centers began as ranchos" and that you could still feel old Los Angeles as "the *ca-*

balleros kick up dust along the trails." Other speakers stressed that horse-keeping neighborhoods have lower levels of crime and that horses teach children responsibility, empathy, and self-respect. These discourses echoed the long-standing association between land ownership and the cultivation of republican virtue reminiscent of ideologies of gentleman farming. One resident then argued that "Horse keeping is only viable in this area if it is tied to land use," leading to requests for favorable zoning, improved equine licensing procedures, and city subsidization of trail construction and maintenance. In an effort to keep these claims to tradition and heritage in the media limelight, the City Council office and the local neighborhood council have cosponsored an annual "Day of the Horse" festival since 2002 (see Figure 11). The festival emphasizes the history of the San Fernando Valley as an agricultural area and claims that Shadow Hills uniquely represents this history through its horse-keeping lifestyle.

The South Central Farmers cannot claim to represent the "unique history" of South



Figure 11 Los Angeles City Council Representatives Alex Padilla (left, Seventh District) and Wendy Greuel (right, Second District) with California State Assembly Member Cindy Montanez (center) at the Day of the Horse Celebration, Shadow Hills, 2003. Source: Photo by author.

Central as a way to preserve their community farm, because their neighborhood's heritage is dominated by planning decisions that produced a largely industrial and multifamily residential landscape, rather than an agricultural one; and by media representations that portray South Central as a violent ghetto, rather than a community-controlled and autonomous space where residents take care of each other and provide for their own needs as best they can (Hunt 1997; Fulton 2001; Wilson 2002, 2005). Indeed, perhaps the only "heritage" of South Central recognizable and credible to the media and the local state, as well as residents elsewhere in the city who know nothing about the neighborhood apart from what they see on the local news and feature films, is a history of violence, poverty, and disinvestment too often blamed on the residents themselves (Fulton 1997, Ch. 11; Hunt 1997).

The farmers exposed the racial biases of "heritage" and located South Central's true causes of poverty and segregation not in the moral or cultural characteristics of its residents, as neoconservative explanations would have it, but rather in the city's history of exclusion and exploitation. They linked the fate of South Central Los Angeles to an intricate system of global racialized capitalism that channels rewards and privileges to a wealthy, typically white elite through the exploitation of non-white labor and communities. Consider organizer Rufina Juarez's narrative of heritage:

The farm is located in the ninth district, which is an area that has a lot of contamination, a lot of violence. It has a history. We've seen in the last ten years a real change in the demographics in terms of people who have been forced to leave their countries because of the diaspora of Mesoamerica and what's happening with the corn. People are no longer able to live off the land. If we're able to connect all that, that is the history of the South Central Farm. (Juarez 2007)

The Farmers understood that South Central's disproportionate poverty and pollution was relationally linked to the production of other places around the world, whether privileged or similarly exploited. Thus, they interpreted their eviction as merely the latest action in a long history of land use planning that has consistently concentrated industrial and toxic facilities in poor, non-white, and immigrant

communities. As fellow lead organizer Tezozomoc explained,

Nosotros sentimos que este es un acto de agresión y es otro ataque en contra de la comunidad que ya está sufriendo. . . . Esta acción es como empujar el cuchillo y enterrarlo en el Corazon de Los Angeles, especialmente en esta comunidad pobre del sur centro. [We feel that this is an act of aggression and another attack against a community that is already suffering. This action is like pushing the knife and twisting it into the heart of Los Angeles, especially in this poor community of South Central.] (Rico 2006, 1)

At best, this dimension of the Farmers' struggle was completely ignored by mainstream and conservative media; at worst, they were dismissed as impractical radicals with Marxist tendencies. Indeed, through the suppression of the South Central Farmers' sharp critiques, the systems of effectively exclusionary land use policies that reproduce racialized patterns of wealth and poverty in Los Angeles were again entrenched, normalized, and naturalized.

Conclusion

The individual struggles of the South Central Farmers and the Shadow Hills homeowners are dynamically linked in a regional struggle over the control of land and its resources and the production of racialized wealth and poverty in Los Angeles. In this article, I have focused on two dimensions of that struggle—unequal claims to the entitlements of property rights, and unequal abilities to mobilize claims of heritage. Both practices, I have argued, illustrate how racism functions systemically and relationally through the reproduction of linked, interdependent, and unequal places. The normative and presumably neutral dynamics of everyday acts of land use planning obscure relationships of inequality and dependency between differently racialized people and places.

There are inherently ethical questions of power and political responsibility involved here (see Massey 2004a). The denial of racial, economic, and geographic interdependency is itself an act of power, most often asserted by those who have benefited from systems of relational racialization and privileging. Such denial takes two forms: the denial of present

responsibility for historic events and the denial of contemporary dependency on others situated elsewhere in space. This double-edged denial is the grounds on which many redistributive or integrative policies such as affirmative action and school busing have failed. Asserting the relational production of space and identity, and embracing a politics of interconnectivity and mutual responsibility, then, is a crucial political project (Amin 2004; Massey 2004a).

In the case of the South Central Farmers and the Shadow Hills homeowners, the impacts of continuous relational racialization on patterns of wealth and poverty are dire. In losing their rights to farm at 41st and Alameda, the South Central Farmers lose an essential aspect of their economic survival—the ability to produce their own food and medicine—as well as a vital resource for community building and political mobilization. By contrast, in gaining the legal protection of increasingly restrictive land use policies despite growing racial and economic inequality, the residents of Shadow Hills can expect to reap the multiple benefits of substantial open space, increased property values, and the reproduction of racialized wealth for future generations. ■

Notes

¹ Under the terms of the initial eminent domain proceedings, the city had granted right of first refusal to the largest landowner, Alameda-Barbara Investment Company, if the parcel formerly owned by them was no longer required for public use within ten years. Thus, in 1995, the city began sales negotiations with Libraw-Horowitz Investment Company, the successor to Alameda-Barbara, to return the property. After a series of complicated legal negotiations, in August 2003 the City Council approved the sale to Libraw-Horowitz for \$5,050,000, and official title was transferred to Ralph Horowitz in December 2003 (South Central Farmers Feeding Families 2006). After receiving notice that their community garden had been sold without their involvement in the political process, the farmers formed South Central Farmers Feeding Families, a community organization that not only lobbies for their rights to continue using the land but also sponsored farmers' markets, festivals, and various political and cultural events. They organized in the courts and in direct actions for several years, attempting to raise money to buy the property and attracting significant media attention and celebrity

support, perhaps most notably when actress Daryl Hannah chained herself to a tree during the final eviction. Despite a last-minute offer from the Trust for Public Land and the Annenberg Foundation to buy the property for \$16 million, Horowitz refused the offer and the farmers were evicted (Doan 2006).

² For the purposes of my discussion here, all census data cited for South Central Los Angeles refer to the census tract immediately surrounding the South Central Farm and not the entire community that might be known as South Central Los Angeles, a community name that has no legal geographical boundaries but instead is primarily marked by popular imaginings. All census data cited for Shadow Hills refer to the census tract that more or less corresponds to the geographic boundaries surrounding the community, as delineated by the Los Angeles City Council and by the Los Angeles City Planning Commission's Community Plan.

³ For example, environmental discourses also played an important role in each community. As in the other discourses and practices I explore in this article, environmental discourses were articulated differently in each community—and served different purposes—according to racial, class, and geographic positions. The South Central Farmers and their supporters argued that the Ninth City Council District, where the Farm was located, has some of the highest toxic pollution rates in Los Angeles County and the fewest public parks. They correctly identified these patterns as an outcome of systemic environmental racism (see Pulido 2000) and argued that the Farm was an important community resource both on its own terms, as a collective green space and source of indigenous horticultural wisdom, and as an alternative to Horowitz's proposed use of the land—a warehouse—which would compound the area's concentration of manufacturing and pollution. The Farmers were also supported by the Trust for Public Land, one of the groups that contributed money to try to buy the Farm. Thus, for the South Central Farmers, environmentalism was typically understood within the context of environmental justice; however, in Shadow Hills environmentalism was simultaneously a convenient strategy and, for a minority, a genuine concern. The Shadow Hills homeowners sometimes used environmentalist tactics to slow or stop a proposed development (e.g., by demanding an Environmental Impact Report), but environmental concerns were rarely their primary argument and were most likely to be used by a minority of community leadership. Their environmentalism is "an amalgamation of several different strands of environmentalism, some more ecological and others more spiritual and aesthetic" (Duncan and Duncan 2004, 103). As Duncan and Duncan (2004, 103) have mused in their study of the aesthetic politics of landscape in Bedford, New

York, "people often subscribe to multiple strands [of environmentalism] without being troubled by the contradictions."

⁴ My arguments in this article are drawn from over five years of fieldwork in Shadow Hills, including observation of two political organizations, approximately twenty interviews, and archival research. Because the South Central Farmers were so well documented in both the English- and Spanish-language media, I rely extensively on newspaper accounts, the South Central Farm Web site (which includes many blogs and links to articles in the popular press), informal conversations with those involved at the farm, and oral history interviews conducted through the South Central Farm Archive Project.

⁵ I follow Laura Pulido in defining white privilege as "the hegemonic structures, practices, and ideologies that reproduce whites' privileged status." As she rightly points out, "whites do not necessarily *intend* to hurt people of color, but because they are unaware of their white-skin privilege, and because they accrue social and economic benefits by maintaining the status quo, they inevitably do" (Pulido 2000, 15). Similarly, I do not believe that most activists in Shadow Hills, past or present, pursue horse-keeping land use policies to deliberately or strategically exclude people of color. Many of my interviewees perceived themselves as "color-blind," although this self-conception is also problematic, in that color-blindness inherently prevents acknowledgment of persistent racial inequalities or policy to remedy them (see Bonilla-Silva 2003). What is important in our analysis of land use policy in Shadow Hills, as well as South Central, is how the *effects* (rather than the stated intentions) of land use policies reproduce wealth and poverty in racialized ways.

Literature Cited

- Ailworth, E. 2004. Garden owner says he's not a bad guy; A developer who seeks to evict hundreds of farmers from a large plot in South Central L.A. defends his efforts to use his own land. *Los Angeles Times* 14 March:B3.
- Almaguer, T. 1994. *Racial fault lines: The historical origins of white supremacy in California*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Amin, A. 2004. Regions unbound: Towards a new politics of place. *Geografiska Annaler* 86:33–44.
- Blomley, N. 2003. *Unsettling the city: Urban land and the politics of property*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bobo, L., M. Oliver, J. H. Johnson Jr., and A. Valenzuela Jr. 2000. Analyzing inequality in Los Angeles. In *Prismatic metropolis: Inequality in Los Angeles*, ed. L. Bobo, M. Oliver, J. H. Johnson Jr., and A. Valenzuela Jr., 3–50. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Boggs, J. S., and N. M. Rantisi. 2003. Relational economic geography. Special issue. *Journal of Economic Geography* 3.
- Bonacich, E., and R. Appelbaum. 2000. *Behind the label: Inequality in the Los Angeles apparel industry*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. 2003. *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the United States*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Butts, R. S., to E. G. Burkhalter. 18 September 1961. Los Angeles City Council File 105850, Los Angeles City Archives.
- Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy. 2003. *Los Angeles in focus: A profile from Census 2000*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.
- Cleland, N. 2006. Rich, poor live poles apart in L.A. as middle class keeps shrinking. *Los Angeles Times* 23 July:B1.
- Davis, M. 1990. *City of quartz: Excavating the future in Los Angeles*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Dear, M. 2000. *The postmodern urban condition*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- . ed. 2001. *From Chicago to L.A.: Making sense of urban theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Delaney, D. 2002. The space that race makes. *The Professional Geographer* 54:6–14.
- Deverell, W. 2004. *Whitewashed adobe: The rise of Los Angeles and the remaking of its Mexican past*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Doan, L. 2006. Protest subsides at urban farm site. *Los Angeles Times* 15 June:B4.
- Duncan, J., and N. Duncan. 2001. The aestheticization of the politics of landscape preservation. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 91:387–409.
- . 2004. *Landscapes of privilege: The politics of the aesthetic in an American suburb*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Ethington, P. 2000. *Segregated diversity: Race-ethnicity, space, and political fragmentation in Los Angeles County, 1940–1994*. <http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/history/historylab/Haynes.FR/Haynes.2000.FR/FINAL.REPORT.20000719e.html> (last accessed 12 February 2006).
- Ethington, P., W. Frey, and D. Myers. 2001. *The racial resegregation of Los Angeles County, 1940–2000*. <http://www.rcf.usc.edu/~philipje/CENSUS.MAPS/CENSUS.2.html> (last accessed 8 September 2006).
- Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council. 2006. Greuel motions for citywide study of LA horsekeeping regulations. <http://www.wildwildwest.org/forum> (last accessed 16 January 2006).

- Fulton, W. 2001. *The reluctant metropolis: The politics of urban growth in Los Angeles*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Garcia, M. 2001. *A world of its own: Race, labor, and citrus in the making of greater Los Angeles, 1900–1970*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Gilmore, R. W. 2002. Fatal couplings of power and difference: Notes on racism and geography. *The Professional Geographer* 54:15–24.
- Grant, D. 2000. A demographic portrait of Los Angeles, 1970 to 1990. In *Prismatic metropolis: Inequality in Los Angeles*, ed. L. Bobo, M. Oliver, J. H. Johnson Jr., and A. Valenzuela Jr., 51–80. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Green, E. 2004. Green dreams. *Los Angeles Times* 31 October:118.
- Hise, G. 2001. Industry and imaginative geographies. In *Metropolis in the making: Los Angeles in the 1920s*, ed. T. Sitton and W. Deverell, 13–44. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hoelscher, S. 2006. The white-pillared past: Landscapes of memory and race in the American South. In *Landscape and race in the United States*, ed. R. Schein, 39–71. London and New York: Routledge.
- Huerta, A. 2005. South Gate, CA: Environmental racism defeated in a blue-collar suburb. *Critical Planning* 13:93–103.
- Hunt, D. 1997. *Screening the Los Angeles “riots”: Race, seeing, and resistance*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Irwin, E. G. 2002. The effects of open space on residential property values. *Land Economics* 78:465–80.
- Jackson, K. 1985. Race, ethnicity, and real estate appraisal: The home owners loan corporation and the Federal Housing Administration. *Journal of Urban History* 4:419–52.
- Juarez, R. 2007. Interview by Sharon Sekhon. 2 July. Los Angeles.
- KCRW. 2006. Activists uprooted from the farm in South Central Los Angeles. *Which Way, L.A.?* [radio program]. 13 June.
- Kobayashi, A., and L. Peake. 2000. Racism out of place: Thoughts on whiteness and an antiracist geography in the United States. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90:392–403.
- Lassiter, M. 2004. The suburban origins of color-blind conservatism: Middle-class consciousness in the Charlotte busing crisis. *Journal of Urban History* 30:549–82.
- Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy. 2000. *The other Los Angeles: Executive summary*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy.
- Los Angeles City Ordinance #122,934. 1962. Los Angeles City Council File 105850, Los Angeles Archives and Records Department.
- Los Angeles City Planning Department. 1991. *Sunland–Tujunga–Lake View Terrace–Shadow Hills–East La Tuna Canyon community plan*. <http://www.ci.la.ca.us/PLN/complan/pdf/sldeptxt.pdf> (last accessed 18 January 2006).
- . 2002. *Planning and zoning municipal code*. <http://www.amlegal.com/los.angeles.ca/> (last accessed 14 July 2006).
- Macy, G., X. Her, E. T. Riebling, and J. Ericson. 2001. An investigation of environmental racism claims: Testing environmental management approaches with a geographic information system. *Environmental Management* 27:893–907.
- Massey, D. 2004a. Geographies of responsibility. *Geografiska Annaler* 86:5–18.
- . 2004b. The political challenge of relational space: The Vega Symposium. Special issue. *Geografiska Annaler* 86:1–78.
- McGirr, L. 2001. *Suburban warriors: The origins of the new American right*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- McWilliams, C. 1946. *Southern California country: An island on the land*. New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce.
- Meecker, M. 1964. San Fernando Valley profile. Research Department Working Paper 46, San Fernando Valley Area Welfare Planning Council, Van Nuys, CA.
- Mitchell, D. 1996. *The lie of the land: Migrant workers and the California landscape*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Morrison, T. 1992. *Playing in the dark: Whiteness and the literary imagination*. New York: Vintage.
- Nicolaides, B. 2002. *My blue heaven: Life and politics in the working-class suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920–1965*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Oliver, M., and T. Shapiro. 1995. *Black wealth/white wealth: A new perspective on racial inequality*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Ortega, J. 2006. Campesinos de LA seguirán luchando: Dicen que entablarán una demanda por la destrucción del huerto [LA farmers will keep fighting: They say they will initiate a claim for the destruction of the garden]. *La Opinión* 15 July:1.
- Painter, G. 2000. *Race, immigrant status, and homeownership*. Los Angeles: University of Southern California Lusk Center for Real Estate.
- Pitt, L. 1998. *The decline of the Californios: A social history of the Spanish-speaking Californios, 1846–1890*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Pulido, L. 2000. Rethinking environmental racism: White privilege and urban development in Southern California. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90:12–40.
- Rico, Y. 2006. Venderán el jardín comunitario: Campesinos tratarán de ayudar al Fondo para las Tierras Públicas a juntar el dinero [They will sell

- the community garden: Farmers will try to help the Public Land Trust to raise the money]. *La Opinión* 16 April:1.
- Roderick, K. 2001. *The San Fernando Valley: America's suburb*. Los Angeles: LA Times Books.
- Rothenberg, S., F. Williams Jr., S. Delrahim, F. Khan, M. Kraft, M. Lu, M. Manalo, M. Sanchez, and D. Wooten. 1996. Blood lead levels in children in South Central Los Angeles. *Archives of Environmental Health* 51:383–88.
- Schein, R. 1997. The place of landscape: A conceptual framework for interpreting an American scene. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 87:660–80.
- . 2006. *Landscape and race in the United States*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Scott, A. J. 1996. High-technology industrial development in the San Fernando Valley and Ventura County: Observations on economic growth and the future of urban form. In *The city: L.A. and urban theory at the end of the twentieth century*, ed. A. Scott and E. Soja, 276–310. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Scott, A. J., and E. Soja. 1996. *The city: L.A. and urban theory at the end of the twentieth century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Sides, J. 2003. *L.A. city limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the present*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- South Central Farmers Feeding Families. 2006. Our story. <http://www.southcentralfarmers.org/story.html> (last accessed 14 July 2006).
- Starr, K. 1985. *Inventing the dream: California through the Progressive era*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Strait, J. 2006. Poverty concentration in the prismatic metropolis: The impact of compositional and redistributive forces within Los Angeles, California, 1990–2000. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 28:71–94.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2000. Summary File 4 (Tracts 1033 and 2281). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Vanderbeck, R. 2006. Vermont and the imaginative geographies of American whiteness. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 96:641–59.
- Wild, M. 2005. *Street meeting: Multiethnic neighborhoods in early twentieth-century Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wilson, D. 2002. Constructing a “black-on-black” violence: The conservative discourse. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 1. <http://www.acme-journal.org/volume1.htm> (last accessed 27 January 2009).
- . 2005. *Inventing black-on-black violence: Discourse, space, representation*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- . 2006. *Cities and race: America's new black ghettos*. London and New York: Routledge.
- LAURA R. BARRACLOUGH is an Assistant Professor of Sociology in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at Kalamazoo College, 1200 Academy Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49006. E-mail: lbarrac@kzoo.edu. Her research interests include comparative ethnic studies, urban studies, history, and geography, with a focus on land use and inequality.