

THE PATHS OF HOPE VALLEY: THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MEANING OF
MAKING HOME IN A NORTH CAROLINA SUBURB

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ABSTRACT

Kelsey Sherrod Michael: The Paths of Hope Valley: The Political and Social Meaning of Making Home in a North Carolina Suburb
(Under the direction of Patricia Sawin)

In this paper I examine how residents of two contiguous suburban neighborhoods in southwest Durham, North Carolina, make home. Drawing on ethnographic work conducted from 2012-2013 and theories of practice and performance, I consider how residents of these neighborhoods, each reflecting distinct phases of the development of the knowledge economy in this part of the South, make home through spatial rather than structural practices. I focus on the ways contradictory elements of the American Dream—control over private property, access to public space, exclusivity, convenience, family—play out in the everyday lives of residents through experiences of both private and public suburban spaces. Ultimately the dream's internal discord requires the same residents who invest in its ideology also to resist it, in one neighborhood by transforming and transitorily dismantling houses from within, and in the other by undermining the principle of private property they value so highly.

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I. Introduction

By that fall, I had spent many hours in the living rooms of Hope Valley. I had listened to residents describe their homes and the neighborhood, and I developed theories about what it means to live in the upper-class suburb. But walking the streets on an October Saturday unraveled my armchair analysis. On past visits I had spotted the occasional dog-walker or runner on one of the less-traveled roads. This afternoon, though, the streets were very quiet. It had rained earlier and the asphalt was wet. I could hear insects and birdcalls as I passed modest ranch homes tucked back behind Dover Road, the oldest and most heavily traveled thoroughfare inside Hope Valley.

A few moments earlier, I had hiked up Dover Road past Hope Valley Country Club, hugging the five-meters-tall hedges that flank the street. These hedges are designed to prevent pedestrians from walking through front yards, with the unintended consequence of exposing them to passing traffic. Unlike Dover Road, though, the streets out of sight of the country club welcome walkers. I passed no cars or pedestrians, and as I went by each silent house, I wondered where the residents were and what they were doing. Occasional debris moldered at the edge of a driveway or barely jutted into the street: an old floor fan standing guard at the edge of a yard, a child-sized red plastic car abandoned in one of the neighborhood's rare gutters. The car sat next to a pile of wet, soggy cardboard. It seemed so strange, the forlorn fan, the waterlogged cardboard, the rain-washed empty car waiting in the gutter—these were hardly the signs of life I expected to find in an affluent country club suburb.



Dover Road in Hope Valley, Durham, NC, October 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

One month later, I visited an open lot in Hope Valley Farms, a newer suburban development adjacent to Hope Valley. It was an unusually warm day for November, just beginning to grow dark and cool around 4 p.m. The lot, situated next to South Roxboro Street, the main boulevard of Hope Valley Farms, has been the subject of much debate within and between two Homeowners Association boards. One board hopes to develop the space into a park; the other, for the time being, wants to keep it as is: a flat, grassy landscape, with a steep 10-foot ridge on its north side. I was sitting on a bench at one corner of the lot when an entire family traipsed onto the range—a man, a woman and two young boys, about ages 2 and 5. The woman carried a wagon and the man wheeled a tricycle beside him. The woman stopped for a moment and leaned forward, stretching her legs; she began waving her arms, an almost dance-like motion. Meanwhile the older boy raced toward the ridge, propelled by his momentum up half the



Andrew, watched by his parents, rolls down the hill at the northern end of the open lot in Hope Valley Farms, Durham, NC, November 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

slope, and then tentatively completed the climb towards the top. He stood there, pivoted and faced his family, yelling at his younger brother to join him. Then he promptly rolled down the hill.

The woman told me Andrew, the older boy, had some definite opinions about the potential development. In fact, he had vowed to “stand in front of the bulldozers” if and when the owners turned it into a park. I turned to the boy rolling past me down the hill:

“Andrew, what do you think about this place becoming a park?”

He made a face.

“You don’t want it to be a park?”

“I like rolling down the hill,” he said.

In this paper I will explore the ways residents of two suburban neighborhoods in southwest Durham, North Carolina, make home. I will focus in particular on residents' everyday spatial practices, what Michel de Certeau calls "lived space." Using de Certeau's framework of strategies and tactics and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's notion of "ambient architecture," I understand home as an embodied performance, a "repetition, reenactment, and renewal" upon, through and against the walls of a house or the contours of a landscape (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2008:21). De Certeau defines strategic structures as imposed, atemporal, systematic and regulating; tactics, on the other hand, are ephemeral movements, the way a person makes use of the physical, permanent strategic structures. While a house is an object or structure, a home is an experience. In making home, residents reproduce and re-member childhood homes, past selves and even family members.

At the same time, this project reframes the strategic and the tactical as more nuanced and complex than a simple dichotomy. When suburban residents both maintain strategic landscapes and simultaneously resist them through their own tactics, they reconstitute the "vernacular" as practices that occur not only "*outside* planning, design, zoning, regulation, and covenants" but also within and through those structures (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2008:19, my emphasis). As we will see later, the red plastic car, the cardboard heap and the open lot all offer clues to residents' priorities in making home and the ways they engage strategic structures in their neighborhoods. Such objects and spaces symbolize the dissonance in these suburbs between landscape appearance and actual use, the past and the present, and residents' personal desires for home and their social consequences; beyond that, they suggest the significance of both private property and public space to making home in Hope Valley and Hope Valley Farms.



Wet cardboard and a child-sized toy car along one of the few streets in Hope Valley with gutters, Durham, NC, October 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

Although scholars in disciplines ranging from cultural geography to psychology have addressed the relationship of house to home, as well as the connection between making home and reproducing childhood experiences, relatively few have examined making home as a spatial, experiential negotiation between house or landscape and the desire to “incarnate the past” (Tuan 1974). Much of the scholarship on house/home emphasizes explicit rebuilding practices, structural alterations or additions (see Kelly 1993; Jones 1980). Other work examines “objects of memory” such as quilts or souvenirs (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1989; Hecht 2001). The work that does address spatial practices such as front porch sweeping or garden-tending takes an apolitical, Jungian approach (Marcus 1995). There remains a dearth of literature on the invisible, temporal practices of everyday life, the dance between residents and the structures they live within (de Certeau 1984:175). While Michael Ann Williams (2004) has produced important work on

abandoned houses as symbols of an individual's past, her research is primarily historical. Williams's focus on "the story rather than the structure" of home does get beyond visible architecture, however, and by de Certeau's definition of stories themselves as spatial practices, represents a step away from material culture studies that ignore actual use. Another notable exception to the larger trend is Annmarie Adams (1995), who looks at a postwar suburban California home as a "carefully negotiated compromise between ideal and real." Adams compares the developers' and architects' "intended" use of the structure to actual use by one family, noting that use has been easy to overlook in traditional histories because "it exists in behavior rather than in built fact" (171). Such behavioral constructions, written off as "banal household routines," have been neglected by critics (Garvey 2001:48-9). Finally, very few scholars have looked beyond the boundaries of house and yard in describing home, as Lynn Manzo (2003) points out.

In contrast, in this paper I consider how residents make home from both houses and a larger suburban landscape, including public space, and the political implications to that process. I ask how people make home in more subtle, less visible ways than back room additions and English gardens. I examine how residents spatially resist the structures of their houses or neighborhoods in order to make home. And I also investigate what making home means for people who still reside in their childhood homes or the same neighborhood in which they grew up. How are past homes, past experiences "encysted in the pain or pleasure of the body" (de Certeau 1984:108) of residents? How do "childhood experiences that determine spatial practices [flood] private and public spaces" (110)?

It is not incidental that I situated my research in a suburban development. The suburbs have long represented the American Dream for "making home"; their potent promise of property

and pastoralism gleams as an integral component of the American ideal of home (Archer 2005). In a 2013 speech about the rebounding housing market post-recession, President Obama urged high school students to strive for “the most tangible cornerstone that lies at the heart of the American Dream, at the heart of middle-class life—the chance to own your own home” (speech, 6 August 2013, Phoenix, Arizona). In this country, making a house a home means making oneself. Land ownership and domestic architecture are perceived and promoted as instrumental to self-realization and even personhood. Residents of Hope Valley and Hope Valley Farms enact this ideology even as they resist it—in Hope Valley, by undermining the organization of the very private property they value so highly, and in Hope Valley Farms by inserting unplanned uses within the very strategic structures they buy into.

Additionally, today more than half the American population lives in (increasingly diversifying) suburbs. Folklorists, however, have overlooked these communities as sites of ethnographic study. General scholarship treating suburbia quantitatively and historically abounds, but it thins beyond analysis of suburbanization as a trend. Ethnographic or in-depth interview-based research grows scarce outside of studies of iconic postwar suburbs such as Levittown (see Kelly 1993; Gans 1967; Henderson 1953). John Dorst (1989), one of the few folklorists who has written on suburbs, takes a “postethnographic” approach, examining the tourist destination of Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania primarily as a visual text. Art historian Ellen Avitts (2006, 2013) comes closest to my goal in her ethnographic examination of the discrepancy between the housing ideals prescribed in developers’ model homes in the Northeastern United States and how residents actually use their domestic spaces. Like Avitts, my aim is to supplement the big-picture surveys and abstract analyses with an ethnographic case study of modern southern suburbs. This thesis also represents my attempt, in a discipline that has at times

been fixated on clearly marginalized groups or “authentic Others,” to mark the unmarked category that is the everyday life of middle-class and upper middle-class suburbia (Shuman 1993:349). In accordance with Amy Shuman I aim to peel back romantic views of folklore and local culture by “account[ing] for the ways in which local boundaries are drawn in order to protect particular positions”—the ways making home is both personal and political (351).

For decades everyone from academics to rap artists has critiqued the American Dream and its suburban framework as inherently dysfunctional, a delusion that conceals its social and political ramifications. These critics reveal how the dream’s implicit claim—that private property in the form of a detached house and land is the “premier instrument for self-articulation”—excludes large segments of the population from citizenship, isolates individuals and families from a larger social or civic life, segregates by race and class, and erases public space, among many other ills (Archer 2005:203). In this study, I show how this suburban contradiction actually plays out in the lives of the people who live within it, locating the dream’s internal discord in seemingly “banal” household routines, the larger suburban landscape, and the way residents experience both public and private spaces.

II. Methods

In fall 2012, I was preparing to do fieldwork for a graduate course on the American house. I was particularly interested in houses with porticos that evoked stereotypical images of plantation homes. After a classmate suggested I look at Hope Valley, a country club community located in southwest Durham, North Carolina, I found that the neighborhood offered several perfect specimens of colonial revival architecture, and I commenced interviewing the respective homeowners. What began as research on the symbolic nature of a certain style of domestic architecture soon turned into a comparative study of neighborhood place-making when I learned

about Hope Valley Farms, a larger, much newer development that borders Hope Valley to the west. The more I talked to residents in both neighborhoods, the more I heard stories about the meaning and the struggle—as well as the pleasure—of making home. I was soon shifting my research focus yet again, from verbal discourse about architecture or abstract place-making to the small spatial practices or “disquieting familiarities” that compose the landscape of home (de Certeau 1984:96).

Over the course of about a year I spoke with members of 12 different households for a total of 24 recorded interviews, with roughly half in Hope Valley and half in Hope Valley Farms. Interviews per person ranged from one to four; I engaged in multiple conversations at residents’ homes whenever possible. There were times when interviews were not enough, however. While scholars commonly think of ethnographic fieldwork mostly in terms of social interaction with those whose experiences we want to understand, my own direct interaction with the landscape in both neighborhoods also became a critical part of my methodological toolkit. Many of my consultants discussed aspects of the landscape outside their houses and yards as significant to making home, but they did not articulate what their experiences in those spaces are like (perhaps because they saw the value of sidewalks and trails as self-explanatory; perhaps because I did not think to press them for an explanation). This compelled me to spend time moving through these landscapes, walking the streets, wandering the trails, and relying on my own sensory experiences there to write what I hope is a “tasteful ethnography,” to use Paul Stoller’s phrase (1989).

Stoller urges ethnographers in their fieldwork to “describe with literary vividness the smells, tastes and textures of the land...” (1989:29). Michael Jackson (1989) also argues along these lines. For him, ethnography that emerges from the ethnographer’s lived experience (what Jackson calls “radical empiricism”) avoids the visualist bias of empiricism, which distances the

“spectator” from the “object.” Radical empiricism, on the other hand, asks ethnographers to “make ourselves experimental subjects and treat our experiences as primary data” (1989:4). Jackson cites Renato Rosaldo’s powerful story of how his own lived experience, the tragic death of his wife Michelle, was what enabled him to finally understand the “rage, born of grief” that Illongot headhunters said impelled them to murder. Although my circumstances were much less fraught and traumatic, in my own case, to understand landscapes, to “think about” them theoretically, I had to move through them in my own embodied practice (Cresswell 2003). My walks thus became a crucial supplement to the interviews. In theory, of course, I might have engaged in a kind of participant observation in which I walked the trails alongside my consultants. But as we will see later in this paper, I learned that a meditative and solitary experience of the streets and trails permitted me to extrapolate a kind of experience that my consultants had indicated, but not articulated, and also yielded valuable insights about landscape use, as intended and unintended. Rather than adhere to the “detached observer of difference” archetype in ethnographic writing, my goal in taking this phenomenological approach was a “topoanalysis which emphasizes the sense of living in a place, of experiencing it from all sides, moving and participating in it instead of remaining on the margins like a voyeur” (Jackson 1989:8,11).

III. Setting

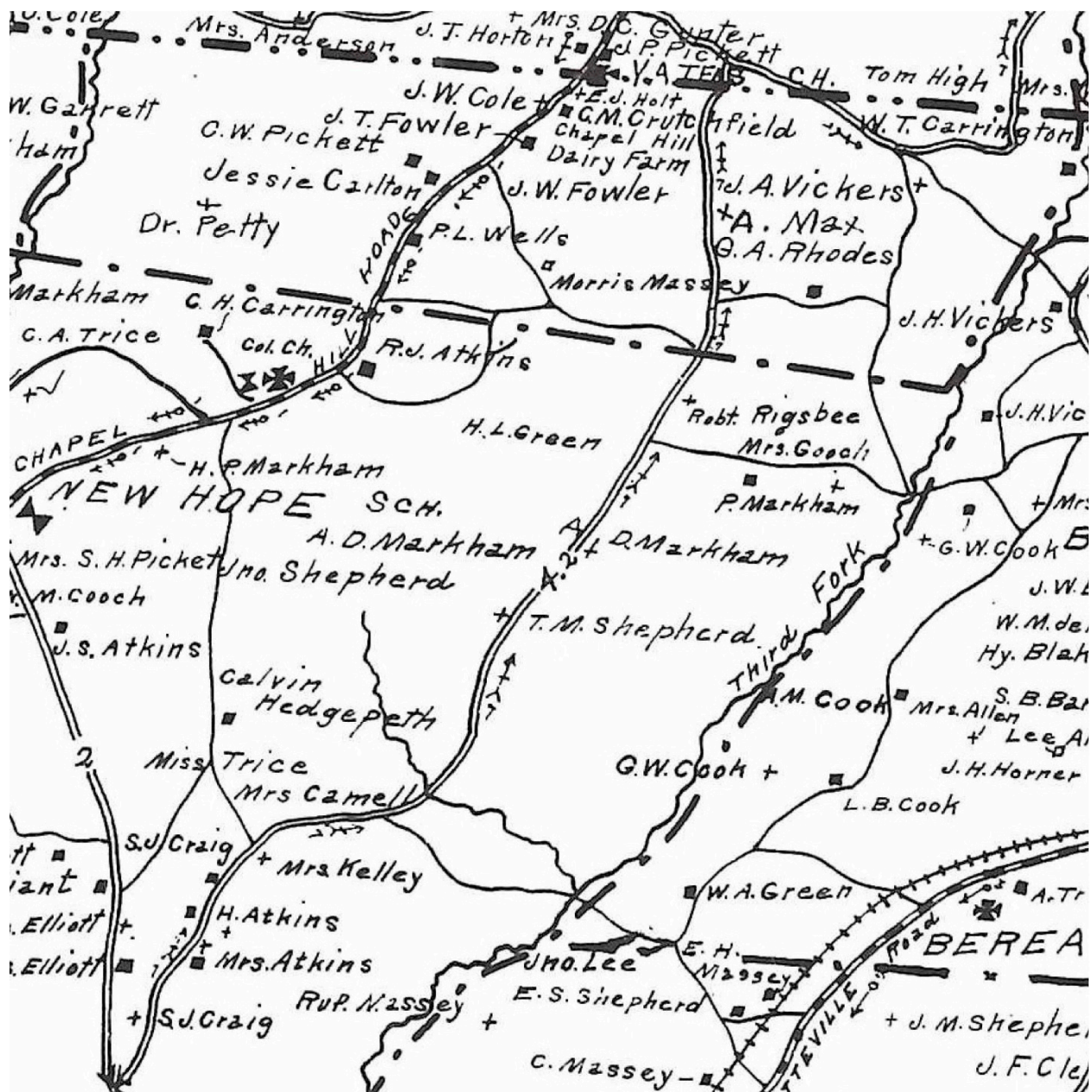
Durham is the fourth largest city in North Carolina, with a population of 239,000 in 2012. Its history is closely linked with the rise and fall of Big Tobacco and the city’s consequent racial makeup. During the late 1800s, the boom years of tobacco and textile industries, many African American freedmen were drawn to Durham for factory work and other occupations (Anderson 2011). But the city’s poor infrastructure resulted in racial settlement patterns that forced blacks

into the lowlands or “Bottoms,” prone to flooding and sanitation problems, while wealthier whites moved to higher ground along major roads (Anderson 2011; Rohe 2011). By 1920, North Carolina was the foremost industrial state in the Southeast. It had also gained a national reputation as a hub of black entrepreneurship and what became known as “Black Wall Street,” a bustling black-owned business corridor in downtown Durham adjacent to the historically black neighborhood Hayti. Despite the achievements of blacks in Durham, like other parts of the South the city was marked by racial unrest and Jim Crow; in the 1960s, Hayti was demolished over the protests of its residents as part of “urban renewal,” a move that left a “wealth of vacant lots and bad will” between blacks and city leaders (Wise, qtd. in Rohe 2011:193). As white flight increased, the separate city and county public school systems remained effectively segregated for another three decades, until the city and county systems merged in 1992 (Anderson 2011).

One could hardly write a history of Durham without mentioning these intrinsic aspects of its development. Durham’s suburbs, on the other hand, have been both literally and figuratively on the margins of narratives about the city. But in fact the story of the growth of Durham’s suburbs is a window onto its wider history—including issues of race, industry, and immigration.

When tobacco baron James B. Duke made his bequest in 1925 for the expansion of Durham’s Trinity College into Duke University, he could not have known that he was indirectly contributing to an eventual shift in the state’s economy. It would be several decades before the tobacco industry in Durham would decline, but the founding of Duke’s medical school and other research facilities paved the way for the later development of one of the world’s premier high-tech research and development centers at the Research Triangle Park, less than ten miles south of Durham’s city center. Duke—in combination with the other major universities in the area, North

Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina—was integral to the RTP's creation and its continued success (Rohe 2011).



Map of farms in the Hope Valley area of Durham, c. 1914 (image via opendurham.org)

A more immediate effect of the university expansion was an influx of both workmen and faculty from outside the South into Durham. Additionally, this period of Durham history saw the rise of new professional industries and the professional class, which coincided with the beginning of a major exodus of the upper-class from downtown Durham to more remote suburbs

(Anderson 2011). At this time, the area of Durham known today as Hope Valley was still devoted to tobacco, sweet potato, lumber and dairy production. Old maps inked over with names designate farms owned by George Shepherd, Jim Beavers, Hugh and Durham Markham, and Henry Green, with what would become Hope Valley Road running down the middle of their properties. (According to Preservation Durham's 2010 home tour pamphlet, "From Crown to Club," "it is believed" that Shepherd's ancestors purchased their farm from a royal land grantee.)

The Mebane Company of Greensboro seized this opportunity to pull in migrating faculty and city-dwellers by buying up the farmland along Hope Valley Road for Durham's first country club suburb. Situated between Durham and Chapel Hill, Hope Valley would be accessible only by car; it aimed to attract Duke doctors and lawyers, part of the new professional class who could afford automobiles. According to some local historians, this made Hope Valley Durham's first true suburb due to its not being "contiguous with anything" (Kueber 2011). Consequently Hope Valley was advertised as offering the country life—horseback riding, golfing, and swimming—with all the modern conveniences of asphalt roads, city water and sewer systems, and electricity, within an easy commute to both Duke and the University of North Carolina. The developers hired Philadelphian Robert B. Cridland, designer of the Vanderbilt estate in New York, as their landscape architect, who developed a plan for narrow, curvilinear roadways in keeping with the contours of the landscape. Preservation Durham (2010) attributes the endurance of Cridland's design and the absence of curbs, gutters and sidewalks still today to Hope Valley's late incorporation into the city of Durham in 1965 and the city's "benign neglect" since then.

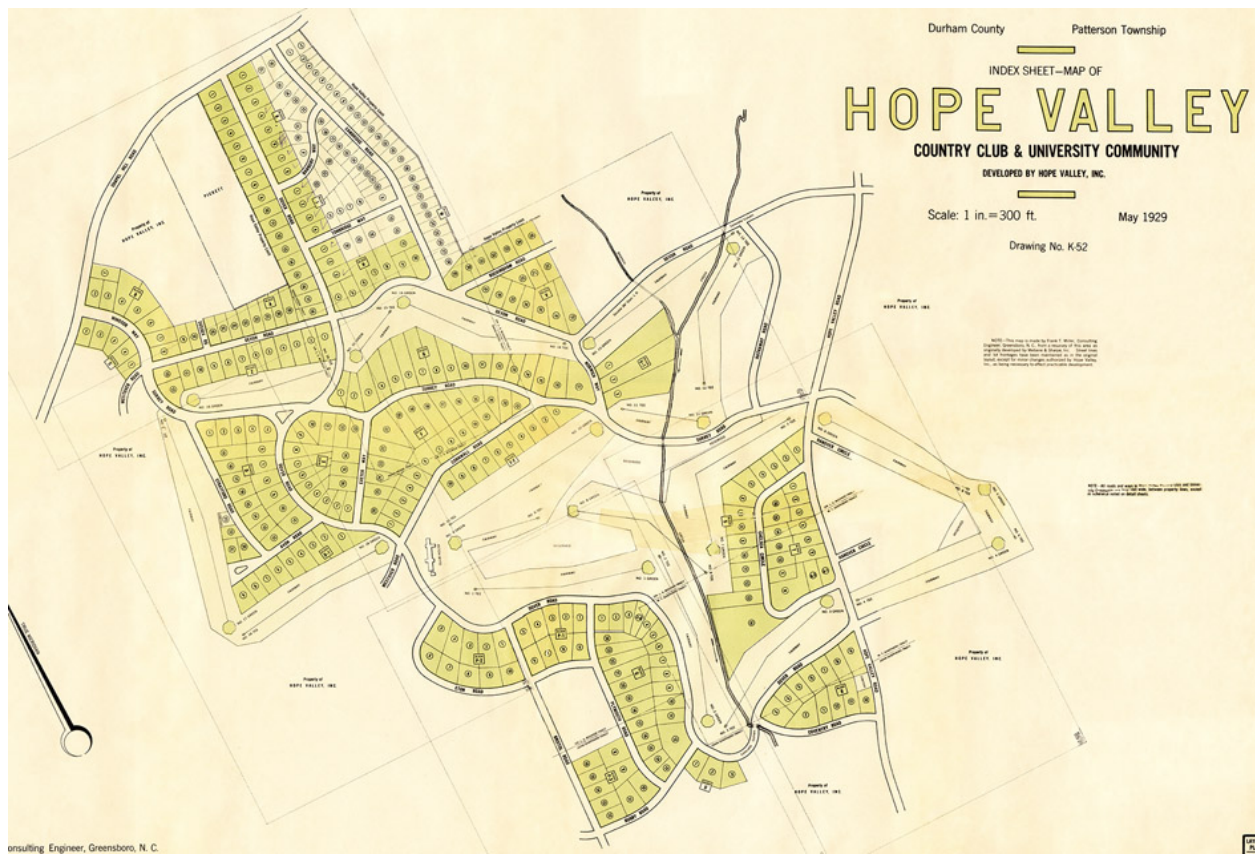
In January 1927, an ad appeared in the Durham Morning Herald bidding Durham residents to enter a contest to name the streets in Hope Valley. Although the contest winner had proposed using names of local Indian tribes like Cherokee and Occoneechee, when Richardson



Riders on Dover Road in Hope Valley, c. 1927 (image via opendurham.org)

Realty of Greensboro took over direct management a few years later the roads were christened after British places such as Dover, Buckingham, Avon, Stonehenge, Cambridge, Chelsea, etc. (Anderson 2011; Deberry 2013). The new names complemented Hope Valley's Tudor Revival and English cottage speculative houses designed by prominent Durham residential architect George Watts Carr, and contributed to the cultivation of the "rural English look" of the landscape as well as evoking Duke's nearby Gothic towers (Deberry 2013). These early homes in Hope Valley cluster around holes of the golf course fringed with forest. Tucked away from the golf course, the remaining acreage would later be purchased by local developers Claude Currie and L.

Watts Norton and developed into a part of Hope Valley characterized by low-slung modern ranch houses.



Consulting Engineer, Greensboro, N. C.
This May 1929 development map of Hope Valley reveals its curvilinear street pattern (image via opendurham.org)

With its winding, “irregular” streets and the hilly golf course ringed with trees (not to mention its Tudor and English cottage style homes), Hope Valley bears the strong stamp of the “picturesque” aesthetic that dates to 18th century English estates and landscape gardens (Crandell 1993; Downing 1858). These English gardens were pastoral, with “undulating openings intermingle[d] with wooded areas” (Crandell 1993:124), and they are echoed in Hope Valley’s landscape. Additionally, Hope Valley’s trees, rolling hills and winding streets conceal its borders, another feature of English gardens. An understanding of the Anglo character of this landscape persists today among residents, who refer not only to the English street names but also the rolling hills and the “winding,” “quiet country roads” as English.



A view of the golf course at Hope Valley, Durham, NC, September 2012 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

As Gina Crandell (1993) points out, the English landscape garden descended from a particular style of landscape painting that can ultimately be traced to the advent of perspective in Renaissance art. In short, these landscape paintings precipitated an understanding of landscape itself as a *view*. Landscape-as-view has long been a dominant narrative in Hope Valley: because both houses and streets adjoined holes of the golf course, early advertisements could exhort Durham's citizens to "drive out" and enjoy "lovely vistas opened through the virgin woods." According to a 2010 home tour pamphlet, the vistas heralded in these early ads remain unspoiled: "Whether driving [Hope Valley's] narrow curbless streets or standing in one of its dramatic apexes you see rather uniformly what its first residents saw in 1926, a rustic, wooded and carefully planned retreat from the factories and offices of Durham" (25). In 2009, Hope Valley was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Given its removal from Durham at the time it was developed, Hope Valley is the epitome of the flight from city to suburbs. Even today, none of its streets other than Hope Valley Road, which demarcates the eastern edge of the development, is a thoroughfare to any part of Durham. The curvilinear design of its roadways makes the neighborhood even more inaccessible to city dwellers, effectively cordoning off Hope Valley. Presumably, there is no reason to be in the neighborhood unless one lives there—the lack of sidewalks and curbs prevents pedestrians from cluttering the views. This particular landscape is an exclusive one, it is easy to see. Early advertisements for the new development publicized Hope Valley as “sensibly restricted—completely serviced—and large enough to be protected forever by undesirable elements” (*Durham Morning Herald*, May 23, 1926). Other ads emphasized the “retreat” from the noxious air of the city:

As a city grows, city dwellers become filled with vague unrest. They can not remain entirely satisfied with city conditions, especially if they have young children. Impure air, smoke, dust and clatter, grow ever more obnoxious. Dangers multiply. The mother is constantly worried for the safety of her children. ... Automobiles, paved highways and suburban parks are breaking up the habit of city dwelling. It is a happier family whose home is located in the country, served with the conveniences of city life and within a few minutes' drive from the heart of town. (*Durham Morning Herald*, June 1926)

Another ad depicts three smiling children above the headline, “Where Will They Play?” It goes on to ask,

What sort of home environment are you going to give them? Will it be the congestion of the city or the freedom of suburban life? Where will they play? On small lawns, concrete walks, traffic-laden streets—or out in the invigorating sunshine—out on the hillsides where open skies and long vistas inspire them? (*Durham Morning Herald*, n.d.)

The questions tap into a popular sentiment: since the late 1800s, Americans have said they are moving to the suburbs “for the children” (Archer 2005:258). This seemingly sacrificial mantra is “the peculiar twist of the American dream” (Seeley, et. al., qtd. in Archer 2005:259). But as I will discuss later, the ad’s juxtaposition of the urban landscape of sidewalks and traffic with the

“long vistas” of Hope Valley has taken on a new significance in recent decades and itself represents a “peculiar twist” in the story of Hope Valley and the American Dream at large.

In appearance, Hope Valley resembles picturesque enclaves of the mid to late-19th century as described by Dolores Hayden (2003). These early American suburbs inspired by religious communitarian movements were “carefully fitted to hilly terrain with winding and well-graded roads” with a commitment to “shared open space” and viewing places (45, 66). As time went on, however, the socialist experiment flattened into routine suburbs, and the open parks were turned into country clubs. It is Hope Valley Farms, by contrast, that more closely approximates the spirit if not the appearance of these communities’ social goals.



A man pushes a stroller down the sidewalk along South Roxboro Street, the main boulevard in Hope Valley Farms, Durham, NC, September 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

First developed in the late 1980s, Hope Valley Farms comprises 770 acres of subdivisions whose success was predicated on its proximity to the Research Triangle Park

(Buggs 1998). The 1980s and 90s saw tremendous growth in the RTP (Rohe 2011). In 1980 General Electric built a new micro-electric center in the park, and two years later the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences moved in, bringing other companies in its wake. During this time Durham experienced a decline in blue-collar jobs as research and biomedical technology became driving economic forces. In 1981 the city council chose to adopt the slogan “Durham: City of Medicine.” By the year 2000 Duke University was the largest employer in Durham County, followed closely by IBM, a longtime RTP tenant (Anderson 2011). Today, Research Triangle Park provides the state with a “knowledge-based economy” dependent on pharmaceutical and biotechnology research and development (Rohe 2011:62).

In a way the development of Hope Valley prefigured the creation of Hope Valley Farms. As a suburb with close ties, both historical and contemporary, to Duke, Hope Valley represents the earliest manifestation of the new professional economy in the area that eventually resulted in the Research Triangle Park and burgeoning professional suburbs like Hope Valley Farms. While Durham’s neighborhoods are divided in a “fine-grained” pattern along socioeconomic and racial lines, in general the Triangle area has increasingly diversified since the 1970s (Rohe 2011:44). Unlike its predecessor, developed during a time when the professional class was almost entirely white, in Hope Valley Farms whites make up less than 50 percent of the north side of the development, paralleling a national trend of diversification in many professional middle-class suburbs (city-data.com; Hayden 2003; Singer). Additionally, it is becoming more and more common in places like the Triangle for new immigrants to move straight to the suburbs (Hayden 2003; Singer 2004). However, it is important to note that Hope Valley Farms’ growth also occurred around the same time as the Durham Public Schools merger. Much of Hope Valley Farms is districted for Jordan High School; as of 2013 about 35 percent of Jordan High School

students were participating in the free and reduced-price lunch plans, while at Hillside High, north of Hope Valley Farms, almost 68 percent of students receive a free or reduced-price lunch (Platt 2013). My own fieldwork indicates that many people move to Hope Valley Farms so that their children may attend Jordan. Given the recent city and county consolidation and Durham's troubled racial history, it comes as no surprise that Hillside's student population is nearly 90 percent black and only 2 percent white, while Jordan is more racially balanced at 40 percent African American, 39 percent white, 11 percent Hispanic, and 6 percent Asian (Platt 2013).



Third Fork Creek Trail runs through Hope Valley Farms, Durham, NC, September 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

Hope Valley Farms is designed so that nodes of small neighborhoods branch off a main four-lane boulevard, South Roxboro Street, with a landscaped median running down the middle of the boulevard and a heavy treeline shielding the smaller subdivisions from the main road. Most of the houses in these subdivisions are either “transitional” or “traditional” in style,

according to real estate agents, with open floor plans and two stories typical of homes built in the 1990s and early 2000s, in contrast to the variety of architectural styles in Hope Valley. The average lot is about 0.2 acres. Sidewalks also run along South Roxboro. In addition, two major greenways cut through Hope Valley Farms, the American Tobacco Trail and the Third Fork Creek Trail, and extend six miles to downtown Durham. The Hope Valley Farms Swim and Racquet Club was converted into a YMCA in January 2013, providing more shared community space. In 2002, a major commercial shopping center sprang up less than four miles from the center of Hope Valley Farms. As of 2013, nearly 50,000 people resided in Hope Valley Farms (point2homes.com).

IV. Strategies and Tactics in Making Home

Performance theory has been a dominant and productive model across genres within folklore, beginning with the discipline's rhetorical/sociolinguistic turn in the 1960s and its emphasis on verbal art as performance (Abrahams 1968; Bauman 1977). More recently, folklorists have called for an expanded theory that considers "less overtly expressive forms" with a focus on the aesthetics of everyday life (see Roberts 2013). Some material culture scholars reject performance theory on the grounds that it fails to distinguish between construction and use; linguistics-derived performance models especially vex these critics (Williams and Young 1995). I agree that a rhetoric-based version of performance theory is insufficient for studies of material culture and for everyday life, and that a more embodied, political, and experiential approach is needed that is not constrained by a strict performer-audience symmetry. But if rhetoric is not the right framework for understanding material culture/landscape, then what is? I contend it is a combination, or rethinking, of performance and practice.

Michel de Certeau describes everyday life as practice, “lived space” (1984:96). For de Certeau, everyday life is the product of both space and time. It is qualitative, the way a foot touches the pavement; it is use of space, embodied action. De Certeau contrasts everyday life—an “anthropological, poetic and mythic experience of space”—with “visual, panoptic, or theoretical constructions” (93). He takes the idea further by suggesting that ultimately, what is spatial is social and vice versa. Following de Certeau, as well as Judith Butler, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett situates performance in space, asserting that practice itself is performance. More than that, performance/practice shapes space as fully as material forms themselves through “repetition, reenactment, and renewal” (2008:21). Sunlight and smoke, a drum’s beat, stomping feet—all raise up “ambient architecture.” Practice-as-performance-as-ambient architecture reframes performance not as a singular event, but as permeating every facet of life. It recognizes repeated, embodied action as performance, emergent even as it is reiterated again and again. It asks folklorists to admit the poetics and ethics of everyday life, and sees even the quotidian as emergent performance. It is temporal, and it is a negotiation, qualities understood as inherent to both performance and the practice of everyday life.

Repetition, reenactment, renewal—these words call to mind Bourdieu’s *habitus*, or “bodily logic,” what de Certeau calls “ways of operating” or “tactics.” Where Bourdieu assumes the *habitus* is always an unconscious expression of hegemony, however, de Certeau sees our everyday lives as resistance to imposed structures and shakes off “the blanket Bourdieu’s theory throws over tactics as if to put out their fire” (de Certeau 1984:59). De Certeau also inverts Michel Foucault’s theory of insidious control through disciplinary structures by imagining spatial practices as “surreptitious creativities” or “coups” of established, strategic structures (96, 79). One such coup is *la perruque*, when an employee conducts personal business while on the

clock or using company tools (25). Another is reading. In an eye wandering over a page, in “leaps over written spaces in an ephemeral dance” the reader makes the text her own; she inhabits it, slipping herself and her own history into the meaning (xxi). This is much more than a passive act of consumption. In fact, de Certeau argues that consumption—of food, books, houses, etc.—is actually production. What does a person *make* of the television show she watches, the book she reads, the house she lives in? What does she do with it? In this way dwelling itself becomes a tactic, a way of operating. Indeed, de Certeau relies on dwelling, on making a space “habitable,” as a metaphor for this act of manipulative production in other contexts, the insertion of our selves and our pasts within or on top of constraining systems. In dwelling, he writes, we “superimpose” ourselves onto space. Similarly, although she does not cite de Certeau as a theoretical influence, Barbara Kelly refers to residents as “coproducers” of their houses/homes in her landmark study of Levittown (1993:3). This suggests that the act of making home is almost inevitably tactical—a quiet resistance to original floor plans, small backyards, HOA restrictions, and the visible, planned landscape. It takes shape in impermanent transformations of space, in meaning residents find in their bodily rituals around a house rather than in the structures themselves, in use, experience, memories evoked by meals at an inherited table. It happens *within* strategic structures like walls and floor plans and defined public spaces—and often in spite of them.

Contra Foucault, Bourdieu and de Certeau, however, everyday life is neither necessarily resistant nor necessarily hegemonic. To acknowledge this is to acknowledge the rich complexity of both the practice of everyday life and our resulting identities:

Everyday life can be oppressive or liberating, depending on the ways it is organized temporally and spatially. Everyday life shapes selfhood and personhood through material, and particularly bodily, practices, but its critical quality is time, as Michel de Certeau

realized. It is the repetition and routine of everyday life that teaches our bodies the *habitus*. (Upton 2002:720)

We will see later in this paper how especially but not only in the suburbs everyday life involves both sustaining and resisting a given strategic landscape. This makes sense if we understand power as a contest rather than a singular panoptic presence, and everyday life as an experiential negotiation rather than always tactical or always hegemonic for any given person.

We are concerned with meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt, and the relations between these and formal or systematic beliefs are in practice variable, over a range from formal assent with private dissent to the more nuanced interaction between selected and interpreted beliefs and acted and justified experiences. (Williams 1977:132)

Dell Upton (2002) also critiques de Certeau for squeezing everyday life into a rhetorical model (the same mistake performance-oriented folklorists have made; Sawin 2002). It is true that despite de Certeau's professed preference of practice over theory, his own text tends towards the abstract and presents a much less grounded analysis than "everyday life" warrants. But he does not rely wholly on rhetoric to describe lived space. He also draws from politics—"coups," art—"weaving places together," and physical structures and movements—"local legends produce cellars and garrets everywhere." Embodied practice resides at the heart of de Certeau's thesis. And although spatial practice, everyday life, should not be reduced to semiotics, the comparison is not wholly unsuitable. For example, de Certeau writes that stories themselves are spatial practices—they "move" us, they "transport" us (1984:115). Disentangling memory or language from spatial practices may be not only difficult but also problematic.

Houses, Stories, Bodies

A home, I have found in both Hope Valley and Hope Valley Farms, acts like a story in many ways. It is both structural and spatial, temporal and lingering. It acts upon its creators even as they create it. Although in other respects, as I will discuss later, residents of the two

neighborhoods make home in distinct patterns, in this respect they all seem to agree. One Hope Valley resident describes home as “more of a feeling I guess than a place” (6 June 2013). Of course, feelings and place are inextricable. For this man, the landscape of Hope Valley stirs those feelings. For him, Hope Valley is what de Certeau would call a “hollow place in which a past sleeps.... Haunted places are the only ones people can live in” (de Certeau 1984:108). Home, ironically, becomes a site that “moves” us, “transports” us to a different time, if not also a different place. Home is the shape of our stories, the very *body* of our narrative—and by that I mean more than a physical manifestation of something invisible. I mean that “bodies and places are connatural terms. They interanimate one another” (Casey, qtd. in Shutika 2011:229). Call it coproduction or reproduction, making home is making something that is both self and other. When one woman in Hope Valley Farms was renovating her house, for example, her neighbor said to her, “Oh, Judy, the house looks just like you” (11 July 2013)—something friends often say about a newborn to the parents. A home may also engage residents in a game of reciprocal gestures. One Hope Valley Farms resident describes this relationship as “symbiosis,” saying that “to bond in a relationship you mimic”:

I’ve heard people joke about how people start to look like their pets, pets starts to look like their people, people start to look like their spouses—I think your house starts to look like you and you start to look like your house. In the sense of the house being your environment. (interview with Jocelyn Neal, 30 July 2013)

Another woman who lives in Hope Valley says that her home is “pretty symmetric, extremely well-balanced. But that that is a lot who I am—I’m balanced and visual and all that. Probably not as gracious as I should be” (27 September 2012). In this particular dialogic relationship, the house/home is a form of embodied social etiquette, both influenced by and influencing the dweller’s *habitus*.



L to R: Ray and Anna Cordova in front of their home in Hope Valley Farms, Durham, NC, June 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

Anna and Ray Cordova moved to Hope Valley Farms in 2012 as newlyweds. In their downstairs half-bath hangs a wall clock in the shape of a smiling green turtle. A small blue bird perches on its shell. The clock symbolizes their relationship: the bird is Anna, “always on the go”; the turtle represents Ray, more “sedentary,” more cautious. The clock, as they revealed to me, corresponds to Anna and Ray’s respective bird and turtle tattoos. In these twin inscriptions the distinction between house/home and body begins to blur (19 May 2013). Indeed, the home itself is bodily logic. Anna recognizes this, and in effect makes the same point as landscape scholar Don Mitchell (2003), who argues that landscapes, social relations and politics are mutually constitutive, when she describes a “healthy house”:

[...]One of the large reasons that we purchased the home where we did is that there is so much ease of walking [in Hope Valley Farms]. Between the two of us, that dog gets walked twice a day, I work out almost every day, and I don’t have to go anywhere to do

it. And then of course, we have a dedicated space for yoga, and Ray and I both have our weights upstairs. So it's nice to have the space that we can do it. And the space in the kitchen to prepare healthy food. I think all of that makes a difference. I know in some lower income homes, you may not even have a stove [...] How can you possibly have fresh food and cook it and take care of yourself in that way if you don't have those things? I think there are sort of several ways of looking at that basic idea of a healthy home. (18 August 2013)

Because of her practice of everyday life, Anna intuitively understands that home is embodied.

Re-membering and Reproducing Through Use

For many residents of Hope Valley and Hope Valley Farms the negotiation of house to create home is fraught. To create home—something both self and other, something that re-members past homes or past selves—requires a combination of strategies and tactics, sometimes on the part of the same person. While Ray and Anna see their house as by and large in harmony with the staging of their story, for other residents their houses structurally conflict with or hinder the creation of home. No matter how compatible the house is with the desired “home,” however, all residents in both neighborhoods are also architects of “home” through use, through lived space. This is where I—and many of my consultants—contend that “home” happens. In spatial use of a home, the house becomes a “liberated space that can be occupied” (de Certeau 1984:105). In use, “inward-turning histories” come bubbling up.

I discovered one such embodied history the first time I visited Ray and Anna for an interview. Ray opened the door to greet me, and I headed into the house. I had already taken several steps before Ray cleared his throat and asked me to stop and remove my shoes. “We keep an Asian household,” he said, gesturing at the pile of shucked shoes by the door (19 May 2013). It took two more visits with Anna and Ray before removing my shoes had become my own bodily logic upon crossing the threshold; my embarrassment at failing to remember the second time stemmed not only from the ritual’s significance as a general mark of respect, but also

because it embodies Ray's personal history. Ray's parents were Asian immigrants who moved to Raleigh, where he grew up. Ray also re-members their habit of keeping the door locked and windows closed. Anna teases him for locking the front door even when they are sitting in the living room or dining room, both spaces in view of the door, or for locking her out of the house after she asks him to leave the door unlocked (30 June 2013). Habits like these are what make home, according to Anna:

Home is where [my husband and my dog] are. And then I think about comfort. I think about my recliner, or the stacks of books I love, or looking out the window and watching the sunrise. Those types of very day-to-day things, that's what I associate with home. People in my kitchen talking, smells of food, coffee—did I mention coffee? (19 May 2013)

In addition to the ambient architecture of coffee brewing or people talking, the spatial habits of Ray and Anna's *neighbors* also contribute to the creation of the Cordovas' home. In contrast to neighborhoods where "it's like each house is its own," Ray describes Hope Valley Farms as a place where people look out for each other, where residents know when neighbors are gone because they aren't out and about. One older retired man has become the "unofficial watchdog" for the neighborhood. Staked out on his porch at the edge of a cul-de-sac, the neighbor can see all incoming traffic to that part of the neighborhood—and "he's always there" (19 May 2013). Thus the Cordovas recognize that their neighbors are also coproducers of their home; in another instance, Ray noted that the generosity of neighbors in offering to watch their dog while Ray and Anna were out of town for a few days will be a memory that stays with him (30 June 2013).

The Cordovas also make home by re-memembering their past homes or family members through interaction with certain objects. Their kitchen table belonged to Anna's great-aunt; it dates to the 1920s. Anna's great-uncle Hank built a wooden stool that squats quietly in the kitchen. And the dining room set we gathered around to discuss making home was the same



Anna's inherited breakfast table, Durham, NC, March 2014 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

dining room set Ray ate his meals at as a young boy. These objects do not stand alone as memory, however; it is Anna and Ray's physical interaction with the objects that rouses flashes of memory:

Kelsey: So when you sit down at these tables, do you feel like you're kind of invoking—
 Anna: Oh, all kinds of memories come up for me. Gosh, I always ate a lot when I went to Aunt Gloria's. To me, it's like biscuits, I think of biscuits, I think of pancakes, I think of those Klondike ice cream bars, lots of food memories.

Ray: And the reason there are only five chairs is there used to be six, but I remember when I was growing up, I had this bad habit of rocking my chair, and so I rocked it too far back once when I was ten or eleven once, and it just fell back and broke in half.

[laughs]

Anna: So lots of great memories. And we're building new ones here. Always thinking of our friends, and as you might have gathered, lot of games when I sit down at the table now. (30 June 2013)

Anna and Ray "build" new memories through other architectural acts—repetition, reenactment, renewal—as well. Every time they have a meal together, Ray lifts Anna's hand, kisses it, and

then kisses her lips. When Anna leaves the house, Ray follows her to the door to say good-bye and tell her that he loves her. And every time Anna returns, Ray comes to the door to say hello and that he loves her. The doorway to Ray and Anna's house is marked as much by Ray's affections as it is by its red paint. As Anna says, "when that's what you get every time you leave and enter a home, gosh, of course it's special."

Other spatial practices that "make home," according to Anna and Ray, include meals they have shared with friends, a "Friendsgiving" celebration, regular monthly Game Days, a cupcake decorating contest, a potluck with Anna's work colleagues, and planting two persimmon trees together with Ray's parents in the backyard. "Keeping house" also means "making home" for Ray, who performs most of the household chores, and experiences mowing the lawn, washing dishes, cleaning the gutters, vacuuming and folding clothes as an almost spiritual experience that carries within it the opportunity for "Zen" like meditation (18 August 2013). These simple acts, and their "disquieting familiarity," are part of what makes a space habitable.

As a "house husband" Ray represents the surprising finding of my research that for most of my consultants, making home is not gendered in the ways one might expect. The historical construction of postwar suburbs as "feminine" due to the private/public gendered division of labor does not seem to be the rule today in Hope Valley and Hope Valley Farms (England 1993:26). In general, the women and men I interviewed identified with their homes to astonishingly similar degrees and were similarly reflective and reflexive about making home. At the same time, both men and women had complicated relationships with their homes: one man feels "claustrophobia" and "enmity" towards a previous residence, evoking an almost iconic image of feminine domestic angst made famous in literary works like Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892). For most of my consultants the labor that goes into making

home is also a joint production. Ray keeps house by doing laundry, washing dishes, and cleaning bathrooms, not just mowing the yard; Jocelyn and her husband split cooking and laundry, and he is responsible for ferrying their children to school, the “suburban dad in the minivan” (13 June 2013).

Still, Anna makes clear that making home is a negotiation between strategic structures and desires to incarnate the past. While Ray is a board member for the Hope Valley Farms Homeowners Association’s Architectural Review Board, Anna finds herself a bit disgruntled over the restrictions on having clotheslines in the back yard. And while Ray cites the injunction against chain link fences as a good example of an important HOA covenant, Anna reminisces about growing up in a yard with a chain link fence, saying it “brings back happy memories of playing in the yard with my dog” (30 June 2013). Anna also notes that “I have a love of old homes in me” inherited from her architectural art historian mother. But she adds that she doesn’t “live the kind of life that would afford me to keep up with an old home.” In fact, most of Anna’s small dissatisfactions stem from dissonance between her past home and the present. She wishes their backyard were spacious enough for a swing set or a more extensive garden—“I just remember growing up I had a really sizable backyard, and I think that was just a great thing to have as a kid” (18 August 2013).

Although Anna and Ray might not frame dwelling as a tactical resistance, *per se*, they understand that “home” occurs in between the walls of the house, and even despite them. It is not “readable” (de Certeau 1984:95); rather, home is an appropriation of the house, of a certain geography.

Ray: It’s those little traditions and the objects in the house that remind us of our old traditions. So that’s what really makes it feel like a home.



Anna and Ray in their living room at home, Durham, NC, March 2014 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

Anna: Because at the end of the day, it's just walls and insulation and siding and brick. It's the people. It's the relationships, it's the connections, it's the love. That's what makes it a home.

Ray: Because if I lived in a house by myself that was three times this size—

Anna: It would feel just like a great big empty box. (30 June 2013)

In rituals like a kiss before dinner, Ray and Anna “articulate a second, poetic geography on top of the geography of the literal, forbidden or permitted meaning” of the physical structure (de Certeau 1984:105). In turn, the physical structure shapes their lives, their health, and their very bodies.

On cold winter mornings in her parents' house in Española, New Mexico, as a child Jocelyn Neal would lie next to the rooms' low radiators, feeling the heat from the hot water running through the pipes, noting how the light from a large bank of windows fell like rain on the floor. The house was built on a hill, which insulated it from the dry Southwestern heat. It was



Jocelyn Neal stands in front of her home in Hope Valley Farms, Durham, NC, July 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

also solar powered, larger and more open than Jocelyn's current home in Hope Valley Farms. But despite differences between the structure of Jocelyn's childhood home and the one she has today, she models the spatial use of her house after the place in which she grew up: "My mother could walk into my house and know where stuff is intuitively. Because the functional layout of my kitchen is the same" (30 July 2013). Jocelyn also recalls her grandmother's home, with its huge pantry full of jars of preserves, a kitchen with the space to save food. Her own home's spatial arrangement is not conducive to saving or storage. But in New Mexico, land was cheap, space was cheap, and "the garage was where you put *stuff*, not the car" (9 July 2013). So today, Jocelyn stores camping gear, bicycles and gardening equipment on one side of her garage, and her husband parks his car on the other side. Three generations ago, Jocelyn's family grew their own food; garden produce supplied up to half of her own family's summer diet. Today, however,

Jocelyn buys dirt, fertilizer, and bird netting for the small garden plot in her backyard and in return, the garden half-heartedly produces a few cucumbers and tomatoes. Gardening, in Jocelyn's situation, is not "an economically productive endeavor." She gardens with her children for another reason—"Why do we do it? Well, the personal pleasure, the physical feel of sticking your hands in the dirt, I like it," she says. Jocelyn also gardens to teach her children where food comes from and what it's like to grow your own food. Teaching her children to garden is "sort of a legacy thing," a way to tap into family roots, despite the economic and social distance Jocelyn senses between her lifestyle and that of her parents or grandparents. In this way, her small garden is "illustrative of the economic realities of this suburban life [...] It's a weird middle space" (9 July 2013).

Judy Curtis also gardens, and she gardens because it is "in her blood" (11 July 2013). Her mother was a horticulture judge, and growing up Judy and her brothers would pull up weeds and harvest vegetables from their own miniature plots. Today, she describes the landscaping around her home in Hope Valley Farms as "a way to frame the house" and "a foil" for the structure, implicitly asserting herself as an artist of home. But trying to re-member past homes or family members brings its own difficulties for Judy:

[Gardening] runs in the family. It's hard to escape it [...] When I started to put flowers in my house, I would get so upset because I couldn't make them look like my mother did. But then I decided, who cares? If I like them, that's what's important. (13 June 2013)

Judy felt the weight of re-producing home as almost predestined, but also impossible to fully realize. For her, the negotiation was not simply between the "strategy" of the physical architecture and her past home, it was also between the past and her present self. In fact, the physical structure of Judy's house enables her to make home: she says the architecture of her house allows her to "explore" certain ways of decorating, and that a "flexible" house like hers



Judy Curtis in front of her home in Hope Valley Farms, Durham, NC, July 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

facilitates such experimentation (29 July 2013). Judy tells me her decorating—with landscaping, paint or wallpaper—brings her house “to life.” Again, making home is a generative act. Given lingering cultural understandings of domesticity, it comes as no surprise that Judy particularly connects “home” with bearing children, attributing the trend in neighboring Hope Valley of people living in the house they grew up in to “a Southern mother holding her children close.” But Judy’s children are long since gone, adults with their own children, and she delights in making home in her own way as a single woman in Hope Valley Farms.

Not far away in Hope Valley, Anita Brame is remembering her father, “an unusual man.” She recalls him sitting at the breakfast table every morning, his horoscope opened up before him. She says he had his entire family’s birth charts drawn up. He was also a well-known Durham building contractor who constructed dozens of homes in both Hope Valley and Forest Hills,



Anita Brame in front of her home in Hope Valley, Durham, NC, April 2014 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

another affluent neighborhood just outside downtown Durham. But his real interests lay in the futuristic. A design for an air car draped his drafting desk; as he grew older, he increasingly became interested in modular and prefabricated home design, “housing for the masses.” He was fascinated by the prospect of using the least amount of plywood possible to build a house—and he did it, creating plywood pyramids with hinge doors. He built an entirely prefabricated church for one small north Durham community. As a child, Anita loved to walk under the scaffolding of these building sites.

Today, in the sharp right angles, gridded glass walls and white-and-black concrete exterior of her modernist Hope Valley home, Anita remembers her father. Anita designed the Mondrian-inspired house with the help of Triangle architect Phil Szostak after having lived in Hope Valley for nearly 37 years. Despite the fact that Anita helped design the structural layout of

the house, when I ask her how she has made the house a home, she does not mention design elements. Instead, she describes her family's first Christmas in their new home, the ambient architecture of "Christmas music blasting all over the house..." She notes the many parties they've thrown. And she points to a wooden mantel in the kitchen, made of walnut from her grandfather's lumber company. For Anita, the mantel is hewn from her family tree. Although her father has been dead for several years now, never having seen the house and home his daughter built, "he would love this house," Anita says. "Oh my god, he would love this house" (18 July 2013).

Deconstructing from Within: Architecture and Revolution

Unlike Anita, who had the financial and social resources to design the home she had in mind, some Hope Valley Farms residents find the structure of their house in conflict with their story/home. While scholars have explored the difference between a "felt home" and "euphemistic home" in the cases of migrant workers or displaced people, few have gauged how the distance between the present and the past can also constrain efforts to create home (Porteous, qtd. in Lattanzi Shutika 2011:84). Few scholars have asked how people who are in conflict with their houses create "felt homes" within them. For some residents, it is not enough for them to make home through "ambient architecture." Instead, they must restructure the house; they must re-member through dismantling. Restructuring does not have to mean literally cutting out walls or tearing up floor, however. Instead, it may mean transformations of space, an invisible spatial deconstruction, to make a house "habitable." This is a more overt "coup" than the particular everyday practices I have looked at in this paper thus far. This is a "punching and tearing open" of "the surface of order" (de Certeau 1984:107).

When Jocelyn Neal imagines her dream house, it looks like the home she grew up in, the house with the low radiators and the big windows in New Mexico. She imagines “Southwestern elements”—high ceilings, lots of light, medium-toned woods, lively art, lots of space. More space than her current house, which she describes as “one notch small” and “missing family amenities” like a mud room, a screened porch and an extra bedroom; more space for sewing, for crafting, for her children. Jocelyn feels constrained by the very walls of her house: “walls are just walls...they’re a burden” (9 July 2013). Jocelyn also feels constrained by the HOA covenants that “legislate” a certain uniformity and by the landscape of Hope Valley Farms. Its hilly topography has resulted in steep front yards that are unsafe for children, and its curving streets are maddening to Jocelyn. In return, she makes home by co-opting these physical structures in a way. In fact, Jocelyn notes that although renting would have been nearly as cost-effective as buying a house at the time she and her husband moved to Hope Valley Farms, they wanted to buy “because frankly we want to be able to mess a place up. We don’t want to have to worry about the space not becoming shaped by us. What that means, frankly, is footprints on the walls and toys being thrown at the walls” (13 June 2013).

The everyday practices of Jocelyn’s family represent an appropriation or coup of the house’s physical structure not only in de Certeau’s terms, but in Jocelyn’s as well. She equates her family’s practices of everyday life, and home itself, with the act of deconstruction or “dismantling”:

The house is there to serve the family. So if there are scratches on the wall, I try to minimize that, but the house is there to serve the family. [...] And when the living room gets dismantled to make a fort, as it is right now—there’s the Batman castle and then the princess castle and then the piano bench and there was something on top of it—*That’s* the home. It’s there to serve the development, growth and evolution of a group of people living as a family. Who at this point still color on the walls occasionally [...] It’s all the stuff you see in the TV commercials, where the mother opens up the pantry door, and

then gets all teary when she sees the height of her kids all marked on the wall, that kind of thing. (9 July 2013)

Jocelyn's house becomes a literal palimpsest when her children color on the walls or when she measures their heights by writing on the doorways. Like "worn coins," the walls "lose...the value engraved on them, but their ability to signify outlives its first definition" (de Certeau 1984: 104-5). Unlike the slow defacement of coins over time as they are passed from hand to hand, however, these inscriptions intentionally and actively challenge the narrative of uniformity that Jocelyn perceives in the house plans in Hope Valley Farms. They "insinuate other routes into the functionalist and historical order" (de Certeau 1984:105). When I ask Jocelyn what memories she will carry with her from life in this house, the stories she tells me all share one detail in common: "transformations" of space, particularly for celebratory occasions like holidays and birthdays (30 July 2013). For one Star Wars-themed birthday party, for example, Jocelyn hung X wings and TIE fighters from the ceiling fan, where they continued to hover weeks after the party. She points to large paper flowers dangling from the ceiling in the dining room, leftovers from another birthday party that she can't bear to take down. Jocelyn calls these traces of temporal events or practices the "detritus of life" (9 July 2013). It is this detritus of family life, not the house's physical structure, that makes home for Jocelyn. Beyond the house, even, Jocelyn's children have forged their own "routes" within a landscape largely inhospitable to children's play: to access a friend's nearby backyard, they "figured out a way through" a fence and thick, brambly foliage (9 July 2013).

Negotiating Childhood Homes in Hope Valley

In contrast to Hope Valley Farms, where the oldest houses are just over two decades old, in Hope Valley it is not uncommon for residents to have grown up in their current home or down the street from their current residence (Deberry, 28 June 2013). Of the seven consultants I spoke



The DeBerry home in the Watts Norton section of Hope Valley, c. 1966 (image via Tad DeBerry)

with, four currently resided in their childhood home or nearby, or had a spouse who had done so. One might assume that, in addition to their class privilege, Hope Valley homeowners with the privilege of living in their childhood homes or neighborhood circumvent the struggles and negotiations of making home, especially in comparison to residents with new homes in Hope Valley Farms. But that is not entirely true. In many ways these Hope Valley natives must alternately maintain and resist the past as it manifests itself in their homes and the landscape at large, a partially self-imposed struggle or negotiation that, as we will see later, reveals the contradictions within the suburban American Dream.

When Tad Deberry pulls into the driveway of his circa 1957 ranch house after a day of work, he feels that he is “home on a number of levels” (28 June 2013). Simple activities like mowing the grass or trimming the bushes transport him to his childhood, when he would play in the creek that runs through the back yard or climb up in a tree house. He has maintained the yard

and much of the house as they were when he was younger, and describes sharing family meals around the same dining room table he ate at as a child as “sort of recreating my growing up.” Every December the family Christmas tree lights up the same spot in the same room it has since 1957. Other configurations or uses of space recall Tad’s boyhood: “It’s funny—in the kitchen, the silverware’s where it’s always been. And the baking things are in this cabinet where they’ve always been...So in a strange way, it’s kind of comforting to me” (23 July 2013). At the same time, Tad is careful to note that when he and his wife moved into their house together, he “tried to be sensitive to” the difference between his familiar relationship with the house and her own. That sensitivity meant repainting and re-wallpapering the master bedroom and bath. (Unfortunately I did not have the opportunity to speak with Ms. Deberry about her own relationship with the house.) In short, Tad’s childhood home has to be negotiated for it to remain his home as an adult with a spouse and children.

A few streets over from Tad’s ranch, a large white Colonial Revival house greets drivers as they enter the neighborhood from Hope Valley Road. Mary Barringer grew up in the house, which was built in 1932 by her father Hubert Teer following the construction of the neighborhood’s first speculative houses. Mary was born three years later. Except for the first 15 years of her marriage to her husband Russell, she has called the “Hubert Teer House” home nearly her entire life. As we sit in her den together, she reminisces about listening with her parents to radio soap operas decades earlier in the same room and making scuppernong jelly with her grandmother in the kitchen (18 September 2012). Her husband Russell, who even more than Mary concerns himself with the architectural upkeep and preservation of the house, maintains certain spatial traditions that Mary’s father began. Every Christmas the Barringers drape the front porch columns with garlands and twinkling lights to resemble Mr. Teer’s holiday decorations



L to R: Mary and Russell Barringer in front of their “Southern Colonial” home in Hope Valley, Durham, NC, July 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

decades earlier (25 September 2012). Russell’s relationship with the house has changed little, it seems, since the first time he saw those Christmas lights:

When I was a little boy, probably eleven years old or so, my parents drove me out here—we lived in town—and I remember coming out here and seeing this house, as a child, decorated for Christmas. And then the rest of that story is, when [Mary and I] were both twelve years old, and going to dancing school, you have a final thing where you pick your favorite girl and that’s your date for the dance and so I chose Mary. And my father drove me out from Durham and he parked out [front] because he didn’t know that most people use the back entrance. Here I am twelve years old walking up that long brick walkway, and I get to the front door to pick her up, thinking my dad’s going to take us to the Club. I knocked on the door, and Mary comes to the door, and the first thing out of her mouth was “Thank you for the beautiful corsage.” Oh, you told her that story? My mother failed to tell me that she’d sent flowers. (2012)

While the past is still powerfully present for Russell in the house, Mary recently decided she wants to downsize. Russell claims he was shocked when Mary proposed they sell the house, “because my view of her being born and raised here” led him to believe that “she would never

come to that conclusion” (19 June 2013). But, Mary says, “I’m tired of it.” She is weary of physically “keeping up” the large house, while Russell—in a more typically gendered division of labor than I found in other households—is very reluctant to leave. When Russell claims he will be heartbroken upon leaving, Mary pauses and delivers the following line: “I won’t be sad at all.”



Russell Barringer with a photograph of the house decorated for the holidays in the 1940s, Durham, NC, September 2012 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

What has happened to Mary between her happy childhood in this house, raising her own children there, and today, when she is ready to leave it without a backwards glance? A better question to ask is what has happened to the house, and what has happened to the American South, in the same time period. The answer is both personal and political. The changing social

hierarchy in the South simultaneously changed the spatial use and practicality of the Barringers' house, and the neighborhood landscape at large. Cleaning such a large house becomes much more difficult now that "the days of servants are long gone" (R. Barringer, 25 September 2012). With their many rooms and closed floor plans, houses like Mary's constructed at the height of Jim Crow make little everyday sense in the 21st century without a bevy of domestic workers on hand. A case in point: the original floor plan included servants' quarters, accessible from only the outside of the house, due to covenants that excluded "persons with negro blood" from occupying premises in Hope Valley (Richardson 1930). For "live-in help," however, residents could construct living quarters specifically for black servants and their families. By the time they had children, Mary and Russell needed to tear down the wall separating the servants' quarters from the rest of the house so that they could use it as living space. Increasingly, shifting social structures have rendered this house less amenable to Mary and Russell's sense of class privilege.

On a personal level, this also makes the house less of a "home" for Mary. If we understand home not only as the site of familiarity, security, and comfort, but also as the seat of "personal power," then we can better grasp the political implications of making home (Shutika 2011:74, 76). Making home is in fact a political statement and "territorialization" (Smith, qtd. in Shutika 2011:231). In other words, home itself is a conservative value. Russell Barringer implicitly refers to this ideology when he says he taught his sons the "values of home" (25 September 2012). Beyond that, Hope Valley's social history of children growing up and staying within the community has made it a pressure cooker for territorialization. But even though it seems like Hope Valley is the epitome of the homeplace as a "secure and stable retreat," providing "continuity with either the real or imagined landscapes of childhood" (Duncan and Duncan 2004:185), in Mary's case, as her house becomes less conducive to a modern upper class

lifestyle, it becomes less and less “the one place where life feels under the individual’s control” (Shutika 2011:76).

Making Home through Discourse

It is easy to see how Hope Valley and Hope Valley Farms are the products of a particularly Southern—and particularly Durham—history, so when I began this project I assumed Southern identity would turn up frequently in conversation. My consultants educated me otherwise: very few of them identify their homes or neighborhoods as symbolically Southern. In addition to their practice of embodied memory, their discourse on this subject becomes another way of making home, a way to make themselves comfortable with where they are while simultaneously distancing themselves from ongoing social issues that are also particularly Southern and particularly Durham.

With the notable exception of Mary and Russell, nearly all my consultants tell me diversity precludes their respective neighborhoods from being “Southern” (27 September 2012). A man in Hope Valley Farms says it doesn’t feel like a “Southern” neighborhood because “people from all over” live there (16 August 2013). Tad Deberry, who lives in Hope Valley, considers it “partially” Southern, citing Southern signifiers like book clubs, literary societies, and golf, but balks at the label due to the fact that the neighborhood’s original makeup was primarily people from outside the state (28 June 2013). (It would seem that for Tad and some other Hope Valley residents, symbolic “Southernness” requires a lineage extending to the antebellum period.) Judy Curtis feels the same way about Hope Valley Farms: it’s not Southern because “people didn’t grow up here” (13 June 2013). Ray and Anna contrast Hope Valley Farms with an extremely segregated rural North Carolina town in which they both worked for a while, noting the diversity of their current neighbors—black, white, Asian, Indian, “mixed race [families], like

us” (30 June 2013). That “half the people on this street are from other places,” including Texas, New York, and New Jersey, also compels Anna and Ray to shy away from the “Southern” label. Jocelyn feels similarly: “Our neighbors next door are from the northern Midwest, Wisconsin areas, Minnesota area” (13 June 2013). She also says that the very structure of Hope Valley Farms, with its look-alike houses, twin floor plans, and HOA regulations, doesn’t allow for the “differentiation of identity” required for expressing “Southernness.”

Not only the neighborhoods themselves but also my consultants’ attitudes are products of twentieth and twenty-first century development in the South and specifically in North Carolina. From the founding of Duke University to the creation of the Research Triangle Park, the professionalization and globalization of Southern metropolitan areas such as Durham have been happening for decades now, even while tobacco was still a main industry. This area ushered in the first wave of non-native workers in the 1920s, and today, as the Research Triangle has become a home for the “expert” class of doctors, professors, software engineers and scientific researchers—as well as the blue collar workers who support their facilities—it has continued to diversify. But while racial and professional diversity is certainly the case in these areas, it does not necessarily erase persistent social problems. For example, the dramatic racial and socioeconomic disparity between Jordan High School (40 percent African American) at the southern end of Hope Valley Farms and Hillside High (88 percent African American) at its northern perimeter: recently the Durham Public Schools Board of Education has struggled to keep suburban families from taking their children out of district schools to avoid going to Hillside (Platt 2013). By distancing themselves from symbolic markers of Southernness such as segregation and homogeneity, my consultants also distance themselves from the racial problems in their own backyards and paint a post-racial portrait of home. This happens in both

neighborhoods, but several Hope Valley Farms residents point to Hope Valley as the archetypal Southern neighborhood for the golf course, the “fancy” marble Post Office, and a more “stabilized” old guard (30 June 2013; 13 June 2013). Regardless of the neighborhood, however, to make home, to be comfortable, residents must assert their place in a New South, one seemingly expunged of the social problems that continue to plague it.

For most people in Hope Valley and Hope Valley Farms, claiming Southern identity would require allying themselves with negative narratives. But they do claim Durham and even the entire Triangle area as “home.” Anna gushes over Durham: “We hope to live here—gosh, as long as we can. We love Durham, we have a lot of conversations about how much we love Durham. I feel like it’s one of the best cities to live in” (18 August 2013). Ray contrasts his parents’ “hoity-toity” suburban lifestyle in affluent North Raleigh with Durham, which in the view of many white middle-class North Carolinians is “grungy,” so-called “Dirty Durham” (19 May 2013). In describing what they like about Durham—its grit, up-and-coming local food scene, and music and art festivals—none of my consultants mentioned well-known race-related aspects of the Bull City’s history, such as its position as a hub of black entrepreneurship or its role in the civil rights movement. Positioning themselves within a much smaller geography than “the South,” these Durham residents still root themselves in place and assert exceptionalism; this allows them to superficially “redeem” narratives about Durham’s place in Southern history.

Strategies, Tactics, and Landscape as Home

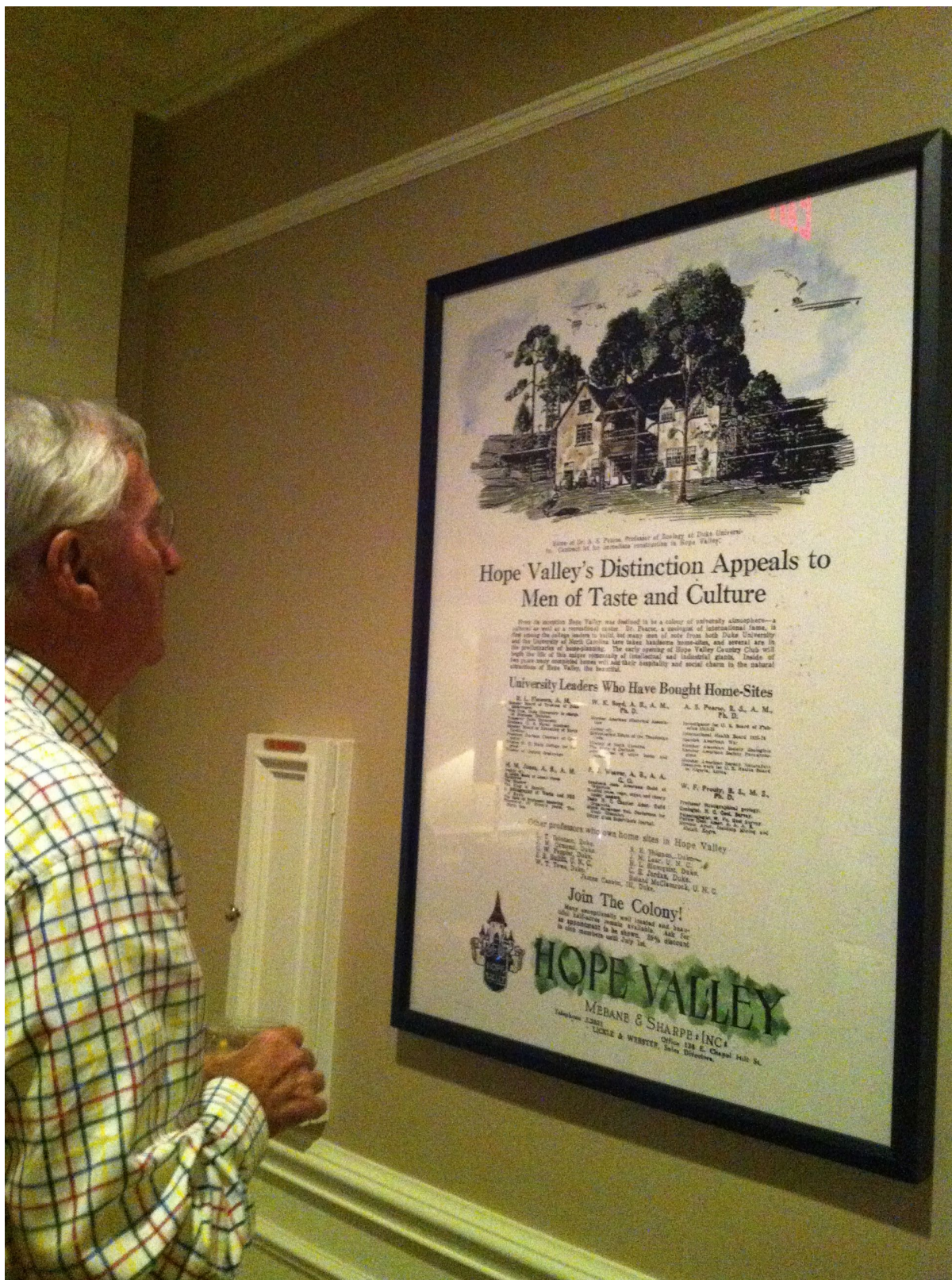
Hope Valley

In Hope Valley, home extends beyond the house and yard. Anita Brame refers to the entire neighborhood, the “rolling hillsides” and “the way the roads were cut through” as “home” (18 July 2013). And although the Barringers are selling their house, they are not actually moving

out of the neighborhood, but across the green to the small house they lived in as a young married couple. In this way Mary is not rejecting her home in its entirety, because Hope Valley itself, its very landscape, is home to her.

Mary and Russell made sure I understood the significance of the landscape as home by taking me on a driving tour of the neighborhood. The drive, and the accompanying anecdotes—“this is the Stone house, they had a parrot that would call my brother to supper”—reminded me just how entwined spatial practice is with story, and vice versa. Significantly, this tour culminated with dinner at the country club, another particularly important part of home in Hope Valley, and a site of embedded memory for Russell and Mary.

Describing the early days of their courtship in Hope Valley, the Barringers say “our home life revolved around the country club” (19 June 2013). It is not a stretch then to surmise that by inviting my husband and me to dinner at the club, the Barringers took us deeper into their home than they had before; the shared meal was an incredibly kind gesture. At the same time, our steak dinner was the incarnation of home as a complex of both belonging and exclusion. A communication mishap resulted in my husband showing up to the club in jeans—not quite dress code—which meant we could not eat in the formal dining room where the Barringers’ regular table is reserved and instead were relegated to the veranda where such casual dress was tolerated. Mary and Russell did not seem offended or put out by this blunder, but our faux pas served as a reminder of who in our party truly belonged in Hope Valley. This political undercurrent flowed beneath our polite conversation over dinner: place is both spatial and social, as Timothy Cresswell argues, and our sense of belonging is concurrent with the recognition of our proper “place” in society (Manzo 2003:55). Hope Valley residents see the entire landscape, including the club, as home because they recognize it as their proper social and economic “place” in the



Russell Barringer reads over one of the early advertisements for Hope Valley, now on display inside the Hope Valley Country Club, Durham, NC, July 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

American class system. As a “distinctly political process,” however, residents’ sense of belonging or of being at-home simultaneously requires “the exclusion of others from that place” (Manzo 2003:55). When someone like Anita or Mary claims the neighborhood’s rolling hills or the country club as home, we should remember that these are not innocuous comments; instead, we must ask, what is at stake? What territory is being claimed? As we will see, Hope Valley residents’ desire for continuity and control over the landscape/home reveals both the social and personal dimensions to belonging and exclusion, and the complicated results.

At first glance, continuity with the past seems to be a foundational value embedded in Hope Valley’s landscape. Preservation Durham’s home tour guide for Hope Valley emphasizes that the pristine views and neighborhood dearth of sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and street lamps all index the “original” Hope Valley:

Hope Valley’s roads even today are without curbs and gutters and still impart the semi rural rustic atmosphere envisioned by Hope Valley’s three designers in 1926. In many cases the original poured concrete still peaks [sic] out from under the city laid asphalt. As well, there are a few gravel roads left in Hope Valley, gentle reminders of our earliest rural beginnings. Review of Hope Valley’s original plat maps confirm that its streets still conform to Cridland’s initial plans.... Many of its intersections are still marked by the original cut iron road signs hung from rustic red cedar tree trunks. (“From Crown to Club” 2010:23, 25)

Today, the winding lanes play a major part in residents’ descriptions of the neighborhood at large. Again and again my consultants cite Hope Valley’s curvilinear street pattern and its scarcity of sidewalks as community perks. When I asked one resident to describe Hope Valley, sidewalks came up immediately: “We don’t have sidewalks, so there’s not that sense of—you know, sidewalks, like you’d find in a new suburban neighborhood” (27 September 2012). Residents go further, contrasting Hope Valley to a nearby New Urbanist community. They say Hope Valley “just wasn’t built” for sidewalks and was “more organically developed” than other



Cut iron signs described in the Preservation Durham home tour pamphlet on Hope Valley, Durham, NC, October 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

suburbs (26 October 2012). They also juxtapose Hope Valley’s curving roads with the “grids” of more modern suburbs. When asked what he likes about Hope Valley, Tad Deberry’s first response was, “I really like that it’s not on a grid...” (28 June 2013).

Sequestered and without sidewalks, street lamps, or even curbs, Hope Valley’s design seems to have successfully made streets—otherwise public space—as privatized as possible. One could argue that this privatization is simply additional evidence of the politics of home and belonging as products of exclusion and distinction. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that it is as simple as a matter of exclusivity. The privatization of Hope Valley’s landscape is about more than that. It is about the American Dream. In fact, Hope Valley’s exclusivity is part and parcel of the American Dream and the ideal of private property that undergirds the suburb’s foundations. The conflation of private property with identity, as a “fundamental condition of

selfhood,” is Americans’ inheritance from the Enlightenment and has become part of the “legacy of conventions built into American housing” (Archer 2005:366). This conflation is apparent in Hope Valley. Why, for instance, is it so important to residents that their neighborhood is not laid out on a grid? Perhaps it is because “gridding... makes its occupants available for observation” (de Certeau 1984:46-47), because the grid connotes panoptic control. Winding, irregular streets, on the other hand, affirm the autonomy of residents by affirming land ownership, in contrast to the urban grid (Crandell 1993). Residents eschew sidewalks and fence in their properties with the tall hedges I clung to on Dover Road for the same reason: the conflation of private property with identity and therefore autonomy.



Hedges lining Dover Road near the country club in Hope Valley, Durham, NC, October 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

One resident describes the neighborhood this way: “I have to have privacy [...] People who like Hope Valley are probably pretty darn independent, pretty okay with who they are

whether they have people around them or not” (17 June 2013). Residents also point to Hope Valley’s variety of architectural styles as evidence of their autonomy. One woman asserts that Hope Valley is “not cookie cutter” and the people who live there “don’t feel like they have to conform to anything” (17 June 2013). She juxtaposes Hope Valley—“built for doctors with horses”—with a nearby New Urbanist community with “houses right next to each other” (27 September 2012). Russell Barringer contrasts the “custom built” homes in Hope Valley with the “production built” tract housing in Hope Valley Farms (19 June 2013). The Barringers also express some frustration that their neighbors across the green chose to build a near-duplicate of their own home that mirrors its Colonial Revival design. Despite their distaste for modernist-style homes like Anita’s, the “mirror image” house provokes even greater ire. As Shutika points out, neighborhood “place identity” is synonymous with the “perceptible differences that are used to describe the difference between one place [and people] and another” (Shutika 2011:229). But I would argue that more than differentiation, the underlying principle at play here is the significance of land ownership—long foundational to the American Dream—and its level of distinction from the look of urban spaces (Archer 2005). As one Hope Valley homeowner puts it, “I like the sense of space and land surrounding the house” (26 October 2012).

The contours of Hope Valley’s landscape itself reinforce the value of land ownership and private property. Like the English landscape gardens Gina Crandell describes, as a picturesque landscape Hope Valley’s “potential for undirected movement feels like and looks like freedom” and “individual choice” (Crandell 1993:126, 128). It seems hardly coincidental that these English estates came into vogue not long after John Locke developed his influential Enlightenment philosophy of private property as the materialization of selfhood (Archer 2005). Hope Valley embodies this pastoral ideal, which enshrines private property removed from social life as a

necessity for the development of identity and the security of autonomy (Archer 2005; Crandell 1993). Of course, this type of landscape has also historically concealed class by making the “estate” appear natural (Crandell 1993:130). Crandell would argue that my consultant’s perception of Hope Valley as a more “organic” development reveals the lingering influence of such thinking:

Even without knowing it, parks, campuses, corporate headquarters, and suburbs create associations to wealthy eighteenth-century estates ... Such associations, even if not understood, are somehow felt; they have been sedimented under two centuries of acculturation, but their power is with us today. (135)

Another clue to the ideology operating in Hope Valley is the sopping pile of cardboard I encountered in the streets that October afternoon. Decidedly un-picturesque and more often an



An old fan at the edge of a driveway in Hope Valley, Durham, NC, October 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

index of a “run-down” neighborhood, trash like the cardboard in a person’s yard or in the street seems to undermine an image of the neighborhood as upper-class, pristine, exclusive. But its presence in Hope Valley shows us that more than exclusivity or affluence, autonomy-per-private property is the neighborhood’s fundamental value. The cardboard also points to a discrepancy between the desire for privacy and the urge to preserve the “lovely vistas” of Hope Valley. It would seem that the landscape-as-home mentality of the many residents who grew up in Hope Valley would create a situation in which “threats to the landscape are often interpreted as threats to identity” (Duncan and Duncan 2004:29). But in fact, privacy and preservation often collide in Hope Valley—and when they do, private property rights take precedence, as the story behind Hope Valley’s historic designation by the National Register suggests. Tad Deberry tells it this way: in the early 2000s there were increasing teardowns of older homes in the neighborhood. A number of Hope Valley homeowners, anxious at the changes, proposed several strategies for preventing future teardowns. This group of planners initially considered nominating Hope Valley as a local historic district, a very restrictive zoning overlay, but decided that “Hope Valley is way too independent to go that route” (23 July 2013). The second option, which the group did pursue, was a protective zoning overlay through the city of Durham; Hope Valley residents roundly rejected this proposal at a public hearing. In the end, the National Register designation offered a compromise: tax incentives to renovators, but no regulation of teardowns. The right to privacy prevailed.

Hope Valley differs in this way from other affluent suburban communities such as Bedford, Connecticut, the subject of a study by James Duncan and Nancy Duncan (2004). Bedford residents rely on land-use regulations, particularly historic preservation designations, to maintain their own picturesque landscape and prevent less wealthy or established residents from

entering the community. By contrast, there is no Homeowners Association in Hope Valley with covenants, rules or regulations that bind what homeowners can or can't do beyond city regulations. A Neighborhood Association exists, but it "doesn't have any teeth" (R. Barringer 19 June 2013) and its function is largely communicative. Most of my consultants are content with the lack of an HOA, arguing that the independent residents would never agree to the rules and regulations. Of course, the lack of such restrictions means residents begrudgingly tolerate neighbors whose homes do not meet their own aesthetic standards. Discussing one such home, Mary Barringer concluded that "they can do what they want to" (24 October 2012). She says the same about the future of her own house once it's sold, and cites the example of Russell's childhood home: "The people who bought it eventually tore it down. People would say, 'How can you stand it?' I said, Well you know, they bought it, it was theirs, they could do with it as they wanted to" (25 September 2012). She bears little resemblance to a woman interviewed by the Duncans who wanted to "freeze Bedford" (59). Take the following conversation between Mary and Russell about the newer subdivisions adjacent to Hope Valley:

Russell: That's right, they're newer. They got sidewalks, because that's the law now. When you have a development, the city tells you where you got to build sidewalks.

Mary: Where to put street lamps and how many trees you've got to plant.

Russell: They control all that through zoning and ordinances. This [Hope Valley] was not that way at all. (19 June 2013)

Or Tad Deberry's description of Hope Valley:

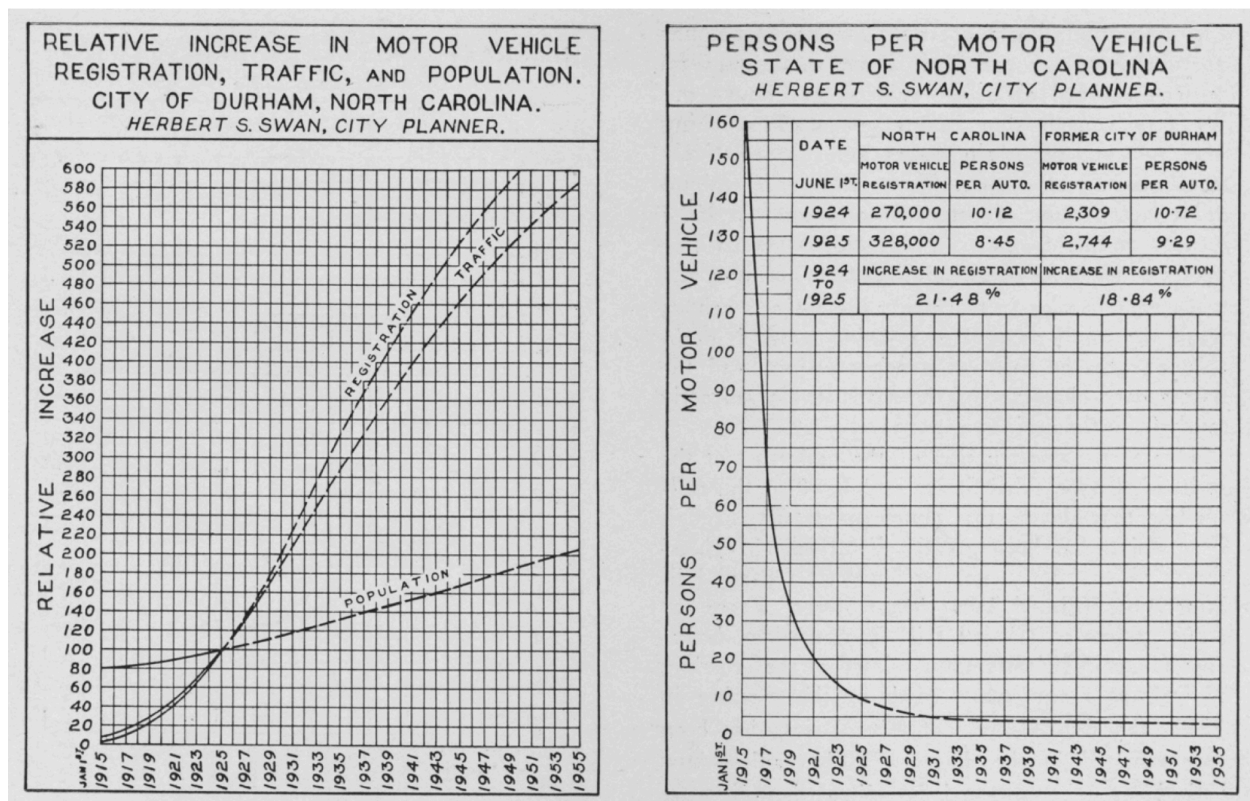
We're a little more loosey-goosey than being in town [...] And it's interesting—we were not in the city limits until maybe the mid-60s. We were in the county, and we sort of ran our own business out here. And there's still sort of that independent...people said, you know what, I don't want the city telling me what to do out here. (28 June 2013)

Anita Brame—who recalls her astrology-reading father in the right angles of her modernist Hope Valley home—perhaps best embodies this tension between preservation and private property. Her house resists the landscape of Hope Valley to some degree, which is

largely populated with older homes in more traditional designs (“heritage houses,” in the words of one resident), and is considered a blight by a few of her more conservative neighbors. In building such an “offbeat” house, however, Anita’s resistance simultaneously upholds and is backed by the dominant ideology of private property rights and autonomy in contrast to conformity.

Anita and other Hope Valley residents complicate the dichotomy between strategies and tactics. We see in her behavior, and Mary’s, a tactical resistance that is simultaneously in keeping with the more strategic ideal of pastoral and private property. Residents view their own (strategic) landscape as an answer to what they perceive as more strategic structures, such as the urban grid or HOA regulations, but in fact, they are performing a dominant American ideology. Their discourse about the “organic” landscape, “independence” and “privacy” obscures the class privilege living in Hope Valley requires and naturalizes socioeconomic position by equating it with character or taste (Bourdieu 1984).

What is even more interesting, however, is how Hope Valley homeowners’ professed desires for privacy and preservation have precluded use and experience of the landscape by residents themselves. Although Hope Valley roadways have remained much as they were originally constructed, since 1926 automobile usage has greatly increased. A neighborhood built for people who could afford automobiles in the 1920s was inevitably small, tight-knit, and exclusive; as automobiles became more common, streets built for cars rather than pedestrians became increasingly dangerous. While the community was still small, however, with fewer and slower cars, the lack of curbs, sidewalks or street lamps did little to prevent residents from walking the streets. Mary Barringer describes how she and other Hope Valley children walked to the country club and the golf course in the 1930s and 40s, while today, children must be



Increase in automobile ownership in Durham from 1915-1955 (image via opendurham.org)

transported by car. She also remembers that on Christmas Day, “the whole street was a big party” as families walked from one house to the next. In contrast, a newer Hope Valley resident told me that most of her neighbors ride their golf carts to the country club. She sees people walking and running frequently on the streets, but fewer bikers, “because it’s not safe, not as safe in here because of the [lack of] curbs.” When Russell Barringer suggested that people who want to walk can use the cart pass on the golf course, Mary reminded him that “you’re not supposed to do that.” He went on:

I see some of my neighbors walking on the streets. Every morning I go to work, I toot my horn at them, they throw their hands, they know it’s me. Because I go, this is before seven o’clock in the morning. So a lot of people walk on the streets, but it’s somewhat dangerous. Because the roads are narrow. And you trust that the driver is going to give you plenty of room. (19 June 2013)

My own attempt to walk Dover Road on that wet fall day was frustrated by the lack of curbs, the narrow shoulders, and the tall hedges that pushed me into the street.



The golf cart pass in Hope Valley is marked by a “No Trespassing” sign prohibiting walking, running or biking, Durham, NC, October 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

Ultimately, maintaining Hope Valley’s landscape as it is inhibits residents from experiencing it. Homeowners looking out their picture windows may see the pastoral ideal, but for those on foot, the landscape does not actually offer the “potential for undirected movement.” The empty, abandoned plastic car I saw on my walk through the streets speaks to the irony: Hope Valley’s idealization of private property interferes with residents’—and particularly children’s—ability to move through the landscape on foot. Over time, the question posed by the old Hope Valley advertisement has become less rhetorical and more plaintive: really, “Where will they [children] play?” This is the “peculiar twist” of the American Dream, of the picturesque suburban neighborhood. Rejecting “urban” public spaces like sidewalks and embracing the automobile, suburbs like Hope Valley designed “for the children” actually hamper communal play. What has happened in Hope Valley may be compared, ironically enough, with Sonya

Salamon's (2003) description of the suburbanization of rural towns, a scenario Salamon laments because in the process of suburbanization public space becomes privatized. In Hope Valley, however, this phenomenon is not the result of "outside" forces. It is self-imposed by residents. An ideology that attaches property to selfhood and venerates the view ("long, lovely vistas") also hinders an embodied experience of the streets, leaving residents to find other ways of moving through it on foot.

In fact, sometimes the very same residents who maintain this strategic landscape also resist it through their own tactics, practicing a sort of political contortionism. While their faith in private property leads them to restrict the development of public spaces like sidewalks, their desire (specifically children's desire) to navigate the streets on foot induces them to find indirect, unplanned routes through the neighborhood that actively subvert the paradigm of private property. Tad Deberry (himself the Vice President of the Hope Valley Neighborhood Association) describes one such "tactic" in an entreaty to other residents titled "The Paths of Hope Valley" (2008). In this memo to the HVNA newsletter, Deberry explains that following World War II, Hope Valley children began connecting new streets with "a network of paths and trails." These various paths crisscrossed private properties, and according to Deberry, were "much, much safer than funneling these many children" down the street. Homeowners have historically accommodated children's use of the trails, he writes, and he ends his testimonial with an admonition: "Please let me encourage everyone to uphold one of Hope Valley's oldest traditions, keep open paths between some of our busiest streets that lead to the Club."

These narrow "desire" paths created by foot traffic weave together private properties and also transgress them; they are "trajectories that do not cohere with the constructed, written, and prefabricated space through which they move" (de Certeau 1984:34). As "insinuations of other

routes” into an established order, they make the landscape more habitable for children and teenagers. At the same time, their accommodation by owners reveals how secure Hope Valley residents feel in their privacy. Still, to some degree the paths undermine the ideal of private property. They point to small and unwitting resistances to privatization: even as an adult, Tad experiences the streets of Hope Valley as social spaces, calling up memories from childhood that are themselves “other routes.” And the majority of Hope Valley residents—nearly two-thirds—who are not members of the country club must find social spaces elsewhere in the landscape, if they do at all.

Hope Valley Farms

While making home in Hope Valley requires privatizing the landscape, in Hope Valley Farms public space and an accessible landscape make home possible. Anna and Ray Cordova refer to making home as a collaborative and public act in concert with their neighbors when they describe the retired man who serves as an “unofficial watchdog” for their subdivision, not to mention their neighbors who brought house-warming gifts of wine and flowers and who have offered to dog-sit for the Cordovas. In addition, sidewalks, trails, a YMCA and the open lot where Andrew and his brother played all render the landscape more public and accessible for pedestrians than in Hope Valley. My consultants in Hope Valley Farms consistently mention the trails, streets and sidewalks as significant reasons for moving to Hope Valley Farms and/or remaining there. Judy Curtis walks to the grocery store via trails and sidewalks; Joe Mack uses the trails for recreation every day. Judy notes that in Hope Valley Farms, “it’s expected, people want to be outside, the walks are there” (29 July 2013). Residents on her cul de sac host an outdoor barbecue every year, complete with a spit, “covered dishes,” kegs for the adults, and Bug Juice for the children (29 July 2013). Anna and Ray chose to relocate to Hope Valley Farms



Bikers on Third Fork Creek Trail in Hope Valley Farms, Durham, NC, September 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

in part because of such vibrant outdoor life and “so much ease of walking.” They made the move after walking around the neighborhood for an hour one afternoon and encountering people on the sidewalks jogging, biking, walking dogs, and playing with children; prior to purchasing their house, Ray and Anna also walked Third Fork Creek trail, one of Durham’s many greenways, which hems the northern side of Hope Valley Farms. For the Cordovas, the ability to move through the landscape on foot was essential for establishing a home.

As it became increasingly clear how important the sidewalks and trails are to my consultants and their ability to make home in Hope Valley Farms, it also became clear that just as I walked the streets of Hope Valley, I needed to walk these trails myself. In keeping with Michael Jackson’s belief that “there is a good case for trying to understand the world through bodily participation and through senses other than sight” (1989:11), on an early fall morning I

took off down Third Fork Creek Trail. The ten-foot-wide asphalt path runs six miles from southwest Durham to downtown and cuts across South Roxboro Street en route; I began on the southern end of the trail and headed north. Before long, the rush of cars grew faint and the sounds of insects and frogs nearly walled me in. As I walked they rose to create their own ambient architecture. Everything smelled damp, green, and occasionally I would catch the stench of stagnant water. The air warmed to 70 degrees under open skies.

Narrow and fringed with abundant vegetation, Third Fork Creek fits the classic definition of a greenway. Tall weeds and dense brush grow beyond a thin strip of trimmed grass on either side of the asphalt. Despite the underbrush, I caught a glimpse of suburban houses through the trees. I passed people walking dogs, people running, walking. Some walked in pairs, others alone; some talked into phones or earpieces. Several cyclists zipped past me. A golden retriever galloped alongside a man in a wheelchair. I saw many women pushing strollers with children inside, and almost as many strollers with small dogs peeking out from inside. Children on rollerblades or bikes meandered past accompanied by teenage siblings or sitters.

After about a half hour my shoulders grew tired from the weight of my backpack and camera, and I felt sweat trickling down my back. I had been moving almost nonstop through this landscape, and as I moved within it, I began to realize that I was experiencing in a bodily fashion the many contradictions of Third Fork Creek—and, more broadly speaking, of making home in Hope Valley Farms. On this trail, like in Hope Valley, strategies and tactics overlap: First, the very strategic structure of the landscape intended to control and regulate use also frustrates efforts to spectate or “fix” it. Second, it seems that the alignment of intended use and actual use of the trail suggests pedestrian conformity to strategy, but different modes of use may indicate otherwise. And finally, Third Fork Creek both resembles and deviates from a suburban

stereotype. All of these incongruities make up a space/place that is “fragmentary,” shifting and pluralistic (de Certeau 1984:108).



Trail users on the greenway, Durham, NC, September 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

My experience on the greenway points to its intended function: to keep users moving. There are no alternate paths on the greenway, just the singular asphalt trail. There are no places to stop and sit, no benches, no glades or wide shoulders. There are no trash cans, no accommodation for anyone to stop and eat on the trail. One could in theory leave the asphalt trail for a trek into the creek bed or surrounding woods, but it would be uncomfortable at the least given the height and density of the underbrush. Pedestrians seem to follow suit—I seldom observed trail users stopping for any reason other than to have their photograph taken by me, and even then, to stop moving and ask someone else to stop felt untoward and uncharacteristic of the space. Additionally, it appears that many suburban residents use Third Fork Creek as a

commuting corridor (getgoingnc.com). As a singular, linear trail with all these constraints, it seems as though the greenway offers little opportunity for the kinds of “choices” or “utterance” de Certeau locates in the movements of a city dweller. Accessing the trail presents a similar situation. Pedestrians, even those whose homes abut the greenway, can reach the trail only by way of sidewalks along thoroughfares such as South Roxboro Street. For people like me driving to use the trail, the only designated parking lots lie far apart at either end of the greenway. Although Third Fork Creek is designated public space, these matters of access imply that pedestrians do pay to use it, either by living near it in Hope Valley Farms or having the means to afford a car.

At the same time, the strategy that forces linear movement also, ironically, frustrates efforts to view it or frame it. Unlike the wooded, rolling hills and winding streets of Hope Valley, designed to be viewed by an “elevated onlooker” from the window of a house or car, this is a landscape that must be experienced (Crandell 1993:147). It is not something a person goes to see, but to move through on foot. My own experience supports this: to interpret the trail, I had to move through it. I could not bring my gaze to bear upon the trail from a distance, and I could never see everything at once. More than that, I could not be a “detached and privileged spectator” (4) when I was sweating, feeling the sun overhead warm my skin against the sharp bite of morning air. I had walked for several miles looking for a spot to set up camp and observe passersby when I realized that moving through the landscape, moving through time, was my necessary interpretation of the space. Even stopping to take a photograph felt strange. When I returned to the trail later that same day, however, I was determined to sit. I settled down on the thin strip of shoulder and immediately felt out of place. Walkers, bikers and runners passed me, often with a curious glance, and I waved my left arm to swat mosquitos as I made notes. This

was no privileged, “secure and comfortable position” (Crandell 69). That there were far fewer trail users in the afternoon, as the air and/or schedules warmed up, also might indicate how experiential and temporal this public space is. This change, as well as my own aching back and itching ankles, reminded me that “by considering the body in movement, we can see better how it inhabits space (and moreover, time)” (Merleau Ponty, qtd. in Cresswell, p. 276).

Despite the regulatory frameworks in place on the trail, we can find evidence of users’ tactics in response. The most easily visible traces of such “surreptitious creativities” (de Certeau 1984:96) are desire paths, where users have left the designated trail. Where the asphalt trail meets the sidewalk on Roxboro Street, for instance, the earth is raw and packed down from pedestrians making a diagonal rather than adhering to the right angle. For less obvious deviations from the trail, however, we must look elsewhere—not in the packed earth of a desire path, but in Third Fork Creek’s online counterpart. There, in the public spaces of the Internet, trail users write back to the “physical” space in a way difficult to see from the asphalt itself. For example, one online forum recommends parking at a nearby shopping center, a more convenient and safer entrance than the designated parking lot at the trailhead. The blogger notes that “this starting point will avoid the intersection with Hope Valley Road. At this point, there are no crossing aids for that road and getting across can be quite difficult—especially if you have inexperienced pedestrians or cyclists (read: children)” (functionalfitnessnc.com). This kind of online commentary adds another valence to the idea of place-as-palimpsest, to the “invisible identities” and “moving layers” de Certeau describes as adding an overlay of meaning upon the city. In a few years, it may not be unusual to experience this digital commentary as part of a physical space with the advent of Google Glass and other computers that can project virtual signage onto the viewer’s environment. Although on my own walk I could not actually see the online

conversations at and about this particular place, forums like the aforementioned blogger's remind us of the pluralistic nature of space.

Beyond these physical/digital desire paths, trail users resist the trail's singular hegemonic structure in subtle, unconscious practice. De Certeau argues that the *decisions* a pedestrian makes are subversions of the planned city; how does Third Fork Creek fit into this framework? After all, faced with a unilateral path with no apparent diversions, trail users have seemingly few options for where to go, what utterance to make. How wide is the language available to them? Can and do they subvert and resist the strategic trail?

Through embodied practice, through their own modes of use, I believe they can. When I was walking the trail, I ran into Joe Mack, one of my consultants for this project. I heard him coming before I saw him: He was by himself, his shorts hiked up much higher than is socially acceptable, yelling "HI!" in sync with each of his steps. We stopped in the middle of the trail to talk; he said he often walks the trail for up to four hours if he is in the mood, and like many people in Hope Valley Farms, for him the trails are a highlight of the area. Both Joe's particular *style* of walking, to borrow from de Certeau, and our *stopping* to socialize in the middle of the path resist its design and convention. Or if "resistance" is too far a stretch, then at the least a person's stylized use of the trail, social encounters and personal subjectivities "create shadows and ambiguities" upon what appears to be an uninterrupted and "literal" geography (de Certeau 101). The "pain or pleasure" a runner feels upon running uphill, the gossip between two walkers—these multiple, entwined stories "haunt" and animate this space. Thus the trail is functional, social, and personal: each user takes it as his or her own while still admitting the presence and meanings of others.



Hope Valley Farms resident Joe Mack out on the Third Fork Creek Trail, Durham, NC, September 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

One final “contradiction” of Third Fork Creek is its resonance and simultaneous dissonance with suburban archetypes. It presents a metonym of suburbia in that, as noted, it is difficult to access the trail without a car. It also does seem to embody the “escape” from the city to the country (nature) that has historically motivated suburban development (Crandell 1993). The movement on the trails, mostly functional, also seems to mimic the actions of people in automobiles going to and from their garages or driveways to work, passing by their neighbors without stopping. Again, there are no places to sit and talk, no picnicking, no sleeping on benches—mostly commuting, fitness, or dog-walking. But still, per my earlier examples, people do find a way to make the greenway a social space. Pedestrians walk in pairs, chatting as they go; others see an acquaintance and stop to talk. And the trail stands in contrast to Loukaitou-



Dogs serve a phatic function on Third Fork Creek Trail, Durham, NC, September 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

Sideris's (2009) characterization of suburban areas as having little sidewalk activity. I would also argue that the many dog-walkers act socially by walking their dogs, that their pets themselves serve a phatic function towards passers-by. For example, I mostly only asked people with dogs if I could make their photograph. I felt more comfortable asking, "Can I take a photo of you and your dog?" than stopping a pedestrian to say, "Can I take your photo?" Everyone I stopped was open and willing to being photographed with the dogs, and no one bothered to initiate a conversation about why I wanted the photograph. All dog-walkers assumed the social interest and value of their pets for a total stranger and even worked hard to get the dogs to "pose" for me. Third Fork Creek may be a very suburban space, but it's one that connects suburbanites to downtown Durham by foot, no less, and offers (small) opportunities for the kind of emergent interaction we tend to associate more with urban spaces. It flies in the face of traditional

iterations of the American Dream that position home “against a world in which public space is perceived as dangerous (or at least challenging)” (Archer 2005:288).

Still, even while they embrace public space and resist strategic elements of the landscape, my consultants do describe private property—the single-family home—as an “apparatus” of identity, in contrast with rented homes or apartments (Archer 2005:261). On the extreme end of that spectrum is one resident who suggested to me that people who live in neighboring apartment complexes “lack culture and emotion” (12 June 2013). Another says the uniform housing in Hope Valley Farms makes him “feel homogenized and shrink-wrapped” (16 August 2013). And Jocelyn Neal says that “if you run the economic analysis, is it better to rent or buy, you can get the economics to tell you either way,” but she and her husband chose to buy a house so they would “be able to mess a place up. We don’t want to have to worry about the space not becoming shaped by us. Home is a space for complete and utter and total shaping of oneself, and that means being oneself. And therefore in my thinking it does involve a physical space that is to whatever extent possible one’s own” (13 June 2013). The American Dream’s equation of identity with private property exists here in tension with the need not to maintain but rather to transform and dismantle the structure that represents it.

V. Conclusion

Soggy cardboard piled by a curb, junk fans at the corner of a driveway, dogs in strollers, X wings and TIE fighters and handprints on walls—these “quirks” trouble the distinction between strategies and tactics in Hope Valley and Hope Valley Farms. Popular images of suburbia paint it as a site of numb, white middle class conformity to dominant discourses (Archer 2005), but these neighborhoods reveal, as Williams puts it, a much “more nuanced interaction” between residents and the strategic structures they live within. Each community’s suburban

landscape suggests that the vernacular, in any context, does not take place *outside* of “planning, design, zoning, regulation, and covenants” so much as it occurs *within* and *through* these hegemonic frameworks—which are sometimes maintained by the same residents who also resist them.

Suburbs present an especially rich opportunity for examining just how complicated and nuanced hegemony and resistance really are as they play out in everyday life. Holding out the promise of property and pastoralism, suburbs disguise the social and political dimensions of the American Dream. The equation of private property with identity manifests itself in single-family homes and, in Hope Valley, effectively privatized public spaces, with the automobile as an accessory. Keeping a landscape “private,” however, makes it difficult for residents themselves to actually use it; they must create tactical circumventions of the selfsame strategies they’ve maintained. In Hope Valley, this takes the shape of paths that reconfigure private property itself by connecting and traversing—transgressing—property lines. In Hope Valley Farms, as well, the act of dwelling within houses and the larger landscape temporally transforms these spaces, despite the appearance of legislated uniformity via HOA restrictions or a linear trail.

Following my conversation with Andrew at the open lot in Hope Valley Farms, I stopped by nearby Southpoint Mall, where multiple children with parents in tow were waiting in line to tell Santa what they wanted for Christmas. A faux fireplace and striped gate separated this piece of the North Pole from Victoria’s Secret. Watching the line form for Santa, I was struck by how different this space was from the open lot, yet both serve the same population. One is commercial and highly controlled, the other currently ungated, its uses “undefined” (Loukaitou-Sideris 2009:7). The open lot, more than any other space in Hope Valley Farms, remains open to public interpretation, to public architecture, temporal structures like Kirshenblatt-Gimblett



The open lot in Hope Valley Farms, Durham, NC, November 2013 (photo credit: Kelsey Sherrod Michael)

describes. Children fly kites on a windy day, they sled when it snows, they fill and shape the lot with their delighted screams as they cut quick paths through the grass in a race. Landscape is more than “text,” but if this open lot with its ambient architecture, with all the invisible practices of its users, were enunciation, it would be a spoken word poem rather than prose.

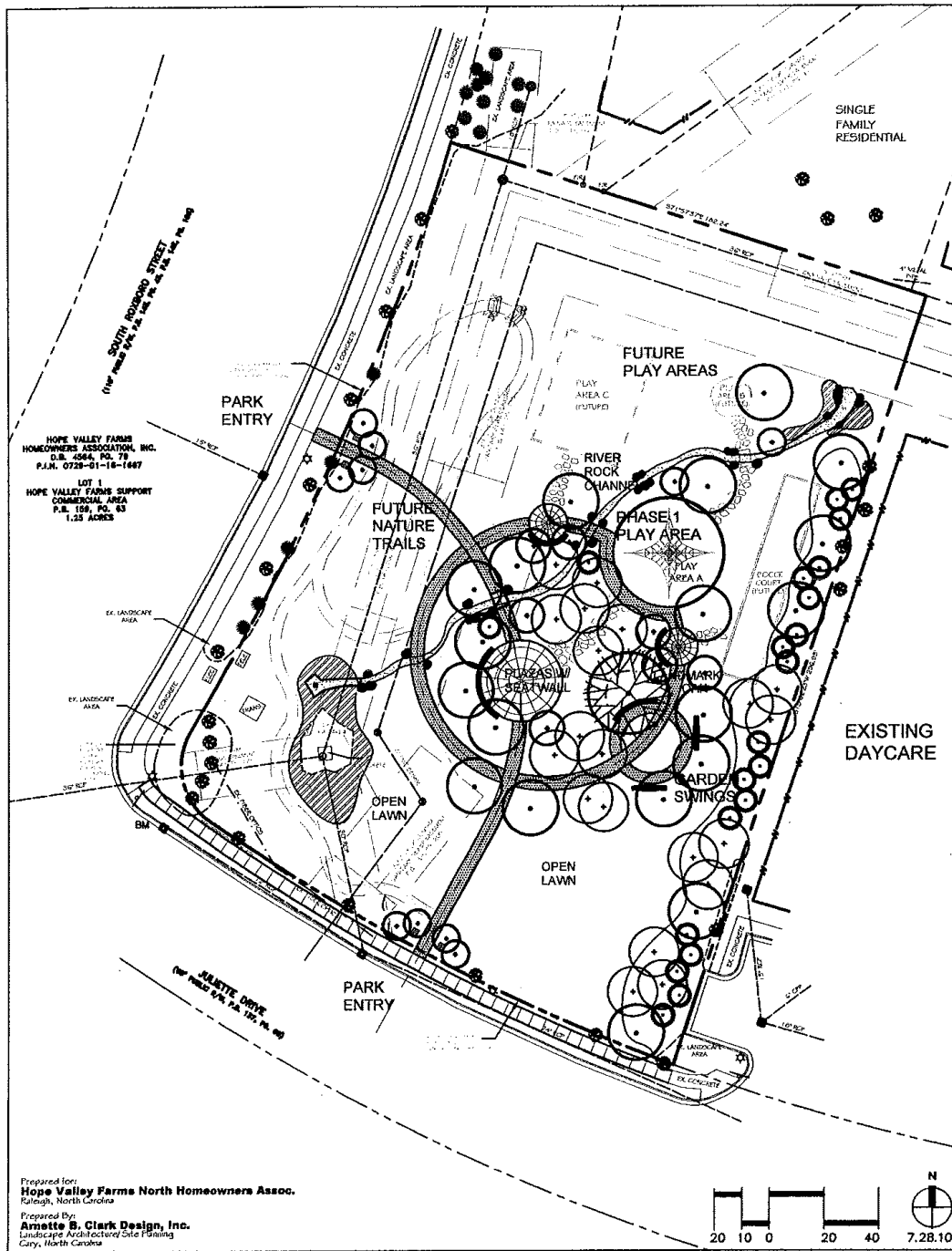
It could be that as an undeveloped landscape, but one that has been clearly leveled in preparation for potential development, its very liminality is what makes the lot so attractive and habitable:

The tactical is an improvisational art, which is why attempts to plan, regulate, or zone such activities are questionable. The history of the playground, a space designed to relocate children from the street to an arena that adults can supervise, might be seen as part of the larger history of organized play. No space designed for play is as interesting as the life-world. Nor can such control...produce vibrant public spaces. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2008:20)

A liminal and minimally-regulated landscape offers an infinite field of play.

Although the lot stands out as a seemingly unregulated public space in Hope Valley Farms, by nature it is still contested. The Hope Valley Farms Homeowners Association owns one-third of the property, and the Hope Valley Farms North HOA owns the other two-thirds. I learned from a Hope Valley Farms North HOA representative that their board initially proposed the plans to turn the lot into a park—with nature trails, seating areas, play sets, a “river rock channel,” swings, and a garden—but the development was rejected by the Hope Valley Farms HOA. What motivated the proposal to build the park? Jocelyn Neal says it well: the board considers the lot “underutilized space” (13 June 2013). Despite the fact that residents enjoy the lot and use it frequently, such use does not meet the board’s standards for a properly regulated, strategic landscape. Historically, the “process of developing public space” is a “process of controlling it” (Loukaitou-Sideris 10). In its current state the lot is not economically productive, while a more developed space would function commercially in that it would “sell” Hope Valley Farms. The lot also does not meet the aesthetic standards of the HOA board, which are simultaneously commercial standards as they relate to property values; it is not picturesque in the least, and a row of evergreen trees shields drivers from this less-than-picturesque view.

The contest over the open lot serves as a reminder that we should not idealize or simplify the landscape of Hope Valley Farms, especially when contrasting it with Hope Valley. Hope Valley Farms’s entire landscape is contested, with competing interpretations: Judy, Anna, and Ray all appreciate the HOA embargo on cutting down trees without permission, but the rule has been immensely frustrating for Jocelyn. Ray likes the HOA restrictions on chain link fences and clotheslines, but Anna regrets them. Judy and Anna like the subdivisions and cul de sacs, but Jocelyn sees them as simply an attempt to create “the artificial feeling of a sprawling old neighborhood” that results in “a drainage pattern for vehicles” and traffic flow problems (9 July



JULIETTE PARK **PHASE 1** 708 JULIETTE DRIVE HOPE VALLEY FARMS NORTH DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA 27713

The Hope Valley Farms North Homeowners Association plan for developing the open lot (image via Michelle Greene)

2013). While some people may move to Hope Valley Farms “for the children,” overall the neighborhood is still no Shangri-La, with steep yards and busy streets that are unsafe for children; the open lot itself occupies a precarious position. Most of the landscape features—curving streets, cul de sacs, steep front yards and HOA veneration of trees—align with a pastoral and picturesque suburban ideal. Some residents defend this landscape; others resist it.

Journalist Leigh Gallagher (2013) has argued that the recent housing crisis together with the changing shape of the American family and rising gas prices signal the end of the synonymy between suburbs and the American Dream. Increasingly, Gallagher writes, young families are moving back into city centers while suburbs face growing rates of poverty and crime. It is true that Durham’s own downtown has experienced a revival in the past two decades (Rohe 2011). While contested, however, the landscape in Hope Valley Farms does suggest that suburbs have the potential for public spaces, contra popular imagery of such communities and, in fact, the very ideology that gave rise to suburbs (Archer 2005). In a combination of design intention and actual use, sidewalks and trails see heavy pedestrian movement, and the open lot offers a considerably public and dynamic space for residents based on “the interplay of ownership, accessibility and intersubjectivity” (Loukaitou-Sideris 8). It is especially delightful for children, for whom the scale of the American (and especially Southern) suburban built environment is so seldom designed (Owens 1997). The open lot reveals the quotidian, often unexplored aspect of “public memory,” defined by Kenneth E. Foote and Maoz Azaryahu as a “matrix in which time and space are used separately and in combination to embed shared historical experiences and a sense of shared past in the public life of a community” (Foote 2007:127). Public space is vital to the formation of public memory (Shutika 2011): neighborhood traditions like sledding down the hill accrue meaning with each production and reproduction, for both parents and children, as they

create ambient architecture that is a tactical monument all its own. For the people who live in Hope Valley Farms, the lot is open, but it is certainly not empty.

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