



Metroburbia, USA

Professor Paul L Knox

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Decades of economic prosperity in the United States have redefined the American dream. Paul Knox explores how extreme versions of this dream have changed the American landscape. Increased wealth has led America's metropolitan areas to develop into vast sprawling regions of "metroburbia" - fragmented mixtures of employment and residential settings, combining urban and suburban characteristics.

Upper-middle-class Americans are moving into larger homes in greater numbers, which leads Knox to explore the relationship between built form and material culture in contemporary society. He covers changes in home design, real estate, the work of developers, and the changing wishes of consumers. Knox shows that contemporary suburban landscapes are a product of consumer demand, combined with the logic of real estate development, mediated by design and policy professionals and institutions of governance. Suburban landscapes not only echo the fortunes of successive generations of inhabitants, Knox argues, they also reflect the country's changing core values.

Knox addresses key areas of concern and importance to today's urban planners and suburban residents including McMansions, traffic disasters, house design, homeowner's associations, exclusionary politics, and big box stores. Through the inclusion of examples and photos, *Metroburbia, USA* creates an accessible portrait of today's suburbs supported by data, anecdotes, and social theory. It is a broad interpretation of the American metropolitan form that looks carefully at the different influences that contribute to where and how we live today.

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