

Introduction

Rural preservation programs provide one of the strongest measures against the impacts of sprawling suburban growth. The advantages of the programs are well-documented. Large tracts of open space around population centers protect water quality by reducing pollution run-off into rivers and streams. They provide critical habitat for native plant and animal species and they protect unique ecological communities, such as old-growth forests (M-NCPPC 2000). Rural preservation programs also provide well-documented social benefits. Directing growth into developed areas reduces the cost of public infrastructure needed to support suburban growth. Supporting natural resource-based economic sectors, such as agriculture and outdoor recreation, can contribute to local and state economies (Maryland D.N.R 2000). Preservation of rural areas often protects important historic heritage sites. Perhaps most importantly, large blocks of rural land sustain a feeling of unity, tradition, and character (Rural Legacy Program 2000).

Without casting doubt on the value of these programs, we can develop a deep understanding of how landscapes are constructed by critically examining the social and historical contexts in which the programs are implemented. As human populations have grown and our influence has extended fully through the natural environment, landscapes have become cultural constructions (Duncan 1990). The visual space around us is shaped by social, cultural and political systems rather than by natural systems. This is particularly true of suburban landscapes, which face high growth and development pressures and retain natural areas only through concerted human decisions. Rural preservation programs in suburban Maryland aim to protect agricultural areas and rural open spaces from sprawling development around Washington, D.C. The geographic location of these protected areas is contingent on social processes.

In Maryland we see a strong racial component to the geographic location of protected rural areas. While state-funded rural preservation programs are equitably distributed throughout the state, county-funded programs vary greatly and in a pattern consistent with the demographic variation between counties. This connection can be explained by historical race relations in the Washington, D.C. area. Historical discrimination in the area had a large impact on residential

patterns and on the nature of social interactions. Race was drawn into the area's social processes, and its mark remains on the landscape today.

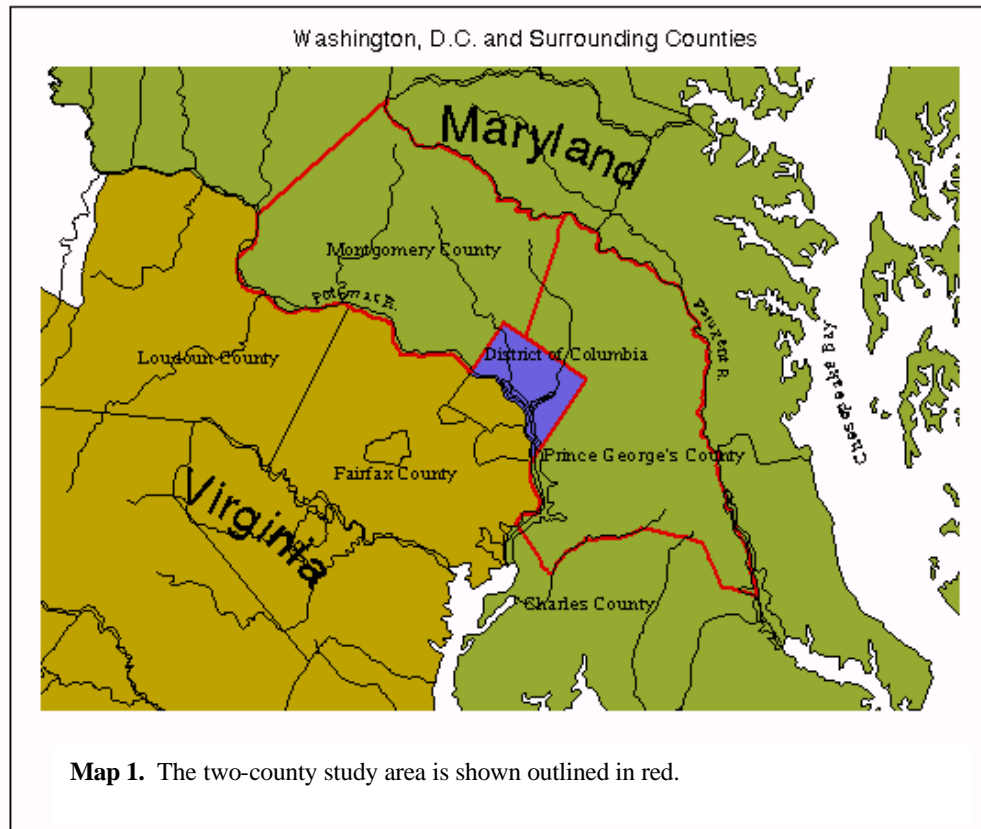
While drawing a connection between race and landscape, this study does not fall within the context of traditional environmental racism research. The preponderance of this research has focused on the connection between demographics and the discreet siting of hazardous waste facilities (see United Church of Christ 1987 and U.S. General Accounting Office 1984). These studies have constructively turned attention to the social dimensions of hazardous waste siting. This study, by examining how landscapes are shaped by historical race relations, exposes a broader perspective on the connection between race and the environment. Even in the absence of obvious racial injustices, all places are racialized (Pulido 2000). Historical attitudes toward race, and past practices that were informed by race relations, contribute to the contemporary landscape.

This paper examines past race relations in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and their connection to current rural preservation initiatives in two suburban Maryland counties. The first section describes the study site, including demographic characteristics and levels of rural preservation in the two counties. The next section describes the major rural conservation initiatives in the two counties. The third section introduces the concept of white privilege and its connection to environmental planning. The fourth section describes the historical development of white privilege in suburban Maryland. The fifth section explains how the difference in rural preservation between the two counties could reflect and reproduce white privilege. Finally, the conclusion contains a discussion of the implications of the paper's findings.

Study Site

This paper explores the connection between race and the preservation of rural landscapes in Maryland's two suburban-Washington, D.C. counties—Montgomery County and Prince George's County. This study site is attractive because the two counties are geographically adjacent and bio-physically similar, which allows us to isolate the effects of historically-developed social differences on their landscapes. Montgomery County and Prince George's

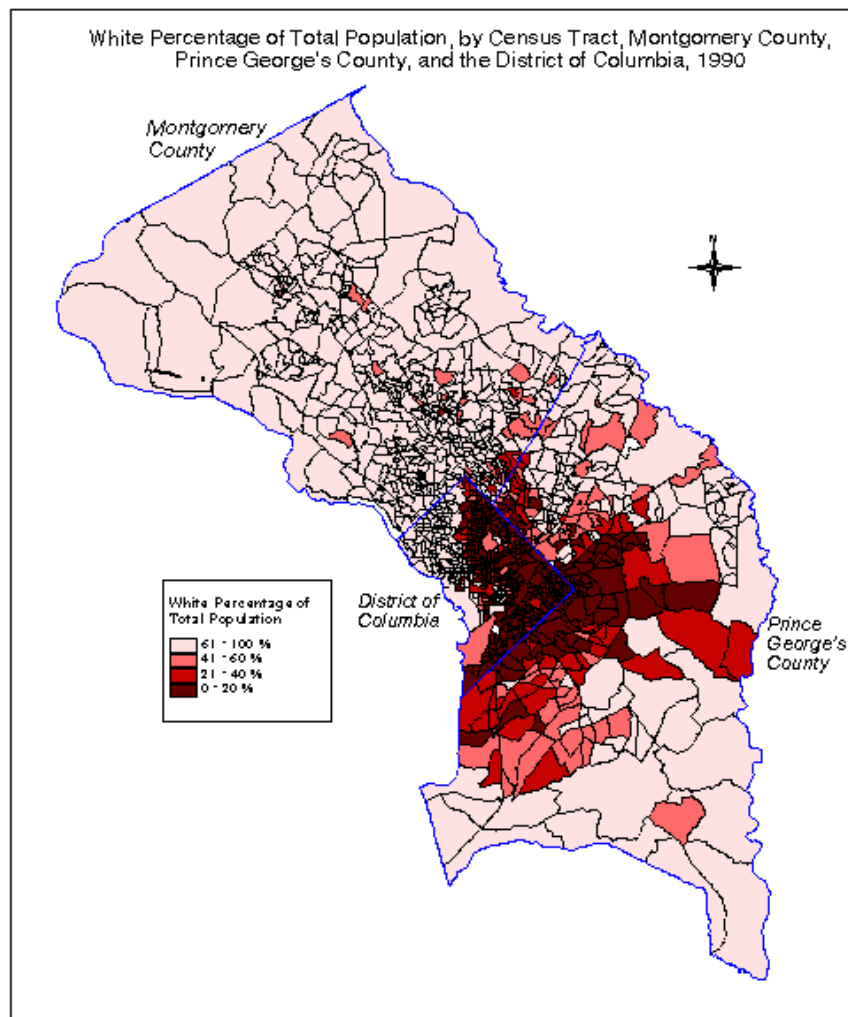
County both lie north of Washington, D.C., between the Potomac River on the west and the the



Patuxent River on the east. Montgomery County lies to the northwest. The fall line, the geologic demarcation that separates the coastal plain in the east from the piedmont in the west, runs through the county and separates the flatter topography of the eastern part of the county from the rolling hills in the western part of the county. Prince George's County lies northeast of Washington, D.C., east of the Fall Line. Both counties have been shaped by the same state policies and the same pressures and influences associated with being part of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

The socio-cultural differences between the two counties are striking. Popular perception in the region identifies Montgomery County as an affluent, white, rural suburb and Prince George's County as the more urban, black suburb. A map of demographics in the region

bears out this difference (see map 2). Montgomery County has been a largely white county since the emancipation of slaves. Current estimates identify the county's population as 64.8% white. Prince George's County shared a similar demographic composition until the later half of the twentieth century, when suburbanization began to re-shape areas outside the capital city. Prince George's County began to see a large increase in its black population in the 1970's and in the past two decades has become a majority black county. The 2000 Census describes the population as 62.7% black (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001).



Map 2. This map shows the large demographic difference between the two counties. Montgomery County has very few tracts with a white population lower than 60%. Prince George's County has a number of tracts with a minority population between 40% and 100%
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Decennial Report

Percent Population by Race*, Census 2000		
Race	Montgomery County	Prince George's County
White	64.8	27.0
Black or African American	15.1	62.7
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	11.5	7.1
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.3	0.3
Asian	11.3	3.9
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0	0.1
Some other race	5.0	3.4

Figure 1. * Total is greater than 100% because some individuals identify themselves with two or more races. This was the case for 3.4% of Montgomery County residents, and 2.6% of Prince George's County residents. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data

The two neighboring suburban Washington, D.C. counties also differ widely in their commitment to rural conservation initiatives. In the 1960's, Montgomery County zoned a 93,000 acre agricultural reserve in which they have since established parks and conservation easements zones. The county planning board recently approved a \$33 million commitment over the next six years to pursue the goal of formally protecting all land within the 93,000 agricultural reserve, which lies less than 25 miles from the Washington, D.C. border. Prince George's County has just begun to develop rural preservation programs. The county plans a rural tier where zoning for development will be restricted, but the county has not committed any public funds to the formal protection of specific rural areas (see figure 2).

It is important to note here that this analysis maintains a focus at the county scale. It may be possible to draw connections between race and preserved rural areas at a sub-county scale, but this study takes advantage of demographic and rural preservation data available at the county level. The benefit of confining the study to this scale is that it allows for consideration of county-wide commitments to rural preservation. This commitment is expressed by the level of county funding to the initiatives and by the ways the counties market themselves to the outside community, including potential businesses.

Rural Conservation Commitments from the Maryland Rural Legacy Program and County Level Programs, 1998 – 2005*				
<i>County</i>	<i>State Rural Conservation Funds</i>	<i>State Rural Conservation Acreage</i>	<i>County level Rural Conservation Funds</i>	<i>County level Rural Conservation Acreage</i>
Montgomery County	\$5.7 million	1,510	\$33 million**	10,000 +
Prince George's County	\$3 million	1,058	\$0	0

Figure 2. * Includes approved budgets through FY2005. ** In addition to the \$33 million in public funds, Montgomery County is committed to raising \$9 million in private funds. Sources: Montgomery County Council, March 21, 2000; Finch 2001; Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust 2000

Rural Preservation Initiatives

Rural preservation efforts in suburban Maryland fall under a number of coordinating bodies. Most of the initiatives in the study area are either funded through state programs, the bi-county Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission, or county level programs. While both counties have had success in acquiring rural preservation funds from the first two sources, there is a great disparity in the level of county funds that are committed to such programs.

Maryland's primary state-funded rural preservation program is the Rural Legacy Program, which was founded in 1997 as part of the state's Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Initiative. Both Montgomery County and Prince George's County participate actively in this program by submitting proposals to the state's Rural Legacy Board. Both have been awarded substantial state funds through the Rural Legacy Program. For the years 1998 to 2000, Montgomery County was awarded \$5.7 million to purchase conservation easements covering 1,510 acres. For the same period, Prince George's County received \$3 million for easements covering 1,058 acres (Rural Legacy 2000). Both counties have shown an interest in pursuing state funds for rural preservation efforts.

The Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is a bi-

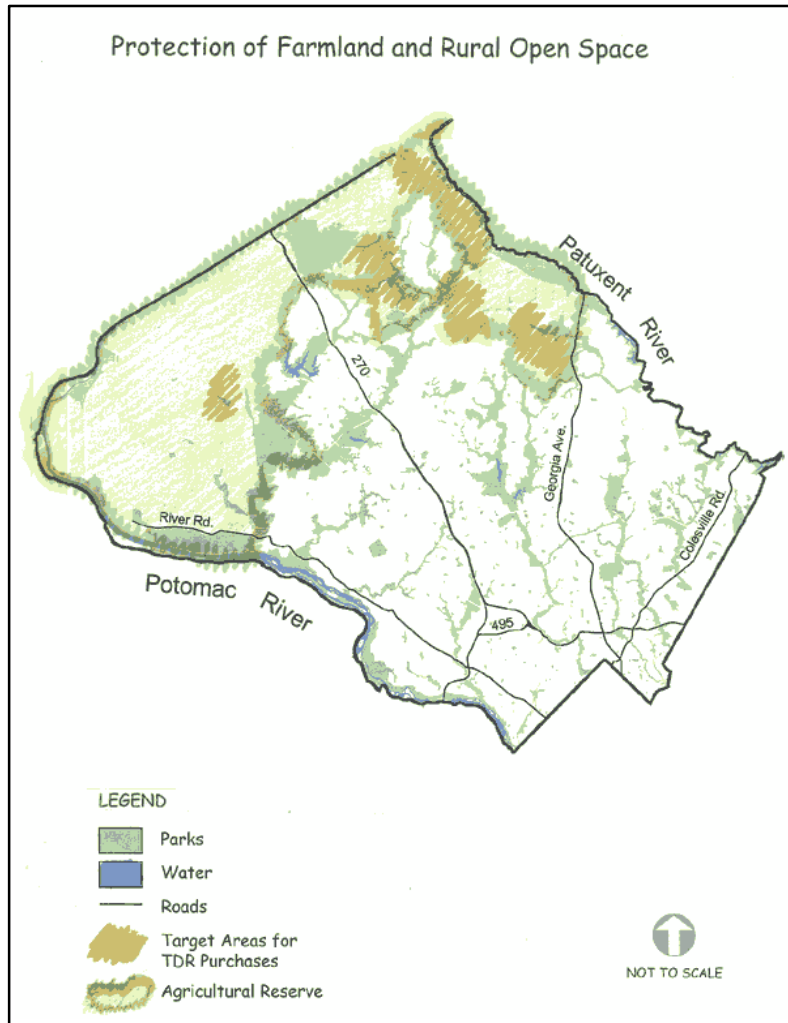
county agency that coordinates planning initiatives in the suburban Maryland region. The M-NCPPC was founded in 1927 to help direct the conservation movement in Montgomery County. The agency eventually grew to include Prince George's County. Both counties have benefited greatly from the M-NCPPC efforts to acquire parklands and other sensitive areas. The M-NCPPC has protected 27,000 acres in Montgomery County and 21,658 in Prince George's County (DNR 1999).

The great disparity in rural preservation between the two counties is in the level of county funds that are committed to these efforts. Montgomery County has developed the Legacy Open Space program, which coordinates land preservation efforts in the county. The Montgomery County Planning Board recently proposed a 6-year, \$33 million initiative that will increase annual spending on land preservation from its current level of around \$3 million per year to \$8 million per year (Audubon Naturalist Society 2000). In addition to the \$33 million in public funds, the county is committed to raising an additional \$9 million in private funds. The funds will be used to protect county lands from development, either by direct purchase or through the purchase of conservation easements. Easements have already been purchased on 47,000 of those acres, and 20,000 more are protected as parks (Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation 1997). The goal of the Legacy Open Space program is to protect the remaining 20,000 within the Agricultural Reserve in perpetuity.

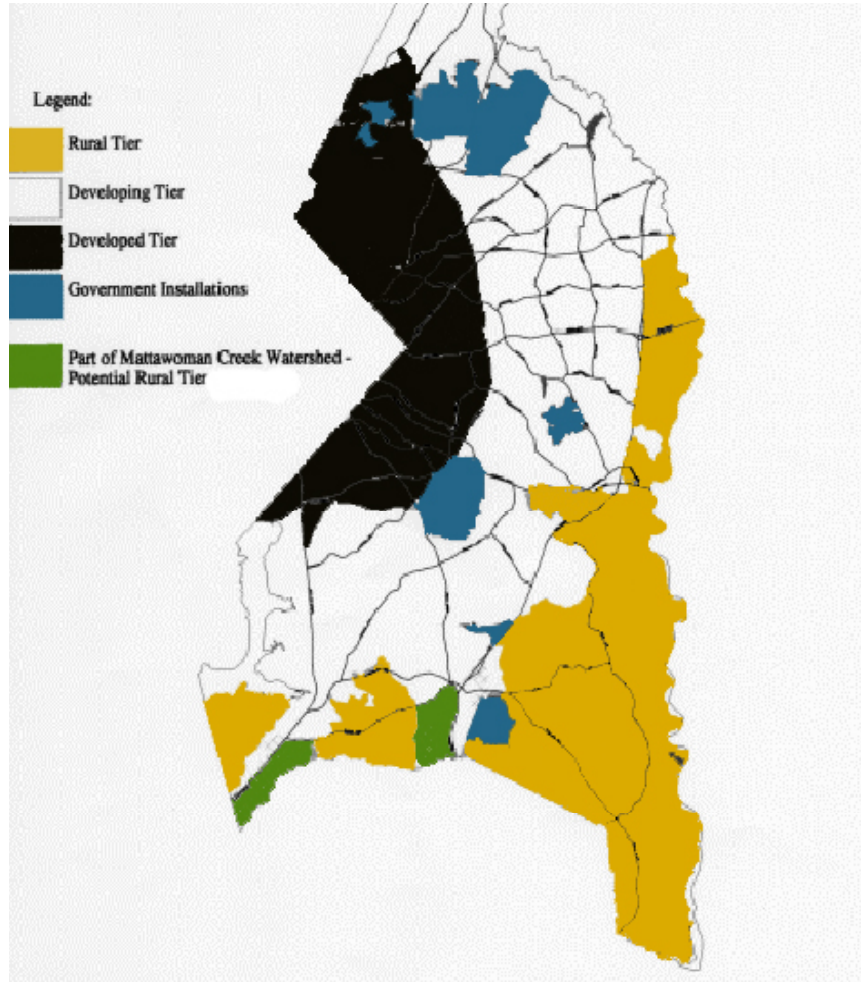
By contrast, Prince George's County has committed no public funds to augment the state's rural preservation programs (Finch 2001). The county's recently approved Biennial Growth Plan does address the need to conserve rural open spaces. The plan calls for a three-tiered approach to development, in which one tier, in the southeast, will be zoned for rural land uses (see map 4). Zoning of new development in that zone will be restricted to one dwelling unit per 20 acres. The major contrast between this zoning plan and Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve is that Montgomery County is strengthening its zoning measures by purchasing conservation easements that permanently remove the development potential of the land.

Much of the land that will be protected through Montgomery County's Legacy Open Space Program will be protected through the purchase of conservation easements. This is a voluntary program. Individual landowners submit their property for consideration and, if the

property is selected, they can preserve the land by selling or donating a conservation easement. The selection of sites for the program depends on private landowners volunteering their land and on program officials selecting the land for funding. The landowner is paid for the value of the property's development potential, and the landowner forfeits the right to develop the property, except within certain retained rights. The easements are in perpetuity (M-NCPPC 2001). Success of the program requires a strong commitment from two groups—the individual landowners who volunteer to sell their development rights and the county taxpayers who agree to commit public funds to the program. This commitment exists in Montgomery County, though not in Prince George's County.



Map 3. Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve
Source: Montgomery County Dept. of Parks and Planning 2001



Map 4. Prince George's Planning Map County

This map shows the county's broad zoning plan, which includes establishing three tiers of development. In the rural tier, zoning would be for agricultural and other rural uses. Source: PG Co. Planning Dept., Biennial Growth Plan

White Privilege

The key to understanding how race is implicated in a community's land management practices lies in recognizing that a community must develop a certain amount of privilege in order to make pro-active decisions regarding its environment. The literature on environmental racism has demonstrated that communities that bear the burden of hazardous waste facility sitings are often minority communities that do not occupy a position of social privilege (see Pulido 2000 and Anderton, et al. 1994). They are not well-represented politically, they lack the financial resources to secure their community spaces, or for some other reason they are excluded from public decision-making. Majority white communities, on the other hand, possess an accumulated privilege by which they are able to exert a stronger influence in how landscapes are constructed. In the words of Pulido, white privilege is "an attempt to name a social system that works to the benefit of whites and provides majority white communities with a privilege (2000: 13)" in making decisions about the environment.

Remnants of the deep-rooted racial discrimination that marked over two centuries of United States history, dating back to the beginnings of slavery, still exist in the country today. After emancipation African-Americans faced severe, legally-sanctioned discrimination until the adoption of Civil Rights laws in the 1960's. Even then, blatant discrimination existed in the form of employment discrimination, educational inequalities, political under-representation, and unequal access to housing, among other ways. Without considering whether, or to what extent, racial discrimination occurs today, the concept of white privilege describes how discriminations of the past have resulted in social structures that benefit majority white communities. Privileges enjoyed by whites early in this century, such as better schools, higher paying jobs, and greater access to loans, provide majority white communities of today with a historically-developed privilege that provides them with greater influence in the construction of community landscapes.

As Foucault (1994) and others have reminded us, hegemonic positions require constant reproduction. White privilege is not an inherent quality of social relations, but rather something that has been produced through a history of discriminatory actions and survives only because

specific actions reproduce it. In Pulido's words, "in order to preserve and exploit the privilege of whiteness, well-intentioned individuals respond to market forces and social structures in ways that reinforce racist hierarchies (2000:30)." They protect the privileges they have enjoyed, such as higher property values and better environments, and, in doing so, erect barriers to entry that keep their community homogeneous. This paper suggests that by preserving rural environments, majority white communities can unintentionally reproduce their demographic privilege.

Historical Development of White Privilege in Suburban Maryland

The history of difference between Montgomery County and Prince George's County can be broken into two eras—a first period covering the general social evolution of the counties from their foundings up to the early twentieth century, and a second covering the twentieth century, when the suburbs saw a great deal of growth and social change.

The striking characteristic of the early development of the counties is that, despite their being neighbors, the two counties were not functionally linked to a great extent. Prince George's County was established in 1669 out of parts of Calvert and Charles Counties, both neighbors to the south. Prince George's was one of five southern Maryland counties that made up the heart of the tobacco growing region in the state. The town of Upper Marlboro, one of the southernmost of the county's major towns, was the commercial, political, and social center of the county until the early twentieth century (Pearl 1996).

Montgomery County was formed in 1776 when Frederick County was split into three parts: Frederick County in the center, Washington County to the north, and Montgomery County to the south. The three mid-Maryland counties developed into a functional region that was largely separate from the southern Maryland counties. The first roads in Montgomery County, which ran from Georgetown to Frederick, oriented the county to its mid-Maryland neighbors. Tobacco was once the major crop of the region but, because the tobacco lands had become very poor even by 1800, tobacco played only a supporting agricultural role to wheat, corn, and dairy (Boyd 1968). Despite current perceptions that link Montgomery County and Prince George's

County as Maryland's two suburban-Washington, D.C. counties, the counties do not share a history of interaction.

The demographic divergence between Montgomery County and Prince George's County has its roots in processes of suburbanization that began early in the twentieth century and accelerated in the 1950's. Counties around Washington, D.C. first began to experience suburban growth in the decade just after the Civil War, when the city's population doubled. Suburbanization increased in the 1920's, when transportation developments made it feasible for government employees to live outside the city's borders and commute to their work in the city. From these earliest years of suburbanization, Montgomery County established itself as the high status suburb. Larger lot sizes and greater community amenities attracted wealthier residents who enjoyed the higher social prestige. This situation contrasted greatly from that of neighboring Prince George's county, where lots were small and streets narrow (Hiebert 1956). The fashionable tone Montgomery County was acquiring was emphasized by real estate companies, who were invested in maintaining high property values. Companies adopted the strategy of building on two to five acre lots to insure a "high character of development," which would be protected by "adequate and proper restrictions placed in the deeds (Armentrout 1936)." Examples of these restrictions, known as restrictive covenants, follow:

It is hereby covenanted by the parties hereto that none of the property herein conveyed shall ever be sold, willed, leased, assigned to or occupied by a negro or person of negro descent, said covenant to run with the land.

(Deed of Transfer to Lionel Probert, Montgomery County, May 13, 1927)

That for the purpose of sanitation and health, neither the party of the second part, or her heirs and assigns shall or will sell, rent, lease, or otherwise dispose of said land, or any improvements thereon, to anyone of a race whose death rate is of a higher percentage than that of the white or Caucasian race.

(Deed of Transfer to Sallie Walker, Montgomery County, February 3, 1930)

Discrimination in the real estate industry was compounded by practices of federal loan providers. In 1933, the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) devised a systematized appraisal method for homes. Their motivation was to identify neighborhoods where housing values were unstable and where rates of foreclosure were likely to be high. One of the characteristics of a high-ranking neighborhood was strong homogeneity in the community, especially of “American business and professional men (from Jackson 1980:423).” A confidential 1941 survey by the HOLC commented that “a rapidly increasing Negro population” resulted in “problems in the maintenance of real estate values (ibid).” While the HOLC did not discriminate in awarding loans, its systematized appraisal method influenced other lenders and effectively institutionalized housing discrimination in the decades that followed.

In the 1940's, the Federal Housing Authority (FHA), using the appraisal system initiated by the HOLC, did concentrate its housing loans in those areas that appeared most likely to retain stable housing values. In some cases, the presence of even a single black family in a neighborhood was enough to consider the neighborhood too unstable for loan commitments (ibid). Though the Civil Rights era helped abolish such statements from official documents, their damage was done. The policies of these lending institutions helped segregate neighborhoods and ensure that the highest valued neighborhoods were predominately white. These neighborhoods then enjoyed the cumulative social benefits of a privileged class, including better schools, better infrastructure, and lower tax rates. Maintenance of that privilege then required that the community remain homogeneous. Sharpe and Wallock comment that it is the collectively perceived threat that race and social standing pose to homeownership and social standing that drives suburbanites to keep their territory segregated (1994:9).

The FHA's redlining practices of the 1940's within the District of Columbia proper contributed to the later segregation of the suburbs of the city. Financial commitments in the District were heavily concentrated in two peripheral areas in the city, both predominately white areas in northwest Washington. Few mortgage guarantees or home improvement loans were issued in the predominantly black southeast section of the city (Jackson 1980). These discriminatory lending speculations then became a self-fulfilling prophecy, as the poorer, minority neighborhoods were not able to secure loans and the neighborhoods did deteriorate.

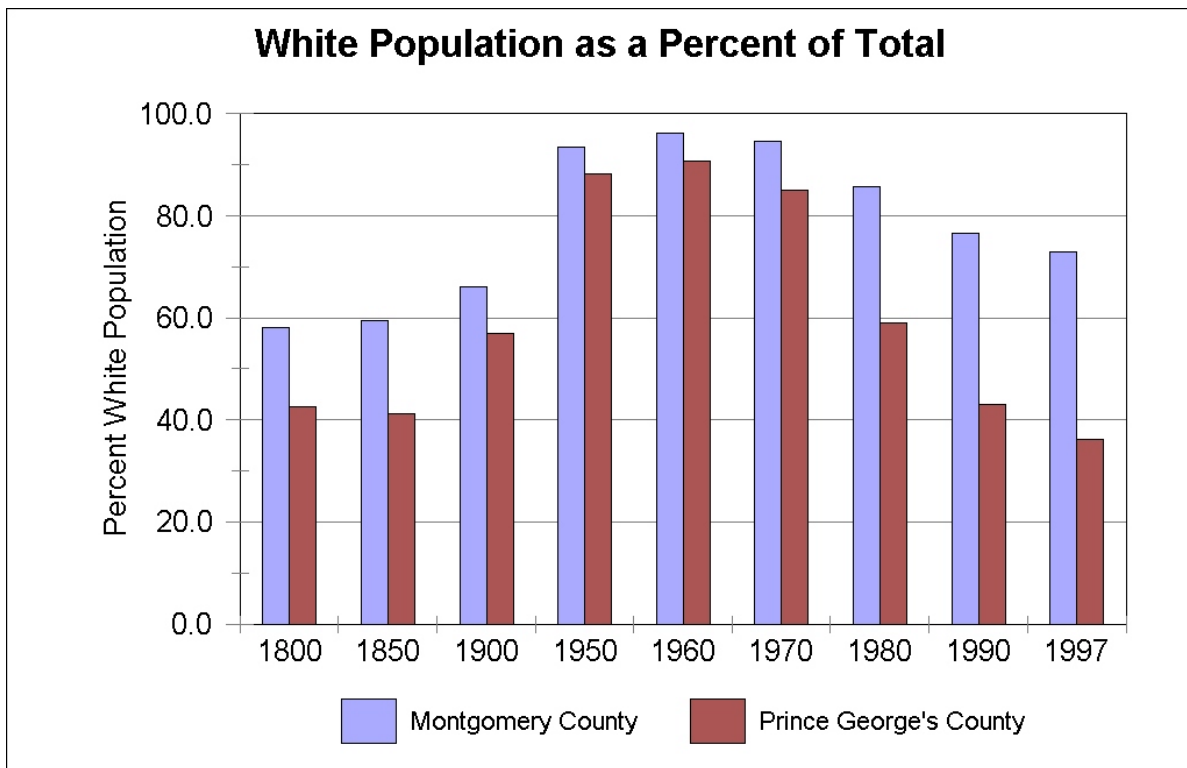


Figure 3. Sources: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Montgomery County Dept. of Parks and Planning

These discriminatory lending practices helped segregate residential patterns in the city's peripheral regions, creating a demographic pattern that still exists in the city today. The Northwest section of the city is predominately white and affluent, while the southeast section of the city is mostly black (see Map 2). The residential segregation within the city proper, a pattern that was well-established by the 1950's, led to segregated suburbs when urban populations moved into the suburbs (Phelan and Schneider 1996). The Washington, D.C. suburbs grew in a pattern consistent with other large metropolitan areas of the 1950's. Improvements in transportation and suburban utility provisions made feasible the move out of the city to the

cleaner environment of the suburbs. People moving from the city often re-located to a suburban location directly outside the area of the city they had inhabited. Montgomery County attracted the middle and upper class white populations from the northwest section of Washington, D.C.

Prince George's County also experienced white suburbanization in the 1950's, leading to a demographic composition that was very similar to that of Montgomery County (see figure 1). When black suburbanization accelerated in the 1970's, it concentrated largely in Prince George's County, due largely to the succession of residents out of the southeast section of the city and into the inner suburban communities of the county (Sharpe and Wallock 1994:8). Suburban segregation was re-enforced because, as Prince George's County began to acquire a visible black presence, more blacks were attracted to the area than whites (ibid). By the time of the 1980 census, Prince George's County had become a majority black county, while Montgomery County has remained a largely white county.

White Privilege in Montgomery County

A number of socio-economic indicators separate Montgomery County from Prince George's County. The demographic difference between the counties should not be seen as a direct cause of the socio-economic disparities. The socio-economic conditions that exist among the counties today, however, are contingent on their historical patterns of development. As previous sections have shown, race relations have played a role in these developments. In this sense, current socio-economic conditions represent the privileges that Montgomery County has inherited and for which it has structural incentives to protect.

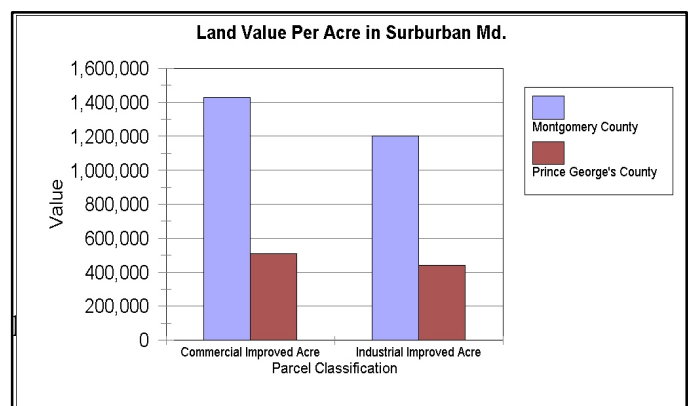
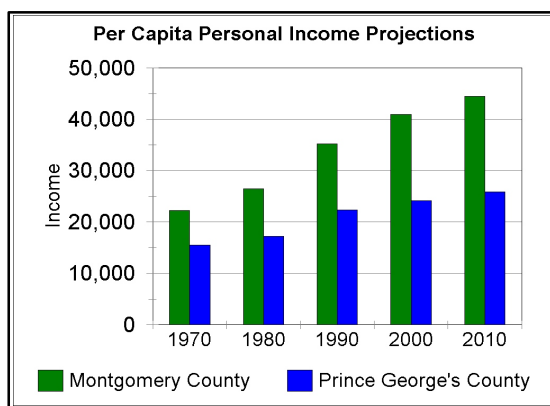
Incomes in Montgomery County are almost twice those in Prince George's County. The 1998 average household income in Montgomery was \$115,680 (Montgomery County Business 2000), while the average household income in Prince George's County was \$50,988 (PG Economic Development 2000). Even more disconcerting are long-term income projections for the two counties. Maryland Office of Planning projections (1997) show that Montgomery County's per capita personal income has been more than 140% the state average and will remain so through the next decade. While Prince George's per capita personal income was equal to the

state average in 1970, it has since dropped and is now only 85% of the state average.

The counties also show are marked difference in the levels of education achieved. Over 50% of Montgomery County's over 25 adult population have a college degree, while 31.3% of Prince George's adult population has that qualification.

Property values also reveal the contrast between the counties. Montgomery County has the highest real estate values in the state, and some of the highest values in the country. The average dollar value per commercial unimproved acre is \$418,700 in Montgomery County, compared to \$99,800 in Prince George's County (see figure 5). For commercial improved acres, the average dollar value in Montgomery County is \$1.43 million, compared to \$511,000 in Prince George's County (M.O.P. 1997). A home built in Prince George's County by the same builder sells at a price from \$13,000 to \$85,000 less than in neighboring counties (PG Economic Development 2000). While this is an attractive incentive to buy a home in Prince George's County, the county's residents do not benefit from high real estate values to the same extent as their neighbors in Montgomery County.

The large gap in these socio-economic indicators is not a direct result of their demographic divergence. Montgomery County's top ranking across these socio-economic indicators does reflect, however, the accumulation of privilege that dates back to at least the beginning of the twentieth century. Currents residents benefit from the structures that developed early in the last century. I now turn to the specific rural preservation initiatives in suburban Maryland in order to understand how constructed landscapes both result from and reaffirm historically-developed privileges.



Figures 4.

Source: Maryland Office of Planning, 1997

Figures 5.

Source: Maryland Office of Planning, 1997

How the Landscape Reinforces White Privilege

White privilege is reflected in the rural preservation initiatives in Montgomery County to the extent that the preservation programs reinforce historically-determined racial hierarchies. The programs themselves have no direct adverse social effects. Rural preservation programs have been shown to provide numerous social benefits. These programs, however, may have the unintended consequence of preserving the county's relatively homogeneous demographic composition and reinforcing the differences between the county and Prince George's County. Some of the benefits of rural preservation programs, such as higher land values and attraction of higher sector industries, may present barriers to entry for minority groups. Furthermore, these socio-economic indicators further distance the county from its neighbor, providing its residents with greater incentives to preserve existing social structures.

One of the direct social benefits of rural preservation programs is the effect they have on land values of properties throughout the county. Home values tend to increase faster around parks and protected open spaces (Maryland's Program Open Space 2001). Lazarus notes that protected physical environments may increase property values to such an extent that members of a racial minority with fewer economic resources can not afford to live in that community (1993:795). Property values in the southern part of the county also increase, as the restriction on development in the northern part of the county restricts the supply of developable land in the county and increases market values. With higher property values, Montgomery County is able to assess a lower property tax rate than Prince George's County and still maintain a sufficient county budget. Montgomery County residents pay a base rate of \$1.86 per \$100 of assessed property value, while Prince George's residents pay \$2.40 (Schwartzman 2000).

Another benefit of preserving a rural landscape is the increased ability to attract high

sector industries to the county. The Joint Economic Committee of the United States Congress has found that quality of life is more important than purely business-related factors in attracting new businesses to an area (from Maryland's Program Open Space 2000). Montgomery County is the state leader in attracting high-tech business locations, which are generally cleaner and more lucrative.

In addition to being one of Maryland's best-preserved counties, Montgomery County is the state leader in high-tech employment., Montgomery County leads the state and the nation's 10 largest metropolitan areas in terms of high-tech locations. The county is home to 60% of the state's bio-tech companies. Almost 50% of the county's private employers are in high technology fields (Montgomery 's Business Development 2001).

Prince George's County's economy does not feature the same level of high-tech companies found in its neighboring county. Some county officials believe the county still has an inequitable share of warehouses and industrial sites (Millner 1998). The leading private employers in Prince George's show the diversity of the county's economy: Giant Food, Dimensions Health Care System, Safeway, Bell Atlantic Corporation, Shoppers Food Warehouse, United Parcel Service, and Computer Sciences Corporation (PG Economic Development 2001). Though the county is attracting high-tech industries through tax incentives and the creation of a high-tech zone, it still relies heavily on lower sector industries.

Protected rural lands save the image of the suburb as haven from the urban elements of an outward-expanding city (Sharp and Wallock 1994). This increases the desirability of the county, both to homeowners and businesses. Land prices increase in the face of this demand, and many minorities are excluded by financial barriers.

A more broad-based effect of Montgomery County's successful preservation policies is the contribution they make to the socio-economic gap between the county and its neighbor. A review of the marketing materials of the two counties shows that they are presented much differently to the larger community. Montgomery County promotes its economic growth, its high-tech economy, and its protected rural environment. Prince George's County promotes economic growth and diversity. Its environmental conditions are not highlighted in marketing the county to potential businesses or employers.

Prince George's County's failure to draw public support for rural preservation programs

reveals a difference in values between its constituency and that of Montgomery County. A recent poll found that 75% of Montgomery County residents support the use of their tax dollars for environmental protection (Maryland Alliance 2000). This support has enabled the county to commit \$33 million in public funds to the Legacy Open Space Program. This public support for rural preservation does not exist in Prince George's County. The county's planning priorities, as specified in the 2000 Biennial Growth Plan are as follows: 1) high quality schools, 2) quality economic development, 3) infill re-vitalization, 4) adequate public facilities, 5) environmental protection, 6) transit support, 7) farmland preservation, and 8) high quality housing (Prince George's County Council 2001). The low priority given to rural preservation dictates that other objectives will take precedence when there is competition for limited resources.

The failure of Prince George's County to engender public support for rural preservation programs should not be seen only as a reflection of the county's values, but also as a reflection of the incentive structures the county faces. In marketing itself to the broader community, Prince George's County operates in the economic shadow of Montgomery County. Montgomery County, which exceeds other Maryland counties in nearly all socio-economic indicators, competes directly with Prince George's County in attracting businesses and residents. Prince George's County's focus has been on closing the economic gap and on improving its school system, both initiatives which will make the county more attractive. At the same time, however, Montgomery County's strong commitment to rural preservation is adding a new component to its marketability to the larger community. In addition to being the wealthiest county in the state, it also maintains the best-protected rural landscape. Its rural preservation programs, which are a reflection of the county's historical privilege, reinforce its position of privilege by widening the socio-economic distance between itself and its neighbor.

Conclusion

Maryland's two suburban-Washington, D.C. counties are starkly different in terms of their demographic composition. Montgomery County is a majority white and very affluent county,

while Prince George's County is a majority-minority county, with a 75% minority population. This demographic difference is a result of historical patterns of suburbanization, which were marked by instances of discrimination. The result is a suburban pattern in which Montgomery County enjoys the privileges of historical race relations while Prince George's County remains in the socio-economic shadow of Montgomery County. This social structure is reflected in the construction of landscapes. Montgomery County, having enjoyed a position of social privilege dating back to the early twentieth century, is better positioned to commit funds to rural preservation initiatives. Furthermore, this commitment to rural preservation may reinforce the county's demographic privilege by preserving relative homogeneity and its high ranking in socio-economic indicators.

A danger in uncovering this connection between race and landscape is that rural preservation programs, and other environmental protection programs, could be seen as contributing to undesirable social structures. While this paper shows a racial component to the geographic distribution of protected areas, the benefits of rural preservation programs should not be discarded. In addition to protecting natural environmental processes in suburban areas, preserved open spaces and rural areas contribute to economic growth, social sustainability, and a higher quality of life. The findings of this paper do not question these benefits, but only place the programs in a historical and demographic context. Landscapes are cultural constructions. The decisions that shape community landscapes are not made in a vacuum, but rather, reflect that community's history, values, social structures, and relations to other communities. Present day environmental planning initiatives, such as Montgomery County's Legacy Open Space Program, to which the county has committed \$33 million over the next six years, emerge out of social conditions which are historically-contingent.

Drawing a connection between race and landscape involves uncovering two processes that are not easily confronted. On the one hand, there are the unpleasant histories of race relations that have shaped our society. On the other hand, there are the social structures that have resulted from those race relations and which continue to inform how our landscapes evolve today.

This paper excavates the sometimes sordid details of historic race relations in suburban

Maryland in order to demonstrate how Montgomery County and Prince George's County have come to be demographically and socio-economically different. That there was racial discrimination in suburban Maryland is clear from the historical analysis. However, the mostly white community of Montgomery County today does not shoulder the responsibility for this discrimination. The message to take from this analysis is that landscapes are historicized, and to the extent that histories were discriminatory, this will be revealed in the landscape. The populations that lived in suburban Maryland in the past had their own attitudes about race and their own social practices. These cumulative attitudes and practices resulted in social structures that have given Montgomery County a position of social privilege. Today's environmental planning initiatives are a reflection not of contemporary discrimination, but of historically developed social structures.

The second difficult topic to face, then, is the suggestion that contemporary populations are locked into racist social structures that had their roots in discriminations of the past. Just as current residents of Montgomery County should not be held responsible for racist practices of the past, they should not be blamed for the propagation of racially discriminatory social structures today. Pulido describes how contemporary populations reinforce racist social structures by reacting rationally to social and economic incentives (2000). People want their land values to remain high and their tax rates to remain low. At the county scale, this structural approach suggests that contemporary land management practices reflect and reinforce a racial hierarchy. This must be an un-satisfying explanation, however, for the conscientious populations of Montgomery County. With this broad connection between race and landscape now established, it may be possible to explore the more nuanced relationships between race and decisions about how the landscape is constructed. It is possible that at a sub-structural level, discriminatory patterns are being reversed.

Rural preservation programs are an important political topic, particularly in suburban Maryland, where high growth pressures meet a strong commitment to environmental protection. While the findings of this paper help place land-use decisions in a historical and demographic context, they are not directly relevant to current policy decisions. Rural preservation programs should not be side-tracked by this knowledge about their contextual circumstances. The

connection between race and landscape is a symptom of a problem that has deep roots in our society. Constructing effective suburban environmental protection policy faces enough hurdles without the burden of addressing racist patterns of the past. The value of these findings from a policy perspective is that they provide support for policies that address these broad-based structural inequities, such as affirmative action. The paper reveals that discriminatory histories have deep and lasting effects that find their way into even our landscapes.

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