

Small-City Dualism in the Metro Hinterland: The Racialized “Brooklynization” of New York’s Hudson Valley

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How does the metropolis influence population change and amenity development in small cities of the adjacent hinterland? We examine one scenario in five cities of New York state’s Hudson Valley, a region north of metropolitan New York City that reveals dual trajectories of urban change. In some cities, immigrant revitalization brings population growth, revitalizes main street economies, and extends cities’ majority-minority legacies. In other cities, amenity development attracts metropolitan newcomers, triggers residential and retail gentrification, sustains majority-white demographics, and fails to offset out-migration associated with rustbelt decline. These dual trajectories are connected through a metropolitan process of “Brooklynization”: sociospatial changes in hinterland regions set in motion by racialized amenity pursuits. Culturally, metropolitan outsiders encounter small cities through ‘rural’ frameworks that emphasize outdoor/agricultural amenities, small-town ‘authenticity,’ and the implicit whiteness of the hinterland landscape. Economically, immigrant revitalization and amenity development are connected via linked migration that channels an immigrant proletariat to some cities and the amenity migrants they labor for to other cities and towns.

How does the metropolis affect population change and amenity development in small cities of the adjacent hinterland? We examine one scenario in five cities of New York state’s Hudson Valley. Located “upstate” or north of New York City (NYC) and bisected by the metropolitan border, this region exhibits contrasting yet interrelated trajectories of urban change: foreign immigrant settlement and amenity development that are materially linked and spatially channeled across different places. We develop a cultural-ecological account to analyze this duality that locates key spatial forces at the heart of the metropolis: NYC, where a new urban middle class uses the near-by hinterland for leisure and residence. Our study features cities that are very small indeed, with populations ranging from six thousand to thirty thousand. Although their size may strain the credibility of urbanists accustomed to larger “small cities,” we heed the critique by Brenner (2013) and other urban theorists of the outdated notion that a place is self-evidently “urban” by virtue

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of size or primacy. As we'll conclude, the changes seen in the Hudson Valley's small cities (and smaller towns as well) represent emergent dynamics of metropolitan restructuring with relevance elsewhere.

FORCES OF SMALL-CITY DECLINE AND CHANGE

The outlook for small cities today might seem dim, given their economic foundation in roiled primary and secondary sectors. Small cities flourished during the Industrial Revolution, when certain forms of capital investment favored their geographic factors (like natural ports and rivers for water mills) and isolated workforces. With rail connections and then automobile corridors, many small cities became strategic sites for agricultural distribution, industrial production, and political representation. As national economies consolidated through the 20th century, distance from major metropolitan regions emerged as a key variable. Many small cities closer to metro economies eventually transformed into regional satellites and metro suburbs. For those further away, the heyday was the mid-20th century era of Fordism, when large firms established factories and branch offices and reshaped cities' economic functions and land-use patterns (Norman 2013). The interior U.S. Mid-Atlantic (which overlays our case-study region) provides an example. Dotted with branch plants from multinationals like General Electric and IBM, small cities in upstate New York, western Massachusetts, and interior Pennsylvania thrived with blue-collar jobs, influxes of regional laborers and corporate white-collar personnel, and a place of pride in the national imaginary. Post-Fordist deindustrialization brought about wrenching social and economic consequences for small cities: population out-migration, shrinking economic opportunity, declining public services, and diminished social vitality (Bluestone and Harrison 1982).

The forces of industrial disinvestment are paralleled and often amplified by the ways rural restructuring affects nonmetro small cities. This involves shifts from labor-intensive activities centered upon growing agricultural inputs, mostly on small farms, to capital-intensive activities, organized around processing agricultural inputs (e.g., meat-packing), which make small farms vulnerable to price pressure and corporate consolidation (Drabenstott and Smith 1996; Hauter 2012). Less germane to our case study, rural restructuring also includes declining employment in extractive industries due to capital-intensive technologies, resource exhaustion, and global sourcing. The consequences for nonmetro small cities and other rural places are similar to deindustrialization—population out-migration, economic decline, and so on (see, e.g., Carr and Kefalas 2009)—and are given further twist by the ascendancy of outdoor recreation and tourism sectors, often the only viable livelihood left for rural communities (Green 2001).

Recreation and tourism bring about shifts from economies of *land* to economies of *landscape* and insert new groups into rural communities—most significantly, vacationers and seasonal residents from metropolitan areas—and new sources of economic precarity based on the seasonal, part-time, and low-wage nature of new service occupations. Tourists usually bring outsized incomes to rural standards of living, which can transform local commerce and strain public services; construction of new tourist lodging and vacation homes can lead to rural gentrification (Ghose 2004; Michels 2017; Stockdale 2010). Again, distance from metropolitan areas shapes the futures of amenity-endowed rural areas. Closer regions may capture the residential migrations of metropolitans with new

preferences for relative isolation and a slower pace of life (Osbaldiston 2012); some of these areas eventually absorb into metro regions (Cromartie 2006). Farther away, places may more exclusively develop seasonal economies that rely on long-distance seekers of winter warmth or outdoor recreations (Rasker et al. 2009).

Deindustrialization and rural restructuring combine in the idea of a social and geographic “rustbelt” left behind by the population growth and economic prosperity in larger metropolitan areas (see Florida 2017). This idea informs our interest in small-city change, which for us indicates a qualitative transition of economic dynamic, demographic patterns, and place identity out of the disinvestment and depopulation associated with rustbelt decline. In this study, we ask two empirical questions. First, which social processes constitute change within small cities? Second, in what ways might different trajectories of small-city change be ecologically organized in the hinterland region? Our inquiry is guided by two emblematic patterns of small-city change: immigrant revitalization and amenity development.

SMALL CITIES IN THE NEW IMMIGRANT GEOGRAPHY

The first pattern involves the local impacts of a changing geography of foreign-born immigration. In North America, immigrant settlement outside central-city enclaves, such as immigrant suburbs and “ethnoburbs” (see, e.g., Li 1998; Singer et al. 2008), has been observed for many decades. More relevant to our study, in the late 1980s, changes in U.S. amnesty policies stimulated a redirection of foreign immigrant flows far beyond traditional metro gateways. New immigrant destinations have brought transnational flows to “heartland” areas of the U.S. South, Midwest, and Northeast that had seen no significant foreign-born population for several previous generations (Jones 2008; Massey 2008). The new immigrant geography is driven largely by population from Mexico and Central America (Zúñiga and Hernández-León 2005), with smaller regional settlements established by immigrants from Asia (Dhingra 2012) and Africa (Miraftab 2016).

The demographic and economic consequences of this new immigration for small cities are well established. Immigrant flows may offset the out-migration of native-born residents, thereby staunching small-city population decline and occupying local housing and storefronts that go vacant (Donato et al. 2008; Norman 2013). Informal ethnic economies can emerge that both serve and employ unskilled immigrants, potentially developing into export-oriented activities (Kaplan 1998; Von Hoffman 2003). At the same time, immigrant flows follow demand for unskilled labor that indicates post-Fordist processes of industrial downgrading (Marrow 2011; Miraftab 2016; Sassen 1998). Notably, sectors like food processing, agriculture, construction, and services expand in new immigrant destinations along dual labor market tracks that disadvantage existing blue-collar workforces (Gray 2013; Parrado and Kandel 2008). Immigrant labor also facilitates the economic ascendance of domestic services and hospitality/tourism sectors, as employers adapt behind-the-scenes occupations around the presumed hard work and labor quiescence of undocumented workers (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2007). In these ways, immigration can deliver both population growth and new forms of exploitation and precarity to small cities and rural regions.

Scholarship on new immigrant destinations provides a robust picture of macro and micro contexts for immigrant incorporation. At the macro level, chain migration sorts

immigrants along relations of community, nationality, ethnicity, and gender and feeds them into transnational geographies of settlement activated via contingent interests and opportunity networks: the outreach of big employers (e.g., meatpackers with rural factories), for instance, or market demand for low-wage personal services in areas where high-wage professional sectors concentrate (Sassen 2019). At the micro level, small cities and rural towns can allow for closer spatial proximity between native-born and immigrant residents than is common in many larger cities, although undocumented status, language barriers, and local racial hierarchies often impede full integration into destination communities (Fisher and Tienda 2006; Hall and Stringfield 2014; Marrow 2011). Less understood is the meso or regional context. Socially and spatially, how do hinterlands organize settlements and employment of immigrants across a differentiated ecology of locations and opportunities? While recent studies of rural “linked migration” between foreign immigration and other newcomers like high-wage professionals identify a broad pattern of regional convergence (see, e.g., Nelson et al. 2010), we seek to learn more about how the new immigrant geography links up to small cities and other places in hinterland regions (see Lichter et al. 2018).

AMENITY DEVELOPMENTS IN SMALL CITIES

A second pattern of small-city change involves the generation and promotion of place-based *amenities*: material, visual, or cultural features of localities that offer pleasurable experiences (Silver and Clark 2016:33). This idea, borrowed from real estate language, requires some sociological nuance. Amenities have no immediate appeal but instead are subjectively mediated by socially constructed values and tastes held by different social groups (Nevarez 2011). An axiom of contemporary urban economic development holds that amenities attract a crucial if heterogeneous constituency: outsiders who have choice about where to work, live, and leisure, and have discretionary income to pursue their preferences. Research shows that particular amenity developments correspond to different kinds and scales of spatial settlement. Large cities that draw professionals and the creative class are associated with tangible amenities like museums and juice bars (Clark 2003), and with quintessential urban experiences like the encounter of social diversity in urban spaces (Florida 2002). Suburbs remain robust draws for middle- and working-class households seeking conventional amenities like good schools and affordable real estate; a subset, affluent technoburbs, adds high-end consumer opportunities (Kotkin 2000). Outdoor recreations, scenic natural views, and a quiet pace of life are the economic lifeblood for small towns and rural regions that draw retirees, mobile professionals, and others seeking antidotes to the metropolitan rat race (Benson and Osbaldiston 2014; Moss and Glorioso 2014).

The value of amenity development in small cities is less certain. These places draw praise from urbanists for experiential amenities like industrial-era downtowns (Burayidi 2001), the “livability” of their compact scale (Lewis and Donald 2010), and tightly-knit communities (Rich 2016), but it’s unclear how those outweigh small cities’ shaky foundations of economic opportunity. Small cities may compete with suburbs in terms of affordability, but their consumer opportunities and public services are often of low quality—often a factor for population exodus from small cities. Perhaps most sanguine about the potential of small-city amenity development is the creative place-making

field, which emphasizes the cultivation and redesign of place texture: neighborhoods, street scenes, urban design, public art, local commerce, and third places (see, e.g., Markusen and Gadwa 2010). In this field, small cities are favorably distinguished by their engaging and “authentic” encounters with community life—a profitable source of contrast to the placelessness of suburbia (Kunstler 1998) and interchangeability of mass-market amenities like theme parks, gambling casinos, and urban tourist bubbles (Judd 1999).

Amenity development strategies may prioritize full-time residential relocation of the kind that registers as population growth and even gentrification, but day trips and seasonal residence illustrate other modes of amenity consumption (Hall and Müller 2004). Economically, more episodic amenity pursuits also fuel local commerce, property values, and public revenues. Symbolically, they too inform cultural-experiential frameworks that mediate outsiders’ *imagined* encounter, via a “tourist gaze” (Urry 1990), with places and amenities. In fact, this reflexive gaze extends beyond tourism into many spaces of everyday life (Nevarez 2011). Notably, gentrification scholars have discerned the importance of symbolic frameworks for encountering place back in the city; young, educated urbanites and others in the new urban middle class consume urban amenities and aestheticize the qualities of place in their new neighborhoods “as if tourists,” even when they proclaim the “authenticity” of the neighborhoods they inhabit (Brown-Saracino 2009; Lloyd 2006:126; Zukin 2010).

Recently, scholars of amenity consumption (see, e.g., Abrams et al. 2012; Benson and O’Reilly 2016) have called for a research agenda that addresses the interplay between spatial structure and the agency of amenity consumers, and that links material analyses of economic flows with cultural analyses of outsiders’ identity projects and the landscapes they encounter. For our study of small cities in the hinterland, this research agenda highlights, first, questions of geography and scale. Outside the big metropolis, how does the hinterland region and its component elements—small cities, but also small towns, rural landscapes, and their spatial relations to each other and the adjacent metropolis—frame outsiders’ encounter with the authentically local? Reflecting the point that the tourist gaze “depends upon what it is contrasted with; what the forms of nontourist experience happen to be . . . particularly those within the home and paid work” (Urry 1990:2), *frameworks for distinction-making* influence how people make sense of various objective experiences and subjective resonances in amenity pursuits. The urban metropolis itself provides one framework. Metro visitors experience hinterland destinations and recreations as consistent (“in their proper place”) with this setting by virtue of experiential and cultural contrasts to metropolitan life, work, and settings—hence the popular notion that the countryside offers a pleasurable experience of “getting away from it all.” Amenity consumers’ leisure and identity projects require organizational and cognitive flexibility, particularly when metropolitan work and life make lengthy, no-distractions vacations difficult to secure. It’s possible that a creative class embraces just-in-time recreations, consuming episodic experiences and places as a means to “incubate” creativity for back at work (Florida 2002:33). Alternately, rising costs of living and economic precarity may constrain aspirations for far-flung travel and leisure. For either scenario, amenities in the hinterland, as touted in metro newspapers, lifestyle blogs, travel media, and arts publications, are especially convenient. In these ways, the metropolis shadows the hinterland escapes of amenity consumers.

THE PLACE OF RACE IN HINTERLAND AMENITIES

Another set of questions regarding outsiders' amenity projects and the landscapes they encounter involve race. Immigrant labor's centrality in hinterland amenity economies is well established in studies of venerable leisure zones like New York's Hamptons (Dolgon 2005) and California's Napa Valley (McLean 2013), but rural amenity research has yet to elaborate how race informs the cultural salience and meanings that metropolitan amenity consumers take from their hinterland escapes. For instance, place-based amenities of the kind endorsed by creative place-making—think art destinations, culinary festivals, and historic places of “national” significance—may presume a social accessibility or cultural privilege that is racially stratified and encoded into color-blind discourses of *whiteness* (Bonilla-Silva 2003). This is suggested, for example, by the dominant whiteness found in urban farmers markets (Alkon 2012; Aptekar 2019), contemporary art galleries (Blackwood and Purcell 2014), and “DIY” urban design (Douglas 2018). Presumably, racialized frameworks of distinction-making inform the gentrification process, given that white gentrifiers favor neighborhoods where existing populations are predominantly white, notwithstanding ethnic and class differences (Hwang and Sampson 2014).

Small cities are deeply incorporated into the rustbelt, as noted earlier, and their declining opportunities have especially ensnared African Americans and other non-white groups who live there. As these places turn to amenity development, we need more insights into how (or whether) outsiders encounter non-white groups, institutions, and settings in amenity destinations. One clue comes from rural studies. This field has shown how anti-urban ideologies of agrarianism and nationalism customarily deem non-white and foreign-born populations to be “out of place” in small towns and the countryside, despite these groups' long-standing and on-going incorporation into agriculture and other rural economies (see Nelson and Hiemstra 2008; Panelli et al. 2009). For small cities found in rural hinterlands, researchers should investigate how racialized discourses of rurality inform the amenity pursuits of metropolitan outsiders.

METHODOLOGY

To investigate these issues, we employ a cultural-ecological approach that qualitatively describes and compares urban change in five small cities of New York's Hudson Valley. We regard these cities as necessarily linked by geography, history, economics, and culture to their surrounding region and its namesake feature, the Hudson River; in turn, this region is significantly affected by its hinterland position to the NYC metropolitan area. As we'll show, downstate meets upstate in this region, where metropolitan expansion, transnational immigration, and amenity seekers encroach upon the rustbelt of upstate New York. We purposively sample this single region and its small cities, first, because of its quite recent waves (dating back only through the past few decades) of population and economic change emanating from metro NYC; compared to Long Island or northern New Jersey, the Hudson Valley casts in starker relief contemporary evidence of metropolitan restructuring on hinterland settlement, economy, and landscape. Second, we purposively sample the five small cities because they share an organizing amenity: a location along the banks of what historians have called “America's first river,” the Hudson River.

The contrasting trajectories of change seen in these cities give us greater confidence when generalizing our findings to other hinterland small cities with similar amenity opportunities.

We situate our analysis in a historical-contextualist epistemology that foregrounds the path-dependent accomplishment of place, whereby social geography, place qualities, and local character reflect prior iterations of change from within and without (Kaufman and Kaliner 2011; Molotch et al. 2000; Paulsen 2004). Given the space limitations of an article, however, our analysis here emphasizes the significance of social groups, institutions, and actors external to the region. This focus on exogenous forces means we tread lightly upon the endogenous production of space exercised by urban elites, investors, community advocates, and other local actors. We make note in footnotes of any local events and episodes that we find significant in directing the outside forces for small-city change.

Methodologically, we look at, first, factors of hinterland and metropolitan restructuring like demographic and community composition, sectoral shifts, and immigration. For these, we draw on data from public, scholarly, private data-gathering sources, as well as secondary sources, that indicate the magnitude and locations of population, economic structure, school enrollments, and labor force composition. Second, we look at cultural processes that animate spatial structure: consumption and recreational activities, place identities, and the racialization of communities and landscapes. For these, we consult an archive of news reporting, media commentary, and online blogs covering the region, its communities and amenity destinations, and its residential real estate. This study draws especially upon coverage in the *New York Times*, the chief metropolitan newspaper that devotes modest coverage to Hudson Valley news, arts, leisure, and lifestyles. Mindful that a metro newspaper hardly provides an objective, even-handed picture of local news in general (Gans 1980), much less of a region that lies at the periphery of the metro subscriber market (George and Waldfogel 2006), we regard writings in the *Times* and other metro-originating media as ethnographic artifacts that indicate the interests, concerns, and biases about the Hudson Valley held by metropolitan middle classes and metro reporters (who are themselves hinterland visitors and leisure seekers) (Frank 2003). Finally, we acknowledge our combined thirty years as analysts and teachers of Hudson Valley topics like government and policy, economic development, urban planning, public services, food security, quality of life, local agriculture, and cultural geography. Our local experience is an ambiguous resource; as residents of this region, we're aware of and not untouched by the buzz and alarm that befall various Hudson Valley municipalities. To this end, we use empirical data to discipline these popular wisdoms and test hypotheses we've developed over decades of residence, work, and leisure in the region.

After introducing the Hudson Valley, we develop our analysis in four stages that reflect the approximate chronological sequence of small-city change: the extension of metropolitan suburbs into the Hudson Valley, the revitalization of some small cities by foreign-born immigrants, the introduction of amenity development in other small cities, and the contextual role of rustbelt decline and amenity development in the countryside. In each section we present and interpret statistical indicators, adding cultural-media data after the first section as we zoom in on particular places. We conclude by discussing theoretical and practical implications of the dual trajectories of immigrant revitalization and amenity development in the metropolitan hinterland.

WHERE DOWNSTATE MEETS UPSTATE NEW YORK

In this article, the Hudson Valley corresponds to what's sometimes called the "Mid-Hudson River Valley," six counties divided by the Hudson River.¹ The region is over nine times larger in area and, with just over a million residents, almost eight times smaller in 2016 population than NYC. The closest point to NYC is about an hour away by train; the farthest is more than three hours away by car. As Figure 1 shows, the region is bisected by the northern border of the NYC metropolitan statistical area (MSA), which subsumes the southern counties of Orange and Putnam, and the eastern middle county of Dutchess.

Table 1 reports sizes, socioeconomics, and demographics of the six Hudson Valley counties. We note the selective dispersal of cities, which in New York state reflect a political-legal designation reserved for incorporated municipalities that provide their own taxable services. Table 1 underscores how these cities are very small; only one is its county's largest population center, and none have a population greater than 30,000 (see Table 3). Nevertheless, these cities have histories of urban concentration dating to the U.S. colonial era, legacies of industrial development since the 19th century, and settlement patterns that bestow an urban texture familiar to larger northeastern cities: industrial architecture (small factory lofts, brick, and mortar), older housing stock (from large Victorian houses to workingmen's houses later sided with vinyl), and ecologies of distinct neighborhoods and enclaves. Today, about one in seven (14.3 percent of) Hudson Valley residents lives in the region's cities. For this article, we focus on the five cities located along the banks of the Hudson River—Poughkeepsie, Newburgh, Kingston, Beacon, and Hudson—and set aside two inland cities, both in western Orange County: Middletown (population 27,601) and Port Jervis (population 8,650).

HISTORY OF THE REGION

Until recently, the Hudson Valley has been spared the suburban development that enveloped Long Island, northern New Jersey, and (just below the Hudson Valley) Westchester and Rockland Counties. Topography is one reason; mountainous terrain, particularly the Catskill Mountains in the west and the Hudson Highlands in the east, originally precluded easy travel or extensive development, thereby giving added social and commercial significance to the Hudson River. Another is the footprint laid by agriculture dating back to the 17th-century Yankee period; dairy farms were prominent east of the river, while grains, fruit orchards, and vegetables diversified the region's bounty. The Industrial Revolution consolidated the region's urban economies of river/canal-based shipping and manufacturing, and Poughkeepsie pulled ahead as the region's "first city" and largest settlement. Immigrants swelled the five cities' populations, most significantly Irish and Germans in the 19th century; southern and eastern Europeans in the early 20th century; and African Americans, West Indians, and Asians after World War II (Blumin 1976; Flad and Griffen 2009). Elsewhere in the region, the outdoors have a storied history thanks to the landscape paintings of the mid-19th-century "Hudson River School" and the 20th-century spread of summer camps for workers, children, and religious groups (Aron 1999). Agriculture, natural communion, and a pastorally situated college sector incorporated the Hudson Valley into metropolitan NYC more through flows of goods,



FIG. 1. New York state's Hudson Valley: six counties and their cities

TABLE 1. Six Hudson Valley Counties at a Glance, 2016

County	Area (mi ²)	Population	Median Household Income	Proportion White (alone)	Cities	Most Populous Municipality
Columbia	648	61,860	\$59,916	96.9%	Hudson	Kinderhook (population 8,434)
Dutchess	825	295,905	\$72,706	78.8%	City of Poughkeepsie, Beacon	Town of Poughkeepsie (44,572)
Greene	658	48,069	\$51,013	89.6%	–	Catskill (11,507)
Orange	839	376,242	\$71,910	74.8%	Middletown, Newburgh, Port Jervis	Monroe (42,343)
Putnam	246	99,408	\$97,606	89.5%	–	Carmel (34,370)
Ulster	1,161	180,505	\$60,393	86.3%	City of Kingston	City of Kingston (23,506)

Source: American Community Survey 2016.

services, and people than permanent settlements of commuters. Likewise, pockets of old money (e.g., in Dutchess County's Millbrook) and artist bohemia (e.g., in Ulster County's Woodstock) achieved celebrity in NYC and elsewhere.

The high-tech economy changed the region following the 1941 arrival of the IBM Corporation. IBM built major facilities in southern Dutchess (outside Poughkeepsie and Beacon) and northern Ulster Counties (outside Kingston) and became the region's largest private employer, with a 1985 peak of over 31,000 employees (or 63 percent of all manufacturing workers in the two counties). Smaller firms in assorted manufacturing and design sectors also thrived in the mid-20th century (Flad and Griffen 2009:273). In turn, IBM's growth fueled housing construction and commercial corridors, giving rise to technoburb sprawl in southern Dutchess and northern Ulster Counties. Government-funded multi-lane bridges, interstates, and parkways expanded the flows of regional commuters and outside visitors in the region. Auto-driven suburbanization also brought urban crisis to the region's cities. 1950 marked the last decade of their uninterrupted growth, after which their populations and industry declined while the surrounding counties grew. In a final blow to the region, IBM's strategic focus on mainframe computing proved ill-fated in 1985, and the firm eliminated some 17,000 positions in the region over the next six years (Flad and Griffen 2009:284). By this point, the rustbelt had tightened around the Hudson Valley.

METROPOLITAN RESTRUCTURING BEFORE AND AFTER 9/11

Table 2 shows how, over the last three decades, the region's six counties have experienced generally steady if uneven net population growth, concentrated in the region's bottom half. By the end of the 1980s, as upstate New York suffered rustbelt malaise, Orange County surpassed Dutchess as the region's most populous county thanks to expanding bedroom communities popular with metro commuters, including a substantial Black population (at 9.7 percent in 2017, the largest of any Hudson Valley county).

TABLE 2. Population Trends in Hudson Valley, New York City, and State, 1980–2010

Place	1980	1990	2000	2010	Percentage Change 1980–1990	Percentage Change 1990–2000	Percentage Change 2000–2010	Percentage Change 1980–2010
Hudson Valley	840,357	924,075	1,006,300	1,064,821	10.0%	8.9%	5.8%	26.7%
Columbia County	59,487	62,982	63,094	63,096	5.9%	0.2%	0.0%	6.1%
Dutchess County	245,055	259,462	280,150	297,488	5.9%	8.0%	6.2%	21.4%
Greene County	40,861	44,739	48,195	49,221	9.5%	7.7%	2.1%	20.5%
Orange County	259,603	307,647	341,367	372,813	18.5%	11.0%	9.2%	43.6%
Putnam County	77,193	83,941	95,745	99,710	8.7%	14.1%	4.1%	29.2%
Ulster County	158,158	165,304	177,749	182,493	4.5%	7.5%	2.7%	15.4%
NYC	7,071,639	7,322,564	8,008,278	8,175,133	3.5%	9.4%	2.1%	15.6%
New York State	17,558,072	17,990,445	18,976,457	19,378,102	2.5%	5.5%	2.1%	10.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Putnam County also grew at this time, albeit at a lower rate reflecting mountainous terrain and large-lot residential zoning in towns where Westchester affluence spilled over (Duncan and Duncan 2004). A decade later, population turnaround came to Ulster and especially Dutchess, where metro-bound rail commuters share the region's technoburbs.² Beyond this point—in northern Dutchess and all of Ulster, Columbia, and Greene Counties—suburban growth gives way to the rural rustbelt of the Hudson Valley's northern half.

Emanating from the south, metropolitan restructuring of the hinterland Hudson Valley has shifted in phases, timing, and locations in ways that pivot around NYC's renaissance. Prior to 1990, metro suburbanization outpaced NYC growth; only with the following decade did NYC growth reflect an "urban turnaround" found in many other large cities (Simmons and Lang 2003). Since this period, as capital investment reaches new levels in the city, Manhattan's middle- and working-class residents have spilled over into outer boroughs like Queens and the Bronx. Yet Brooklyn, the most populous borough, is perhaps the best-known symbol of NYC's contemporary vibrancy. Today, Brooklyn's signature brownstone apartments are coveted real estate; its once industrial/low-income areas are trendy, gentrified neighborhoods; and its expanding technology, media, and service sectors dissipate the traditional tides of Manhattan-bound commuters. In contrast to the corporate texture of Manhattan's commercial landscape, Brooklyn's consumer services and amenities convey entrepreneurial, niche-focused, and artisanal qualities that update the diversity of neighborhood commerce that Jane Jacobs originally celebrated across the river. More so than contemporary Manhattan, then, "Brooklyn"—a real place, but also a symbolic landscape—epitomizes the urban renaissance fueled by the new urban middle class (Zukin 2010).

As property values and residential development reach levels attainable for only the highest incomes—increasingly, the purview of a global upper class—NYC's residents today navigate a crisis of housing availability and cost of living (Busa 2017). The pressures of hanging on in a city seemingly bent upon sacrificing its character as a place for all socioeconomic strata have caused soul-searching for many New Yorkers. This was amplified following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, when media accounts circulated anecdotes about anxious New Yorkers leaving the city stripped of big-city bravado, or opting out the "rat race" for places better suited for a thoughtful pursuit of self-actualization in life, family, and career. In the new millennium, households with a multivalent locational agenda—an easier pace of life, more space, quality schools, etc.—have fueled a new wave of growth in NYC's suburbs (Frey 2016). The U.S. Census Bureau officially extended the border of the NYC MSA in 2013 to include Dutchess County, although effectively the commuter radius stops at the train station in Poughkeepsie (Berube et al. 2006:32).³ The suburban incorporation of the Hudson Valley's southern tier and regional technoburb sets the metro context as we now turn to the region's riverfront cities.

TRAJECTORIES OF SMALL-CITY CHANGE

Below, we describe and compare the two trajectories of small-city change, immigrant revitalization and amenity development, seen in the Hudson Valley. Table 3 reports key indicators for the five cities. Our discussion of small-city change addresses its spatial

TABLE 3. Change in Five Small Hudson Valley Cities

City	2016		Population Change 1990–2016	2016 Percentage Foreign Born	Δ School Dist. Enroll. 1991–2018
	Population	Trajectory of Change			
Poughkeepsie	30,511	Immigrant revitalization	5.8%	13.3%	17.3%
Newburgh	28,406	Immigrant revitalization	7.4%	23.9%	8.7%
Kingston	23,506	Amenity development	1.8%	11.8%	−9.2%
Beacon	14,289	Mixed	7.9%	12.6%	8.0%
Hudson	6,549	Amenity development	−18.5%	16.0%	−27.3%

Source. U.S. Census Bureau; New York State Department of Education.

origins, impacts on population size and demographics, and responses by metropolitan outsiders. We elaborate the systematic dualism that connects these two trajectories later, after a discussion of amenity developments in the region’s rural areas.

GROWING IMMIGRANT CITIES

In the 1980s, Latin American immigrants began appearing in particular cities, suburbs, and agricultural stretches of the Hudson Valley (Gray 2013:114; Smith 2001). Via chain migration, two immigrant flows materialized. The first wave of immigrants, centered in Newburgh and the region’s southern tier, came largely from Mexico’s Puebla region and the Honduran city of San Pedro Sula, redirected from New York City’s growing Mexican enclave. In the 1990s, a second wave, centered in Poughkeepsie and the region’s northern counties, brought immigrants from the Oaxacan village of Agustín (Mountz and Wright 1996; Villarrubia-Mendoza 2010:71).⁴ With co-ethnic networks a channel for labor recruitment, foreign immigration has facilitated Hudson Valley employers’ reorganization of manufacturing and agriculture into lower-paying and/or lower-skill occupations (Gray 2013; Villarrubia-Mendoza 2017). Mexican immigrants are further represented in low-skill occupations of the region’s growing service economy, like tourism (composed of recreation, lodging, dining, transportation, and shopping, tourism accounted in 2014 for 6.6 percent of Hudson Valley employment; Vrba 2015), domestic services, construction/maintenance, and distribution.

Foreign-born immigrants also brought the most significant transformation in decades to Poughkeepsie and Newburgh, which currently host the region’s largest Latino populations (Smith et al. 2013). Proportionately, Hispanics make up one of every seven Poughkeepsie residents and one of every two Newburgh residents (these statistics conservatively exclude “some other race,” a common self-designation for Hispanic Census respondents). In some regards, this demographic shift is seen across all Hudson Valley river cities; since 1990, all five cities have lost “white alone (not Hispanic)” population in absolute and proportionate terms and gained foreign born and Hispanic populations. Nonetheless, only in Poughkeepsie, Newburgh, and Beacon have populations grown at a significant (>5.0 percent) rate. Poughkeepsie and Newburgh in particular are the region’s “offset cities” (Donato et al. 2008) where immigration has reversed population decline (or at least its smaller outflows following the earlier urban crisis decades). Its effects are further manifested in the commercial landscape, where Spanish-language businesses occupy storefronts on main streets that went vacant during the urban crisis (Mano and Greenow

2006). One Oaxacan entrepreneur (quoted in Cortés 2016) said, “Mexicans and Latinos replaced the old infrastructure with new businesses” in Poughkeepsie, a claim that could apply to Newburgh as well.

The nature of chain migration underscores the nonlocal origins of urban growth in Poughkeepsie and Newburgh. Without anticipation or serious outreach by local leaders and institutions, foreign immigrants arrived to reverse the population decline of the urban crisis. Local racial-ethnic demographics highlight an important context. Since the mid-20th century, Poughkeepsie and Newburgh have been the Hudson Valley’s Blackest cities, containing the region’s first and second largest Black populations, respectively. Both cities share histories of Black protest against white elites’ implementation of welfare policies and eminent domain in the urban renewal era; both two cities share regional distinctions as symbols of white flight (Mamiya and Karouma 1978; Neubeck and Cazenave 2001). These racialized legacies are extended as Latin American immigration has made Poughkeepsie and Newburgh the region’s majority-minority cities. In the 2000 Census, 51 and 72 percent of residents reported a racial-ethnic category other than “white alone (not Hispanic)” in Poughkeepsie and Newburgh, respectively; ten years later, those figures grew to 57 and 80 percent, respectively. The rates of non-white composition are higher in the cities’ underfunded public schools.

Although immigrant revitalization has brought growth back to Poughkeepsie and Newburgh, metropolitan media and visitor perceptions often regard these cities as uninviting beyond their scenic riverfronts. Metro media connect Newburgh specifically to urban decline, street gangs, and lurid crime. Content analysis of *New York Times* coverage of Newburgh in 2001–17 reveals characteristic headlines like “Melee Upstate Is Sign of Urban Woes” (9/2/02), “4 Accused of Bombing Plot at Bronx Synagogues” (5/21/09), “In Newburgh, Gangs and Violence Reign” (5/12/10), and “As Nationwide Gangs Fracture, Bullets Fly in New York” (5/15/17).³ While some argue this depiction exaggerates Newburgh’s on-the-ground conditions, these media frames influence the outside view of a small city that, in 2002–17, the metropolitan paper of record only reported on an average of 2.3 times a year. *Times* coverage of Poughkeepsie is more thematically varied, addressing metro commuter concerns (e.g., “A Visit to the Commuting Far Reaches”: 8/31/07), issues of public equity (“Racial Patterns Are Found in Recent School Budget Elections”: 8/25/10), and human interest stories (“In Their Diversity, Mourners Honor the Spirit of a Leader”: 11/6/05) alongside spotlights on crime (“Police Officer and 2 Others Are Killed in Poughkeepsie”: 2/19/11; “Life Sentences for 2 Sex Traffickers Who Preyed on Mexican Immigrants”: 6/16/14). With the *Times* reporting on Poughkeepsie an average of 4.9 times annually, Poughkeepsie’s view in metropolitan readers’ eyes is notably distant, if somewhat more well-rounded than Newburgh’s.

To turn the page on their worrisome reputations, leaders in these cities have promoted residential and commercial redevelopment of their riverfronts. In Newburgh, this area includes blocks of historic Victorian houses that some big-city migrants have begun purchasing and rehabbing (Ocejo 2018); reporting on this trend, a 11/6/05 *Times* headline announced, “Newburgh, N.Y.: Finally, A Confirmation of a Rebound.” In the last decade, Poughkeepsie’s first new residential construction materialized along the riverfront near the train station. In 2009, a new “Walkway Over the Hudson” opened across the river between Poughkeepsie and the Ulster County shore.⁶ Evidence remains unclear if the Walkway has circulated tourist activity in Poughkeepsie beyond the riverfront, but the new destination certainly attracted favorable attention (e.g., 14 percent of all *Times*

coverage of Poughkeepsie in 2002–17). We note that *Vogue* Magazine included the Walkway in a “weekend guide to upstate New York” (in actuality, covering just the Hudson Valley and Catskills) that failed to identify Poughkeepsie by name (Conrad 2014) —an anecdotal reminder of the city’s low status in metropolitan circles.

Beacon represents a mixed case of small-city change: It began the new millennium on a trajectory of immigrant revitalization, until the arrival of a major museum shifted it onto a path of amenity development. Today, the city is best known to the world for the Dia:Beacon gallery, a 160,000-square foot museum featuring contemporary art works, like sprawling panels and Richard Serra sculptures, that are too large for permanent exhibition in NYC museums and galleries. Less known, even to Hudson Valley residents, is that this city of 14 thousand is proportionately the region’s second largest Latino city. Beacon’s immigration is related to Newburgh’s, as the two adjacent cities effectively constitute a single destination separated by a river (see Figure 1). Latin American immigration fueled growth in Beacon at roughly the same time it did in Newburgh, most robustly in 1990–2000, then cooling off the following decade. (By contrast, immigration into Poughkeepsie and the upper Hudson Valley accelerated slightly after 2000.) At present, Hispanics make up one of every five residents in Beacon, and Spanish-language businesses dot Main Street Beacon. If these patterns don’t make visible the contributions of foreign immigrants to Beacon, one reason is they materialize against the historic backdrop of a white-majority city with a smaller Black population comparable in size to the Mexican community. For many locals, foreign immigrants’ most significant impact has been on the city’s school district, where enrollments have grown on pace with neighboring Newburgh (see Table 2), in contrast to steady enrollment declines across most of the region (Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress 2013).

AMENITY DEVELOPMENTS IN SMALL-CITY HOTSPOTS

Currently, Beacon is the region’s most robust site of amenity development, thanks to the global stature of Dia:Beacon, which opened in 2003. The bustle of weekend crowds exiting the riverfront train station and walking along Main Street contrasts with the city’s atmosphere at the turn of the millennium, when factories were shut down, local commerce was moribund, housing supply was underinvested, and immigration was the only source of change. Perhaps the city’s prospects were never as dire as Poughkeepsie and Newburgh’s, given Beacon’s proximity to the technoburbs and its small supply of modest single-family housing (some of it with good views of the river). Still, at best Beacon leaders might have anticipated a modest transformation as a bedroom community.

Unexpectedly, Beacon’s new future arrived in the personage of Michael Govan, executive director of the NYC-based Dia Art Foundation, who in the late 1990s was searching for a site to house permanently the institution’s massive works:

One day, flying some 60 miles north of New York City in a rented Cessna 172—Govan got his pilot’s license in 1996—[he] spotted a faded Nabisco factory sign on the banks of the Hudson River. Back in New York, Govan traced the building to the International Paper Corporation and drove up to see it on a wet spring day. “So I walk into the building and it is *spectacular*,” he remembers. (Wallach 2003)

In this journalistic account, Govan appears as almost a proverbial angel descending from the heavens, but the point is apt: Beacon's new trajectory materialized with no prior outreach made by local leaders, much less a local vision that an unused box factory could hold a world-class museum that might turn the city's fortunes around. As one city official said, "Dia found us; we didn't find them" (quoted in Walker 2014). The *New York Times* reported (with particular enthusiasm in its Real Estate, Travel, and Arts sections) every stage of the art-based residential gentrification that unfolded: e.g., "Quaint City Rediscovered" (6/15/04), "Signs of a Comeback in Downtrodden Beacon" (9/12/04), "A Place of Their Own, Where Creativity Rules" (3/19/06), "A City Reborn as a Haven for Art" (3/29/09). Not counting its regular appearance in museum listings and exhibit reviews, Beacon appeared in the metro paper of record an annual average of 2.9 times over 2002–17—more than Newburgh twice its size, and with none of its neighbor's negative framing.

Creative place-making policy assigns responsibility for the type, site selection, and development of place-based amenities to local organizations, leaders, and coalitions. Yet in the Hudson Valley, amenity development has characteristically proceeded via interventions from institutions, individuals, and media from outside the region. In Columbia County, this occurred when a pioneering NYC antiques dealer opened a storefront gallery in Hudson along the derelict commercial corridor, followed by others fleeing Chelsea's social circus and AIDS' devastation. ("I have to cut the cord," said one gallery owner [quoted in Colman 2002].) By 2000, a high-end antiques district had developed in the apparent middle of nowhere, sustained by elite collectors and second-home decorators from metro NYC and New England. Hudson's small size inserts retail gentrification cheek by jowl within a community troubled by population decline, drug trade, and shrinking, underfunded public schools. Notably, half of Columbia County's Black population resides in the city. That urban frisson, as well the sense of Amtrak-accessible remoteness from NYC, has drawn a small yet vocal group of bohemian exiles who spread word of Hudson's charms to a broader constituency (see Botton 2013). Perhaps predictably, the arts have followed. Performance artist Marina Abramović recently cancelled plans to build a long-duration performance art center in Hudson, but a renown grunge musician and her partner transformed a 19th-century foundry on the river's edge into a celebrated arts venue, Basilica Hudson.

Kingston demonstrates the latest, market-driven momentum of amenity development in a region whose small cities and (discussed in the next section) rural landscapes are "on the map" of metropolitan visitors. Unlike Beacon and Hudson, this city has no single destination-level amenity, trading instead on a reputation as a "hidden" small city with historic architecture (as the state's first capital) and contemporary cool. A gateway to the Catskill Mountains, Kingston entices vacationers on their journeys to state parks and quaint towns. The proximity of a state university in New Paltz (at 7,600 students, the region's largest college enrollment) contributes to Kingston's relative youthfulness, which boasts dive bars, live music venues, indie-rock festivals, and a semiprofessional soccer team owned by a NYC-based tech entrepreneur. Local merchants and developers have shown savvy in finding profitable niches in Kingston's amenity infrastructure, but so have metropolitan newcomers whose upstate dreams begin with the economic advantage they discovered on prior visits. "Opening this kind of business would have been close to impossible in Brooklyn," a 36-year-old co-owner of a combination bar-bookstore told the *New York Times* (Foster 2018); in Kingston, "it was more attainable for us."

In all three cities, downtown and riverfront commerce thrives, tourism is robust, commercial property values have increased, and the pros and cons of gentrification are debated. However, Kingston's population growth is recent yet relatively flat, while retail gentrification hasn't stopped Hudson from losing over a sixth of its population since 1990 (see Table 2). Only Beacon has registered significant population growth since 1990, and then due largely to immigrant revitalization prior to 2000; the city's population has shrunk by about 2 percent in the Dia:Beacon era. Further, job growth under amenity development is pegged to tourism, services, and small commerce, none of which are associated with steady breadwinner incomes. Amenity development, then, reveals an ambiguous pattern of small-city "revitalization": metropolitan buzz and hot property markets, but dubious population and employment gains.

THE BROOKLYNIZATION OF THE HUDSON VALLEY

The cultural aspects of metro NYC's influence on the Hudson Valley's small cities can't be fully understood through an urban scan alone. This section extends analysis to the region's small towns and rural areas, which compose a landscape that geographically surrounds and culturally informs all five river cities. As we'll show, the rural landscape parallels the demographic impacts of amenity development and, just as importantly, informs metro outsiders' reactions to small-city change.

RUSTBELT DECLINE IN RIVERFRONT CITIES

To discern the rural context for the five river cities, we begin by revisiting population change across the region. Breaking population indicators down to the municipal level shows that beneath the steady if uneven population growth reported earlier in Table 2 at the county level, many municipalities registered population loss, particularly in 2000–10, the period of an ostensible "9/11 effect." Suburban Orange and Putnam Counties had the fewest places losing population (18 and 11 percent of municipalities, respectively). By contrast, in the other counties to the north, from a fifth (in Dutchess) to more than a half (in Columbia) of municipalities lost population after 2000. Population loss is most prevalent in the Hudson Valley's northern half, where suburban development gives way to rural rustbelt, which suggests the effects of rustbelt decline in areas where residents don't regularly access metro commuting or technoburb occupations. Here, the weakening of traditional blue-collar sectors and a polarized occupational structure have diminished the quality of economic opportunities for many working- and middle-class households, auguring a significant out-migration of Hudson Valley residents (Caridi 2018). This has been especially pronounced for young adults and working families; in 2000–10, the region lost over 9 percent of its 25- to 34-year-old population, and over 17 percent of its 35- to 44-year-olds—a familiar pattern of rustbelt decline.

These patterns help explain the population effects associated with the two trajectories of small-city change. Poughkeepsie and Newburgh both gained population after 2000, as foreign migrants arrived in numbers sufficient to offset native-born exodus. Immigrants are likely to have younger households with children, a major factor in why Poughkeepsie and Newburgh school enrollments have increased or at least held steady. By contrast,

Beacon and Hudson lost population after 2000, while Kingston experienced a rather flat (<2 percent) growth. In these cities, metropolitan in-migrants generally fail to offset population losses; for one reason, they're less likely than foreign immigrants to bring larger, family-age households. The exodus of long-time residents and the aging of neighborhood demographics are patterns associated with gentrification, but they also characterize small towns and rural areas of the Hudson Valley's northern portion, to which we now turn.

BROOKLYNITES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Historically, middle-class metropolitans descended upon rural Hudson Valley to enjoy outdoor recreations, in sites like summer camps and state parks, that had tenuous social and cultural connection to surrounding communities (Aron 1999). Today, metro outsiders are more likely to pursue the "authenticity" and amenities of small towns, villages, and landscapes. Hudson Valley locals often describe these visitors and newcomers as "Brooklynites." We adopt this local expression as an ethnographic designation for the post-9/11 wave of metropolitan amenity consumers, notwithstanding the fact that many reside primarily outside metro NYC.⁷

Brooklynites comprise three ideal-typical groups, starting with second-home owners. Famously, the Hudson Valley was an elite NYC vacation residence for 19th century "robber barons." Today, the metropolitan rich still stoke the top end of the region's real estate market, buying large properties in rural towns and prestigious villages with new or finely renovated houses. Northeastern Hudson Valley is their stronghold, as indicated in real estate reports listing Dutchess County municipalities with the highest average prices for a single family detached house.⁸ In 2003–11, the top five municipalities were dominated by towns beyond the suburban belt—Washington, Stanford, North East, Pine Plains, Milan, Clinton, and Rhinebeck, all 2010 population <5,000—where farms and land preserves nestle alongside prestigious old homes and newly built mansions on estates set back from public view, and average home sales exceed half a million dollars. Some of these places trade upon long-standing patrician reputations, while others maintain working agricultural communities.

If this elite stratum seems more Upper East Side than Brooklyn, and more historic than post-9/11, more affordable second-home markets can be found across the river in Ulster County, where hotspots include small towns like the Catskills valhallas of Woodstock and Phoenicia, and towns under the shadow of the Shawangunk Mountains (a popular rock climbers' destination) like New Paltz, Stone Ridge, Rosendale, and Marbletown. In Columbia County, metropolitans can enjoy a rarified country life at summer homes and artist retreats in towns like Greenport, Ghent, and Germantown (Iovine 2002). In Greene County, Catskills *pieds-à-terre* are built to suit (alongside genuine 1960s spiritual communes) in remote towns like Oak Hill, while ski resorts in Windham and Hunter welcome winter vacationers to mass-produced resort condos. Across the four northern counties, second homes and vacation properties represent a large share of the region's Airbnb listings that make owning Hudson Valley property feasible for some metropolitan middle-class households (Higgins 2015).

A second group of Brooklynites are residential migrants, typically households whose upstate livelihoods in media, cultural, technology, and art/design sectors remain tied to

industries' metropolitan networks (cf. Nevarez 2003). In contrast to commuters to the technoburbs and points further south, this group works out of homes, storefront offices, a scattering of formal co-working spaces, and the rare tech firm in the region (e.g., an Etsy office in Hudson employs less than 50 workers). Hudson Valley analysts struggle to measure these creative workers' economic impact, in part because telecommuting statistics exempt the activities of independent contractors and other flexible workers. For another reason, "primary residence" is an unstable category for newcomers who strategically split city locations (e.g., to enroll children in NYC schools) with Hudson Valley properties (for property investments and tax benefits). Many in this group consider themselves middle class or see their relocation as a means to "downshift" their lifestyles. Nonetheless, their metro incomes benefit from the Hudson Valley's lower costs of living and, for households with children, make possible a move into pricier towns with better-performing schools (see Benson and O'Reilly 2016; Hoey 2010).

The third group are tourists—single adults, childless couples, and families—for whom Hudson Valley vacation rentals, bed & breakfasts, wedding celebrations, and farm/food/art tourism offer bases to explore the "next Hamptons," a phrase that denotes the status competition associated with the Long Island destination while simultaneously rejecting its vulgar "society pages" aura (cf. Dolgon 2005). Day trips and overnight stays are typical lengths of visit for metro tourists to the Hudson Valley.⁹ While the Hudson Valley has long sustained a supply of vacation rentals, the 2008 launch of the short-term rental platform Airbnb heated up this market and dispersed bases for Hudson Valley exploration to many new sites in the region. Ten years later, Airbnb ranked the combined Catskill Mountains and Hudson Valley as its 15th top trending destination, and only one of two U.S. regions (alongside the Smoky Mountains) to make its global "19 destinations to visit" list (Airbnb 2018). Outside the rental market, these Brooklynites make their economic impact felt in village centers, where merchants and restaurateurs depend on tourist business from mid-spring (when farmers markets open) through summer and the autumn "leaf-changing" season, and into the winter holidays. The three ideal-typical groups of Brooklynites overlap in practice, as seasonal tourism is often the gateway for those making longer stays and deeper investments in the Hudson Valley.

The Hudson Valley's "new agriculture" exemplifies a signature rural amenity popular with Brooklynites. Since the new millennium, the region has witnessed a growth in new farms led disproportionately by young and women operators. Out of necessity and principle, these farms pursue value-added niches that contrast to conventional farming and rely primarily on sales through farmers markets, community support agriculture, farm stands, and "u-pick" farm visits (Glynwood Center 2010). This direct-to-consumer infrastructure sustains an ethos of "civic agriculture" that Brooklynites find inviting, stimulating further buy-local behavior throughout rural towns (Obach and Tobin 2011). Particularly as metro outsiders record their farm purchases and experiences in social media and stories circulated "back home," their consumption reveals the curatorial impulse and rejection of inauthentic modernity that animates the markets for locally made goods and artisanal services back in the big city (Ocejo 2017). Yet Latin American and West Indian farm workers are conspicuously underrepresented in farmers market booths and photo-heavy food/farming blogs, underscoring how race is characteristically erased from the amenity experience of the region's new agriculture (Gray 2013).

CONSUMING THE RACIALIZED HINTERLAND

“Call it the Brooklynization of the Hudson Valley,” one *New York Times* feature declares, “the steady hipness creep with its locavore cuisine, its Williamsburgian bars, its Gyrotonic exercise, feng shui consultants and deep clay art therapy and, most of all, its recent arrivals from New York City” (Applebome 2011). This account leans toward caricature but has implications we draw on. We adapt the ethnographic concept of the Brooklynization of the Hudson Valley, first, to denote the sociospatial changes across hinterland regions that are put into motion by metropolitan amenity pursuits. Amenities in the countryside differ in kind from those found in urban hotspots—more farms and country living, less art and urban landscape—but the agents of hinterland change are the same: metropolitan newcomers. Notwithstanding the idea of “getting away from it all,” Brooklynites adapt metro modes of work and life to their Hudson Valley encounters, whether by wealth and property investment; remote labor undertaken in remodeled homes and co-working spaces; or the exercise of status distinction in dinner parties and farm-to-table restaurants. These activities may portend gentrification both urban and rural; here we call attention to the prior role of metropolitan concerns and lifestyles that animates Brooklynites’ hinterland escapes.¹⁰

Second, Brooklynization reveals a “whiteness” in amenity pursuits and residential preferences that reconfigure and reinforce the hinterland’s racial-ethnic patterns. The region’s new agriculture exemplifies the colorblind whiteness of signature Hudson Valley amenities, to which we would add art museums, antiques districts, and culinary tourism. Racialization is also evinced in the residential shifts accompanying small-city change, which we can now extend down to rural towns; in both urban and rural amenity locales, population out-migration and amenity development haven’t shifted the majority status of white (not Hispanic) population. Elsewhere, immigrant revitalization has sustained the legacies of certain cities and towns as majority-minority, but the tourism activities and residential migrations of Brooklynites have for the most part routed around these places. (Recall that although foreign immigration brought initial growth to Beacon, it never shifted the city to a majority-minority population.)

To elaborate the symbolic frameworks behind the spatial and racialized preferences of metropolitan amenity pursuits, we observe how metro outsiders interpret the overarching “ruralness” of the near-by hinterland. Physically, the rural is never far in riverfront cities, all of which offer outdoor and agricultural activities (e.g., mountain hikes, river views, farmers markets) within city limits, and agricultural zones just outside their borders. Experientially, Brooklynites encounter the hinterland, and even its most urban amenities (like art museums and cultural events), through prisms of urban escape, hinterland travel, and contrasts of settlement size and scale. These experiences inform distinctions with which Brooklynites interpret and assign value to their forays into the hinterland. Consider, for instance, how an organizer of Basilio Hudson’s annual music festival described the city of Hudson to a popular metro blog:

The atmosphere is the best of a picturesque historical antique town mixed with industrial wasteland, framed by Hudson river skies. It’s a real urban mix set within a rural landscape, with a lot of Americana [David] Lynch-ian charm. A cool melange of small town characters and big city visitors—totally nuts and beautiful. Best of all worlds combined! (quoted in Carlson 2012)

This statement evokes themes of small-town authenticity and rural deindustrialization, inviting Brooklynites into a rustbelt romance with a city that, on the ground, maybe isn't all that different from Newburgh, a place that receives much less metropolitan celebration. A chief difference between the two cities is racial status; Hudson is majority-white, Newburgh majority-minority. Beyond particular amenity activities and residential patterns, the "rural" imaginary itself conveys to Brooklynites a comfortable encounter with undiscovered, rough-hewn place that, at least implicitly, erases connotations of nonwhiteness.

This racial erasure doesn't alter the fact that immigrants remain heavily represented in behind-the-scenes occupations associated with amenity development, which highlights a third element of the Brooklynization of the hinterland. A dialectic of economic reliance and spatial divergence between foreign immigrants and metropolitan newcomers diversifies the regional ecology, as linked migration channels an immigrant proletariat to certain cities and the amenity migrants they labor for to other cities and towns (cf. Nelson et al. 2014). Furthermore, insofar as these two groups sustain hinterland population in-migration, small cities diverge in a *dual* system for metropolitan class formation, in which social groups at opposite ends of the economic hierarchy pursue unequal opportunities via new settlements, new place-based activities, and transformed place identities (cf. Castells and Mollenkopf 1991). In this way, small-city change in the Hudson Valley manifests a larger-scale front of metropolitan restructuring.

CONCLUSION

The case of the Hudson Valley offers new theoretical insights into several domains of small-city research, starting with the impact of metropolitan restructuring. Even and perhaps especially outside of their impact on residential in-migration, amenities revalorize some hinterland places for leisure and consumption and other places for the reproduction of low-skill service, industrial, and agricultural labor. Channelized linked migration embeds and realigns population and racial patterns in the metro periphery with flows of transnational labor and amenity consumers. Altogether, Brooklynization comprises a cutting edge of metropolitan extension into the hinterland, possibly in advance of suburbanization or other conventional forms of metropolitan expansion. In this process, small cities in the hinterland are strategic sites for consumption activities, labor reproduction, and racialized status distinctions. They don't exhaust the hinterland settings that Brooklynization can touch down in, of course, and our study has highlighted a constitutive role for rural localities and the "nonurban" in the process of urban change (cf. Angelo 2017). Nevertheless, small cities are central elements in the Brooklynization of the hinterland, we theorize, given their primacy in regional geographies, their adaptability to immigrant flows, and their landscape salience to metro outsiders.

This study raises important implications for scholarly research on local amenity economies. Amenities may reflect local initiatives in creative place-making, but our case study illustrates how external interventions by metropolitan groups, institutions, media, and markets are essential for putting amenity destinations "on the map." Further, synthesizing the scholarships on amenity economies and the new immigrant geography, this study highlights an operative role for cultural frameworks and distinction-making among the places and faces encountered in amenity pursuits. Whereas tourism research shows

how outsiders in amenity destinations like Aspen and Ontario’s “cottage country” aim cultural distinctions at locals and rival classes (often of the same race) who *share* the same places (e.g., Stuber forthcoming; Michels 2017), the racialized dimensions of Brooklynization illuminate how distinction-making takes in foreign immigrants and non-white populations in ways that *differentiate* and *stratify* places (Lichter et al. 2018). We think the Hudson Valley’s proximity to the metro area is an important context for the local meanings and experience of racial difference. As a conveniently accessible hinterland, it enables a variety of outsider incursions and offers flexibility in the ways that metropolitan amenity consumers manage the transitions between home, work, and hinterland leisure. In this context, and like place identities more generally, ecological markers of immigration and race become encoded into visitor perceptions and metropolitan media newspapers with an experiential multiplicity and accumulated connotation greater than found in, say, the episodic relationship between overnight guest and immigrant hotel worker.

Our analysis suggests several points of entry for future research. In this article, we’ve only offered suggestive evidence for the many ways that Brooklynites consume places and *scales* of place across a region. Beneath the scale of the municipality, micro-level studies could give greater definition to analyses of metropolitan frameworks for spatial-racial distinction in the hinterland, as befits the increasingly granular places commodified on Airbnb. Pulling back in scale, metro hinterlands offer variety in the types and histories of leisure experiences that outsiders can consume, of which we’ve only examined the recent Brooklynized variant here. Comparative research could synthesize and illuminate variation across different zones and modes of amenity pursuit: comparisons with older mass tourism and elite vacation destinations (e.g., extending the metro NYC case by studying the New Jersey shore and the Hamptons alongside the Hudson Valley); of proximate versus far-flung destinations; and of different groups and life-stages of amenity seekers. Studies emphasizing specific amenities—civic agriculture, outdoor recreations, summer camps, art destinations, and so on—can give greater specificity to the ways that hinterlands draw transnational flows of visitors, laborers, investment, and cultural imaginaries.

Finally, this study raises policy and ethical implications for the discussion of small city change. In this article, we borrow the term “Brooklynization” from its ethnographic context but question the decontextualized and sometimes glib tone of its popular usage. Metropolitan amenity pursuits portend new forms of metropolitan opportunities, inequalities, and decline. Deindustrialization and population exodus shape the material and aesthetic terrains for Brooklynization, a point that should perhaps trouble the “rustbelt romance” with which metropolitan media and outsiders often view amenity development and gentrification in the hinterland. Meanwhile, foreign immigration is an important if irregular source of population growth in the hinterland, yet we observe a conspicuous and, we think, racialized silence of metropolitan enthusiasm for this kind of small-city renaissance. Lastly, we’ve theorized Brooklynization via the pointed framework of the “dual city” not just to underline how small cities drive growth at polar ends of the hinterland opportunity structure. The market thrust of Brooklynization reveals a cultural and policy neglect for the “middle,” namely, workers and households who are unincorporated into metropolitan amenity economies. These implications of Brooklynization reinforce a call for a critical reassessment of the terms and assumptions of small-city resilience.

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Notes

¹In regional terminology, the “Lower Hudson River Valley” covers Westchester County, Rockland County, and northern New Jersey, areas long considered part of NYC’s metro region, while the “Upper Hudson River Valley” refers to the Albany-area “Capital Region” where the river begins. A related area is the Catskill Mountains region, a.k.a. “the Catskills,” which includes Ulster and Columbia Counties as well as two other counties, Sullivan and Delaware, not adjacent to the Hudson River.

²The staggered extension of the NYC metropolitan area through the Hudson Valley reflects an important regional contingency: In 1989 NYC’s metro commuter rail extended to the Poughkeepsie train station but, across the river, stopped short of Ulster County (Plotch 2015).

³One “9/11 effect” is revealed when we track residential outflows from New York City to the Hudson Valley. Internal Revenue Service county-to-county migration data from 1992 to 2016 show that a steady flow of NYC out-migrants surged modestly from 2001 to 2006, to more than 4,000 net migrants annually. After a four-year lull following the 2008 economic recession, NYC out-migration recovered to a modest new peak in 2016. About three-fourths of these city out-migrants have relocated to the three Hudson Valley counties inside the MSA border: Orange, Putnam, and Dutchess.

⁴Latin America is the chief but not sole source of recent foreign immigration to the Hudson Valley. Smaller numbers of Asian immigrants have settled around the technoburbs of southern Dutchess County and the city of Hudson, while most recently, a small Middle Eastern population has settled around Poughkeepsie, adding Halal stores and mosques to its Main Street milieu (Axelson 2018).

⁵We conducted content analyses of *New York Times* coverage of the Hudson Valley using searches of the terms “Poughkeepsie,” “Newburgh,” and (because the word “Beacon” yielded too many unrelated results) “Dia:Beacon” on the newspaper’s online search engine, restricted from 1/1/02 to 1/1/18. We excluded results from Calendar and other event listings; Weddings; art, book, food, and restaurant reviews; Opinion pieces and Letters to the Editor; Obituaries; sports reporting narrowly focused; electoral events, court cases, and government forums incidentally held in the region; news of events, activities, and trends happening specifically within the region’s colleges; articles where the only Hudson Valley reference was expert quotes from the region (Poughkeepsie’s environmental organization Scenic Hudson is a frequent source for commentary); and Hudson Valley articles and references that are mostly historical or scientific in nature. Our archive contains only one result from each news story that the *Times* reported over consecutive days in multiple articles (e.g., breaking law-and-order stories), resulting in a conservative measure of how often Poughkeepsie and Newburgh are reported to *Times* readers. For our archive and further methodological discussion, see <http://bit.ly/2SuSEEP>.

⁶The Walkway over the Hudson represents a significant local achievement, reflecting the vision of local hobbyists, not city elites, to turn an abandoned railroad bridge into the longest elevated pedestrian bridge in the United States. However, city and regional leaders’ support was necessary to attract public funds for construction and present-day operation as a state park.

⁷Researchers have noted the association by rural residents of outsiders who bring higher economic and/or cultural capital with the nearest big city, despite the less than complete accuracy of such designations. In northern Ontario’s Almaguin Highlands, for instance, locals call vacationers who hail from as far as Texas and the U.K. “the people from Toronto” (Michels 2017:71).

⁸We collected proprietary reports from Dutchess and Ulster Counties real estate organizations that listed average real estate prices and focused on three years—2003 (2004 in Ulster County), 2007, and 2011—for a snapshot of the post-9/11 decade that avoids drops associated with the 2008 recession. We purposefully examined average home sale prices, which are notoriously skewed by high values, to highlight the bidding power of non-local buyers. The prices were not adjusted to inflation.

⁹The predominantly metropolitan basis for Hudson Valley tourism is indicated by the top 2014 feeder states for tourists to Dutchess County: New York (#1), New Jersey (#2), and Connecticut (#4)—i.e., the “tri-state” NYC metro area (Vrba 2015).

¹⁰As we’re uncertain of the timing of extant population displacement across all amenity-development sites of the Hudson Valley, we refrain from subsuming the concept of Brooklynization under the general banner of gentrification. As Stockdale (2010:38) asserts, “A distinction though should be made between *displacement* and *replacement*,” with only the former a necessary criterion of gentrification. By contrast, in many Brooklynized rural places, population out-migration preceded metro gentrifiers by a number of years, while it continues in other Hudson Valley places that have yet to attain Brooklyn buzz.

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