

“The veteran needed a roof over his head, instead of giving him just a roof we gave him certain amenities,” Levitt explains. “We divided it into sections and we put down schools, swimming pools, and a village green and necessity shopping centers, athletic fields, Little League diamonds. We wanted community living”

Ron Rosenbaum. "The House that Levitt Built." Esquire December 1983: 378-391.

“Those who lambasted suburbia...tended to ignore several basic facts: the boom in building energized important sectors of the economy, providing a good deal of employment; it lessened the housing shortage that had diminished the lives of millions during the Depression and war; and it enabled people to enjoy conveniences, such as modern bathrooms and kitchens, that they had not before.”

James Patterson, Grand Expectations, pg. 340.

“What the people were looking for were good schools, private space, and personal safety and they found them in the suburbs. It was the single tact home that offered growing families a private haven in a heartless world.”

Kenneth Jackson, Crabgrass Frontiers

"The basic Levitt Cape Cod sold for \$7,990; later, an expanded ranch-style house sold for \$9,500. There were no down payment, no closing costs, and no secret extras. Veterans who signed up for the first Levitt houses had to put down a onehundred-dollar deposit, which they eventually got back...The Levitts and their managers knew they had to change the essential philosophy of home building in order to meet their deadlines. They analyzed the construction process and broke it down into basic components. There were, they figured out, twenty-seven separate steps, so they would train twenty-seven separate teams--- each team would specialize in one step ... for it demanded less talented workers...By 1948 they were building 180 houses a week or, in effect, finishing thirty-six houses a day. It was, Bill Levitt noted, like clockwork: 'Eighteen houses completed on the shift from 8 to noon, and 18 more houses finished on the shift from 12:20 from 4:30...The first Levitt house could not have been simpler. It had four and a half baths and was designed with a young family in mind. The lots were 60 by 100 feet, and bill Levitt was proud of the fact the house took up only 12 percent of the lot"

David Halberstam, The Fifties

"Levittown represented the worst vision of the American future: bland people in bland houses leading bland lives. The houses were physically similar, theorized Mumford, so the people inside must be equally similar; an entire community was being made from a cookie cutter...a multitude of uniform, unidentifiable houses, lined up inflexibly, at uniform distances on uniform roads, in a treeless command waste, inhabited by people of the same class, the same incomes, the same age group, witnessing the same television performances, eating the same tasteless prefabricated foods, from the same freezers, conforming in every outward and inward respect to the same common mold."

Lewis Mumford, The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformation, and Its Prospects. Pg. 486.

“The community has an almost antiseptic air. Levittown streets, which have such fanciful names as Satellite, Horizon, Haymaker, are bare and flat as hospital corridors. Like a hospital, Levittown has rules all its own. Fences are not allowed (though here and there a home-owner has broken the rule). The plot of grass around each home must be cut at least once a week; if not, Bill Levitt's men mow the grass and send the bill. Wash cannot be hung out to dry on an ordinary clothesline; it must be arranged on rotary, removable drying racks and then not on weekends or holidays....”

Up From the Potato Fields, "Time 56. July 3, 1950.

“The Negroes in America...are trying to do in 400 years what the Jews in the world have not wholly accomplished in 600 years. As I Jew I have no room in my mind or heart for racial prejudice. But...I have come to know that if we sell one house to a Negro family, then 90 or 95 percent of our white customers will not buy into the community. That is their attitude, not ours...As a company our position is simply this: we can solve a housing problem, or we can solve a racial problem, but we cannot combine the two.” **William Levitt**