Names of Real-Estate Developments. III

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PARTS I AND II OF THIS PAPER (*Names*, 7 [1959] Sept. and Dec.)
described the methods and sources employed in the inquiry; ex-
emplified overt semantic themes found in the development names;
and made some comparison of recently affixed names (drawn mainly
from the New York *Times*, 1948–1951) with those that had been
registered in Nassau County, Long Island, New York, in the period
1854–1950. Part III begins with a comparison of the observed
development names with American place names as the latter are
described by George R. Stewart.

The following abbreviations are used:

NI – Section Index of the Land and Tax Map of Nassau County
(Long Island), New York.

NYT – New York *Times*.

TSN – Notices of the sale of property on which taxes were in arrears,
in Suffolk County (Long Island), New York; published in local news-
papers.

6. *Comparison with Established Place Names*

Development names *in toto* are best considered as distinct from
place names. However, certain relations between the two bodies of
names are apparent. Place names or place-name elements often
occur in development names; and some development names attain
the status of place names. Hence some comparison of the two kinds
of names would seem to be instructive.

Semantic Themes in Development Names
and in the General Body of American Place Names

A reading of *Names on the Land*[74] leads to the conclusion that all
the semantic themes that have been found in development names
exist in American place names taken as a whole. English and quasi-
English names, names referring to natural features, names trans-
ferred from other places than England, especially names of exotic

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[74] Rev. and enl. ed. (Boston, 1958).

flavor, historical and topical references, encomium, Indian and pseudo-Indian names, and names chosen less for their "meaning" than for (apparently) some phonetic charm — all these types are found elsewhere than in "developments."

The practice of giving an attractive name to a prospective colony goes back at least to Eric the Red, who, having found a new land as he sailed west about 985 A.D., called it Greenland "'Because men would the more readily go there if the country had a good name.'"[75] In motive and form the name bestowed by Eric has a marked likeness to many development names.

The tradition of English names too had early roots in American history. In 1658 the Massachusetts General Court called it "a commendable practice" for the colonists to have chosen place names "from our dear native Country of England."[76] Thereupon the Court justified the choice of *New London* for that Connecticut city.

References to natural features are too obvious to need much specification. The use of tree names, for example, so prominent in development names, is seen in the repeated use of *Cottonwood, Cedar,* and *Pine* by the Western mountaineers.[77] In Philadelphia — and in how many other places? — streets were named after trees.

Stewart relates how foreign non-English names were given with various possible motives — among them admiration for a strange name, "advertising," hope that the new settlement might equal a famous old-world place, and remembrance of the home place of immigrants.[78] Historical allusions in place names are, of course, commonplace. Washington, Lexington, Franklin, Hancock, Adams, and other notable persons and places are often thus remembered. Some names make topical references — the stuff of social history — as, *Gene Autry* (Oklahoma), celebrating an actor and singer in Western radio programs and motion pictures; and *Tarzan* (Texas), which embodies the name of a fictional jungle hero. Some other timely place names are *Electron, Gasoline, Radio,* and *Radium.*[79]

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[75] *Ibid.*, p. 36.
[76] Quoted, *ibid.*, pp. 52–53.
[77] *Ibid.*, pp. 221–22.
[78] *Ibid.*, pp. 238f.
[79] *Ibid.*, p. 379.

Stewart's treatment of Indian and pseudo-Indian names has already been noticed. Development names combining elements of personal names or place names are in some wise analogous to, e.g., *Kenova, Leaday,* and *Texarkana.*[80]

If it be charged that development names often have an artificial and accidental quality, the reply can well be that so have many well-established place names, viewed as to their origin. Concerning the making of *Tumac* Stewart quotes A. H. Sylvester of the Forest Service: "I spelled two *Tu* and added the 'mac' to it for Tumac which makes as fine a looking Indian name as I will ask you to find anywhere."[81] *Pasadena*[82] and *Tolono*[83] are other examples of place names whose origins were marked by a speck of the adventitious or factitious.

Certain types of American place names do not evidence themselves in the development names examined, except as development names may repeat — possibly as specific terms — established names of any origin whatever. Among these types are names based on incidents, Biblical names, classical names, and possibly — though this is more difficult of ascertainment — names whose purpose was to get political advantage by flattery. The presence of a few names of folkish character has been noted among the development names, but the strain is a thin one. Such names are likely to be replaced with something more stylish.

Homonymic forms, word-play, and apparent double provenance have been remarked in development names. Likewise Stewart points out that *Bare Mountain* often became *Bear Mountain,*[84] that "Media in Pennsylvania used the ancient name for the land of the Medes, but was also the plural of *medium,* because it lay at the center of a county," that a later town became Numidia instead of New Media, and that a man named Palm might be commemorated in a place called Palmyra instead of Palmstown.[85]

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[80] *Ibid.,* pp. 364, 362, and 363f., respectively.

[81] Quoted, *ibid.,* p. 357.

[82] *Ibid.,* p. 349.

[83] *Ibid.,* p. 362. For other items related to this point of artificiality and "chance," see, e.g., *ibid.,* pp. 324 and 327–29.

[84] *Ibid.,* p. 132.

[85] *Ibid.,* p. 187.

Long Island Place Names

A more limited comparison of the two classes of names can be made by examination of place names on Long Island. Such an examination has particular point, since most development names cited in this paper are from Long Island. Following are observations on some three hundred place names given in *Long Island*,[86] published by the Long Island Association.

Of the most frequent unbound forms, *Beach, Estates, Gardens, Heights, Manor,* and *View* have places among the established names. *Grove, Hill,* and *Hills* are other unbound forms that figure in both development names and these Long Island place names.

The roll of bound forms is fairly well traversed; the established names contain, e.g., *burgh, bury, dale, haven, hurst, lawn, mere, mont, side, stone, town,* and *ville.* Among such forms not included in our count of bound forms but present in the place names are *ham, lyn,* and *ton.* The bound form *wood* occurs both as an initial element and as a terminal one (*Woodhaven,* etc. and *Inwood*); the same is true of *brook* (*Brookville* and *Holbrook*). *Brook* is seen also as an unbound form, in *Stony Brook.*

Some semantic strands noticed for development names are apparent. Among English place names are *Devon, Kensington, Malverne* (with modified spelling), *St. Albans,* and *St. James.* Most, if not all, of the foregoing names are also place names elsewhere in America. Bound forms of obsolete or obsolescent denotation are seen in *Cedarhurst, Roslyn, Shoreham,* and *Westbury.* Natural features are alluded to in *Bellerose, Flowerfield, Oceanside, Ozone Park, Pinelawn,* etc. Flushing was named after the Dutch seaport. *Flanders* is more likely to be felt as having Continental than British associations. The first element of *Murray Hill-Flushing* is the name of a section of Manhattan. But again, *Flanders* and *Murray Hill* occur otherwhere in America as place names. Indian names on Long Island include *Asharoken, Ronkonkoma, Sagaponack,* and *Setauket.* Historical allusions appear in *Port Jefferson, Port Washington, Roanoke,* and *Roosevelt.* Does *Arverne* trace to *Arvernia* or did it originate mainly as a phonetic artifact?

According to Herbert F. Ricard,[87] historian of the Borough of Queens, New York City, the name of Malba, a section of Queens,

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[86] 15th ed. (Garden City, N.Y., 1950).
[87] Quoted in the *New Yorker*, Nov. 7, 1953, p. 32.

was formed from the initials of the surnames of the five men whose company developed the area about 1908. From the same source it is learned that Rego Park, also in Queens, drew its name from that of the Rego Construction Company, *Rego* in that name being constructed of the first parts of the expression "real good."

Certain themes that emerged from the development names are missing from the Long Island place names. The encomiastic group is not detectible, nor are the hybrids — names combining elements of personal names or place names. Heroes and events of the sports and entertainment worlds are likewise missing, though of course they may be present but veiled by the mists of time. Nor do we find allusion to technological aspects of the society (as we do find recognition of, e.g., radio and aviation among the development names). On the other hand, among the place names *Mt. Sinai* stands as a representative of the Biblical strain that has been noted as absent from the development names. *Babylon* may be a moot example.

Some Attitudes toward Development Names and Place Names of Similar Aspect

Some critical vibrations are directed at development names, whether or not the names become place names. Development names may be called banal, rootless, prettified, pretentious, undescriptive to the point of irrelevance. It may not be an exaggeration to say that in some quarters development names seem to be considered a dubious linguistic congeries that is apart from the main stream of American place naming. Adduced below is some published comment that reflects attitudes toward development names and to comparable formations that have become place names. Most of the place names cited are likely to have been applied originally to the property syntagmas that are here called developments.

Mencken's remark on development names was noticed earlier in this paper. Over a century before, Byron had jeered at names (of places or of "developments"?) in London suburbs. Don Juan, approaching London, passes

> Through Groves, so call'd as being void of trees
>   (Like *lucus* from *no* light); through prospects named
> Mount Pleasant, as containing nought to please,
>   Nor much to climb;[88]...

And in the concluding lines of the stanza:

> Through 'Rows' most modestly call'd 'Paradise,'
> Which Eve might quit without much sacrifice; —

A form of criticism resides in some writers' pointing out non-congruence between the supposed claims of a name and the actualities of a site. When Martin and Leora Arrowsmith move to Nautilus, Iowa, they find lodgings "In a two-family house on Social Hill, which is not a hill but a slight swelling in the plain."[89]

Another instance of noncongruence is called to attention by Arthur Koestler (though a full-fledged place name is in point). Writing about Tel Aviv, that author comments with neutral tone: "Even its name was a paradox: 'tel' means 'hill,' 'aviv' means 'spring'; but the city is flat and the winter rains are followed by summer heat without much transition.'"[90]

A locality in the Borough of Queens, New York City, was the subject of the following description in a newspaper report: "Forest Hills, a reclaimed patch of low-lying moor on Long Island, consists mainly of modern apartment houses and it boasts self-service elevators."[91]

Distaste may be manifested at the dropping of a traditional name in favor of a mellifluous label of the development sort. In a historical guide to New York City[92] it is said of the Village of Newtown

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[88] *Don Juan* XI.xxi. (*The Complete Poetical Works of Lord Byron*. Student's Cambridge ed. [Boston, etc., 1905]). See stanza xx also.

[89] Sinclair Lewis, *Arrowsmith* (New York, 1925 [1924]), p. 210. In the same novel (p. 241) the house of the industrialist Clay Tredgold is "on the highest knoll (fully twenty feet above the general level of the plain) in Ashford Grove, which is the Back Bay of Nautilus."

In Max Shulman's novel *Rally Round the Flag, Boys!* (New York, 1958 [1954]), about a town in Fairfield County, Connecticut, a property owner reflects (p. 91): "You take a lot like the Yarbro place, give it an attractive names — Pilot's Knob, for example — and you could get maybe $15,000 an acre!"

[90] *Arrow in the Blue* (New York, 1952), p. 161.

[91] Richard F. Shepard, "Turkestani Finds Turks Indifferent," *NYT*, May 4, 1952, p. 32/2–4.

[92] Frank Bergen Kelley, comp., *Historical Guide to the City of New York*, rev. (Tercentenary) ed. (New York, c. 1914), p. 297.

(Elmhurst), settled in 1652 by the Dutch, who named it Middel-burgh: "Unfortunately the historic name was changed to Elmhurst a few years ago to satisfy the fancy of a real estate speculator." Elmhurst is the present name of this section of the Borough of Queens.

Amused detachment, at least, is to be perceived in an account of the change of name of a section of New Milford, Connecticut. A writer tells how two boys, after bicycling from Hartford, chose to rest in "a field opposite a farm house just off Pug Lane (or Poplar Swamp, as it was also called, and now grandly known as Park Lane)."[93]

Apropos of the abandonment of one folkish place name on Long Island, satisfaction has been explicit. An article on the "Early History of Huntington, Babylon, and Northport (Long Island, N.Y.)"[94] tells of the substitution of the name *Northport* for *Cow Harbour* at some time between 1832 and 1837. The article ruminates that "The name Cow Harbour is not one to attract or entice new residents to settle here regardless of beauty of location, so we can heartily rejoice the name was finally changed to Northport." The plain-Jane name *Head of the Harbor* (Long Island) was changed to *Roslyn* by a committee under the leadership of William Cullen Bryant.[95] A historical note mentions the antecedent of a Long Island place name of indubitable development stripe: "'*Punksole*,' the ancient name of Manorville, used to be written Punk's Hole — a designation which does not seem to be aboriginal, though no satisfactory interpretation of it can be found in *English* diction-aries."[96]

In *Names on the Land*, George R. Stewart manifests a tempered — or ambiguous — distaste for the smooth confections of subdivision platters. In his Chapter XXXI Stewart takes up romantic themes

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[93] Newell Rogers, "Driven from Pug Lane Farm as Boy, Artist Kappel Decades Later Buys It," New Milford (Conn.) *Times*, Nov. 20, 1958, Sec. 3, p. 5/1. Cited is Philip Kappel's information that in colonial times young sheep were called pugs. Cf. in *OED*, s.v. *pug*, *sb.*², 8b, *pug* as a quasi-proper name, in dialectal use, for a lamb and some other animals.

[94] Northport (N.Y.) *Observer*, Aug. 28, 1952, p. 16/3.

[95] John G. Rogers, "North Shore Motor Trip...," New York *Herald Tribune*, Aug. 1, 1955, p. 15/5.

[96] J[ames] H[ammond] T[rumbull], "Long Island Indians," *Magazine of American History*, 1 (1877), 330.

in place names of the middle nineteenth century. He cites the
popularization of *brook, burn, dale, glen, hurst, mere, mont, side, vale,
wood*. "One of their devotees," he writes,

was the developer laying out a district for summer homes or for one of the new
suburbs which the railroads were making possible. Such names came to enclose New
York City like a ring of outer fortifications — Oakwood, Hillside, Montclair, Engle-
wood, Scarsdale, Larchmont, Glen Cove, Greenvale, Rosedale, Cedarhurst, Edge-
mere.[97]

The attraction of such names Stewart attributes to their sup-
posedly poetic quality, their English aspect, their snobbishness and
exclusiveness, and their suggestion of lovely landscape. The fore-
going analysis comes surprisingly (with its discovery of Anglo-
philism and snobbishness) after the opening passage of the chapter,
for there the author finds romanticism and the frontier to be in
some wise parallel inner phenomena. "The frontier was not only of
the land, but also in the minds of men."[98]

Several chapters later (XXXVI) Stewart describes the spread, in
post-Civil War years, of "a horrible malady called 'good taste.'"[99]
Names given then, he avers, "tended to be effeminate, snobbish,
Anglophile, and full of liquid sounds."

Thus the "frontier" quality of romantic names seems to have be-
come quite dissipated. Stewart explains that "An earlier generation
had at least been positive and even creative, by introducing Dale
and Glen. In the seventies and eighties such names were already
stale, but they were more fashionable than ever."[100]

From frontier creativeness (plus Anglophilism and snobbery) to
epicene imitation in twenty or thirty years (Stewart's account might
be so summed up) — the strands here are too variegated, the changes
too rapid to make up a convincing interpretation. Why should
Englewood and *Rosedale*, because they may have been given a
couple of decades earlier, occupy a higher place than *Brookfield* and
Bosky Dell? The contrast seems to depend on a conception of history
in segments rather than as continuity. However they be judged, the
names in question continued (and continue) to be of much the
same character.

The line of thought is not clarified by a paragraph, in Chapter
XLII, that pronounces the 1920's to have marked the beginning of

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[97] P. 273.   [98] P. 270.   [99] P. 330.   [100] Pp. 330–31.

a more robustious era in the language of Americans. Stewart writes that "through a century, under the influence of Good Taste, names had become more namby-pamby and insipid. At last the current was stemmed, or even reversed."[101]

The foregoing seems to carry the era of "Good Taste" back to the times of fresh romantic influence — not merely to "the years following the Civil War." The continuity of naming tradition thus implied seems more in keeping with social realities than was Stewart's earlier distinction between the "frontier" quality of mid-nineteenth-century development names and the post-Civil War products.[102] However, the naming practices that Stewart deprecates, far from being braked, are still — as development names show — in full course. As for imitation and repetition, they are always with us in the comparable sphere of place names; Stewart himself makes that clear. With regard to historical judgment, and even consistency, Stewart's handling of the names in question is not the most satisfactory feature of *Names on the Land*.

Mencken's notice of development names, Byron's sally, Sinclair Lewis's amused clause about Social Hill, Richard F. Shepard's salute to Forest Hills, Frank Bergen Kelley's irritated remark on the change from Middelburgh to Elmhurst, George R. Stewart's sweet-sour treatment of development names (or comparable place names) — these are some signs of attitudes toward the names. But all criticism is confronted by the massive fact that the names have persisted and multiplied for generations. This fact will be the subject of rumination in the next Section.

7. *Some Semantic Problems*

By the views of some authors there would seem to be little necessity, or indeed feasibility, in an inquiry into the semantic aspects of names. Reviewing the opinions of Stuart Mill, Bertrand Russell, and others on the nature of proper names, Stephen Ullmann tends to agree that proper names are, in effect, labels.[103] "On this reading,"

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[101] P. 378.

[102] To be noted in passing is Stewart's reference (*op. cit.*, p. 270) to the fact that in the early nineteenth century, plantations in the cotton states might be given names drawn from poems and novels. Cf. above note 70.

[103] Stephen Ullmann, *The Principles of Semantics*, 2nd ed. (Glasgow and Oxford, 1957), pp. 73–74.

he avers, "proper names seem to lie outside the province of se-
mantics, or at least on the outer fringes of that area." In semantic
study, the only import Ullman infers for such names lies in their
becoming appellatives and vice versa. This view is in essential
agreement with that of Sir Alan Gardiner when the latter writes
that the term *proper name*

merely segregates and puts in a class by themselves those words in which the
power of distinctive word-sounds to identify distinct things is exhibited in a
pure or nearly pure state, without that power being assisted to any great degree
by such meaning as may attach to the word.[104]

Both writers, it will be observed, display an element of tenta-
tiveness or qualification — Ullmann by his phrase "On this read-
ing," Gardiner in such an expression as "without that power being
assisted to any great degree." Their reservations would seem to be
well taken. On the other hand Ernst Pulgram unreservedly contests
Mill's theory of the "meaningless label." Pulgram concludes that
"meaninglessness cannot be ascribed to names as a characteristic."[105]

The views of George H. Mead, as reported by Margaret Schlauch,[106]
seem to point toward both the "label" status of names and their
"meaningfulness." In its relationship to the thing indicated "the
significant symbol" is a label; in its relationship to response to the
thing the symbol is a concept.

With respect to proper names, the views of John P. Searle appear
to be not out of harmony with the formulations of Pulgram and
Mead. After exploring the problem of the proper name, Searle con-
cludes in part: "We can now resolve our paradox: does a proper
name have a sense? If this asks whether or not proper names are
used to describe or specify characteristics of objects, the answer is
'no.' But if it asks whether or not proper names are logically con-
nected with characteristics of the object to which they refer, the
answer is 'yes, in a loose sort of way.'"[107]

Development names, at least, present semantic features that are
worth scrutiny. Consider the general character of the names. It is
evident that in large part they are fabricated expressions consisting

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[104] Sir Alan Gardiner, *The Theory of Proper Names*, 2nd ed. (London, New York,
and Toronto, 1954), p. 66.

[105] Ernst Pulgram, *Theory of Names* (Berkeley, 1954, p. 35; original publication
in *Beiträge zur Namenforschung*, 5 [1954], 149–96).

[106] "Early Behaviorist Psychology and Contemporary Linguistics," *Word*, 2
(1946), p. 35.   [107] "Proper Names," *Mind*, 67 (1958), p. 173.

of unbound and bound forms that are repeatedly employed in the corpus. The repetition of forms has been shown by, e.g., counts that are presented in Section 3 of this paper. The combinatory forms include common nouns and adjectives, which is to say that in other contexts they possess identifiable referents. But in development names customary references may not be operative; features, as of physiography or vegetation, that are "purportedly" symbolized may be absent from the referents of the whole names — the developments.[108] Nor is the reference of component proper names easy to determine. Nevertheless it is clear that development names possess some sort of potency for the public for which they are fabricated or conceived. The paragraphs that follow will describe some problems of the semantics of development names and will make suggestions for the study of the problems.

Symbolic Values

Ogden and Richards have described the relations between symbol (word), thought (reference), and referent (what is symbolized).[109] Their view of the symbolic process will aid in the definition of semantic problems attached to development names.

The authors distinguish between "more or less direct" and "indirect" relationship between thought and referent. Their example of the first is the thought or perception of a colored surface. On the other hand the "indirect" relationship occurs when there is thought of, or reference to, what is known by report, the authors' example being a reference to Napoleon.

A corresponding distinction is to be observed between two kinds of employments of a proper name. For anyone who does not know the referent by experience, a proper name is in the role of "label," But to one who is familiar with the referent, the name is more; it in some degree connotes the properties of the referent. Failure to take

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[108] The nonsymbolic factor is presumably not so great in place names as a body. Hence it is doubtful whether George R. Stewart's comprehensive classification of place names is generally applicable to development names. ("A Classification of Place Names," *Names*, II [1954], 1—13) Thus Stewart says of descriptive names (*ibid.*, p. 3): "Actual *false description* is rare." It is clear that Stewart does not narrow the meaning of "false description" to "deception," nor is that sense intended in this paper.

[109] C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*, 5th ed. (New York and London, 1938), especially pp. 9ff.

this distinction into account is no doubt at the bottom of much dispute about the character of the proper name. It is a distinction that is apparent in the thinking of, e.g., Mead and Searle as cited above.

The direct-indirect dichotomy has other bearings in the semantic study of development names. In considering these bearings we shall do well to recognize that many of those names possess not only the usual designative function of names, but also an allusive function. Section 4 of this paper, on "Semantic Themes," contains a classification of names based on the varied character of potential allusions.

The development name *Gramercy Park* designates a constellation of holdings on Long Island. When used or apprehended by anyone who knows that development by sensory experience, the name summons up a multiplicity of impressions. This phenomenon constitutes an instance of direct symbolism. On the other hand if I learn, through report, of the existence of a development so named, it is indirect symbolism that (in accordance with the Ogden-Richards distinction) is in effect for me. My subsequent use of the name as a means of identifying the development will also be in the nature of indirect symbolism, so long as I do not have firsthand knowledge of the place. Thus a name in its function of identification may operate as either a direct or an indirect symbol — as a connotative term or as a "label."

In its allusive function too the development name *Gramercy Park* may involve either direct or indirect symbolism. For those who know the famous private park in Manhattan (or any other Gramercy Park, apart from the development so named), the development name acts as directly symbolic on the plane of allusion. If on the other hand the allusion is explained to someone who has not seen any extra-development Gramercy Park, for that person the allusion comprises indirect symbolism. There is a third possibility in allusion, namely, that the allusion-referent is not known and remains unexplained.

When physical features are in allusive reference, direct symbolism is dependent on one more condition: the presence of the physical features at the site of the development. Absence of such physical features would seem to indicate that their signifiants have only emotive value. If the only vegetation on the site of a hypothetical

Edelweiss Manor is scrub pine, grass, and weeds, the first element of the name is emotive, not symbolic, even for persons who have first-hand knowledge of the edelweiss. Physical features so considered may be natural (e.g., physiography, vegetation) or cultural (e.g., the park, the farm).

It will be apparent that direct and indirect symbolism may occur in various combinations with designative and allusive import. For some persons a name may occur designatively as a direct symbol, while a component form of the name operates as an indirect symbol. For others, who know the development by report only, the name will be an indirect symbol; if the referents of all component allusive forms are known firsthand, those forms will be direct symbols. For still other persons direct symbolism will operate for both designation and allusion. And so on. The presence or absence of physical features in allusion will introduce another possibility of variant combinations of direct and indirect symbolism.

Following are some causes of the difficulty of knowing what is symbolized for different persons by many allusive forms:

1. The allusion may be to a subject that is so narrowly known that allusive value would seem to be nil for most of the relevant population. Such would surely seem to be the case with first names, as in *Ada Mae Park* and *Miriam Estates*; amalgams of personal names, as *Edstan Village* and *Pearlnat Homes*; *Belluscio Estates*, which embodies the name of the former owner of the land; and other presumably allusive names requiring knowledge of special contexts, such as *Hampton Court, Sherwood Estates, San Remo*, and *Trianon Park*.

2. Even if an element seems to embody a generally available allusion to a given universe of discourse — say, American history — it probably has various "meanings" for different members of the population. Does mention of the name *Jefferson* cause recollection of that statesman's specific historical contributions? Undoubtedly, for some persons, in greater or lesser degree. For others the name may invite only a feeling of generalized patriotic approval.

3. The question of the semantic intention and effect of allusive forms is further complicated by the occurrence of numerous forms that must possess multiple reference. A development name that is taken to represent a historical allusion may also duplicate a place

name or the name of a neighborhood street or park. How does each of the possible associational complexes contribute to the "meaning" of the name ?

4. The recognition of topical allusions would be subject to attenuation over a period. Such forms as *Nira* (National Industrial Recovery Act) and *Willard* (presumably the name of the boxing champion) may have had allusive value for all or nearly all of the relevant population at the time the names were bestowed, but in the course of time their allusions would probably not be recognized by increasing larger portions of the new generations.

5. A certain number of forms are so heavily exploited in commerce that they would seem to have lost a considerable part of their symbolic content. The question is raised whether the specific terms of the following examples any longer have much, if any, symbolic value when used commercially: *Apex Homes* (Oceanside, L.I.), *Central Homes* NI 1941), *Colonial Manor* (NI 1926), *Grand Terrace* (NI 1927), *Keystone Homes* (Flushing, Queens), *Knickerbocker Homes* (Hempstead, L.I.), *Royal Plaza* (NI 1925), *Triangle Park* (NI 1927). The selection of such specific terms as those in the foregoing examples has an aspect of ritualism.

What is the history of these commercial stereotypes ? A seminar in the American language might do worse than to dig into this question. The inquiry might shed some light on (a) the circumstances leading to the popularity of the terms involved; (b) the process by which the symbolic content of the terms becomes attenuated through their heavy employment for at least a large part of the relevant population.[110]

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[110] Among the "ritualistic" name elements *Majestic* ranks high. In the *Manhattan, New York City, Telephone Directory, 1955–1956,* many businesses began their listings with *Majestic,* including the Majestic Bias Prods Co., the Majestic Brokerage Co., the Majestic Brush Mfg. Corp., the Majestic Coal Co., the Majestic Corset Co., and the Majestic Exterminating Co., Inc.

The diminished symbolic charge of such words in business is suggested in the name of a Newark, N. J. firm, seen on a rubber typewriter-pad: *Peerless Imperial Company.*

Cf. the following: A youth in Brooklyn, New York who belongs to a club called the Archers was asked how that name had been chosen. Did the club engage in archery ? "No," the young man replied, "it's just a name. It was a choice between that and Panthers." This indeterminate reply is likely to find some parallel in the answers of older respondents who are asked to explain the choice of a public name (as of an organization) containing a similar "allusive" element — in effect: "It's just a name."

6. Since a given allusive form may have more than one referent —
there may be, e.g., more than one referent for *Gramercy Park*,
outside the development so named — it would seem that the situ-
ation of the bestower of an allusive name is different from that of the
relevant public. The bestower presumably has a particular referent
in mind; for the public there may be a choice of referents.[111]

Emotive Values

Ogden and Richards[112] distinguish between the "symbolic use of
words," which they term statement, and the "emotive use of
words," which serves "to express or excite feelings and attitudes."
The latter use the authors consider "a more simple matter" than
the former, and "probably more primitive."

In the view adopted here emotive values may attach to both the
designative and the allusive functions and to both direct and in-
direct symbolism. Development names as directly symbolic identi-
fiers have emotive force because of the character of the associations
that may cluster around the development named. A name evokes
feelings and attitudes as the place becomes known for, let us say,
the beauty of its constituent properties or its proximity to a glue
factory. The emotive force of allusive-direct symbolism also seems
understandable, at least in some manifestations. If one knows
Salisbury, Eng'and, the first element of *Salisbury Park Manor* may
excite agreeable associations of the cathedral town. If a Salisbury
is not known by experience — i.e., if the allusion involves indirect
symbolism — the character of the emotive value of *Salisbury* is
more obscure.

Even the indirect symbolism of the "label" function of proper
names may be marked by emotive phenomena. When one hears or
reads a name, even though he is unacquainted with the referent, he
is likely to have some feeling about the name — pleasure, distaste,
or whatever. In so far as such response is apart from symbolic values,
its explanation remains to be given. Elsdon C. Smith has pointed

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[111] This circumstance seems to suggest the fallacy of the view attributed by
Ullmann (*op. cit.*, p. 68) to C. Morris, W. M. Urban, and R. Carnap that speaker and
listener can be "bracketed" in consideration of the factors entering into the speech
situation.

[112] *Op. cit.*, p. 149. The present writer cannot agree, even on the authors' showing,
that "The emotive use of words is a more simple matter."

out to this writer in conversation the interest residing in attitudes toward names.

The way in which emotive values may predominate in development names is well suggested by examples containing forms which, taken at symbolic face value, make suggestions that are paradoxical or at least improbable: *Hilldale Heights* (East Northport, L.I.), *Knoll Crest Park "Block 2"* (TSN 1909), *Valcrest Homes* (NI 1950), *Valmont Gardens* (Elmont, L.I.), *Marine Acres* (Seaford, L.I.). *Glencrest Homes* is "In the Glen Oaks section of Queens." Sunken Meadow Heights is near Sunken Meadow State Park, L.I. For admirers of *Ramview Heights* (Ramsey, N.J.) there must be inhibition of any sense of *ram* other than that derived from *Ramsey*. Surely the names of this last group are to be taken, not as maps of the referents of the component forms, but as musical chords meant to send echoes flying in some undefined social deeps.

Presumably development names give rise to agreeable feelings in prospective customers. How do the names bring about emotive responses ? The difficulties of this question will get some definition through consideration of the name classes that have been set up.

If "purportedly" signified physical features, natural or cultural, are not in fact represented in a development, the signifiants are here regarded as having only emotive force. By their operation, it might be said, an idealized landscape is imposed on an existing one by verbal *force majeure*. Thus by some inquirers the emotive force of allusions to natural beauty will be taken as self-explanatory. Others may discover specific symbols in the profusion of woods, knolls, crests, and meadows.

For most of the relevant population, solely emotive must be the value of such archaic morphemes as *burn, bury, croft, dale, fold, holme, hurst* — forms having "British" tone. But even forms that have currency in general expression — e.g., among the principal unbound forms, *Farms, Heights, Terrace* — may not possess ordinary symbolic value when they are used in development names. After the report, in Section 3, of the count of the principal unbound forms, there was some comment on the presumptive reasons (pertinent to emotive values) for the popularity of those forms.

An additional word may be in order on the farm, among the cultural features signified in development names. The farm as a producing unit is not heavily weighted with prestige. Yet *Farm(s)*

is likely to occur in developments containing higher-priced houses. To put the pertinent socio-symbolic concept in more general terms: a cultural feature of humble status may (under certain conditions that I do not attempt to define here) be employed as a symbol of high status. Structural features of the log cabin may be embodied, at considerable expense, in the tycoon's hunting lodge.

The large class of "British" names and elements also has paradoxical aspects. Tangled strands of attraction and repulsion go to make up American attitudes toward things British. The phenomenon has persisted through two wars with England and at least one near war (and even through periods of alliance). A certain discomfort, to say the least, vis-à-vis Briticisms has probably never been in short supply in America. H. L. Mencken was able to write (and on this subject allowance should be made for his well-known bias): "To the average American of the plain people, indeed, any word or phrase of an obviously English flavor has an offensive smack."[113] Yet with surprising frequency, even today the American accepts a British name (or an imitation thereof) for his dwelling place, whether in a development or an apartment house or hotel. Some sector of the national psyche seems to respond powerfully to a British or quasi-British name as, apparently, a token of superiority and stability.

With respect to the present corpus the ambivalence in the situation is heightened in and near New York City by the presence of large numbers of persons of non-English descent — especially German, Irish, and Italian; if the Jewish population be regarded separately (as is the anomalous custom), various national origins are in point. These stocks are of the marrow of the metropolis, and some of their numbers retain a keen and prideful consciousness of the countries from which they or their ancestors came. Even more to the point, the English have traditionally been regarded as antagonists of some of the groups. Nonetheless the British tradition probably has little less sway among them, when it comes to development names, than among population segments of British descent.

The case of Irish-descended citizens is particularly puzzling, for by and large they are notably self-conscious about their ould-sod heritage. Moreover Ireland and the Irish are the subjects of a genial

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[113] *The American Language*, 4th ed. (New York, 1936), p. 269.

sentimentality on the part of great numbers of Americans who have little or no connection with that country. In and about New York City, at any rate, convivial singers of various ancestry are given to full-throated renditions of "My Wild Irish Rose."

On the face of the matter, then, the facts seem to go against all expectation. Though a certain number of developments are identified through the use of personal names and place names of non-British provenance, omissions are conspicuous. It is mysterious that no realtor — so far as has come to the writer's attention — feels impelled to call his development Dublin Terrace or Ballybunion Acres instead of something like Buckingham Manor. With reference to social psychology we seem to be confronted with divergent, if not contradictory, attitudes that are so compartmented as to be viable.

It seems clear that for the relevant population "British" names and name elements suggest social superiority. No doubt contributing to this effect are constructive contributions of the British in the history of America, and impressions made by English literature in the schools. It will be remembered too that "glamour" advertising apotheosizes some things British — though such advertising is a manifestation rather than a primary cause of American middle-class partial orientation toward Britain. It remains to be seen if the decline of Britain as a world power will in time result in a lessened role for that nation in American imagery.

Still different kinds of psychological mechanisms would seem to be operative when historical, literary, and topical allusions are afoot. It is very well to say that these names represent an endeavor to borrow prestige from great, or at least prominent, personages, institutions, etc., but the manner of borrowing is not instantly clear. For one thing the historical and topical elements comprise considerable variety. *Atomic, Dagmar, Pilgrim, Radio,* and *Revere* connote different kinds of prestige. Is there some common ground among them ? The problem here is compounded by the circumstance that the indirect symbolism of some of the elements in point would seem to be, for many persons, of hazy character.

The romantic appeal of Indian names, like that of British names, is not a result of an unbroken history of affection for the people memorialized by the names. Vis-à-vis both categories social psycho-

logists may wish to trace the steps by which agreeable romantic associations have become attached to the names.

Exotic names (e.g., *Lido*, *Mandalay*, *Venice*), names of romantic tradition (*Robin Hood*, *Captain Kidd*), and names of literary men (*Whitman*, *Hawthorne*) — the attractions of these and other categories seem to have still different origins.

The foregoing classes of names seem to derive their power from imaginatively-charged universes of discourse — spheres of socially cohesive mythos. A more precise description of the psychological and sociological character of these myth-spheres, an account of the ways in which they are transmitted from generation to generation, an analysis of their linguistic media — these are problems that remain to be worked out.

At least the outer raiments of poetry must be credited with the appeal of such creations as *Dreamland, Echo Park, Smoke Rise,* and *Whispering Breeze*. Inquiry into the ways in which members of this group attain affective force can best be subsumed under the more general study of figurative language.

In a consideration of the emotive power of the development names it is necessary to revert to the possibility of multiple references in many names. The natural-features-plus-"British" names are a sizable group that illustrates the manner in which names may receive enforcement from at least two areas of reference. Again, such a name as *Wellington Farms* (TSN 1934), besides possessing an English air, may refer specifically to the conqueror of Napoleon; and many persons who encounter it must know *Wellington* also as the name of a New York City hotel. *Chesterfield Homes* (Jamaica Estates North) has the advantage of incorporating the name (perhaps accidentally) of one of the most widely advertised cigarettes, while some prospective customers may recollect the epistolarian. Also, both *Wellington* and *Chesterfield* are found as place-names in various states. *Manton Manor* could manifest the name of a business official or some other personage in the consciousness of the originator of the name. It also has an English aspect. Furthermore, *Manton* was the name of a sometime Federal judge who was known in headlines. And a motion picture was called *The Mad Miss Manton*.

It is asked whether some of the affective power of such names does not derive from the fact of multiple reference as such — apart

from the nature of the suggestions that the names convey. Con-
frontation with a multiply-referent name may be pleasing as a
passive equivalent of punning; it may give rise to a sense of lin-
guistic power — an illusory pleasure, if you will. Such experience, it
is supposed, would not depend on consciousness of the semantic
process involved.

The example of *Chesterfield*, lately given, can be taken to illus-
trate the following thesis: Reference to an object that is about at
a neutral point on the scale *approval-disapproval* is likely to
awake a favorable response if the object is sufficiently prominent
in the public mind. The force of *Chesterfield* would seem to derive
in good part from its prominence from the advertising of the ciga-
rette. Apart from *aficionados* of that smoke the public must feel in-
different about it — though surely not unconscious of it. Supposing
that such a symbol as *Chesterfield* is widely effective outside a circle
of smokers, it appears that its power is partly due to the mere fact of
its dissemination, even though the word's emotional tone for most
people be nearly neutral.

Two types of multiple reference remain to be noticed. The first
is out-and-out punning, presumably exemplified among develop-
ment names by such forms as *Keen, Monaco, Ruby,* and *Byrd* —
all noticed earlier in this paper.

Another kind of element makes suggestions as "available irrele-
vances" — that is, as resultants of some accidental resemblance of
sound or of spelling between the elements in question and other
elements that may be etymologically, and by usual description
semantically, unrelated; but apart from any presumptive intention
to pun. The possibilities of *manor*, put forward in Section 4, furnish
the prototype of the operations of this class. Similarly, *holme* is
likely to be not far from *home* in "meaning," being pronounced
identically. The element *fold* probably carries some of the value of
enfold, as that word is used in popular romantic songs and fiction;
while *wold*, in sound (as well as by its resemblance to *old*) may carry
some force of fashionable antiquity. It seems safe to say that *croft*
has, peripherally, some value of *soft* with favorable tone.

Our first multiple-referent groups, then, have potentialities for
multiple suggestion because a given word or element possesses two
or more applications (however imperfectly some of the references
may be realized by some persons). The last-mentioned group calls

up words or associations through accidental resemblances of sound or spelling.

A name may partake of both available irrelevance and a more "rational" type of suggestion (indirect symbolism on the allusive plane). *Ardmore Village* may be supposed to be primarily attractive as an "English" name, with echoes of the Forest of Arden present for some persons. But semantic lines in *Ardmore* may also run to *ardent*, especially with erotic tone; and to *moor* as the setting of romantic fiction and to *more* as the signature of plenteousness or even of a bargain.

It is evident that not all the possibilities in a multiply-referent name will be potent for all persons; even when all possibilities do operate they act with different degrees of conscious and unconscious force. The writer's debt here to William Empson's explications will be recognized.[114] A full description of the semantic content of a multiply-suggestive name, then, would cover the ways in which its several suggestions operate — in consciousness and unconsciousness — for a representative sector of the population using the name, as well as for the bestower of the name.

At one end of a resultant scale would be those persons whose verbal sensitivity is such that for them all suggestions of a name would be activated. The remainder of the population would be arranged in descending order of suggestion-response. At the foot of the distribution would be those unable to isolate any of the suggestions contained in the name. For the latter the names might be described as solely phonetic phenomena (if any linguistic elements should be so described). Synthetic names based on personal names may be classified among those drawing strength largely from phonetic value; thus, apparently, *Luberne*. If an attempt were made to ascertain the force of names on this basis, undoubtedly the numerousness of suggestions would be found to be an oversimplified criterion. Problems of the quality of suggestions would enter — e.g., in terms of clearness and "richness."

To the degree that symbolic values of development names elude identification, one is inclined to think that some affective charm must reside in names simply as concatenations of speech sounds. On this head it is asked here whether the sounds $[\alpha^r]$, $[\varepsilon l]$, and

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[114] William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, 2nd ed. (London, 1947).

[mɔʳ] do not carry some special satisfactions. Exemplifications are in *Harwick Homes* (Farmingdale, L.I.), *Marbourne Homes* (Bethpage, L.I.), *Mar-Gen Homes* (Oceanside, L.I.), *Marlane Homes* (Whitestone, Queens), *Marlen Homes* (one at East Hempstead, another at North Bellmore, L.I.), and *Milbar Heath* (NI 1947); *Delham* (Saddle River Township, N.J.), *Delworth Homes* (Freeport, L.I.), and names beginning with *Bel, Bell,* and *Belle;* *Altamore Farm* (TSN 1939), *Avonmore Park* (TSN 1895), *Barmore Heights* (Norwalk, Conn.), and *Ritzmore Park* (NI 1924). These phonetic elements — and others might be cited — are notable in trade names in general.[115]

A curious name, presumably mainly phonetic in its appeal, is *Revilo Heights* (in Rosedale, Queens, according to NI, and of date 1925). The attributive term of this name is probably pronounced [ˈrɛvɪlou], with *revel* the base, rather than *revile.*[116] *Cheverly Estates* (1948), *Culluloo Park* (1915), *Ormond* (1946), *Ormonde Park* (1906), and *Reyam Manor* (1928) — all from NI — are other examples whose charm might be attributed mainly to phonetic values; any references that such names may have for their originators are likely lost on the public. Perhaps the phonetic question can best be viewed in the light of commercial names as a body, rather than only within the naming sphere here under consideration.

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[115] Cf. among commercial names *Conmar* zippers, *Mar-Gro* brassieres, and *Intra-Mar/Shipping Corp./Air Freight Division* (seen on a truck); *Bellwood Shoe Co., Bel-Mar Undergarment Co., Bel-Mor Knitwear, Belle-Sharmeer Stockings; Jay-Mor Restaurant* (all seen in New York City), *Traymore Hotel* (Atlantic City, N.J.), and five firms having *Worthmore* as the first word of their names and one *Worthmor,* listed in the *Manhattan, New York City, Telephone Directory, 1949–1950 Issue.* The foregoing *Bell* and *Bel* examples are from the same listing, where others can be found. *Kenmore* is the name of a line of electrical appliances of Sears, Roebuck and Company.

For *mar* the possible denotative proximity of *marvelous* must be noted. Also, in some formations that combine parts of given-names, the syllable *mar* may represent the first part of, e.g., *Mary* or *Martha.* Symbolic possibilities for *bel,* etc. were noted earlier.

[116] The writer has seen *Revilo* as the name of a comfortable-looking motor cruiser thirty-five or forty feet long. Aside from the possibility that the person who selects or creates such a name does not know the word *revile,* questions are raised about the conditions under which undesired suggestions in an expression may be inhibited.

Inhibition of inappropriate suggestions must take place with the use of *Wood-lawn* in development names. *Woodlawn* is the name of a well-known cemetery of

The frequent occurrence of forms that have little direct-symbolic value, the various and vague functioning of indirect-symbolic allusive forms, the somewhat paradoxical character of emotive values in such names as the "British" group, the repetitive use of many forms — these and other features of the names invite to speculation on the reasons for the general acceptance of development names.

It seems evident that many development names are the food of fantasy. The possibilities of fantasy of social elevation and of the romantic West have been suggested in earlier parts of this paper. (The themes just mentioned are familiar enough in much advertising for, e.g., clothing, travel, and entertainment.) Again it has been suggested that fame as a generalized quality (cf. *Chesterfield* above) may furnish agreeable tone to a name-element, perhaps with little or no symbolic content in operation. Psychoanalysis might maintain that many allusions to natural beauty involve sexual symbolism that would function even more unconsciously.[117]

But the potency of the "dream-work" present in the names obtains a special force, I surmise, from the circumstance that this dreamwork is conveyed in names. Of pertinence here, I think, is the concept of the linguistic field.

The Field Theory

The linguistic field has been conceived in various ways. Referring to the field conception of Trier, Stephen Ullmann mentions[118] "a closely knit and articulated lexical sphere where the significance of each unit was determined by its neighbors, with their semantic areas reciprocally limiting one another and dividing up and covering the whole sphere between them." As to a conception of Ipsen's, Ullmann finds that it depends on linguistic criteria: "formal and

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New York City. Nevertheless *Woodlawn Terrace* was filed as a development name in Nassau County in 1907, *Woodlawn Park* in 1924. A colony named *Woodlawn Park*, at Fanwood, N.J., was announced in *NYT* Aug. 19, 1951, R 1/6.

Contextual inhibition of "unwanted" suggestions is a subject that has not, to the writer's knowledge, been canvassed. Cf. remarks above on *Hilldale Heights, Sunken Meadow Heights*, etc., names which seem to carry contradictory ideas.

[117] Cf. Sigmund Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, rev. ed., tr. Joan Riviere (Garden City, N.Y., 1938), pp. 139, 141.

[118] *Op.cit.*, p. 157.

functional assimilation, the constitution of lexical groups cemented
by tangible morphologic and semantic marks."[119] Again: "Porzig's
fields are simple relationships of the type 'verb + inherent subject
or object' ('dog' — 'bark'). Those of Jolles are correlative pairs
like 'right — left' ..."[120]

Perhaps the field conceptions of Trier, Ipsen, Porzig, and Jolles
will be comprehended in the statement that a linguistic field consists
of a sector of the vocabulary (of whatever language) that possesses
distinctive characteristics derived from relations among referents
or among features of form or function.

It is hypothesized here that (1) names constitute a linguistic
field characterized by function; (2) the onomastic field-effect is such
as (a) to inhibit ordinary expectations of reference vis-à-vis the
component forms of names that are compound, as development
names often are; (b) to inhibit ordinary expectations of morpho-
logical contrast among units constituting the field. It may be clear
that item 2b refers to the repetitious employment of some forms
among names — in the present case, among development names.

By "ordinary" expectations are meant the expectations obtaining
among nonproper names.

The validity of the foregoing hypothesis is supported, I think,
by the fact that in spite of possible referential disorder and repeti-
tious character of development names, native speakers of English
do not appear to find them in conflict with patterns of English
langue. Confronted by a compound development name, most of
the relevant public do not require, for the component forms, the
word (morpheme)-reference-referent relationships that would be
required outside the onomastic field. The changed value of the
component forms might be likened to the changed value of a given
note or chord as tonality changes in music. To take the most obvi-
ous example, when the tonality of F has been established the triad
on C has a different meaning (dominant) from what it will have
(tonic) when the tonality becomes C. I attach more than figurative

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[119] *Ibid.*, p. 158.

[120] *Ibid.*, p. 158. Besides Ullmann's review of field theories, see that of Suzanne
Öhman ("Theories of the Linguistic Field," *Word*, 9 [1953], 123–34), whose em-
phases, including the importance attached to Porzig's formulation, differ inter-
estingly from those of Ullmann.

importance to this musical comparison. I venture to say that in a comprehensive description of signs an identity of psychological processes will be discovered as between a shift in the referential exactitude of name-components (such as might be a function of the onomastic field) and a shift in musical key.[121]

The history of naming suggests circumstances that may have made for an onomastic field-effect. The origin of place names as appellatives has been remarked for some languages at least. Appellative character also seems to loom large in early forms of personal names.[122] Thus it appears that the hypostasization "proper name" was a relatively late development in language. Now this hypostasization must have marked a notable advance in social organization. Whether applied to places or to persons, the proper name helped to organize experience and crystallize social structure. With the advent of "proper name" the conglomerate topography became in a sense "mapped." The mass of human beings became individually distinguishable; the essentials of social hierarchy, even of social responsibility, were furthered.[123] Thus (present speculation continues) "name" came to be highly valued.

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[121] I do not find directly pertinent considerations in Charles Morris, *Signs, Language and Behavior*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1946) or in Suzanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1958), in which the author discusses (Ch. 8) musical symbolism.

[122] On both kinds of names see Andrew Lang's part of the article "Name" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed. (1911). Lang writes: "As to the meaning and nature of ancient local names, they are as a rule purely descriptive. A river is called by some word which merely signifies 'the water'; a hill has a name which means no more than 'the point,' 'the peak,' 'the castle.'"

However, Lang asserts that "the Celtic names (like those which the red men left in America, or the blacks in Australia) are musical with poetic fancy, and filled with interest in the aspects and the sentiment of nature." Nils Magnus Holmer seems to differ with this view of American Indian names, while furnishing corroboration of the appellative origin of most ancient place names in the languages to which he refers: "It may be said in general ... that the American Indian place names, in so far as they are used by native speakers, are still nothing but appellatives, or in any case preserve much more of the original appellative character than most Old World place names. For although the latter too are appellatives in their origin (at least in the majority of cases) they have in the course of time assumed the character of proper names, which implies, among other things, that their meaning is seldom understood or regarded." (*Indian Place Names in North America* [Cambridge, 1948],p. 41).

[123] Cf. the following: "As objects and events are named, they are experienced, for names evoke the qualities of the social relation in which they are used. We

The values attached to this social structuring force of naming passed into *langue*. Proper names as a "field" are distinguished by the special values that are different from those of ordinary denotation and even from the emotive values resulting from associations of referents of nonproper names. Apart from denotation and variant emotive values, the proper names *Lily* and *Violet* possess a semantic element not present in the nouns *lily* and *violet*. Conversely the presence of the special quality residing in "name" inhibits the ordinary expectations of symbolic value in nononomastic constituents of names.[124] The effective element might be called the onomastiseme.[125]

It is not maintained that the development of the onomastiseme was in the main a conscious process, though it may have been more so than most features of *langue*. On the question of purposive employment of the onomastiseme, one is reminded of the magical powers attached to names in primitive societies;[126] taboos on the utterance of some names are part of the relevant considerations

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cannot act with one another or, for that matter, toward things, until we have learned the names which society has given to such action." (Hugh Dalziel Duncan, *Language and Literature in Society* [Chicago, 1953], pp. 135–36).

[124] An analogous process took place in Indo-European personal names. Elizabeth G. Withycombe describes the manner in which a personal name was formed by the compounding of two elements; but, in most IE languages, apparently without particular regard for the meaning of the elements. (*The Oxford Dictionary of English Christian Names* [New York, 1947 (1945)], pp. xiii–xiv).

[125] In "A System for the Description of Semantic Elements" (*Word*, 7 [1951], 1–14), Eugene A. Nida affirms the need for, and the possibility of, semantic studies. He proposes to describe meaning in terms of the ethnolinguistic environment. This leads to a distinction between the linguiseme ("a minimal feature of meaning based on the linguistic context") and the ethnoseme, which "identifies a minimal feature of meaning based on the ethnological context." Analytical elements subsequently described included semes, sememes, episemes, episememes, etc. It seems to me that Nida's system still leaves the question, How isolate the ethnoseme(s) in such a form as a development name? Nida would seem to dispose of some problems too shortly in his view (p. 4) that the statement of the observable relationships [among forms] "is usually not too difficult in a language which is a part of the culture in which we ourselves live (i.e. Western European)."

Of less pertinence to semantic problems of development names is Paul L. Garvin's "A Descriptive Technique for the Treatment of Meaning," (*Language*, 34 [1958], 1–32), in which the author demonstrates the semantic study of the category of obviation in Kutenai — i.e., the study of a grammatical feature.

[126] See, e.g., Ogden and Richards, *op. cit.*, pp. 24–28 and 36–37.

here. Name magic in its various aspects suggests the possibility that at some stages of social evolution the onomastiseme is exploited in the interests of maintaining the social order.

By these lights acceptance of development names whose constituents are minimally symbolic — sometimes only ostensibly symbolic — comes about as follows: The occurrence of "name" changes the "tonality" of the discourse in respect to names that occur in it. With this change in "tonality" the hearer or reader ceases to require that purported symbolism of allusive name components be available within the name's sphere of reference. The factor causing this inhibition of referential requirements might be called the onomastiseme, which is a function residing in *langue*. In effect the onomastiseme is an attenuated form of name magic, which itself prevailed or has prevailed because of the value consciously or unconsciously attached to the social-structuring effects of proper names.

Questions of Method

Additional study of development names might profitably carry further some of the procedures described in the present paper and might initiate others. The count of unbound and bound forms, in Part I, is, in the expression of David W. Reed, an example of "quantitative pre-analyses."[127] In order to judge the representativeness and the significance of at least some of the proportions arrived at for the several forms, the technique of the standard error should be applied, as Reed makes clear. A count of forms, with similar rigorous handling, would be desirable for other parts of the study.

Again, in view of the difficulty of determining the semantic content of a given development name, it is obvious that the semantic classification of names, adopted above, is in a sense a rough expedient, though useful, it is hoped, in a preliminary survey. A given development name might well be seen as belonging to more than one of the semantic categories set up. Moreover, when two semantic themes — e.g., British tone and natural beauty — are present, the proportions in which they are operative are of moment and surely defy present methods of investigation. Other cases of multiple

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[127] David W. Reed, "A Statistical Approach to Quantitative Linguistic Analysis," *Word*, 5 (1949), 235–47.

suggestion — as when a name of British origin has American his-
torical associations and is of frequent occurrence as a place name —
are even more opaque. Nor is there reason to believe that the se-
mantic content of a given development name is the same for all
members of the relevant population.

As a general principle of inquiry into such a corpus as develop-
ment names, it might be useful to define the characteristics of names
associated with some precisely determinable social feature or
features. Apropos of development names the prices of the properties
included in the developments suggests itself as such a precisely
determinable feature.[128] The names of developments whose com-
ponent properties fall within a given price range would be compared
with those occurring in other price ranges. At least some broad
differences might be discoverable. These differences would seem to
reflect the nature of name acceptance on various income levels —
and, because of the known correlation between income and edu-
cation, on various educational levels.

Once the differences had been thus generally defined, a relatively
small number of interviews might sharpen the definitions. Inter-
viewers might ask for each informant's responses to a selected group
of names. Some of the names would be among those found accept-
able to the informant's known or inferred economic level; other
names would be typically associated with developments designed
for buyers at some economic distance from the informant. In-
formation about the informant's education should be obtainable
in the interview; hence it should be possible to heighten the ac-
curacy of the correlation between name-style acceptance and edu-
cational level.

Another source of light might be contexts — e.g., advertising —
in which the names occur. In the present study contextual material
was drawn on in Section 5, under the heading "Themes in the
Advertising of Developments."

If the hypothesis of the social-structuring function of names is
tenable, the attention given to economic and educational levels in
this approach would seem to have special relevance. Moreover the
interview would bring out some subjective elements of response in

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[128] These prices were not ascertainable from NI and TSN, which were among the
main sources for the present study. Prices are usually included in advertisements for
developments.

the relevant population. Until the linguistic millennium brings means of measuring the subjective objectively, the subjective will have to be accepted with the rest of the universe. However, it is the supposition here that the teasing obscurities of meaning can be somewhat illuminated by the application of criteria based on measurable factors.

In any event perhaps it is unnecessary to be entirely pessimistic about the usefulness of subjective evidence in semantic questions. Apropos is Karl Mannheim's warning against dangers of the quantitative approach to the social sciences — of "This measurement mania, especially as it developed in the U.S.A." He writes:

Thus there are two unprofitable tendencies arising from overestimating the significance of measurement: (*a*) we tend to forget the real motives and interests which originally determined the choice of our problem and its formulation, and (*b*) we neglect all avenues of approach to reality which do not lend themselves to measurement and we call those aspects of an object real which corresponds to the limited idea of matter-of-factness.[129]

Suggestive here too is an article by Sir Edmund Whittaker, "Eddington's Principle in the Philosophy of Science."[130] Whittaker sets forth the following principle:

All the quantitative propositions of physics, that is, the exact values of the pure numbers that are constants of science, may be deduced by logical reasoning from qualitative assertions, without making any use of quantitative data derived from observation.

The question takes form: Can quantitative values be similarly arrived at from qualitative assertions in the social sciences and — if a distinction is to be made — in language?

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[129] Foreword of *The Feminine Character* by Viola Klein (New York, 1949 [1946]), p. xiii.

[130] *American Scientist*, 40 (1952), p. 46.