At the turn of the century Philadelphia was a booming manufacturing city, an important port, and a major publishing and financial center. It was also a leader in medical research and training, and in higher education in general, the University of Pennsylvania in particular at that time widely respected for new programs begun under the dynamic leadership of provost William Pepper. But up-to-date aspects of Philadelphia were largely ignored by visiting writers. To them, its rivals New York and Chicago were modern cities, not Philadelphia. The best known of these negative assessments is Lincoln Steffen's article in McClure's (later published in The Shame of the Cities) in which he coined the famous "corrupt and contented" phrase that has almost become the exclusive property of Philadelphia, so far as word association is concerned. For Steffens, Philadelphia was a city of plump, old-fashioned Quakers with the mein, if not the morals, of founder William Penn.

Why Philadelphia was viewed as a quaint anachronism out of the mainstream of modern America? And why did writers view New York and Chicago so differently when Philadelphia in many respects was modern too? These are important questions because the stereotypes that evolved by the turn of the century were quite influential, not only in terms of urban rivalries but in how residents perceived themselves, it being fair to say that in many ways the prestige of where we live influences our own personal self-esteem. Stereotypes of any kind of course are notoriously subjective and difficult to analyze, but let us make an attempt at least to see how the Philadelphia stereotype evolved. Some statistics provide a reasonably objective starting point.
In 1910 the federal census on manufacturers noted the "great diversity" in Philadelphia. Of the 264 industries listed in the census, 211 were reported in the city, a fact that impressed the Census Bureau and reflected the prosperity Philadelphia industry enjoyed. The biggest industry in terms of dollars was textiles, which in the combined value of all the various textile products manufactured in Philadelphia was more than double the value of the products of its nearest rival. Thirty-two percent of the nation's carpets and rugs, twenty-two percent of its felt hats, twelve percent of its hosiery and knit goods and twelve percent of its woolen and worsted goods came from Philadelphia mills, according to the federal census. Home of the Baldwin words, Philadelphia was also the world's leading manufacturer of locomotives, and the yards along the Delaware made the river second only to the Clyde in Scotland as a ship-building center.

The city was also booming in population growth, averaging an increase of over 200,000 between 1880 and 1910 as the city's population nearly doubled from 847,170 to 1,549,008. To put those figures in perspective, the 256,311 increase between 1900 and 1910 was more than the total population of Kansas City (248,381) or Seattle (237,194) or Denver (213,381) and far more than total population of Atlanta (154,839) or Houston (138,276), twice the total population of Omaha (124,096) and nearly four times the population of San Diego (39,578). In fact in 1910 only forty-four cities in the United States had a population over 100,000, so that Philadelphia would have ranked 17th simply on the basis of the population added between 1900 and 1910.

All these impressive statistics notwithstanding, Philadelphia did not have a boom town image at the turn of the century. Growth after all is relative, and Philadelphia had not fared well compared to its two biggest rivals, New York and Chicago. New York had grown even more impressively in population during the same period, jumping from 1.9 million to 4.7 million, and during the decade between 1900 and 1910 it increased a whopping 1.3 million. Chicago had also increased dramatically in population from approximately 503,000 in 1880 to 2.2 million by 1910, and it was averaging an increase of some 500,000 a decade or twice Philadelphia's growth rate. The story was same with manufacturing statistics. Philadelphia might outrank lesser rivals, but its 8,379 manufacturing establishments in 1910 were fewer than those in Chicago (9,656) and only a quarter of those in New York (25,938). Its total value of manufactured products ($746.1 million) was also well behind New York ($2.1 billion) and Chicago ($1.2 billion).

In terms of its industrial image, Philadelphia perhaps suffered most
from the phenomenal growth of Chicago. Little more than a military outpost and a handful of cabins in the early 1800s, Chicago had grown explosively along with the rest of the midwest and had passed Philadelphia in the 1890 population census and in the 1900 manufacturing census. With its steel mills and stockyards and cultivated frontier brashness, Chicago made old Philadelphia look staid indeed. Philadelphia’s city fathers knew they had an image problem, and they addressed the issue in a history of the city they commissioned for distribution at the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893.

According to the history’s author, Philadelphia was being “blamed for being too conservative, for not being more noisy, more boisterous and bustling” but this was because most visitors saw only the historic shrines like Independence Hall and the First Bank of the United States, which were in old neighborhoods near the Delaware where there was only a tiny fraction of Philadelphia’s factories. Industrial Philadelphia was spread throughout the vast metropolis; suburban districts like Kensington, Frankfort, Tacony, Germantown and Manayunk were “cities in themselves, centers of stupendous manufactories” where “manufactures and industry incessant, unwearying and endless send forth their music in an atmosphere electrical, vibratory and resonant with the vitalizing subtlety and force of combined mechanical and human action.” If more visitors toured the industrial district and experienced the “atmosphere electrical,” the author said, Philadelphia would have a more progressive image.

Unfortunately image-changing was not all that easy because Philadelphia was in fact different from other cities in some important ways. Philadelphia, for instance, had significantly fewer “new” immigrants from eastern and southern Europe than many other cities. Philadelphia had a reputation as a skilled worker’s town; unskilled immigrants in the late 19th century tended to bypass it altogether or pass through it for the anthracite mines of northeastern Pennsylvania or the steel mills of Pittsburgh, or head even further west to industrial centers like Cleveland and Chicago.

With eight percent foreign-born from the Austro-Hungarian empire in 1910, for example, Philadelphia had fewer than coal towns like Reading (19%) and Wilkes-Barres (18%), or Pittsburgh (20%). Not all the new immigrants shunned Philadelphia, but in 1910 there were nearly as many foreign-born from the British Isles (England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales) as there were from Italy and Russia (128,910 to 136,004). In fact as late as 1890 fifty-nine percent of Philadelphia’s foreign-born were from the British Isles, compared to forty percent in
New York and thirty-one percent in Chicago. By 1910 the percentage had dropped to thirty-four percent, but this was still significantly higher than in New York (18%) or Chicago (14%).

So many English in fact came to Philadelphia in the 19th century that they made cricket a popular sport. Cricket, of course, has been played in Philadelphia since colonial times, but the game really did not catch on until the middle of the 19th century when mill workers flooded into the city from Midland textile towns like Nottingham and Lancaster where cricket was king. Over two hundred cricket clubs were organized in Philadelphia and the suburbs at one time or another in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Most of the clubs were informal associations of millhands or office workers who got together at a neighborhood park to play in the evening, like many club softball teams do today. But a few were far more ambitious, with spacious clubhouses, pavilions and grandstands that could seat several thousand spectators. Germantown, Merion, Philadelphia in Chestnut Hill and Belmont in southwest Philadelphia were clubs of this calibre, and English visitors in the 1890s were especially impressed since London at that time had only two of comparable size.

Matches at the Germantown Club usually drew the largest crowds because both the original club grounds in the Nicetown section of North Philadelphia and its second and permanent home near Wissahickon Avenue in lower Germantown were close to many mills, and workers would flock to important matches. Mills were even known to close down on the day of an important match, as many did in 1878 when a Philadelphia all-star team and a visiting Australian team played their final match.

English mill workers of course were not the only ones who appreciated the game, collegians at Haverford and the University of Pennsylvania being active boosters, and these young gentlemen gave the game a new genteel respectability that led to the founding of the elite clubs. But the bond with the Midlands cricket traditions was strong, and even the elite clubs kept up those ties by hiring English coaches. Germantown brought over George Bromhead from Nottingham, and he served as head coach and head groundsman for forty years, from 1881 to his death in 1921. Percy Clark, a native Philadelphian who was a leading player in his day, reminisced that Bromhead "was not so much a man as an institution; all cricketers who knew him love him for his soldiness and soundness, his constant good nature and his warm heart." Cornelius Weygandt, an English professor at the University of Pennsylvania and well-known author in his day, remembered growing up in Germantown...
in the 1870s and 1880s when cricket was "the" game to play.\footnote{8}

There was baseball on corner lots, but more than half of the town's boys, both mill hands' sons and sons of the "carriage folks," played cricket. In the long back yards of Walnut Lane where I was born we played cricket with a soap-box for wickets and whatever number of boys were available. Two were sufficient, one to bowl and one to bat, though generally we could get together eight or ten and have sides. When such a group was playing at Brockie's, a hundred other such groups were cricketing in this informal fashion in a hundred other yards or playgrounds.

By the 1890s Philadelphians played the game so well that their teams played "first class" competition or the equivalent of major league teams when they made a tour of England every three to five years. Given this high level of play and the large number of English immigrants, it is not surprising that the game was a popular spectator sport in Philadelphia. After having only an average of eight hundred persons attend their matches in New York, an English team in 1897 was overwhelmed when four thousand Philadelphians showed up for their first match there and nine thousand for their second one. The captain of the English team exaggerated a bit when he wrote later that baseball in Philadelphia was "quite a secondary consideration," compared to cricket, but he certainly was right in saying that the city had a "genuine enthusiasm" for the English sport.\footnote{9}

The popularity of cricket was frequently cited as evidence that Philadelphia was different from other American cities in an English sort of way, but observers also pointed to other examples such as the Philadelphian love of country life and gentleman farming; and the popularity of riding and fox hunting. Philadelphia was also often compared to London, which it did resemble in some respects, with its profusion of Georgian-style red brick buildings, and its narrow streets and quaint courtyards called "alleys," and fashionable small parks like those at Washington and Rittenhouse Squares.\footnote{10}

Probably the most significant English similarity, so far as images are concerned, was the attitude among old Philadelphia elites that careers in industry or commerce were not quite as prestigious as those in fields like finance or law, medicine and the professions. No doubt this was true in part because the early Philadelphia fortunes were made in investments and banking, but the attitude was a bit backward at the turn of the century in the sense that industry and commerce were then the backbone of the local economy. Moreover, the old elites reinforced their conserva-
Market Street was in fact something of a residential dividing line between the old and new money. In an article in *Harper’s Weekly* in 1894, Charles Davis noted that on one side of the street “lies the new town of Philadelphia,” where there were “wide avenues, magnificent homes generous and modern in its every outline.” On the other side of Market, “quite peacefully rests the old town of Philadelphia, with narrow streets, old brick houses, and shrouded in the conservatism which gave the city its individuality two hundred years ago.” The “new town has the money and progression of a modern Western city, with the boom still on.” On the other hand old Philadelphia had little interest in such things as rapid transit, he says. “It prefers walking, or an occasional ride on the horse-car. If it has thrown aside the shad belly coat and the wide-brimmed hat of its Quaker ancestors, it cannot altogether free itself from the blood which ran through the splendid men who once wore these quaint clothes.”

Notwithstanding the modern city he sees north of Market, it is the “old” Philadelphia that charms Davis, especially its “calm, leisurely temper.” Editors of Philadelphia papers, he says, should not resent jokes about the city’s quiet life. They prepare long lists of Philadelphia industries, and try to assure the world that their city is a great and always increasing commercial centre. Their defense, it seems to me, if they feel called upon to make one, lies in the fact that they discovered how to live before nine-tenth of the cities in America were ever built, and have stuck to that mode of life ever since. The restful peace which pervades the old city, and which causes the paragraphers, so much amusement, is, after all, its first virtue.

The symbolic center of old Philadelphia was Rittenhouse Square, which was located between 18th and 19th streets with Walnut and Spruce streets on the north and south. Ironically in its earlier years, that part of town had not been very fashionable at all. Far from the center of the colonial Philadelphia which grew up along the banks of Delaware River, the Rittenhouse district until the 1830s was more of a suburban slum, with brickyards and a scattering of modest rowhouse homes for workingmen who labored in the coal yards and other industrial sites along the nearby Schuylkill River. But as the city began to move westward, the real estate values began to climb, and so did the status of the residents. By the turn of the century, the blocks facing Rittenhouse
Square, and those nearby on the west side to 22nd Street, had become the most fashionable district in the city.  

Each Sunday residents of the houses on the square and nearby streets passed through the square on their way to and from church services, pausing to exchange pleasantries, “to see and been seen in what was called the weekly “church parade.” The square was also the setting for other informal socializing of the neighborhood residents; on sunny days in June debutantes wearing summery frocks and holding parasols could be seen in the square flirting demurely with eligible young bachelors who lunched at the exclusive Rittenhouse Club across the street. As Davis put it, Rittenhouse Square was “the stage on which nearly all of the old Philadelphians have played some of their most important parts.”

Henry James was another visitor who was impressed with the old-fashioned qualities of the Philadelphia. On a visit to the United States in 1906 after many years of living in England, James visited Philadelphia for a few days and stayed at one of the residential squares which he does not identify but it no doubt was Rittenhouse, given his own patrician background. James felt that Philadelphia did not “bristle” like other American cities. Philadelphia had “inherent habits of sociability, gayety, gallantry” amid a sense of Quaker tradition where “ideally, for the picture, up and down the uniform streets, one should see a bland, broad-brimmed gentleman, or a bonneted, kerchiefed, mittened lady, on every little flight of white steps.” What made Philadelphia so special for James was that it seemed to represent an organic unity in its social relations. Unlike New York, Boston or Chicago whose “cadres” were a third empty and another third “objectiveally filled,” Philadelphia’s all had the right stuff. “It was a society in which every individual was as many times over cousin, uncle, aunt, niece and so on through the list,” and within these relations a “scheme of security, in a community, has been worked out.”

In his view, Philadelphia was simply Rittenhouse Square writ large—a big, extended family, a happy one too, and happily not changing with the times. To be sure, James was aware that Philadelphia had its share of immigrant newcomers, including many from eastern and southern Europe. The latter he said you could encounter “almost anywhere” in the city. James did not “pretend to know how many new immigrants have settled on the bland banks of the Delaware,” and in his short stay he had not visted the “vast quarter” where “their hordes gathered.” James justified his disinterest because “some virtue in the air” had reduced “thier presence, or their effect to naught.” He was especially impressed by how little influence the new immigrants seemed to have in
comparison to New York where “there are few of its agitations in which they have not something to say.” How could James make such generalizations? He admitted not visiting any of the new immigrant neighborhoods, so it is not surprising that he felt the new ethnic groups did not exert any influence. Had he ventured away from Rittenhouse Square to districts like Port Richmond or South Philadelphia (the latter where the largest Italian and Jewish neighborhoods were located), James might have felt differently, especially about the role of the new Philadelphians in agitating for labor reform.

In any event, ethnic Philadelphia did not exist so far as James was concerned, nor did it really for another writer for Harper’s Monthly whose article was also published in 1906. For Charles Henry White, the modern city was simply a departure point for the journey to the old colonial district along the Delaware. Riding a streetcar “into what seemed another century,” White gazes in wonder at the “long rows of colonial brick houses half shrouded in the shadow of their heavy overhanging cornices,” and admires “the interminable progression of dormer windows and the strange fantasia of chimneys with their pots askew.”

White was charmed by the “alleys”—the narrow side streets that were sliced between the broad blocks of Penn’s original Plan—which were “clean, decent and well scrubbed, and “from their coved cornices to the most insignificant mouldings in the door panels there is a well-bred formality and simplicity of motive.” The cobblestone streets, “under the pressure of many generations,” rose and fell “in delightful hollows” while overhead the peeling paint of weatherbeaten facades revealed “bricks in checkerboard design, bleached to a delicate salmon, with here and there soft golden umbers and liquid grays—the color of quality tapestry.”

The native Philadelphians too, White found charming, having enjoyed good company in the neighborhood saloon in Cuthbert Alley where he stayed. “There is enough of interest in the friends one makes in a day’s idling among the floating population of this quaint corner to leave a lasting impression of the Philadelphian’s happy capacity for an intelligent appreciation of an infinite number of things apart from the mechanical daily routine. It is this civic character of the Philadelphian that forms such a striking contrast between him and his matter-of-fact brother in New York.” In White’s view, “His mode of living, the happy tradition of his environment, and the fortuitous conditions which enable him to touch the past at innumerable points are largely responsible for it, and make it a common occurrence for the Philadelphian to daily pass
the house occupied by his grandfather as a matter of course, while we New Yorkers, who have long since sold our grandsires' bricks to the wrecking firm, pass them without a twinge of conscience, even though they stare at us in mute protest from the rear wall of some Harlem dwelling."

It would be misleading indeed to assume that nobody moved in Philadelphia or that all residents of alleys in Philadelphia were as happy-go-lucky sorts as those White described, just as it was misleading to think of Philadelphia as Rittenhouse Square, the way James did. But realities notwithstanding, writers preferred to limn Philadelphia in picturesque ways, and by the eve of World War I the stereotype was fully established. In his book, *The Personality of American Cities* (1913) Edward Hungerford called New York the "City of the Sleepless Eye" which "hummed at any hour of the lonely hours of the night." Chicago was also portrayed in dynamic terms: awake before dawn, its "nervous little suburban trains . . . reaching into her heart from South, from North, from West" while "a might army of trucks and wagons send up a great wave of noise and clatter."24

By contrast Philadelphia was calm and almost bucolic, a city which was best appreciated in the morning by approaching it on foot along one of the historic turnpikes north of the city where you could see "fat farms" and "rich land down in the valleys" and where you could chat a while with a genial tollkeeper whose stories about the pike "would make it worth the waiting."25 Through venerable hamlets like Spring House and Plymouth Meeting the traveler tramps to the suburban districts within the city limits and down Germantown Avenue, through Chestnut Hill and Mount Airy to Germantown itself, where bronze tablets record the history that has marched on before you "down this same busy street." At one house the visitor learns that George Washington met there with his officers on the eve of the Battle of Germantown. He moves along to the Chew Mansion which was "set even today in its own deep grounds" and where some of the worst fighting in the battle took place26:

"History! It is spread up and down this main street of Germantown, it slips down the side-streets and up the alleys, into the hospitable front-doors of stout stone-houses. Here it shows its teeth in the bullet-holes of the aged wooden fence back of the Johnson house, and here is the Logan house, the Morris house, the Wend house, the Concord school and the burying-ground. Any resident of
Germantown will tell you what these old houses mean to it, the part they have played in its making.

The traveler continued on his way by trolley to center city, to Franklin's tomb at 5th and Arch Street and the old Meeting House nearby, to the lovely Georgian-style Christ Church whose graceful spire had spiked the skyline along the Delaware River since colonial days, and then to Independence Hall, the "greatest of our shrines" which "no American, who considers himself worthy of the name, can afford not to visit at least once in his lifetime." Hungerford gave no account at all of all the bustling mills and factories he would have passed along the way when he took his trolley ride from Germantown to the historic district around Independence Hall. In his view Philadelphia was simply a treasure house of history, on whose shoulders "Time has laid a gentle hand."  

In fairness to Hungerford, he does mention the modern Philadelphia of hotels and department stores, but only briefly, his main interest of course being those characteristics which made Philadelphia unusual. But it is not altogether clear from the evidence he gives that Philadelphia was so different from New York or Chicago. Hungerford used rural roads to enter Philadelphia, for instance, but one could have tramped along the Boston Post Road into New York or along Green Bay Road to Chicago, with much the same in scenery along the way as in Philadelphia. With the other travel writers, there is the similar problem about evidence. For instance, Davis mentions the "old" and "new" money, and the "new" elite neighborhoods north of Market vying with "old" elite neighborhoods of Rittenhouse Square. These differences existed, but it was not a particularly Philadelphian phenomenon; New York, Chicago and all other major cities being able to supply their own examples. Other cities also had historic districts, albeit not as large as Philadelphia's; nor in most cases anywhere near as old. Chicago's water tower, for instance, was built in the 1860s, but it was a treasured landmark for having survived the 1871 fire.

In any event, if travel writers found Philadelphia quaint, political reporters at the turn of the century considered it downright backward. The best known political critic was Lincoln Steffens, who used the stereotypes about the old-fashioned Quaker city as an effective backdrop for his "Corrupt and Content" article. Here was a city that should have represented the best in American government, he said. Philadelphia was the birthplace of our country and rich in historic tradition; with forty-seven percent of its population native-born of native-born parents,
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it was also “most American of our greater cities” so it could not blame its problems on immigrants. The Quaker City was also “good and intelligent” and it had also long enjoyed “great and widely distributed prosperity.” Philadelphia had every reason to shine as a civic model, Steffens said, yet he found it “the most corrupt city in America,” its citizens “supine,” “asleep,” and “hopeless boss ruled.” “Corrupt and contented,” Philadelphia was a disgrace not only to itself and Pennsylvania “but to the United States and American character.”

How could Steffens find so much wrong with the Quaker City? To answer that, it is necessary to keep in mind the progressive view that a strong two party system was considered necessary in order to give voters some choice. Philadelphia was, for all practical purposes, a one-party town with the Republicans in firm control. The Grand Old Party enjoyed widespread popularity for a variety of reasons. Philadelphia was an industrial city, and it benefitted greatly from the high protective tariffs the Republicans backed. The dominance of the Republicans at the state and national levels in the late 19th and early 20th centuries no doubt helped to keep high the popularity of the local Republican party, given the patronage benefits that flowed to Philadelphia from Washington and Harrisburg.

Memories of the Civil War were also still strong in Philadelphia, the city having been a major hospital and supply center for the Union Army. Gettysburg was just a hundred or so miles from Philadelphia, so the war came very close indeed, and this did little for the popularity of the secessionist Democratic party. In the decades after the war the GOP worked hard to keep those memories fresh by encouraging the sprinkling of Civil War statues all over town, and the rock-ribbed Republican Union League Club, founded during the Civil War to raise troops and money, made especially sure the party wrapped itself in the American flag. To be sure, a token Democratic party remained, with even some Old Philadelphians among their number, but for all practical purposes, Philadelphia was a Republican city.

Unfortunately, voter fraud went hand in hand with the powerful Republican machine, particularly in the red-light and boardinghouse districts near the Delaware River. But public apathy was not so widespread as Steffens claimed. Insurgency often occurred in the middle-class suburban wards where independent Republican candidates won many victories over organization men in council elections. The city government was also not as backward as Steffens implied, at least in basic services like street repair, fire fighting and the like. Major improvements in public health were underway, the biggest project being
a water filtration system that was the largest in the world at the time. Steffens mentions filtration, but only in connection with unsubstantiated claims of corruption on the part of mayor Samuel Ashbridge who played an important role in securing approval for the improvements from the city councilmen in 1899.30

In Steffen's view, corrupt businessmen were responsible for Philadelphia's problems. The businessmen bought the politicians, who in turn bought the voters. Steffens had first presented these ideas in an article in 1901 for *Ainslee's* magazine. The following year Steffens was working for *McClure's* and writing more about municipal corruption. By the time Steffens came to Philadelphia, he had already done articles on St. Louis, Minneapolis and Pittsburgh, and he would go on to write about Chicago and New York; in each city Steffens found the same unhealthy relationship between businessmen and politicians.31 These findings strengthened Steffens' argument, but they weakened the Philadelphia stereotype, since the city seemed much the same as the others so far as its politics were concerned.

While outsiders like Steffens were most influential in shaping the negative image, it is also important to note that some well-known Philadelphians were saying much the same thing. One of the local critics was Clinton Rogers Woodruff, a lawyer who attended Philadelphia's prestigious Central High School and the University of Pennsylvania and was secretary of the city's Municipal League as well as secretary of the National Municipal League.

In an article in 1899 Woodruff labeled the delays in water improvements the "Policy of Procrastination," "Corporate Greed," or "Official Indifference."32 He viewed political deals with the same distain as Steffens, and given their similar outlook, it is not surprising that Woodruff served as Steffens' local contact for background information when he came to Philadelphia to research the "Corrupt and Contented" article.

Woodruff blamed the Philadelphia politicians for the delays in getting safe water, but they were not the only guilty parties. Engineers, for instance, differed in their cost estimates for filters, and physicians argued among themselves over whether or not the filters would work; some of supporters of the old miasma theories were still unwilling to accept the breakthroughs in the new field of bacteriology. In short, procrastination occurred, as Woodruff said, but the complexities are omitted.33

Agnes Repplier was another influential Philadelphian who reinforced the unprogressive image. Like Woodruff, she was well known
outside the city, in her case as a respected author and a regular contributor of essays to *The Atlantic*, *Harper’s*, and other prestigious journals. In a history of Philadelphia published in 1898, she says,

A strong attachment to whatever has been, an equally strong, and often well-founded dislike for innovations, characterize Penn’s city. Her prejudices are ancient, deeply venerated and unconquerable. Strangers within her gates protest vehemently against these prejudices, and explain their absurdity in the clearest and most convincing manner. They waste a great deal of valuable time in this way, and are never quite sure whether they have been listened to or not. If the day ever comes when logic will persuade as easily as it preaches and proves, the face of the earth will be altered, and Philadelphia may change with the changing world. Above all, the Quaker City lacks that discriminating enthusiasm for her own children, and the work of their hands, which enables more zealous towns to rend the skies with shrill paeans of applause, and to crown their favored citizens with bays. Philadelphia, like Marjorie Fleming’s stoical turkey, is ‘more than usual calm’, when her sons and daughters win distinction in any field.

Conservative and opinionated. This unflattering view of Philadelphia from a native Philadelphian gave an added degree of authority to the stereotype. But Repplier had a grudge of her own against the city, over what she felt was a lack of widespread local recognition for her position as one of the leading magazine writers of her day. With Woodruff too, his personal feelings may have influenced his writing. His outspoken interest in reform did not make him popular with the Republican regular organization, and with little hope of going anywhere in politics (he served briefly in the state assembly), Woodruff seemed to relish publicizing Philadelphia’s problems.

In any event, it would probably be fair to say that most Philadelphians were not all that unhappy with the image of an unprogressive city in the sense that progress was not necessarily something valued more highly than the past. This seemed especially so at the turn of the century when Philadelphians realized that they could not keep up in industrial and population race with their bigger rivals. History gave the city a special status; Philadelphia after all was the birthplace of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. These were achievements that upstarts like Chicago could never claim, no matter how much they might grow and glow in the modern era. As Repplier remarked in the introduction to her history,
More impetuous towns speed like meteors on their paths, dazzling the western world by their velocity, and dazzled themselves by their own glitter and glory; but the Quaker City sees them rush by without envy, without ambition, without distaste, without emotions of any kind. She knows, and she has known for many years, what is best for her; and if this best be ever out of reach, it is not by mere swiftness of step she can hope to overtake it. She is content to grow slowly if she can grow symmetrically, and if grace and strength keep pace with her increasing bulk. She is content to face the future if she can hold closely to the past, recalling its lessons, valuing its traditions, respecting its memory, and loving in her cold steadfast fashion the living links which connect her with her honourable history, with her part in the great story of the nation.

In the same year Repplier's book appeared, the city completed major restoration work on Independence Hall with approximately $100,000 in funds from the city and the Society of Colonial Dames and the Daughters of the American Revolution. A museum in the west wing of the ground floor was removed, and the original court room restored. Similar renovations took place on the ground floor in the east room where the Continental Congress met, the intention to make it "not so much a museum of relics" as an exact copy of the original as possible. History would come alive as one viewed the room, which would have "every detail of original furnishing, so far as known . . . even to a great water cooler which stood in the doorway opposite the Speaker's desk." Upstairs (which had been used by the city councils from 1854 to the early 1890s) partitions were torn out to restore the original banqueting room "whose walls in their day echoed with discreet impartiality toasts to King and President, monarchy and republic."39

Philadelphia of course still promotes Independence Hall, which remains the city's top tourist attractions (along with Liberty Bell which was moved to a separate pavilion in 1976). Nearby is Society Hill, the largest neighborhood of 18th and early 19th century homes in North America, lovingly restored in recent decades. This area too is a major tourist attraction, and the visitor's center for Independence National Historical Park (the only downtown National Park in the country) is at Chestnut and Third Street in the heart of Society Hill. The city is still honored as the "Birthplace of Independence," and it has been the site of the major events commemorating the bicentennials of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the writing of the Constitution
in 1787. Visitors mean big dollars to hotels, restaurants and stores and in this sense Philadelphia is understandably sensitive to the potential of the past.

Philadelphia also knows it will never be able to regain its role as the nation’s leading metropolis; it realizes too that it never will be able to compete on equal terms for even convention business with New York or Chicago, notwithstanding the new convention center planned for the Reading terminal complex on east Market Street. In the convention center debate, opponents used these facts (that the new convention hall will not match the size of those in New York, Chicago and several other cities which also have far more hotel rooms) to support their contention that the convention center was not worth the high cost. The state legislature finally approved the project, but in typical Philadelphia fashion a number of her own representatives voted against the bill.40

Another recent episode that reflected the city’s ambivalence in forging new civic policy was the controversy in the spring of 1984 involving Willard G. Rouse 3rd, a member of a repected family of Baltimore developers whose projects include Columbia, a planned community between Baltimore and Washington; the Faneill Hall Marketplace in Boston; Harborplace in Baltimore, as well as the Galley I shopping mall on east Market Street in Philadelphia.41

Rouse proposed a new office tower in center city that would be higher than William Penn’s statue atop the tower on City Hall. There was no city ordinance prohibiting building higher than the tower, which was completed in the 1890s and is approximately forty stories high, but a "gentlemen’s agreement" was recognized by realtors and city officials, which said in effect that 491 feet, or just below Penn’s pedestal, would be the height limit. This was done out of respect for Penn and the City Hall, but the agreement also seems to have been honored for so long because tall buildings in Philadelphia were not economically feasible, given the low demand for office space until recent years.

The agreement had already been broken unofficially—the west tower of Center Square, built in the 1970s, at 15th and Market is 526 feet high, although it is listed at 491 feet; and some six to ten buildings were higher than 491 feet if transmission towers and the like were counted, according to a city planner. But Rouse’s proposal, for a sixty story building to be called One Liberty Place, caused a furor because it meant a dramatic change in the skyline, not to mention a clear break with tradition.42 Local interest was so great that the local public television station aired on all-day “community forum” show on May 1, with experts and residents alike given a chance to voice their views on the
Rouse proposal and the "gentlemen's agreement." The planning commission and the city council approved the project, but not without much soul-searching.

On September 10, 1986 the era of "gentlemen's agreement" officially ended when the steel skeleton of One Liberty Place rose above the statue of William Penn. To mark the topping out at sixty stories (a ten-story tower to be added), Rouse staged a spectacular laser light and fireworks show choreographed to George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in December. The show won Rouse some favorable publicity, but the doubters remained, the Philadelphia Inquirer the next day quoting a cabby who grumbled that "To celebrate something that ruins the charm of the city is a disgrace."

The final verdict on One Liberty Place of course will come only after the project is completed, and the total effect can be assessed, not only to the skyline but on the street level where Rouse will be including new shops and restaurants. But the ending of the "gentlemen's agreement" was noted with much nostalgia in the press, however successful the project may be, and in some ways Philadelphia still is a city that in the words of Repplier has a "strong attachment to whatever has been," and "an equally strong, and often well-founded dislike for innovations." So perhaps there is something in stereotypes afterall?

NOTES


2. There is no history of urban stereotyping, but many social scientists have dealt with the issue. See, for example, Anselm L. Strauss, Images of the City (New Brunswick, N.J., 1976; orig. pub. 1961); Lloyd Rodwin and Robert M. Hollister, eds., Cities of the Mind: Images and Themes of the City in the Social Sciences (New York, 1984); and Andrew Lees, Cities Perceived: Urban Society in European and American Thought, 1820-1940 (New York, 1985). For individual cities, see Robert Fogelson, The Fragmented Metropolis: Los Angeles, 1950-1930 (Cambridge, Ma., 1967); Blaine Brownell, The Urban Ethos...
in the South, 1920–1930 (Baton Rouge, La., 1975); and Carol O’Connor, A Sort of Utopia: Scarsdale, 1897–1981 (Albany, N.Y., 1983). A related study is Kevin Lynch, The Image of the City (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), which examines the subject of urban images literally by looking at cities from an architectural and planning perspective.


4. For a full discussion of the ethnic factor, see Caroline Golab, Immigrant Destinations (Philadelphia, 1977).


6. Lester, Cricket, 57, 63.

7. Ibid., 315–16.


9. P.F. Warner, Cricket in Many Climes (London, 1900), 91, 95. The Morris cricket collection in the Haverford College library has reference works as well as a good deal of material on the history of cricket in the Philadelphia area.


12. Charles Belmont Davis, “The City of Homes,” Harper’s Monthly 89 (June 1894), 4. To be sure, some old elites had homes north of Market Street in those days, but most were in Chestnut Hill or Germantown, which were technically part of the city but considered more like suburbs. Many old elites maintained summer homes there, or on the Main Line (in neighboring Montgomery County), or vacationed at fashionable resorts like Bar Harbor in Maine. But most returned to their homes in “old” Philadelphia when September arrived.


14. See Trina Vaux, ed., Historic Rittenhouse (Phila., 1985), ch 1. The Rittenhouse neighborhood as defined by preservationists and the City Planning Commission includes the entire southwest quadrant of Penn’s original city, which is a district considerably larger than the Rittenhouse Square area itself. Workers continued to live in the larger district after Rittenhouse Square became fashionable. See Dennis Clark, “‘Ramcat’ and Rittenhouse Square: Related Communities,” in William W. Cutler and Howard Gillette, The Divided Metropolis, Social and Spatial Dimensions of Philadelphia, 1800–1975 (Westport, Conn., 1980), 125–140. Rittenhouse Square itself did not remain exclusively Old Philadelphian, White himself quoting a coachman’s remarks that “Nowadays the codfish aristocracy has been driving a lot of the old people out of here.” But the Square neighborhood still has some Old Philadelphians, notwithstanding the ethnic changes over the years.


17. Ibid., 551.

18. Ibid., 546.

19. Ibid., 548.

20. In Work Sights Scranton and Licht show a 1919 strike poster written in Hebrew, Polish and Italian (English also), and the new immigrants were active in the labor
movement in earlier decades. Lane, for example, notes a strike of Jewish textile workers in 1890; *Roots of Violence*, 40.
22. Ibid., 44–45.
23. Ibid., 46–48.
25. Ibid., 77 ff. His starting place was the William Penn Inn in Lower Gwynedd Township, which is still very much in business today, but the adjacent fields to the southeast are now fast filling with expensive tract homes.
26. Ibid., 80–81.
27. Ibid., 84.
28. The water tower remains very much a reminder of Old Chicago, albeit overshadowed by nearby Water Tower Place, a seventy-story complex built in the 1970s that includes an indoor mall, a hotel, offices and forty floors of luxury condominium residences.
31. According to a biographer of S.S. McClure, Steffens was lukewarm about the assignment for *The Shame of the Cities* series, and he took it only after prodding by McClure (Steffens “permitted himself to be thrust upon the road to fame”); Peter Lyons, *Success Story: The Life and Times of S.S. McClure* (New York, 1963), 215–217.
33. Woodruff seemed to favor taking water from new sources far north of the city, but land acquisition and the need for aqueducts made this a very costly option compared to filtering the existing supply from the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers at the city’s doorsteps. Filters would have been needed anyway because bacteriologists had shown that all rivers were potentially dangerous, no matter how pristine they might appear.
34. Repplier wrote over two dozen books and some four hundred essays during her long and productive life which spanned ninety-five years. She died in 1950. For an interesting essay on Repplier, see Lukacs, *Philadelphia: Patricians and Philistines*, 85–146.
35. Repplier, *Philadelphia, The Place and The People* (New York, 1912; orig. pub. 1898), 390. The book went through several printings and editions, but Repplier does not appear to have made any changes in the original text.
36. She would gain widespread recognition in her late years, but in the late 1890s, she was still better known as a writer for *Atlantic* than as a Philadelphian.
37. Native Philadelphians today still seem to enjoy criticizing their home town. The best example perhaps is E. Digby Baltzell who compared the city unfavorably with Boston in his *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia* (Boston, 1979). John Lukacs cannot be called a “native” son—he was born in Hungary and came to Philadelphia after the 1956 uprising—but he has a critical detachment similar to Baltzell, as well as Repplier. In *Patricians and Philistines* he says, “Philadelphia in 1900 was provincial and patrician. Provincial, because, unlike the other great cities of the burgeoning nation, uninterested in sophistication; unlike the older Boston or the newer Chicago, incurious about what was happening in New York. Patrician, because of the close relationship of families composing its principal social and financial institutions; indifferent, rather than hostile, to the rising
new rich, even when the latter were ready to make their public contributions to the benefit of the city.”


40. In the final stages of the debate, most of the opposing Philadelphians were blacks who felt the project had not provided enough job guarantees for minorities.

41. The Rouse family has several members with separate firms over the years. Willard has his own company, Rouse & Associates. He has been working in Philadelphia since the 1970s, and his headquarters is located in suburban Malvern. So if not a native Philadelphian, Rouse perhaps no longer deserves a Baltimorian label, and he considers himself a Philadelphian, native born or not.

42. The Philadelphia Saving Fund Society building on east Market Street was topped out in the 1930s at 491 feet in deference to the “gentlemen’s agreement”; Philadelphia Inquirer, Sept. 5, 1986. The city planner’s remarks are also in this story.
