



Snob Zones: Fear, Prejudice, and Real Estate

Lisa Prevost

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An exploration of the corrosive effects of overpriced housing, exclusionary zoning, and the flight of the younger population in the Northeast

Winner of the 2014 Bruss Silver Award and First-Time Author Award from the National Association of Real Estate Editors

Towns with strict zoning are the best towns, aren't they? They're all about preserving local "character," protecting the natural environment, and maintaining attractive neighborhoods. Right?

In this bold challenge to conventional wisdom, Lisa Prevost strips away the quaint façades of these desirable towns to reveal the uglier impulses behind their proud allegiance to local control. These eye-opening stories illustrate the outrageous lengths to which town leaders and affluent residents will go to prohibit housing that might attract the "wrong" sort of people. Prevost takes readers to a rural second-home community that is so restrictive that its celebrity residents may soon outnumber its children, to a struggling fishing village as it rises up against farmworker housing open to Latino immigrants, and to a northern lake community that brazenly deems itself out of bounds to apartment dwellers. From the blueberry barrens of Down East to the Gold Coast of Connecticut, these stories show how communities have seemingly cast aside the all-American credo of "opportunity for all" in favor of "I was here first."

Prevost links this "every town for itself" mentality to a host of regional afflictions, including a shrinking population of young adults, ugly sprawl, unbearable highway congestion, and widening disparities in income and educational achievement. *Snob Zones* warns that this pattern of exclusion is unsustainable and raises thought-provoking questions about what it means to be a community in post-recession America.

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