

DEMOLISHING A HISTORIC HOTEL



DEMOLISHING A HISTORIC HOTEL

*A Sociology of Preservation Failures
in Davis, California*

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Davis Research
Davis, California
2003

This book is dedicated to

The Davis Enterprise and to

Heather Caswell and civic-minded people everywhere

Generations of *Davis Enterprise* editors, reporters and other news-workers have created an indispensable chronicle of Davis history in the pages of that newspaper. Without that chronicle, this book would not be possible.

Heather Caswell catalyzed the energy to save the Terminal Building. She is one of those continually emerging community-spirited people upon whom the civic health of societies depends.

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The front cover photograph was taken by the author. It displays an especially dramatic moment in the September 28, 2000 ripping apart of the Davis Arch Mural painted on the north wall of the Terminal Building.

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INTRODUCTION

This book tells the story of a historic hotel in Davis, California, a structure variously called the Terminal Building, the Terminal Hotel and the Hotel Aggie. The major parts of this building's story are: its heyday and neglect decades (Chapters 2 through 6); four failures of preservation regarding it (Chapters 7 through 11); its demolition and burial (Chapters 12 and 13); and, consequences and causes of its demise (Chapters 14 and 15).

1) TO WHOM IS THIS AN INTERESTING STORY?

Few if any stories are of interest to "everyone." People differ and there is therefore always the question, "To whom might this story be interesting?" Let me suggest some kinds of interests to which this story might appeal.

These interests divide into three categories, with variations on each: (a) the **historic preservation puzzled or involved**, (b) **local and town history enthusiasts**, and (c) **social science methodologists**.

THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PUZZLED OR INVOLVED. Especially promoted by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, there has arisen in the United States what we might call a "preservation establishment." While it is not large enough to be termed a "vast army," there are a great many people making a living from it and wielding power in its name. As an idea and an organizational presence, "historic preservation" reaches almost every section of the United States.

Those most involved in it consider themselves "professionals" who practice a complicated discipline. This fact separates them from lay people in the same way other "professionals" are separated from laity. Important markers of the separation include speaking an arcane argot. There are "historic resources," a "National Register," "SHPOs" (pronounced "ship-os"), and so forth, as in other specialized occupations.

(1) All this creates lay people who ask, "**What in the world is 'historic preservation' anyway?**" If you are a person asking this question, this story is for you. I take you "on the ground" though the playing-out of historic preservation in the case of the Terminal Building, a structure about which there was much controversy. One technique used on this tour is to reproduce (especially in the Chapters of Part II) many of the documents of which historic preservation practice consists and indicating how these documents intersect with various groups for and against their application. If you seek to penetrate the seemingly remote and foreign topic of historic preservation, this is your guide.

(2) Oddly, historic preservation as a field has not been strong on generating detailed case studies of how people actually do it (a notable exception being Longstrech, 1998). The

tendency, instead, is to vignettes of triumphs (as in “five minute success stories”) or abstract exhortations about proper practice. Clearly, though, descriptions of the “real thing,” warts and all, are needed if people are to learn about mistakes and how to avoid them. This book is written very much in this empirical vein. I hope that anyone who can say “**I am seriously involved in historic preservation**” will learn a great deal about how to do it (and how *not* to do it) from reading this account.

(3) True to the ethnographic ethic of the social scientist, I try to convey the grittier realities of historic preservation. If you are a person who says “**I want to be a preservation professional,**” the story of the Terminal Building is a story you should know. It is often and rightly warned that no one should enter medical school without first working in a hospital and accepting the realities routinely encountered there. In kindred fashion, a prospective preservationist-for-hire should read this story and to come to emotional grips with its less-than-cheerful facts.

(4) The story of the Terminal Building is also a technical one in the sense of asking and answering this question: “**How and why did preservation fail in the case of the Terminal Building?**” Unlike the first and third interests, just described, this kind of interest is that of the preservation insider—a person seriously **committed** to or seriously **opposed** to preservation. For such people, answers to this question can help guide action in future preservation struggles.

As I will elaborate in the second section of this Chapter, posing and answering this question of “why preservation failure” is the organizing principle of this book.

LOCAL AND TOWN HISTORY ENTHUSIASTS. While the rise and vicissitudes of historic preservation are major elements of this story, they are far from all of it. In order adequately to contextualize the historic preservation aspects, I have had to include a great deal of Davis history per se, particularly in the five chapters of Part I, those that cover the eight decades of the building’s life. That is, historic preservation did not (and does not) operate in a social vacuum. The larger social matters surrounding it were and are important.

I hope this larger (albeit selective) history will be of interest in at least two ways.

(1) I have been surprised and heartened to observe a rising interest in the histories of towns, and cities (as eloquently voiced and reviewed by Amato, 2002, for example). Less surprising, much of this interest focuses on the great and often cataclysmic changes that took place in so many of them in the decades following World War II. With very high frequency, these changes involved the decimation of their downtowns (Davies, 1998; Fogelson, 2001).

Of signal import, decimation in the usual way did not happen in Davis. Why it did not provides an intriguing case for further and comparative study of towns. However, Davis people **did** engage in a vast devastation of their own sort that I chronicle in Chapter 5. Put tersely, in addition to leveling much of their old downtown, they leveled a good portion of the rest of the town.

(2) One of my pet peeves about the civic life of Davis is it that too many of its participants are afflicted with public life amnesia. The same kinds of problems and successes happen over and over, but any current crop of people in public life react as though THIS (whatever the this) is an entirely new kind of “crisis” (or triumph) for Davis. Very often, it is not. So, one of the aims of this book is to provide Davis people with at least a little historical perspective.

In a more positive vein, the history of Davis—defects and all—is actually quite interesting. In it, we can follow how a town and then city were constructed bit-by-bit. Each juncture in that construction was a point of contest over what best to do. It is clear that events need not have gone the way they did. Given how problematic the outcome of the whole assemblage clearly was, it is a marvel that it came out as well as it did. I hope that I have conveyed just how problematic and “iffy” are processes of change and development.

SOCIAL SCIENCE METHODOLOGISTS. This book is unusual among social science reports in the degree to which it reproduces photographs, newspaper reports, government documents, and other items for the purpose of telling its story. This innovation takes place because, among other reasons, it has recently become practical to do so.

The “doing” of this literally “documentary sociology” presents new kinds of strengths, but also raises new kinds of problems. Those strengths and problems of presenting data in this and other ways are the concerns of social science methodologists, among whom I count myself. I hope that this book will be of interest to such people. (And, I will address this topic again later in this chapter.)

2) PRESERVATION FAILURE(S)

Although I ask many questions along the way, one question provides the principle around which this book (this story) is organized. As previously indicated, that question is: **“Why did preservation fail in the case of the Terminal Building?”**

THE ARGUMENT THERE WAS SOMETHING TO PRESERVE (CHAPTERS 2-6). To speak of preservation having “failed” is to assume there was something worthy of preservation. But, as we will see in Chapters 6 through 11, this was a contested assertion.

The City of Davis Historical Resources Management (HRMC) voted in 1984 and 1999 that the building should be designated a historic resource. But, the nomination was rejected by the Davis City Council both times (2 to 3 in 1984 and 1 to 4 in 1999).

Because a City Council twice thought otherwise, an analyst such as myself bears a special burden to show that the historical record reasonably meets what are called “The National Register’s Criteria of Evaluation.” For reference, these criteria are reproduced in Fig. 1.1.

Using all the materials developed by the HRMC and city staff and going beyond them with my own research, the five chapters of the Part I are intended to provide empirical evidence that is much more than sufficient to say that the building met at least one of the four criteria (all that is needed) shown in Fig. 1.1. (The details of this documentation and the assessment done by Davis officials in 1999 appear in Chapter 7.)

THE “HOWS” OF PRESERVATION FAILURE (CHAPTERS 7, 8, 10, 11). While, in the end, a building is preserved or it is not, the on-going process leading to an outcome is more complicated. In the Terminal Building case, there was preservation failure-in-increments or by degree.

Viewing failure as a process, there seemed to me to be four major stages (or forms) in this sequence: (1) designation failure, (2) feasibility study failure, (3) facadectomy failure, and (4) freeze failure. These four stages/forms of preservation failure are the topics of the four main chapters of Part II, specifically, Chapters 7, 8, 10, and 11.

1.1. The National Register's Criteria for Evaluation (from Murtagh, 1997: 183).

The National Register's standards for evaluating the significance of properties were developed to recognize the accomplishments of all peoples who have made a contribution to our country's history and heritage. The criteria are designed to guide state and local governments, federal agencies, and others in evaluating potential entries in the National Register.

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and:

(a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

(b) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

(c) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

(d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Designation Failure. In the world of historic preservation, the primordial act of preservation is that of "designation" by a government body. As indicated, this was the first form of failure to which the Terminal Building was subjected. The details of these events are presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

Feasibility Study Failure. Irrespective of success or failure in designation, owners can still decide that they will rehabilitate a building in a way that meets what are called, in preservationist lingo, "the Secretary's standards." The "Secretary" in this phrase is the Federal Government's Secretary of the Interior. This Secretary operates the National Park Service, which includes historical preservation activities. The "Secretary's standards" are, in their simplest form, a set of ten practices with which an owner strives to comply when working with a building. (For reference, I reproduce them in Figure 1.2.) Or, an owner may decide to rehabilitate a building using looser criteria and broader goals.

Whenever historic preservation is considered, courses of action need to be assessed. This is commonly done with what is called a "feasibility study" or "feasibility analysis." A fairly elaborate undertaking, it is coordinated by a specialist in such studies. It ordinarily consists of the three logical parts of (1) costs, (2) demands, and (3) return on investment (Stevens and Sherwood 1982).

Regarding **costs**, the physical facts of the building are assessed and construction possibilities laid out. "An architect and structural engineer [are commonly] hired to assess the existing condition of the building and then provide schematic drawings of remodel scenarios with input from the property owner, city, and community (ideally). A cost estimate would be provided for each scenario. A financial specialist . . . complete[s] a 'development budget' for each of the scenarios, that includes the 'hard construction costs' . . . and including all the other costs associated with the development" (Wilkinson, 2001).

Regarding **demands**, market potential income is analyzed. "The analyst . . . recommend[s] various funding sources to make the project either financially feasible or infeasible . . . [For example, [a] project might prove infeasible with a large bank loan, but feasible with a low-interest loan from the Redevelopment Agency or a federal source" (Wilkinson 2001).

Regarding **return on investment**, “a cash-flow analysis [is] developed showing which scenarios pencil out with the various funding sources and which don't The results of [a study of the Terminal Building] might have shown, for example, that [it . . .] was feasible with second story affordable housing (using a loan from the city and a grant from the state housing office) and the ground floor as commercial. . . .” (Wilkinson, 2001).

In the period when a feasibility study for the Terminal Building was relevant, such studies took several months to conduct and cost in the neighborhood of \$20,000.

Despite the urgings of many credible people and organizations, such a study was never performed. This was the second preservation failure. The details are presented in Chapter 8.

Facadectomy Failure. In some situations, compromises that save only a portion of a building are struck. One form of this is to save only the facade and to replace the building behind it. Among strict preservationists, this is referred to derisively as “facadectomy.”

Even so, a considerable number of instances of it exist. Although preservation purists decry it, many other people, including myself, find it acceptable, even if not preferable.

In the Terminal Building case facadectomy was part of the discussion, but never achieved truly serious consideration. This third form of failure is chronicled in Chapter 10.

Freeze Failure. The Terminal Building story had the curious feature that the demolition contractor knocked down the rear walls of the building and then stopped in order to have workers salvage the brick dislodged from those walls. The ambiguity of what might be the next steps created at least the hope of a “freeze” on further demolition that might result in some (limited) form of preservation. This freeze also failed and it was the final form of preservation failure. The story is told in Chapter 11.

WHY PRESERVATION FAILED (CHAPTER 15). These four, sequential forms of preservation failure tell us the **hows** of the process. But, we do not yet clearly know **why** it happened. This is a separate question that I try to answer after presenting all the pertinent materials.

Getting all the pertinent materials before us requires 14 chapters. So, Chapter 15 is on the causes of preservation failure.

CONSEQUENCES OF PRESERVATION FAILURE (CHAPTER 14). The processes of preservation failure (Part II) and why it did (Chapter 15) are the central features of the Terminal Building story. But, I would feel remiss if I did not also address a number of ancillary but still important aspects.

One of these is to speak to the question of what happened after the building was gone? What difference did its demolition make? This book went into the publication process a little more than two years after the building was demolished. Therefore, many of the larger and longer term consequences still had not happened (or were at least hard then to see).

Nonetheless, a number of interesting things had occurred in those two years, and I describe them in Chapter 14.

DEMOLITION DRAMA (CHAPTERS 12 and 13). Buildings are not easily demolished and do not immediately disappear. Instead, they have to be smashed and bludgeoned into submission. This aspect is, I think, also very much a part of the story of the failure to preserve a historic building. Therefore, I observed the demolition processes and events, which spanned a period of

1.2. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. (Downloaded from the National Park Service, www2.CR.NPS.GOV/tps/tax/rehabstandards.htm.)

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation



The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are ten basic principles created to help preserve the distinctive character of a historic building and its site, while allowing for reasonable change to meet new needs.

The Standards (**36 CFR Part 67**) apply to historic buildings of all periods, styles, types, materials, and sizes. They apply to both the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The Standards also encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction.

Rehabilitation projects must meet the following Standards, as interpreted by the National Park Service, to qualify as "certified rehabilitations" eligible for the 20% rehabilitation tax credit.

The Standards are applied to projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

73 days. These events and processes are analyzed in Chapter 12 and 13. The former depicts the time sequences of the demolition. The latter focuses on special moments in the demolition and oblivion. Or, to use another metaphor, they have to be hacked to death, butchered, and the bleeding parts of the carcass hauled away.

PRESERVATION CAMPAIGN (CHAPTER 9). As will become evident, the story of preservation failure is also a story of citizens campaigning for preservation. But, in the same way that many other topics are ancillary to the central question of preservation failure (e.g. Chapter 14 on consequences), the story of the citizen's campaign is pertinent but not treated as a story in itself.

Instead, I mostly focus on the campaign's actions as they play on the question of preservation failure or success.

But, as with the other ancillary topics, I would feel remiss if I totally ignored the campaign itself. In this spirit, in Chapter 9 I give special attention to one of the most important moments in the campaign. This was a celebration of the Terminal Building on Sunday, June 11th, 2000.

In fine, I have in this section indicated the question around which this story revolves (why did preservation fail?) and how the various other parts of the story (the book) relate to that central question. In other words, this section summarizes this book.

3) TWO OTHER FRAMES FOR THIS STORY

I acknowledge that the question—"Why did preservation fail?"—is not the only way to phrase or conceive these materials. There are at least two other (and kindred, but different) linguistic renderings.

The first of these might be called **demolition success**. Instead of asking, "Why did preservation fail?" we could ask, "Why and how did demolition overcome the benighted and woolly-minded forces arrayed against it?" This book's title might then be something like: *How Glorious Profit-Maximization Overcame Soft-minded Sentimentalism in the Dreadful People's Republic of Davis, California*.

Rather than bemoan the loss of a historic building, the analyst would celebrate liberation from an archaic past and ugly architecture, the virtues of unfettered private property and the free market, and a victorious strike against demented leftists.

The second alternative framing might be called **parties in conflict**. Instead of taking one side or the other in the struggle—as the above two frames do—one could attempt to stand outside both sides and to be judiciously neutral and uncommitted. This is a rather common frame in early social science studies of conflict (e.g. Kreisberg, 1982; Hierich, 1971).

So conceived, this book's title might be something like *Preservation Conflict in Davis, California*. I did, in fact, experiment with writing this story using this second frame.

As "in principle" ways to proceed, I have no quarrel with either of these two alternative ways to tell this story. The problem with both of them, though, is that neither is my point of view. Instead, I do not believe the first and I am not neutral, which is required by the second. To write this story in other than the way I have would be a lie and inauthentic.

4) STORY-FRAMES AND BRUTE FACTS

Story-frames such as the three I have just described make a difference: in (1) the questions one asks or fails to ask, in (2) some of the facts and that one elects to include or exclude from one's account, and in (3) the interpretation one makes of some facts.

Even so, I want also to stress that the greatest portion of what one reports is not affected by the story-frame one uses. For example:

- The first part of the Terminal Building was constructed in 1925 or it was not.
- The Hotel declined after World War II or it did not.
- The Davis City Council denied historic resource designation to the building in September, 1999 or it did not.

It happens that the bulk of the story of anything is at this brute level of empirical fact. This brute level is more-or-less immune from change by the author's story-frame.

In the present case, I think that while I promote the approach signaled in the phrase "preservation failure," the sheer history I write differs little if at all from one written using either of the other two story-frames.

5) THE BROADER SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

For readers who may not be familiar with it, let me add that, more broadly, this inquiry is informed by the sociological perspective. This study is, I hope, an example of it. By "sociological perspective" I mean the point of view that exhibits the three features of focusing on human behavior or social organization, asking generic questions about these, and applying a skeptical mindset.

First, the focus is human behavior and social organization in their myriad forms. In this inquiry, the human behavior of central interest is an episode or event, that of "preservation failure" (Cf. Lofland and Lofland, 1995: Ch. 4, on "episodes").

Second, the inquirer asks at least one of the eight generic empirical questions sociologists ask about human behavior and organization and makes a serious effort to develop an answer or answers (Lofland and Lofland, 1995: Chapter 7).

One of the eight generic empirical questions asked in this inquiry is, "What are the causes of X?" As reported above, the application here is, "What are causes of preservation failure?" An answer is offered in Chapter 15. Others questions asked and answered include the questions of social process (Chapters 7, 8, 10, 11, 12) and of consequences (Chapter 14).

This second feature sets the sociological perspective off from a large portion of other writings and reports on social behavior and social organization. These other works commonly provide descriptions and abundant moralizing, but little or no effort seriously to ask and answer generic empirical questions.

Third, in his classic primer, *Invitation to Sociology*, Peter Berger rightly declares: "the first wisdom of sociology is this—things are not what they seem." He elaborates that this statement is itself "deceptively simple," for, "social reality turns out to have many layers of meaning. The discovery of each new layer changes the perception of the whole"(1963:23).

If this is true, answering questions about human behavior and organization requires the unwavering application of a critical, questioning or skeptical mindset. The surface or official appearance of things cannot be taken as "the" true or complete account—nor can any dissent

from any surface or official account. In the quest to know, the questioning of the questioning is unending. In this study, I have had to question any number of surface realities, to question those questionings, and to question those questionings, in infinite regress (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:153-156).

Even so, every inquiry has to end sometime. But this does not mean questioning and skepticism end. It only means one has, for the moment, run out of time, patience, and resources. The skepticism itself has to go on. I am uncertain about many aspects of the answers to questions I offer here. This has to be and this is how it should be.

So also, readers have an obligation to bring a skeptical mindset to what is presented here—and to what they make of what they think they see here.

6) DIGITAL DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

As everyone knows, the silicon chip joined with the computer has begun a "digital revolution" in encoding and transmitting information. Specifically, it has become possible for people of ordinary means (such as myself) to encode, manipulate, and reproduce words and images in ways heretofore either not possible or prohibitively expensive.

This book consists largely of resized and edited reproductions of original documents and pictures that make up the story of the Terminal Building. Only a few years ago, it was not, as a practical matter, possible to compose a story in the documentary manner seen in the pages of this book.

Instead—and as I did many times in empirical studies I performed in the 1960s through the early 1990s—I would have had to provide my own textual/verbal representations of the documents and pictures. But now, "digitizing," (commonly termed "scanning") has transformed what is routinely possible in the pages of a book.

We are still at the beginning of this transformation, which means that ways to use the new possibilities to best advantage are undefined and unknown. Like children with new toys, though, we stumble ahead with glee (e.g. Lepore, 2001).

Therefore, the "digital documentary" way I tell the Terminal Building story is in the nature of an experiment—a groping forward into new ways of presenting evidence.

Nonetheless, even though "digital documentary" is experimental and groping, I cannot but believe that reproductions of originals provide a historical authenticity that is likely stronger than an author's textual representation of those documents. Indeed, I think the veracity and vigor with which one can present "brute facts" (mentioned above) is much strengthened.

I might also mention that I view the use of these new "visual" materials as marvelous but only a technical extension of sociological inquiry as we know it (just explained in section 5, above), rather than as a radical epistemological departure or leap. That is, some versions of what is termed "visual sociology" or "visual studies" tend to view "the visual" as a step across a great divide of some kind (discussed but not necessarily endorsed by, for example, Becker, 1974, 1995, 2002)). I do not. It is a leap and a big one, but one that primarily increases the detail with which we can present evidence and the credibility of that evidence.

7) MY ROLE

Looked at from the point of view of methods of social research, this study is an instance of what sociologists call, variously, "fieldwork," "participant-observation," or "participatory research."

Whatever the rubric, the hallmark of the method is the researcher's direct participation in the social life under study.

It is useful to distinguish among such studies in terms of whether or not the researcher began involvement with research in mind or not. In this case, I developed research objectives only on September 18, 2000, the day the demolition began.

Before that, I was only and simply an involved citizen. Along with many other people, I was attempting to preserve the Terminal Building in some manner. This also explains why there are so few photographs in this book taken by me before that date, but many after that date. I had then begun seriously to document what was going on with a camera and field notes.

Therefore, questions of "informed consent" (now so often raised regarding research) were not pertinent before September 18. After that day, it was my practice to indicate to everyone I encountered that I was "writing a book" about the building.

The topic of this research has one unusual feature I want to call attention to because it bears on issues of ethics, privacy and disclosure that are so often raised regarding sociological fieldwork. That unusual feature is that all the people and events involved in this book took place in the political arena and they were events of public life. In our society at this time, at least, people and events that are political and public are, by definition, proper objects of observation and comment by anyone. Indeed, the contents of this book offer ample evidence that many residents of Davis were not shy about observing and commenting.

Therefore, with materials of this kind, my relation to the social life under study was the same as that of everyone else who cared to pay attention.

Some of the documents I reproduce show that I was a rather involved partisan in the Terminal matter. The depth and intensity of my involvement is a two-edged sword. On the one edge, my involvement provided me with a view closer than that of some other people. I was one type of "insider." This means I could gather data of certain sorts that were not available to the less involved.

On the other edge, my partisanship clearly poses the threat of bias. I have always been aware of this, and I have tried my best to correct for it. But, in the end, I cannot be the final judge. Each reader will have to form her or his own assessment. I can hope, however, that the "digital documentary" evidence I mention above helps the story tell itself, so to speak. It makes the reader less dependent on me than is the case with some other methods of representing what happened.

8) DAVIS HISTORY IN A NUTSHELL: POPULATION AND GEOGRAPHICAL EXPLOSION

The history of Davis I present in the chapters that follow is necessarily specialized and selective. It is therefore important to provide a larger context into which the reader can fit these several pieces. That is, the full meaning of events—in 1960, for example—cannot be appreciated unless one knows the relation of that or any year to the years and decades before and after it.

In my view, the two most important dimensions of this larger context are Davis' 1) population growth and 2) geographical size viewed over time from the beginning in 1868 to the 21st century. This is a span of some fourteen decades. Inspecting only these two variables over these decades provides us, I think, indispensable perspective on the machinations we observe in Davis in any year.

POPULATION EXPLOSION. In column 1 of Fig. 1.3 we see the population of Davis at the start of each of fourteen decades of its history. At the start of the first decade, it was zero (for there was no Davis) and in 2000 (the start of the fifteenth decade), it was 60,308.

Let us first look at the population figures for the first five decades, 1860-1900. We see they run: 0, 500, 600, 700, and 700. This was the era of Davis as a small and even stagnating agricultural **VILLAGE**. Indeed, in 1900 there were only about 175 residential and commercial structures.

But, in 1906, Davis was selected as the site of the University of California experimental farm. A small installation was built and began slowly to grow. This influence is seen in the population figures for the next four decades of 1910-40: 850 to 1,040 to 1,243, to 1,672. This was a new era for Davis. In it, many if not most, of the structures people later regarded as classically and quintessentially Davis were fashioned. Most pertinent here, this was the period in which the Terminal Building was constructed. With this growth and construction, Davis was changing from a village to a **TOWN**.

But all these population figures were truly small and even pathetic compared to what happened over the next five decades—the 1950s through the 1990s. Looking again at column 1 of Figure 1.3, we see leapfrog jumps in the population numbers. From 3,554 in 1950, the population increased to 60,308 in 2000. Davis had changed once again, this time from a town to a **CITY**.

For perspective, consider the average per year increase in population from the village to the town to the city periods. In the village decades, the population grew about seven people a year, on average. In the town decades, this increase was about 70 a year. But then, in the new city decades, Davis was adding some 1,200 new residents every year.

So, when reading about the struggles of the Terminal Building in the “neglect decades” chronicled in Chapters 5 and 6, for example, bear in mind that one is reading about a new-city-in-the-making constructed by a new mix of players. A hoard of highly educated and sophisticated newcomers was combining with the old-boy G Street merchants to build a futuristic Davis. (In the above sketch, I have used without specific citation snatches of text from the introduction to Lofland and Haig, 2000:7-8.)

GEOGRAPHICAL EXPLOSION. The slowness of Davis’ growth before World War II meant that the number of developed blocks changed little from the original grid of 1868. The boundaries that became official with incorporation in 1917 were virtually the same as the original 1868 grid and these did not change until after World War II! In the map of Davis’ geographical growth shown in Fig. 1. 4, this “original city” area is shown in solid black in the lower middle.

As the *Davis Enterprise* graphic makes clear, the city was enlarged in wave after wave of annexations over the 1950s-90s.

These population and annexation facts provide, then, the context in which to view both (1) demolition zeal and (2) rising concern for local history and preservation.

□
 1.3. Davis
 Population and
 UC Davis
 Enrollment over
 14 decades.
 (Reproduced
 from Lofland,
 1999: 35.
 Technical notes
 [signaled by *
 and **] omitted.)

Decade ↓	1 Davis popula- tion at start of decade*	2 Decade increase in popula- tion	3 Average yearly increase in popula- tion (rounded)	4 Farm/ UC Davis enroll- ment at start of decade**	5 Decade increase in Farm/ UC Davis enroll- ment	6 Average yearly increase in enroll- ment (rounded)
1860s	0	500	50			
70s	500	100	10			
80s	600	100	10			
90s	700	0	0			
1900s	700	150	15	0	125	12
10s	850	190	20	125	175	17
20s	1,040	203	20	300	200	20
30s	1,243	429	50	500	700	70
40s	1,672	1,882	200	1,200	500	50
50s	3,554	5,356	500	1,700	1,100	100
60s	8,910	14,578	1,500	2,800	9,800	980
70s	23,488	13,152	1,300	12,600	4,500	450
80s	36,640	9,569	1,000	17,000	5,000	500
90s	46,200	11,591	1,200	22,000	3,000	300

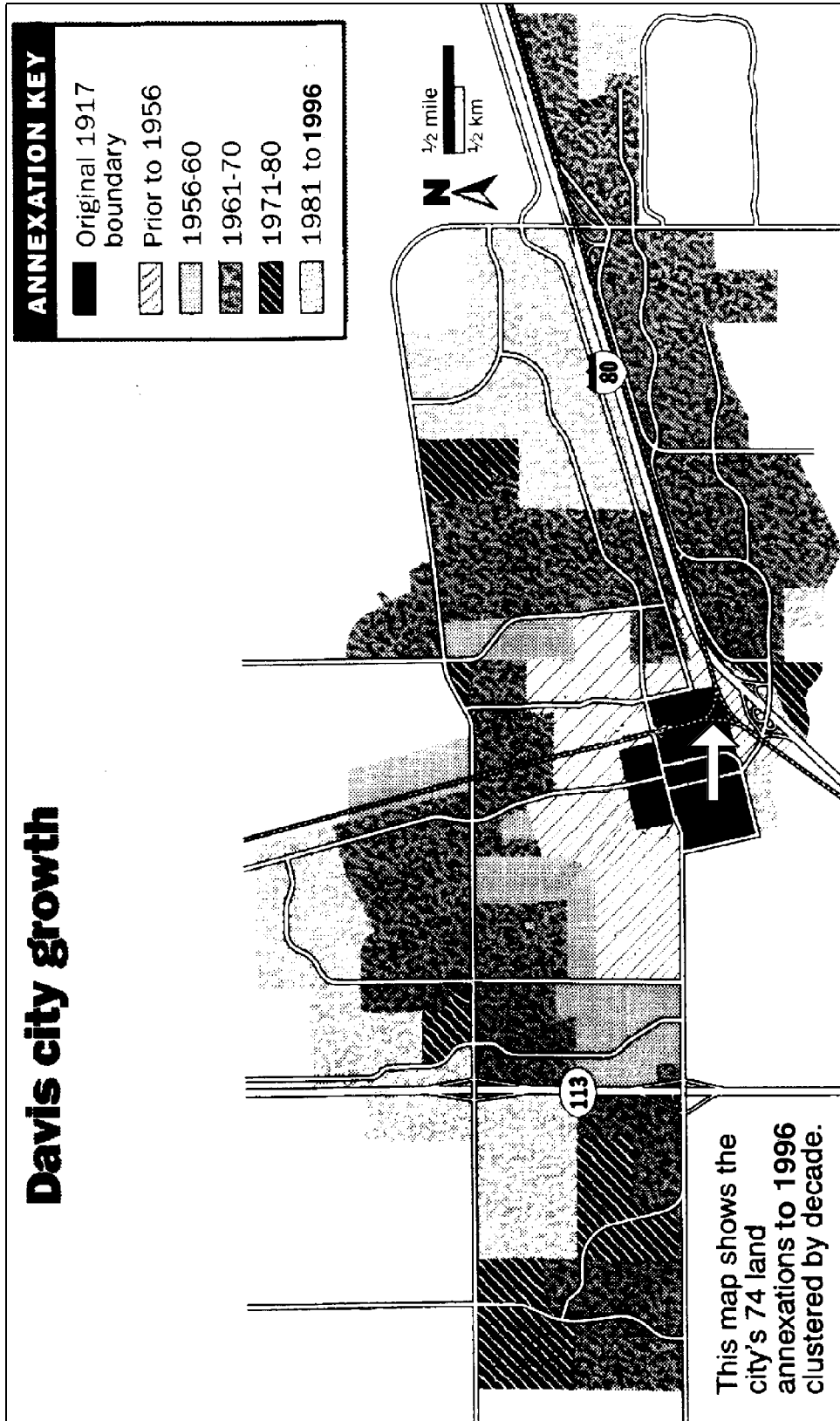
□ □
 1.4. The 1917 city incorporation area of Davis is shown in black in the lower middle of this map.

The Terminal Building at Second and G streets was next to the railroad track in the lower right of the black area. The white arrow points to the location.

(Map reproduced with my deletions and revisions from a graphic by Nathaniel Levine appearing in the *Davis Enterprise* of October 4, 1996.)



Davis city growth



This map shows the city's 74 land annexations to 1996 clustered by decade.



In this chapter, I have suggested how the story of the Terminal Building can be significant; explained the central concept of “preservation failure” that will be explored; indicated how this book is organized; and, placed this undertaking in sociological and methodological perspective.

With, in addition, a sketch of Davis’ population and geographical explosion, we are ready to get on with the story itself.