

	1932 – 1936	1956 apartments
<b>Planner(s)</b>	Clarence S. Stein and Henry Wright	Frederick Bigger
<b>Architect(s)</b>	Ingham and Boyd, Ralph Griswold	Ingham, Boyd and Pratt
<b>Landscape Architect(s)</b>	Theodore M. Kohankie	Griswold Winters Swain

## DESCRIPTION 1 of 2

The Buhl Foundation, in its brochure for the project, promoted this for-profit housing as the “First large scale, planned, residential community built from the ground up in one operation to be retained in single ownership and managed as a long-term investment.” Chatham Village always had a national, and even international, impact out of proportion to its rather modest dimensions, deriving in part from the names of Stein and Wright, acclaimed planners of Sunnyside Gardens in Queens, New York, and Radburn, New Jersey. More notable is the complex's highly irregular contour; rarely had low-cost housing dealt so successfully with steep slope topography. Helping its fame also was the decade in which Chatham Village went up; in the 1930s, governments everywhere in the nation were contemplating public-assistance housing. Chatham Village became a model for schemes across the country.

The complex fits 216 families on sixteen acres: 129 row houses date from 1932 and 68 from 1936; a three-story, 19-unit apartment building went up in 1956. The planners left four acres for playgrounds and commons, plus twenty-six adjoining acres of untouched woodland. Rented from the Buhl Foundation until 1960, the homes then became a cooperative and were privatized. Nonetheless, the complex retains strict restrictions on upkeep and changes.

At the south end of the development the Greek Revival former Thomas James Bigham mansion of 1849 is now a community center named Chatham Hall. Its original owner and builder was an avid abolitionist, newspaper publisher, and politician whose house was used as part of the Underground Railroad.



Credit: Library and Archives Division,  
Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, PA

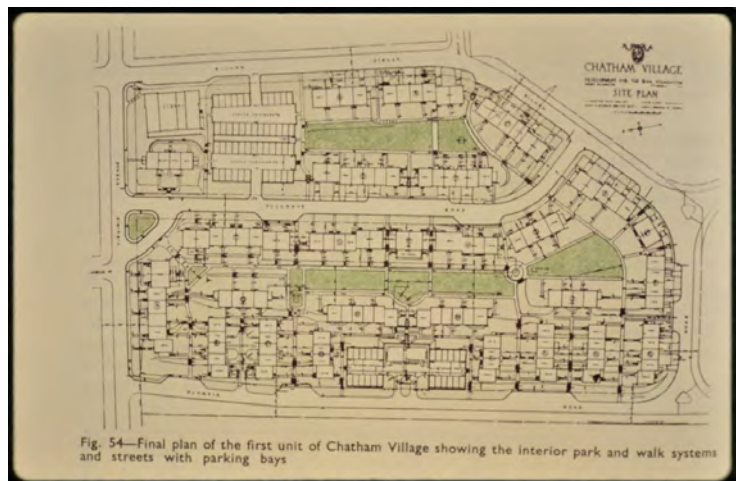


Fig. 54—Final plan of the first unit of Chatham Village showing the interior park and walk systems and streets with parking bays

Credit: Urban Explorer: The John Reps Travel Photographs, John William Reps  
<https://digital.library.cornell.edu/catalog/ss:1502897>

Lu Donnelly et al., “Chatham Village” [Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania], SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012—, <http://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/PA-01-AL45>. Accessed 2019-04-30.

## DESCRIPTION 2 of 2

Despite the rhetoric of “economic democracy” espoused by Lewis, Stein, and Wright, their planned community has benefited from being an intentional enclave. Original tenants noted their affinity to their Chatham Village neighbors and weak social connection to Mt. Washington as a whole, while today’s cooperative residents liken their membership to life on a college campus. The Chatham Village Club, to which every member belongs, is an apt metaphor for the nature of life in the community. “There is no public life here, in any city sense,” observed urban critic Jane Jacobs. “There are differing degrees of extended private life.” Regarding the community’s insularity, she continued: “Chatham Village’s success as a ‘model’ neighborhood where much is shared has required that the residents be similar to one another in their standards, interests and backgrounds. . . . It has also required that residents set themselves distinctly apart from the different people in the surrounding city; these are in the main also middle class, but lower middle class, and this is too different for the degree of chumminess that neighborliness in Chatham Village entails.” Jacobs noted the practical consequences of being an island. Faced with the need to cooperate with residents of different neighborhoods in a matter at the local public school, she reported, the parents of Chatham Village found that there was “no public acquaintanceship, no foundation of casual public trust, no cross-connections with the necessary people—and no practice or ease in applying the most ordinary techniques of city public life at lowly levels.”



Buhl Foundation Photographs, MSP 187, Detre Library & Archives at the Senator John Heinz History Center.

Bamberg, Angelique. *Chatham Village: Pittsburgh's Garden City*. Pittsburgh PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014. Accessed August 13, 2018. ProQuest Ebook Central.

**DESCRIPTION [original SAH entry shortened for classroom use]**

The William R. Knight house is an example of the Lustron Corporation's Westchester Deluxe two-bedroom model in their line of all-steel homes advertised as "a new standard for living." Built on a concrete slab foundation, the one-story "modified ranch-styled" house has an area of 1,085 square feet, is encased with porcelain enameled panels, and is covered with porcelain enamel roof shingles. Windows are in aluminum frames trimmed in yellow porcelain panels. William Knight was the local Atlanta distributor for Lustron Homes, a national manufacturer of prefabricated houses founded in 1947 and headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. Knight lived here until the 1990s, long after Lustron ceased operations.

Though Lustrons are mostly found in the Midwest they exist all over the United States. By the end of 1949 the company had shipped 1,950 houses to thirty-three states and the District of Columbia. Only thirteen percent (approximately 250) Lustrons were shipped to states in the southeast, including eighteen to Georgia. The Lustron phenomenon was short-lived but illustrates a significant episode in post-World War II housing. With the end of the war in 1945, America experienced a high demand for new housing for military personnel returning to civilian life. In addition, huge factories, now vacant, stood ready to be retooled for civilian purpose, including the manufacturing of houses. Indeed, the Lustron factory was housed in a former military plane plant leased from the War Administration. Retooling the factory was expensive and the Lustron Corporation needed a large capital investment to initiate production, arranging for a \$37.5 million loan from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC). By 1950 Lustron was unable to keep pace with demand and the company declared bankruptcy after the RFC recalled its loan. By this point total production had reached 2,080 Lustron homes, each made up of about 3,300 factory parts. The company had successfully demonstrated, despite a slower start, that only 300-400 man hours were needed for erection of a Lustron Home by carpenters, another 40 hours for plumbers, 25 hours for electricians, and 12-16 hours to lay floor tiles. Once the site was prepared, and the Lustron Home truck-trailer delivered the pre-fabricated parts on site, the Lustron could be built in two weeks.

The process of enameling metal sheets was developed in Germany and Austria in the mid-nineteenth century. It found its way into the manufacturing of signs, various appliances, and bathroom and kitchen fixtures, remaining popular because porcelain enamel was durable, easy to clean, and did not fade. Iron was usually the base metal until low carbon sheet steel replaced it in the early twentieth century. During World War II the availability of a lighter gauge metal, produced by using lower heat for the enameling process, lowered the price of panels. In the 1930s a streamlined aesthetic featuring sleek surfaces and forms was popular in designs for gas stations, bus depots, and other roadside architecture; its application in residential architecture followed shortly thereafter. When Carl Strandlund, a Swedish-born engineer who worked at the Chicago Vitreous Enamel Products Company during the war, retooled and successfully managed a war plant producing tank armor for turrets, he was promoted and encouraged to turn his inventive mind to the creation of an architectural panel for use in housing. Strandlund patented the interlocking panels and sealed adjacent units, which formed the basic building block of the Lustron Home.

The "modified ranch house" was designed by Chicago-area architects Beckman and Blass, who initially proposed a flat-roof and open plan, suggesting that the innovative modern materials, pre-fabrication, and progressive ideas regarding production and distribution demanded a more cutting-edge aesthetic. Roy Burton Blass met Lustron's Strandlund when he used porcelain enamel panels to remodel



Chicago-area movie theaters. Morris Beckman had an architecture degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and had worked as a draftsman for Skidmore, Owings and Merrill. Both were inclined toward more modern designs, but Strandlund emphasized the need to appeal to a mass market, and insisted on domestic imagery more Levittown than Weissenhof. The Beckman and Blass ranch house design embodied this populist orientation. In the fall of 1946, a prototype was erected in Hinsdale, Illinois, the result of approximately 200,000 hours of planning, thus establishing the model from which the company never deviated substantially. The basic five-room Esquire prototype evolved, with only minimal changes, into three other models: the Newport, the Meadowbrook, and the Westchester (the model for the Knight house).

Today, surrounded by mature trees and verdant lawns, the Knight house appears modest and unremarkable with little to indicate that it was the result of a national experiment in factory-built, all-steel houses.



Hand-eye Supply. 'Lustron, The All Steel House.' September 4, 2015.



Danaparamita, Aria. 'Lustrons: Building an American Dream House.' National Trust for Historic Preservation.



Collection of Lustron Homes for Sale from Realtor.com, <https://www.realtor.com/news/trends/lustron-homes-for-sale-2/>

Robert M. Craig, "William Knight Lustron House" [Atlanta, Georgia], SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012—, <http://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/GA-01-121-0073>. Accessed 2019-04-30.



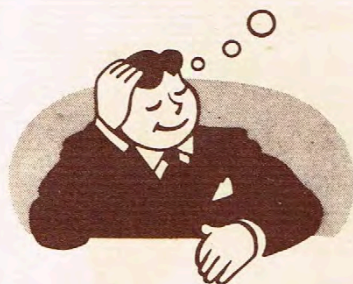
# Things you want to know!



about

THE  
**LUSTRON** HOME

THE *LUSTRON* HOME



"Imagine . . .

A two bedroom one-floor plan ranch-type home that has more than 1000 square feet of floor space . . . An all-steel porcelain enameled—inside and out—mass-produced house that is well within the income of home buyers . . . A home that is built in a factory by the same mass-production methods that have made the motor car industry the outstanding economic achievement of the century . . . A home that is speedily assembled on the site by a local builder-dealer under factory trained supervision . . . One that provides durability and permanence in construction and is almost maintenance free.

That's something, isn't it? And, it's past the imagination stage. Read further! Then, you'll want to take the first opportunity—if you haven't already—to look at the Lustron Home. We think that you'll agree that we've brought Mr. Average American's dream right down to earth—within his reach."

THE *LUSTRON* HOME

## Builder-Dealers

The Lustron Home is sold only through local Lustron dealers. The dealer will purchase the home direct from the factory, erect it, and sell it to you. All sales must be initiated and completed through him. None are handled directly by the factory.

Incidentally, we're proud of our dealers. Through a very careful screening system we are rapidly setting up a nationwide dealer network. If a dealer has not yet been appointed in your area, we ask you to bear with us until we can expand our dealer organization into your own locality.



## Lots

There are more than 1000 square feet of floor space in the Lustron Home. This means that a 50' x 100' or larger lot will best accommodate the 31' x 35' floor plan. If you do not own a lot now and want to buy one for a Lustron Home, wait until you have talked with your dealer. He will be able to advise you correctly.

## Heating

Visualize the way the sun's rays heat the surface of the earth. The same principle is used in Lustron's radiant panel heating system. It is the latest development in modern heating engineering.

Hot air from the overhead furnace unit is forced into a chamber above the ceiling. Heat rays radiate downward from the ceiling panels, heating the floor-to-ceiling area evenly. There are no uncomfortable air currents carrying dirt and soot through the house. The automatic heating plant is economical to operate.





## THE LUSTRON HOME

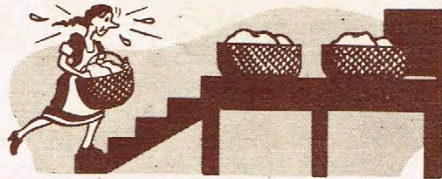


### Price

Your dealer will announce the price of the erected home when the houses are ready for delivery. The price will include the foundation and the erection of the home. Site improvement and the extension of sewer, water, and other utilities are extra, varying as they do with each lot. Mass production and speedy erection make it possible to deliver the Lustron Home at a price never before available for quality houses in this class.

### Colors

The colors for the Lustron Home have been chosen by leading designers and color experts. Interior colors are designed to make furnishing and decorating easy. Neutral shades permit the widest possible variation in choice of draperies, rugs, and individual decorating schemes. Permanent finishes cut down maintenance costs. Exterior colors are distinctive and lend a feeling of quality and permanence.



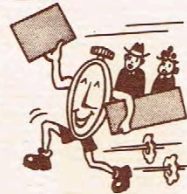
### Basement

The Lustron Home is designed with maximum storage and service facilities on the first floor. A basement—the old necessary evil—is not needed. The furnace is located at the ceiling in the large utility room. The combination dishwasher-clotheswasher-sink in the kitchen brings your laundry upstairs for greater convenience. The washer spin-dries the clothes, and hooks are attached to the walls of the utility room to hang the clothesline. Seven large closets, many overhead cabinets, and the spacious utility room provide ample storage space without a basement.

## THE LUSTRON HOME

### Erection Time

The complete Lustron Home package is shipped from the factory to the builder-dealer, ready for speedy erection on the site by the dealer's specially trained crew.



### Picture Hanging

Pictures can be hung with screws set in the plastic sealing strips between the interior panels. You can change your mind, too! If you don't like the picture in one spot it's easy to remove the screw and put it in another place.

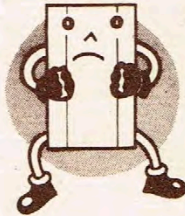
### Garages

We are using all of our limited supply of steel to give as many house-hungry Americans a place to live as we can. Garages are included in our plans for the future but are not available now. We will have designs for garages to match the Lustron Home.



### Porcelain Enamel

Lustron porcelain enamel is a mineral substance like glass, which is fused to steel at a temperature above 1300 degrees Fahrenheit. The high quality porcelain enamel used in the Lustron Home is remarkably durable and will withstand abuse and atmospheric conditions. Porcelain enamel is the best protective covering known for metal. The Lustron porcelain enamel is nonglossy and comes in beautiful pastel colors. It has been used for many years on the best stoves, refrigerator interiors, washing machines, store fronts, and service stations.



## THE LUSTRON HOME

### Building Codes

The Lustron Home can be built in almost any city or town in the United States. The Lustron building codes experts work in close cooperation with Lustron builder-dealers. Together they are approaching code problems in localities where new types of construction are opposed.



### Other Models

At present, we are marketing only one model—the five room one-floor plan home that you have seen in national advertisements or on display. There are no provisions for adding rooms to this home. America needs housing and our purpose is to put a quality product on the market at the lowest possible cost to meet this demand. Future plans call for larger models.



### Financing

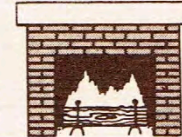
The usual sources of home financing, including FHA-insured and GI loans, are available. The Federal Housing Administration has issued its Engineering Bulletin covering construction of the Lustron Home. The dealer is prepared to assist the customer in arranging mortgage financing through the customary channels.



### Fireplaces

Sorry, no fireplace! No provision has been made for fireplaces in the present model of the Lustron Home.

**SORRY**



**DESCRIPTION [original SAH entry shortened for classroom use]**

Belair at Bowie stands among Maryland's most significant suburban residential developments. While deliberately not marketed as a "Levittown," Belair at Bowie can be considered the fourth and final of these iconic mega-communities constructed by the famed Levitt and Sons firm in the decades following World War II. From the outset, Levitt and Sons conceived of Belair as a smaller scale venture than the Levittowns in New York (1947–1951), Pennsylvania (1952–1957), and New Jersey (1958–1972), all containing roughly 17,000 houses. Belair was initially planned for 4,500 houses and eventually completed with about 7,500. It was constructed on a 2,226-acre tract located well outside and roughly equidistant from Annapolis, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C., in then still largely rural Prince George's County.

The models available at Belair were the same ones designed for new sections of Levittown, New Jersey. The houses were a refined and expanded collection intended to boost sales in New Jersey and allow Belair to compete effectively in the national capital region. The firm had already addressed criticisms of single-model homogeneity in suburban developments by alternating three visually distinct models, each with two facade variations, along every street in New Jersey. This planning strategy was further enhanced after 1960 with additional models that would, as noted in a 1962 sales brochure for Belair, "provide greater variety and a pleasing neighborhood scene." For the street facades Levitt staff architects utilized neo-traditional and neo-colonial elements they thought would attract middle-class families, a design decision that also reflected the predominant conservatism of the region's domestic architecture. At Belair, Levitt and Sons employed modern styling only for a variation of the Country Clubber located in the community's earliest completed sections and for the buildings housing the changing rooms and offices of Belair's three swimming and tennis clubs. These were all built by the Levitt and Sons but they operated from the beginning as membership-only facilities.

Belair remained a segregated venture for most of its development decade. As with all of its earlier subdivisions, Levitt and Sons restricted sales at Belair to only qualified white buyers. The company had "voluntarily" desegregated Levittown, New Jersey, in 1960 after two years of court cases originating with the 1958 passage of New Jersey's fair housing law. Nonetheless, for Belair and elsewhere Levitt and Sons did not alter its policies regarding race. For a time, individual builders, building companies, and the industry as a whole sidestepped the issue of segregation in new housing by shifting blame. They claimed that integration was not good for business because the (white) buying public did not accept the idea of investing in and committing to mixed-race neighborhoods. By the time that Levitt and Sons began the construction of Belair, the civil rights movement was entering a period of strong forward momentum and success, and the new community was, unsurprisingly, the focus of periodic protests at its sales center. Despite these actions, it was not until Prince George's County put in place an open housing law in 1967 and the passage of the Fair Housing Act in 1968 as part of the Civil Rights Act that compelled Levitt and Sons to abandon restricted sales.

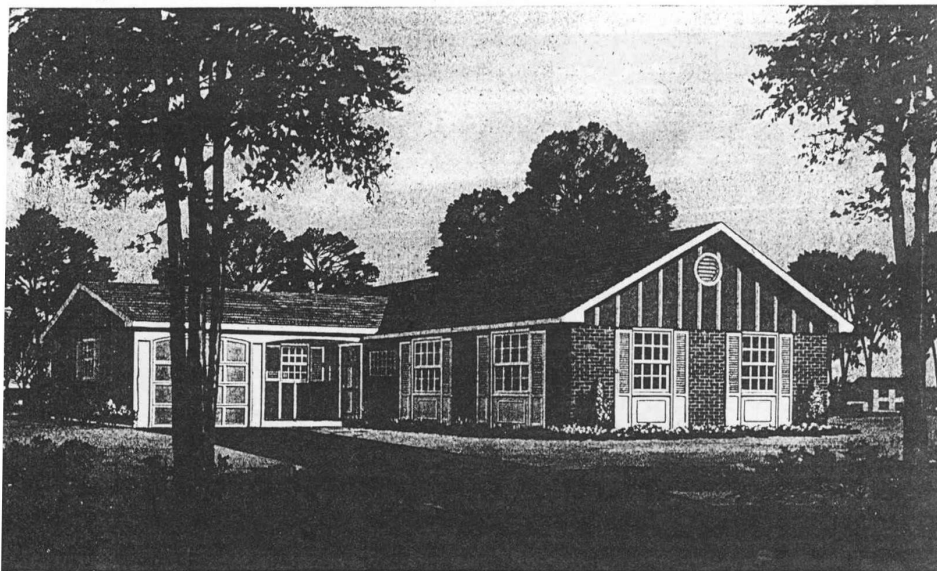
James A. Jacobs, "Belair at Bowie" [Bowie, Maryland], SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012—, <http://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/MD-01-033-0004>. Accessed 2019-04-30.



The Completely Air Conditioned

# Rancher

OPEN TODAY!



Price \*15,990 Cash required \*690 Monthly payment \*121

**40%  
MORE  
FOR YOUR  
MONEY**

Check all the features shown on the first page of this 6-page advertisement. Every one is included in this house!

- ★ This Rancher is built for the relaxed comfort of the all-on-one-floor home, with a colonial flavor that stamps it as a native son.
- ★ The moment you step up to the sheltered entrance, you feel the spaciousness that's built into its L-shaped plan. The entrance hall, so often lacking in one-story houses, provides easy access to the charming living room and the big, open dining area.
- ★ The kitchen's a living dream, and the family room with its glass wall that rolls open to the lawn has a dual personality... brings the outside in, and the inside out!
- ★ To complete this delightful picture, there are three bedrooms, two tile baths!
- ★ And there's a separate laundry room, a full size garage, and a storage room. Want to know more? Browse through the Air Conditioned Rancher to your heart's content... but watch out... this house will steal your heart!

You'll never find a hidden charge in Belair...

**The price we say  
is the price you pay!**

★ ★ ★

# BELAIR

by *Levitt and Sons*

Route 50, Bowie, Maryland. Phone CEdar 6-8131

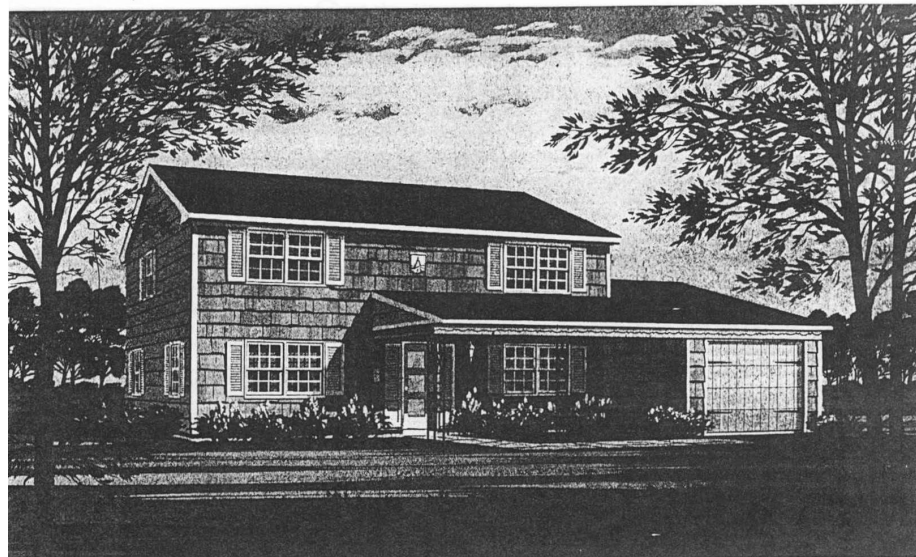
See first page of this 6-page advertisement for map and directions

**MORE**  
Turn the page →

The Completely Air Conditioned

# Colonial

OPEN TODAY!



Price \*16,990 Cash required \*790 Monthly payment \*128

**40%  
MORE  
FOR YOUR  
MONEY**

Every Feature listed on the first page of this six-page advertisement is included in this delightful three-bedroom, colonial-style house!... and many, many more plus-value conveniences and design firsts!

There's never a hidden charge in Belair, where

**The price we say  
is the price you pay!**

★ ★ ★

# BELAIR

by *Levitt and Sons*

Route 50, Bowie, Maryland. Phone CEdar 6-8131

See first page of this 6-page advertisement for map and directions

**MORE**



# AMERICAN UTOPIA

Examining 20<sup>th</sup> Century Models for Suburban Domesticity

PEER REVIEW RUBRIC			
	ALWAYS // MOST (3)	SOMETIMES (2)	RARELY // NEVER (1)
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> <input type="checkbox"/> short and concise <input type="checkbox"/> focused on the prompt <input type="checkbox"/> consistently uses key vocabulary from prompt			
<b>THESIS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> clear <input type="checkbox"/> comprehensive <input type="checkbox"/> answers the question			
<b>BODY PARAGRAPHS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>topic sentence for each</b> body paragraph <input type="checkbox"/> <b>concluding sentence for each</b> body paragraph			
<b>EVIDENCE</b> <input type="checkbox"/> relevant <input type="checkbox"/> well explained <input type="checkbox"/> developed <input type="checkbox"/> integrated <input type="checkbox"/> substantial			
<b>ANALYSIS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> thoughtful analysis of evidence to support argument			
<b>CONCLUSION</b> <input type="checkbox"/> uses key terms ( <b>think: could the conclusion be used as the intro?</b> ) <input type="checkbox"/> short and concise			
<b>NOTES:</b>			