Planners Network

disorientation guide

2024
Edition 2

Disorientation Guide Team

Lead Editor: Cara Chellew

Editors: Gideon Abagna Azunre, Norma M. Rantisi, Jake Ryan

PN Steering Committee Guidance: Eve Baron, Efadul Huq, Anna Kramer, Arielle Lawson, Norma M. Rantisi, Sean Robin, Keisha St. Louis-McBurnie, Michaela Shirley, Samuel Stein, Carl Webb, Anaid Yerena

Graphic Design and Layout: Maaike Bouhuyzen-Wenger

Planners Network (PN): The organization of progressive planning. Our members are professionals, activists, academics, and students involved in physical, social, economic, and environmental planning in urban and rural areas. We serve as a voice for social, economic, and environmental justice through planning. Email: ***info@plannersnetwork.org***; ***www.facebook.com/PlannersNetwork/***; ***www.instagram.com/plannersnetwork/***; Check out 'videos' and 'live' at Youtube channel: ***@plannersnetworkprogressive2811***

Progressive City: Radical Alternatives, a project of PN: An online publication dedicated to ideas and practices that advance racial, economic, social and environmental justice in cities. We feature stories on inclusive urban planning practices, grassroots organizing, and civic action. Email: ***info@progressivecity.net***; ***www.facebook.com/pcityradical***; Twitter: ***@pcityradical***

Ear to the Pavement, a podcast by Allison Lirish Dean in association with Progressive City: Radical Alternatives.

The BIPOC Planning Collective Mutual Study, an affiliate of Planners Network. For more information, visit ***www.blackandurban.com/collective***

Other Planners Network projects:

Angotti, T. (Ed.) (2020) ***Transformative Planning: Radical Alternatives to Neoliberal Urbanism***. Black Rose Books.

Progressive City: Radical Alternatives Special Issues

Planning for Community Economic Development
Planning for Environmental Justice
Planning for Just Transportation
The Future of Planning - Insights from Emerging Planners

Table of Contents

Beadwork by Bert Whitecrow

Land Acknowledgement for Mother Earth

Michaela Paulette Shirley & Elisha Charley

To Mother Earth,

We urge principles of land co-stewardship and reconnecting to the divinity of Mother Earth. We are a group of people composed of planning academics, practitioners, and stakeholders grounded from all corners of Mother Earth. We are Indigenous to the ancestral territories of Turtle Island and beyond and declare our gratitude and agency for taking care of the land we plan, unplan, and design. We recognize the historic and ongoing colonial planning violence against the land. We ask for forgiveness as we struggle to take care of the land and each other kindly. We are privileged by technology, which may have shifted our compass, but we must reflect on our communal traditions and take co-ownership of our ecological contributions by centering Indigenous and sustainable reciprocity of caretaking Mother Earth, her waters, her herbs, her relatives, and her children. Through our co-planning and co-design efforts, we urge solidarity from our fellow humans and ancestors and relatives for mentorship to ensure that plans and designs center morality with the land. From here, there shall be balance with our relationality in the ecology we collectively inhabit.

Michaela Paulette Shirley (Diné, Navajo Nation), originally from Kin Dah Lichii, Arizona, resides in Albuquerque, New Mexico, managing the Indigenous Design and Planning Institute, and working towards her Ph.D. in American Studies, at the University of New Mexico.

Elisha Charley is a Nihok'aa Diyin Dine'é Diné (Navajo Nation tribal member). Her Ph.D. research focuses on Indigenous Planning and Self-Help Housing in Nihok'aa Diyin Diné'e Bikéyah (Navajo Nation).

Welcome to the Disorientation Guide

Cara Chellew

Many people are drawn to urban and regional planning because they have a desire to shape their communities, create positive change, and engage in meaningful work. For those new to the field, planning seems to be a way to address pressing environmental and societal issues. But how can the most transformative elements be realized?

Climate change and global heating are here. The world is literally on fire with wildfires raging across the planet. Extreme heat is making parts of the world uninhabitable and flash floods threaten lives and destroy basic infrastructure. Migration due to drought and other climate related factors will continue to increase. There is a need to design our cities and services with flexibility and resilience in order to adapt to our unpredictable future in ways that can ensure that justice is centered.

Yet the challenges to just planning abound. Fake news and alternative facts dominate, distorting discourse around ideas such as racial justice, decolonization, LGBTQ+ rights, and feminism. Black history is erased from school curriculums, trans people are denied gender affirming care and their right to even exist, and women's reproductive rights are increasingly under threat. Now, more than ever, planners must put forward visions and policies that protect human rights and dignity.

As concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion have become more mainstream in urban planning and other professions, what does it mean to be a "progressive" or "radical" planner? And what kind of power do planners have to enact change?

The Planners Network Disorientation Guide attempts to answer these questions through a range of articles, interviews, and excerpts sourced from progressive planning academics and practitioners.

The first part of the guide focuses on **decentering Western, colonial and patriarchal planning paradigms** and recentering voices traditionally excluded from planning and city-building. The second part includes a number of contributions exploring the themes of **justice in relation to planning theory and practice**.

These categories are not mutually exclusive as efforts to decenter mainstream planning cut across both and the objective of centering justice is key across the works, but helps to orient the reader to a general emphasis.

The Disorientation Guide is meant to be an introductory resource for students and those new to planning. Although we have attempted to include a range of topics important for progressive planning, this guide is not meant to be exhaustive. It is rather a starting point to discover a wealth of resources located in each piece.

While going against the grain is not easy, connecting and building relationships with others is key. It is our hope that this guide can help to inspire positive ways forward amid present challenges and offer a lens into the kinds of alternative visions and practices that planning can be.

Cara Chellew is a PhD student in Urban Planning, Policy & Design at McGill University and a member of the ***Urban Politics and Governance research group***. She is the founder of ***DefensiveTO***, a multimedia project which documents defensive/hostile urbanism in Toronto and beyond.

Planners Network Statement of Principles

The Planners Network Steering Committee

Organization

We are a coordinated network of individual members and of chapters based in cities, regions and campuses around North America, also known as Turtle Island, and beyond.

We publish the online magazine Progressive City, distribute a monthly newsletter, participate in and lead advocacy and organizing efforts, host public events, and gather for conferences.

Progressive

We are aligned with social movements that seek to transform society in order to achieve equity and liberation for all oppressed peoples.

We want progress away from racial capitalism and toward egalitarian socialism; away from extractive (neo)colonialism and toward abolition and decolonization; away from environmental catastrophe and toward climate justice; away from patriarchy and toward feminist liberation; away from the status quo and toward freedom.

Planning

We are planning practitioners, activists, academics and students engaged in the process of shaping space over time. We work in planning agencies and we protest against them, as well as the exploitative systems they uphold.

We study, teach, practice and fight for a form of planning that is transformative and anti-racist, geared toward the full realization of human rights, dignity and spatial justice. We seek public and social responsibility for meeting these needs, because the private market was never designed to do so.

We study, teach, practice and fight for a form of planning that is transformative and anti-racist, geared toward the full realization of human rights, dignity and spatial justice.

Planners Network from the Beginning

Tom Angotti

In 1975, Chester Hartman typed a letter to about 300 planners and activists, including members of the recently defunct Planners for Equal Opportunity. This was the first PN newsletter, run off on a mimeograph machine and mailed out.

This is the first mailing of a new communications/action network of leftist planners in the U.S. and Canada. At the first level, the idea simply is to put the few hundred North American "radical planners" in regular touch with one another, to share ideas and experiences, discuss their work and lives, develop some sense of community and mutual support.

These were heady times. The newsletter exchanges debated radical and socialist alternatives to mainstream urban planning. The Vietnam War was over, the last major anti-colonial struggles were being won in Africa, and détente between the U.S. and the Soviet Union brought optimism about peace and alternatives for social justice. In Europe, the welfare state was strong. In the U.S., the civil rights movement had killed Jim Crow and affirmative action was very much alive. Many Networkers celebrated the end of the federal urban renewal program, which they had fought as the first "advocacy planners."

The PN newsletters, usually published bi-monthly, contained notes from members about their work, news about conferences, publications, and other resources. Chester Hartman did most of the work, and received small individual grants and member contributions.

The first move toward making PN an organization came at the 1979 conference on progressive planning at Cornell University. The first PN conference was held in 1981 at the National 4-H Center outside Washington, DC. A formal statement of principles was adopted, several working groups were set up and a steering committee formed. In 1985 PN issued a "Call for Social Responsibility in the Planning and Building Professions" that spoke out against nuclear weapons, cutbacks in social spending, the aggressive U.S. foreign policy, and for economic and racial justice at home.

Another conference was held in 1986, and since 1994 conferences have been held almost every year, with venues in Washington, DC, East St. Louis, Brooklyn, Pomona, Toronto, Lowell, Amherst, and New York City. PN conferences are planned with the involvement of local communities and encourage participatory workshops.

Throughout the course of PN's history, members have organized local activities such as forums, conferences and campaigns. In 1975, Networkers in New York City started a forum series. There have also been local activities in Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Ithaca, Toronto, Winnipeg and Montreal. Today there are chapters in some U.S. and Canadian cities.

In 1995, Chester Hartman turned over the newsletter and coordination of PN to a new Steering Committee. The newsletter and membership list moved to Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. A website and listserv were started. The bi-monthly newsletter gradually expanded to contain more and more articles and features. In 2002, the printed newsletter was converted to Progressive Planning, a quarterly magazine under the direction of an editorial board and volunteer staff. Shortly after launching the magazine, we realized the need to bring back the networking that happened with the newsletter, and launched the PN e-newsletter for members. The magazine was in print for 16 years and after it ceased publication the on-line Progressive City website and blog were launched. A monthly e-newsletter continued to provide member updates and information on conferences and publications.

In the three decades since PN's founding, the political spectrum in North America has moved radically to the right. The left and progressive movements have become more diverse, and so has PN's membership base. Today PNers work in a broad array of disciplines, focusing on issues of race, gender, sexual orientation, and environmental justice as they relate to the physical, economic and social environment of cities and rural areas. The constant objective throughout PN's history has been to advocate that planning be used to eliminate inequalities and promote peace and racial, economic and environmental justice.

Planners Network arose during the Civil Rights and progressive movements of the 1960s when the mainstream planning profession was struggling to meet the new challenges posed by urban activists. The planning profession today, however, has been diverted to attend to and specialize in a host of other issues, frequently taking the focus off of North America's foundational contradictions of race, class and gender, while the planning academy struggles to retain its position in the educational establishment. With the threat of climate change on the horizon, the need for an organized alternative is greater now than ever. We must ask ourselves what the alternative will be and how planning can be part of it.

[Portions of this article were published in the Planners Network Newsletter and Progressive Planning Magazine.]

Tom Angotti is Professor Emeritus of Urban Policy and Planning at Hunter College and the Graduate Center, City University of New York. He was the founder and director of the Hunter College Center for Community Planning and Development. He is also Adjunct Professor at Parsons/The New School. His books include Transformative Planning: Radical Alternatives to Neoliberal Urbanism, Zoned Out! Race, Displacement and City Planning in New York City, and Urban Latin America: Inequalities and Neoliberal Reforms. He is an editor of progressivecity.net and Participating Editor for Latin American Perspectives and Local Environment.

Indigenous Planning

Interview with Theodore Jojola by Cara Chellew

For this interview, **Cara Chellew**, *PhD student in Urban Planning, Policy & Design at McGill University spoke with* **Theodore (Ted) Jojola**, *Distinguished Professor and Regents' Professor in Community & Regional Planning, University of New Mexico over Zoom.*

Chellew: Why don't we start with you telling me a little bit about yourself and how you got into planning?

Jojola: My name is Ted Jojola, I'm from the Pueblo Isleta and I'm faculty at the Community and Regional Planning Program [University of New Mexico]. I'm also director and founder of the Indigenous Design + Planning Institute, which was created in 2012 to assist Native communities and other place-based communities on how to use culture and identity to inform community development.

All our activities are based on assisting folks to first empower them with their own voices, but also to get them to wrap their heads around the meaning of their places and how they can return it to something that they recognize. Our legacy, unfortunately, is [that] lots of people—outsiders—have been coming in, disrupting our communities and trying to assimilate and transform us into what I refer to as "the other," in their attempts to extinguish us.

In my academic role, I've always wanted to look at what we call cultural change and how it is that particular Native communities have been able to build their own resiliency and sustainability in the face of all these outside influences and impacts.

Chellew: What is Indigenous planning and how does it differ from Western planning traditions?

Jojola: How do you use culture and identity to inform community development? It really is based on a process that we call "seven generations planning." It acknowledges the ancestors, but it also acknowledges those that will inherit what we do and who will lead us into the future.

"[H]ow can you make something so compelling and then be able to allow those generations to continue to successively carry that in terms of the original intent and clarity?"

We look at 7 Generations from the standpoint of being in the middle: preceded by your parents, your grandparents, and your great grandparents [and] followed by your children, your grandchildren and your great grandchildren.

Part of our Indigenous planning toolkit is to examine the distribution of age groups within existing populations tied into generations. Basically our definition of a healthy community is that all [generations] are present and vibrant and vital in any living community. And if they're not, then that's where we start the conversation about why they are not there and what is needed to bring them back.

And, of course, such conversations really examine the impacts [to] our communities all the way from high mortality at infancy, to elders, to out migration of groups, to the imbalance of males and females in the workforce and all these other kinds of things. So that's where we begin the discussion. But the other aspect of that is also to remind people that [for] the conversations that we have today and the solutions that we see into the future, we may not live long enough to actually see their completion.

We use [the] example [of] Chaco Canyon and Pueblo Bonito in particular, which took 140 years to complete [through] seven distinct phases of its construction. So the goal we set forth in our conversation is to say, "how can you make something so compelling and then be able to allow those generations to continue to successively carry that in terms of the original intent and clarity?" So that's the way we frame a lot of our discussions.

This model essentially challenges the Western paradigm of how we think about planning. So as Western planners we are trained to [look forward to] 5 years, 10 years, 25 years and, if you want to take a risk, 50 years. If you change the conversation, instead, [to] how is this going to affect you, your children, your grandchildren, or your great grandchildren, then people begin to see that it's not as abstract as they think. It becomes personal and the framework helps to build a much different conversation.

Chellew: Western planning tends to focus on zoning and land use and the primacy of private property. How does this differ from Indigenous notions of land and property?

Jojola: Some of the main values [with which] we have built this relationship to land [are] based on land tenure. Land tenure is driven by the right of inheritance. So when you're born into our place-based communities, you inherit those things from your parents or your extended family. In your lifetime, you're expected to maintain it and make it even better for those that are going to inherit it. So that's why things like private property don't really transfer in this kind of context. Things are not meant to be bought and sold.

We don't make places as much as we inherit places that are already made.

Our responsibility as such is not to create places, but to maintain them.

Chellew: You write about 'PlaceKnowing' in your work. Can you explain what this concept means?

Jojola: Sure. It comes out of a series of conversations that we've had nationally and internationally with like-minded colleagues about what they understand about placemaking. That's essentially the discussion that has occurred in mainstream America, particularly when it comes to trying to reform policies that affect rural communities. [Placemaking involves] looking at... internal assets and repositioning art and creativity as a way to diversify and rejuvenate economies, especially in rural communities.

But in those conversations, it became apparent very quickly that for Indigenous communities, they didn't really understand what placemaking is... We don't make places as much as we inherit places that are already made.

Our responsibility as such is not to create places, but to maintain them. And what's really important is knowing about what we have. When we've had discussions in communities, it's the elders who articulated this the best: "if we don't walk the land with our children, then we don't know who we are, don't know the meaning of our places, we don't know the stories of the land, we don't know our language, we don't know the meaning of our ceremonies. We risk not knowing anything and our culture becomes detached." If we don't attend to that, then we are structuring ourselves to lose our identity. So that's why 'PlaceKnowing' is positioned the way that it is. It's essentially remembering, retaining, and understanding these meanings.

Chellew: You mentioned that you're the director of the Indigenous Design and Planning Institute at the University of New Mexico (UNM). What is the mission of the institute and what kind of things are you currently working on?

Jojola: Our mission is to develop a pedagogy that helps to both engage and provide technical assistance. [We hope to] change the minds of young people. Plant new seeds in terms of how they approach both planning and design. We're invested in the School of Architecture and Planning and Landscape Architecture at UNM, so we work across the board with colleagues, faculty, students, and also with professional groups as well.

Essentially our projects are inspired by like-minded individuals and communities that aspire to bring back their traditional knowledge and ways from their respective worldviews. And by using cultural identity as a way to be able to plan and design for their communities... We work with Native communities in particular to assist them in developing conceptual ideas or strategic planning for their communities. We are also shifting some of our energies now to beginning to tell the stories of places and letting the community speak for themselves about why it's important.

We've got an Indigenous planning toolkit that we've evolved and developed as a result of all of this work. We're also very conscious about how we relate that to teaching these kinds of ideas and principles. We're strategic in contributing to the scholarship—as a consequence of not just our efforts, but efforts jointly with other scholars and

institutions and tribes and so on. [We] have now created a new subfield in planning and that's Indigenous planning. Now major universities, especially in Canada and the US, are looking for faculty that have that area of specialization... We've been successful at that in planning.

We're now trying to make the same kind of inroads for Indigenous design. There's a lot of interest actually in how you integrate Indigenous design into architectural education... In Canada there are architectural firms that are bringing Indigenous design to the forefront, but it's still a growing field. The one that's probably the most advanced is Laurentian University [in Sudbury, Ontario]. They've got a Master's in Indigenous design.

> [We hope to] change the minds of young people. Plant new seeds in terms of how they approach both planning and design.

Chellew: Do you have any advice for students who'd like to pursue Indigenous planning?

Jojola: We have a whole field of studies around the Indigenous planning process.

Right now it's somewhat solidified within our own university, but we're working steadfastly to see how we might be able to influence it in a more interdisciplinary fashion. For example, I am partnering with Kahente Horn-Miller and Jake Chakasim on Carleton University's [in Ottawa, Ontario] initiative around their 'Collaborative Indigenous Learning Bundles' on Indigenous design and planning.

We've also been approved to do an online certificate degree in Indigenous planning. We've been working on that, but we are feeling like we bit off more than we can chew because it's a bigger task than we had anticipated. On the other hand, our School here at UNM is fortunate to have [Indigenous] faculty and practitioners that are helping us to do this. We have three Indigenous faculty in the planning program: myself (Isleta), Lani Tsinnajinnie (Diné) and Elspeth Iralu (Naga). Several years ago we hired the first ever Indigenous chair of the architecture department, Chris Cornelius, Oneida Nation in Wisconsin. So we're steadfastly making progress, but so far it's just us in the US. We need to replicate it at other schools of design and planning. But it's going to take several more generations in order to be able to successfully grow our own, so to speak.

Theodore (Ted) Jojola is a Distinguished Professor and Regents' Professor in the Community & Regional Planning Program, School of Architecture + Planning, University of New Mexico (UNM). Currently he is the founder and Director of the Indigenous Design + Planning Institute. iD+Pi works with tribal communities throughout the Southwest region as well as internationally by facilitating culturally informed approaches to community development.

Settler Colonial Planning and Gaza:

As Captured in Visualizing Palestine's Stories

Progressive City: Radical Alternatives Managing Editors

For 75 years, Palestinians have been subject to Israel's settler colonial practices of dispossession and displacement. Today, internationally recognized human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International and B'Tselem, acknowledge that Israel's current system of domination and oppression over Palestinians constitutes ***apartheid***. Nowhere is this more evident than Gaza, which is among the most densely populated

areas in the world with 2.3 million people confined to 365km². Since 2007, Israel has subjected the Gaza Strip to an air, land and sea blockade, making it the world's largest ***"open air prison."*** In response to the October 7th, 2023 attacks by Hamas on Israel, on October 9th, Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant announced ***"a complete siege on Gaza…[with] no electricity, no food, no water, no gas"***—a siege that has been coupled with continuous bombardment.

Decades of military occupation (in both their spectacular and everyday forms) are at the root of the violence in Gaza and Israel over the past week, with settler colonial planning playing a key role. A hallmark of settler colonial planning is creating conditions that degrade people's access to their means of life, suffocating communities of their access to vital resources like land, water and transportation. To date, Israel retains control over Gaza's water, electricity, telecommunications, and other utilities, and places severe restrictions on the entry and exit of people and goods. To enforce such control, Israel has constructed a high-tech, barbed wire fence along the border with Gaza, with remote machine guns in certain sections. Israeli authorities tightly control Gaza's fisheries, a sector they have ***violently and illegally attacked in recent years***. Swathes of Gaza's infrastructure—from hospitals to schools to roads—have been decimated by multiple assaults and bombardments since 2007. These policies are all emblematic of a settler colonial planning system. Even before the institution of a 'total' blockade on October 9th, Gazans faced severe shortages of food and medicine and ***a collapsing economy*** as a consequence of such policies.

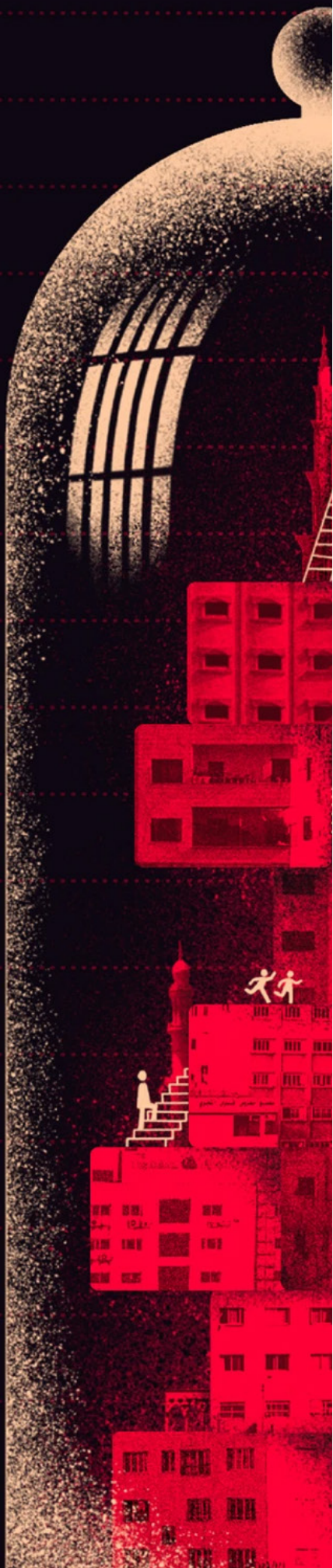
We also recognize the direct complicity of Western powers—including the US and Canada—in supporting the ongoing occupation and violence. From the provision of arms and funding to explicit support for Israeli government policies, they work collectively in furthering the dehumanization of Palestinians and propping up the settler colonial system. Biden's recent announcement of more military aid, ammunition and unconditional political support for Israel and the EU's threat to cut all funding to Palestine are only the most recent expressions of this wider complicity.

Here, with the permission of ***Visualizing Palestine*** (VP), we share some of VP's stories that convey the many consequences of this colonial planning regime — a regime that continues to deny Palestinians' access to essential services and livelihood opportunities, and indeed, their very humanity. These resources not only highlight the violence of occupation but also underscore the decolonial planning work needed to ensure lasting liberation.

Israel's Closure of Gaza Started Long Before the Blockade

The following visual tells the story of Israel's forced isolation of Palestinian residents of Gaza from Palestinians in other parts of historic Palestine.

ISRAEL'S CLOSURE OF GAZA **STARTED LONG BEFORE THE BLOCKADE**



Israel's current military closure and blockade of the Gaza Strip represent an intensification of decades of escalating Israeli policies that made closure a way of life in Gaza.

During the 1948 Nakba, 200,000 Palestinian refugees fled to Gaza, tripling its population overnight. The Gaza Strip, a fraction of the pre-1948 Gaza District, was severed from the rest of historic Palestine, creating a densely populated, economically dependent territory. These events set the stage for Gaza to be subjected to some of the harshest Israeli policies of military closure and blockade.

مركز الميزان لحقوق الإنسان
AL Mezan Center for Human Rights

ADALAH JUSTICE PROJECT

VISUALIZING**PALESTINE**

2007 BLOCKADE IMPOSED
land, air, sea blockade represents most extreme closure to date

2006 **CLOSURES INTENSIFY**
amidst Palestinian elections

2005 **UNILATERAL SEPARATION**
Israel withdraws settlements in Gaza and continues military occupation from Gaza perimeter. PM Ariel Sharon states: **"Gaza cannot be held onto forever. Over one million Palestinians live there, and they double their numbers with every generation"**

2004

2003 **FAMILY SEPARATION POLICY**
Gaza residents living in the West Bank are forcibly expelled to Gaza, dividing families. A Palestinian resident of the West Bank can move to Gaza only if they permanently sign away their right to return to the West Bank.

2002

2001 **ISRAELI FORCES BOMB GAZA AIRPORT**
destroying only Palestinian airport

2000 **ISRAELI FORCES BOMB GAZA SEAPORT**
closures imposed during Second Intifada become permanent, including ban on students from Gaza studying in the West Bank.

1999 Israel adopts tight restrictions on imports into Gaza

1998 **WORK PERMITS AND PERMITS FOR FAMILY VISITS BECOME RARE**

1997

1996 **GAZA ECONOMY LARGELY SEVERED FROM WEST BANK**
exports of goods from Gaza to West Bank decline dramatically;

1995 Israel restricts access to Palestinian territorial waters

1994 **ISRAEL BUILDS FENCE AROUND GAZA**
deepening control over movement of people and goods

1993 **FIRST SWEEPING CLOSURES**
Israeli closure becomes permanent structural reality in Gaza

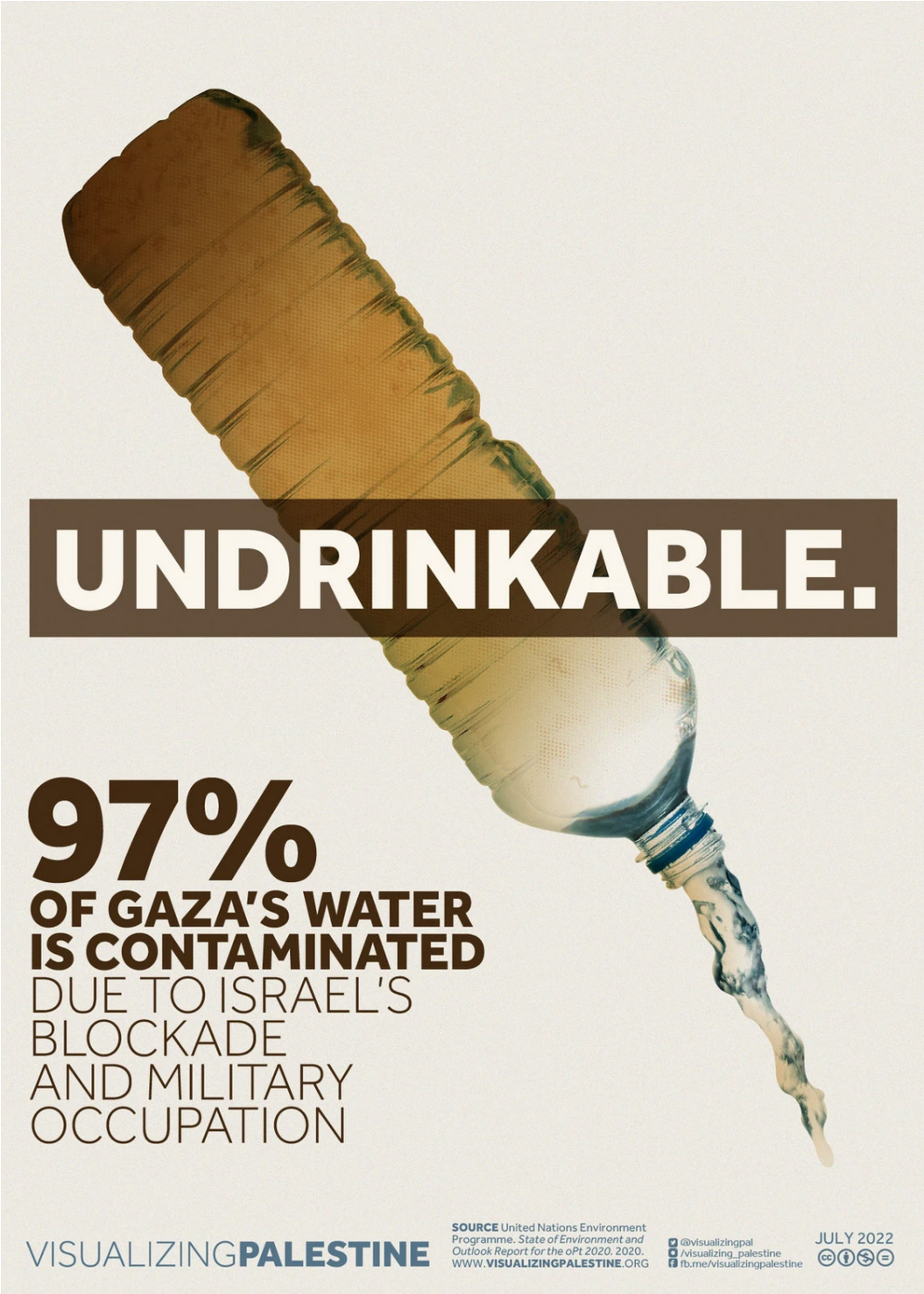
1992

1991 **INTRODUCTION OF PERMIT SYSTEM**
for the first time, no one can exit Gaza without an Israeli permit

SOURCES bit.ly/vp-gazaclosure
WWW.**VISUALIZINGPALESTINE**.ORG

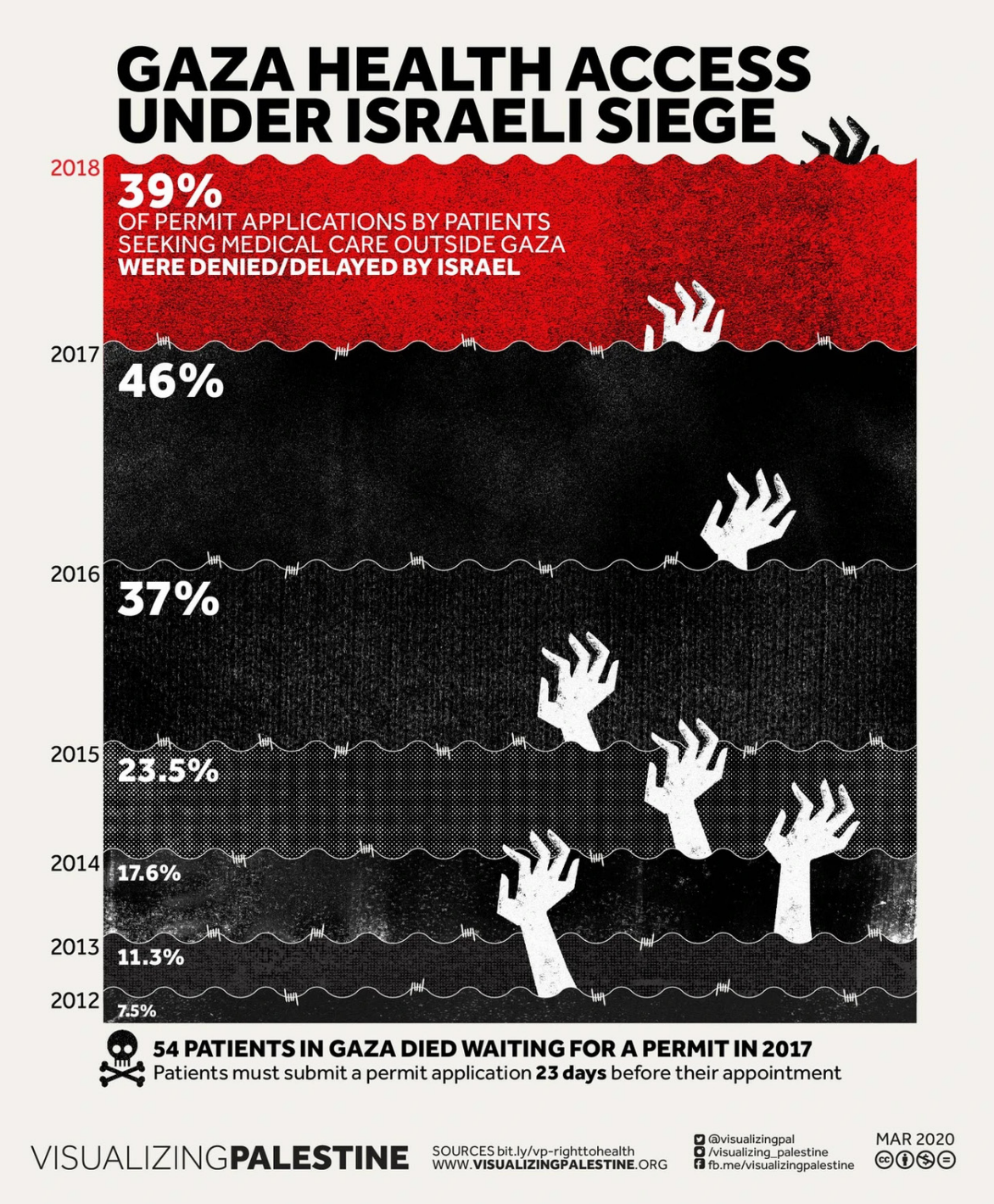
@visualizingpal
/visualizing_palestine
fb.me/visualizingpalestine

JUNE 2022



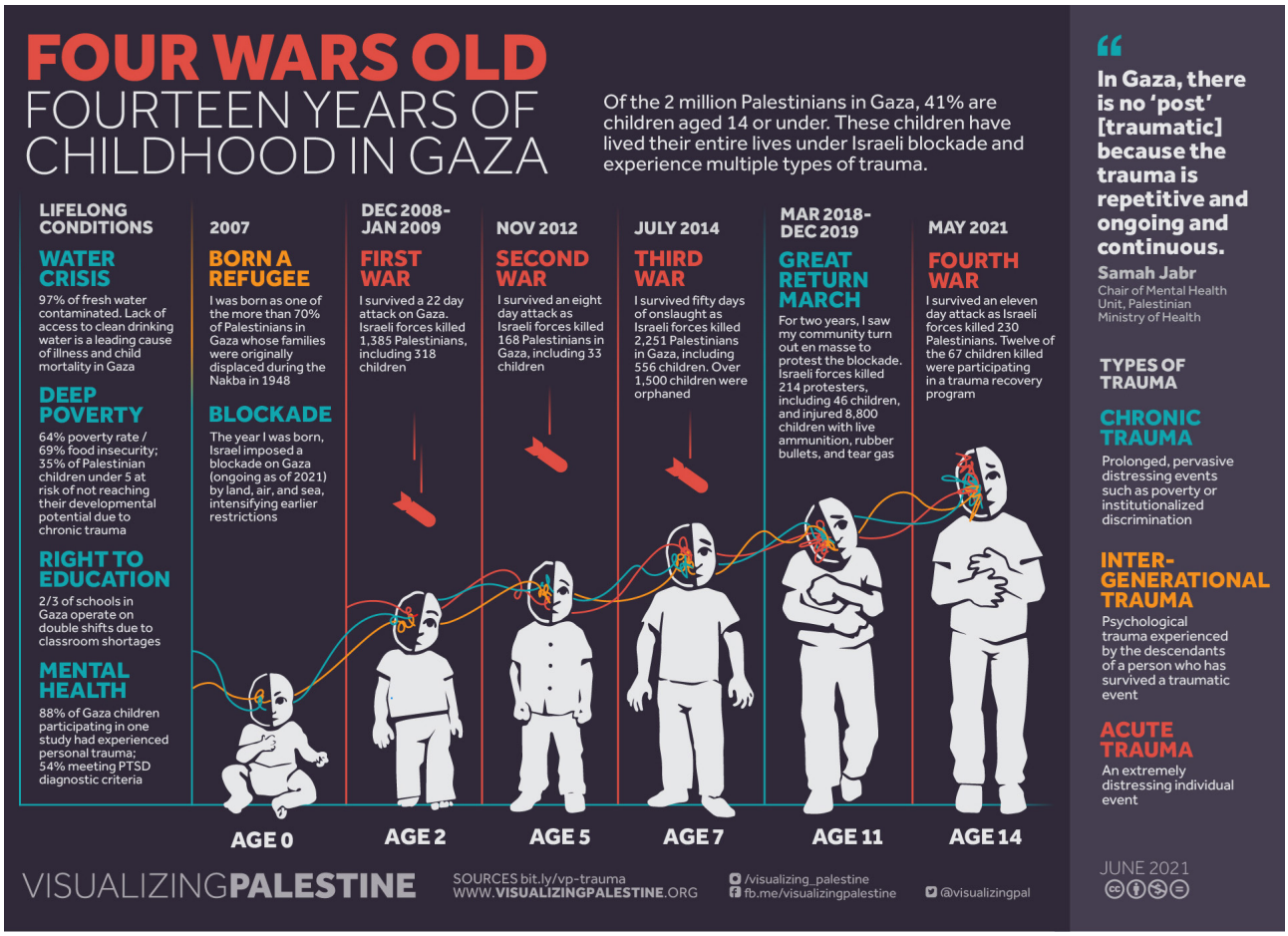
Undrinkable

This visual shows how Israel's military blockade on Gaza and recurring bombardments have made conditions in Gaza incompatible with a life of dignity.



Gaza Health Access Under Israeli Siege

Under Israeli blockade, Gaza hospitals experience a chronic shortage in essential medicines and equipment. Patients are forced to apply for a permit to seek care outside Gaza, and there is a high rate of denial of these permits by Israeli authorities. Numerous people have died awaiting treatment. This visual shows the dire health conditions that Palestinians navigate on a daily basis under blockade.



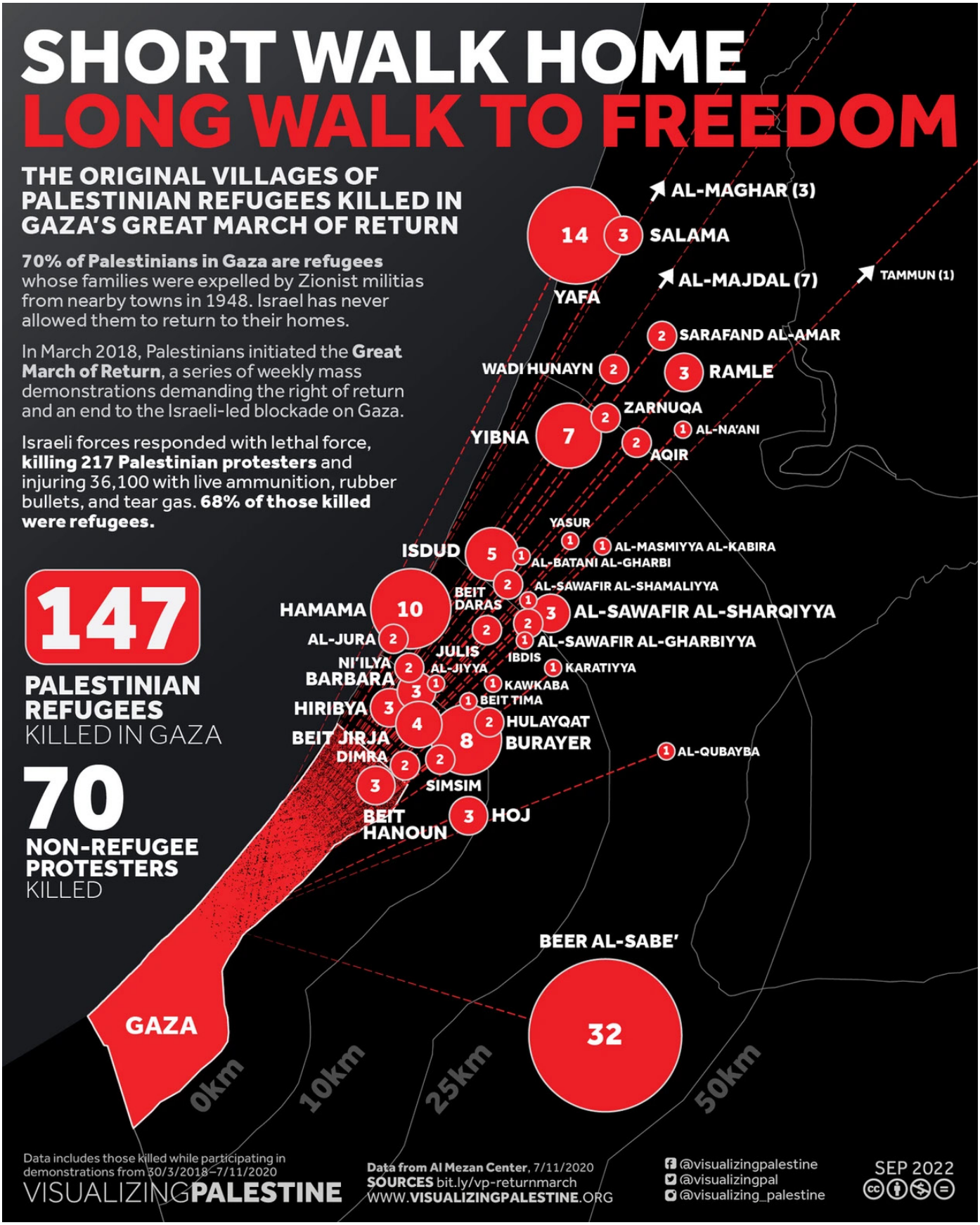
Four Wars Old

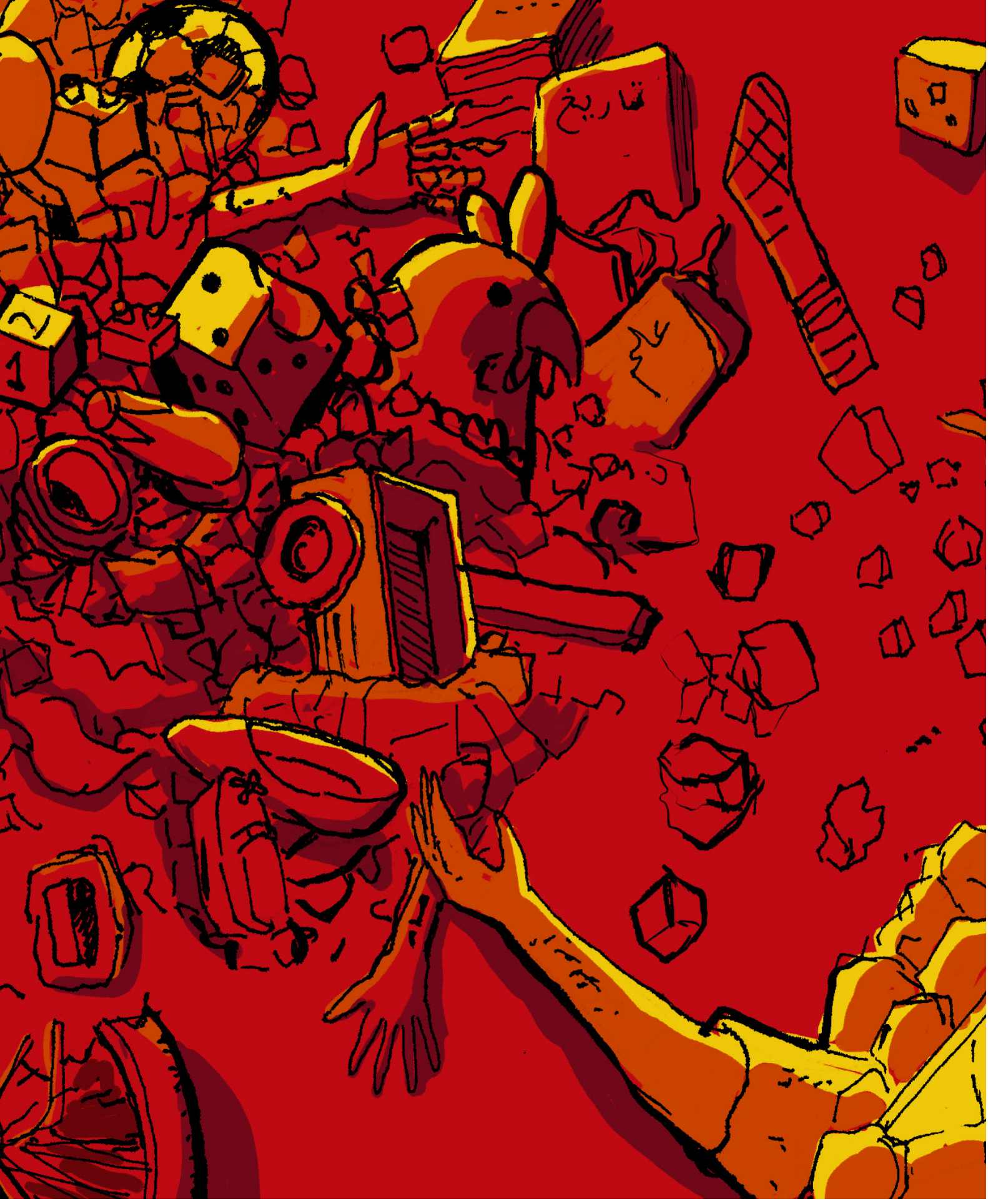
At least ***447 Palestinian children*** have been killed by Israel's assault on Gaza so far. This visual tells the story of Palestinian children in Gaza, who have experienced multiple assaults and multiple types of trauma since 2007, leading to a ***widespread mental health crisis among youth***.

Short Walk Home, Long Walk To Freedom

From 2018-2019, Palestinians in Gaza engaged in mass civil resistance, calling for an end to Israel's blockade and the realization of their right to return. Israel's response was to open fire on protesters, massacring hundreds and wounding thousands. This visual tells the story of Israel's repression of Palestinian civil resistance in Gaza.

To learn more, visit ***Visualizing Palestine***, ***Decolonize Palestine***, and the ***Palestinian Youth Movement***'s ***Our History of Popular Resistance: Palestine Reading List***.


SHORT WALK HOME
LONG WALK TO FREEDOM
THE ORIGINAL VILLAGES OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEES KILLED IN GAZA'S GREAT MARCH OF RETURN
70% of Palestinians in Gaza are refugees whose families were expelled by Zionist militias from nearby towns in 1948. Israel has never allowed them to return to their homes.
In March 2018, Palestinians initiated the Great March of Return, a series of weekly mass demonstrations demanding the right of return and an end to the Israeli-led blockade on Gaza.
Israeli forces responded with lethal force, killing 217 Palestinian protesters and injuring 36,100 with live ammunition, rubber bullets, and tear gas. 68% of those killed were refugees.
147
PALESTINIAN REFUGEES KILLED IN GAZA
70
NON-REFUGEE PROTESTERS KILLED
AL-MAGHAR (3)
14
3
SALAMA
AL-MAJDAL (7)
TAMMUN (1)
YAFA
2
SARAFAND AL-AMAR
WADI HUNAYN
2
3
RAMLE
ZARNUQA
2
YIBNA
7
1
AL-NA'ANI
2
AQIR
YASUR
1
ISDUD
5
1
AL-MASMIYYA AL-KABIRA
1
AL-BATANI AL-GHARBI
2
AL-SAWAFIR AL-SHAMALIYYA
BEIT DARAS
1
HAMAMA
10
3
AL-SAWAFIR AL-SHARQIYYA
2
2
AL-JURA
2
1
AL-SAWAFIR AL-GHARBIYYA
JULIS
IBDIS
NI'ILYA
2
AL-JIYYA
1
KARATIYYA
BARBARA
3
1
1
KAWKABA
1
BEIT TIMA
HIRIBYA
3
4
2
HULAYQAT
BEIT JIRJA
8
BURAYER
DIMRA
2
2
1
AL-QUBAYBA
3
SIMSIM
BEIT HANOUN
3
HOJ
BEER AL-SABE'
32
GAZA
0km
10km
25km
50km
Data includes those killed while participating in demonstrations from 30/3/2018–7/11/2020
VISUALIZINGPALESTINE
Data from Al Mezan Center, 7/11/2020
SOURCES bit.ly/vp-returnmarch
WWW.VISUALIZINGPALESTINE.ORG
@visualizingpalestine
@visualizingpal
@visualizing_palestine
SEP 2022



Detail from Ashla; illustration by Samir Harb

Black Planning in Action

Abigail Moriah

About seven years ago, feeling disillusioned, I began to reflect on my career in planning and development as well as the tensions I was experiencing. Self-doubt emerged, and I started to question my role in planning and if I was the right 'fit.' As a Black woman, should I be in this field? As a person committed to working with Black, racialized, and low-income communities, was planning the right path? I wondered where the other Black planners were and why I did not see more of them. I noticed the value placed on 'technical planning' versus 'community knowledge' or being in community. I was conflicted by what I heard from Black communities and what I observed in practice: the lack of historical recognition and protection of heritage, unequal infrastructure investment such as the provision of sidewalks, incompatible land uses adjacent to homes causing safety and environmental problems, and development-induced displacement.

These experiences and reflections made me increasingly curious about the experiences and motivations of other Black planners. The Black Planning Project was created in 2018 in response to what I saw - and to what I didn't see - around me in the field of planning in Canada. Through interviews with Black planners, I began to ask a series of questions to understand their planning journeys and aspirations in the field.

Many of the individuals I spoke with described how they had little knowledge of planning or knew few (if any) people working in the profession before they entered the field. They chose planning because they saw it as a way to participate in and shape more beneficial outcomes for Black, racialized, and lower-income communities. Some people talked about how they found it challenging to have few opportunities to meet others who shared similar lived experiences, racial or cultural backgrounds. In addition, some

individuals questioned how planning was being done, its impact on historically Black communities or areas with a strong Black presence and spoke of the internal conflicts they experienced in the workplace or classroom as a result. Importantly, many people reflected on the roadblocks they faced as Black planning professionals trying to build experience and skills to advance their careers.

While these conversations with Black planners provided a glimpse into how the planning profession in Canada could change from their perspective, the year 2020 (re) surfaced and amplified the reality of inequitable conditions in Black neighbourhoods and unjust experiences in urban spaces for Black people more broadly. Despite the historical destruction of Africville, Hogan's Alley, and countless other Black communities in Canada, there was still minimization and denial surrounding anti-Black racism and violence in the country, both past and present. This revealed a lack of knowledge about the histories of Black communities and their relationships with planning, both in the classroom and in professional practice.

In this context, a conversation about Black planning has been reignited. In his 2022 ACSP conference presentation entitled "Black Planning at MIT," Darien Alexander Williams emphasized that this is not the first time Black planners laid out a set of demands. He reminded us that today's discussions are reminiscent of the 1969 walkout at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) when Black planners requested resources to address planning issues, establish a Black epistemology, and support grassroots participation of Black communities in planning matters.

Black representation and voices – individually and collectively – are lacking in the planning profession. Importantly, Black spaces and communities are still experiencing more harm than benefits from planning. Planning practitioners and Black communities are urgently in need of a Black Planning lens. As planner Jamilla Mohamud posits in her article Anti-Black Racism in the Liveable City and Canada: "What would it mean to rethink livable cities, and urban planning more broadly, to center the lives of Black people?".

What does this mean for planners who want to engage in planning that is informed by and centers Black experiences and histories? How can planners responsively engage in planning to restore and reimagine Black spaces? Where do I, as a Black person and planning practitioner, turn to for hope of what might be possible in communities with significant Black populations? And how might this inform how Black planners, non-Black

planners, and Black communities engage in planning, and reimagine and expand how planning is done? Understanding the experiences and histories of Black people and places is a first step. It can inform what we know about planning, how it is taught, and hopefully impact how planning is practiced. To illustrate this, I turn to the community-driven work happening in the community of Beechville in Halifax, Nova Scotia where the Beechville Community Development Association has led and worked alongside a team of municipal planners to engage in planning quite differently.

Beechville: Black Planning Transforms from the Ground Up

Beechville is a historic African Nova Scotian community founded by Black Loyalists and Black freedom seekers in the early 1800s, after the War of 1812. Over the years, Beechville has faced many land use and planning challenges, from incompatible land uses and development encroachment to shrinking community boundaries. In recent years, when Beechville residents started to engage planning staff at Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) to address planning and development pressures in their community, residents required the city to work with them on their terms, not through the typical planning engagements.

At the request of the community, HRM planning staff were asked to participate in community walks led by members of the Beechville Community Development Association, not once or a few times, but on a biweekly basis. Through regularly inviting planners into their community for these walks, the residents showed them what was happening, sharing their history and drawing on their experiences with planning, land use, and development. This fundamentally transformed how community and municipal planners engaged with each other and the community. The community strengthened their knowledge of planning policies, processes, and instruments and began to identify their needs and priorities. This formed the basis of a community action plan, providing strategic direction and a vision for how the community could develop, which in turn began to transform how the HRM does planning with African Nova Scotian communities.

In these community walks, residents took space to talk about the history and impact of planning (by design) on the Black community.

What does the Beechville example illustrate? The Beechville example shows how residents were able to place themselves at the center of the planning process. By inserting themselves into the planning process, they ensured that Black voices and perspectives were represented. Beechville residents also introduced an engagement and knowledge sharing tool to the municipality which was not frequently used in community planning: community walks.

In these community walks, residents took space to talk about the history and impact of planning (by design) on the Black community. They revealed how it has created many harms and the challenges they are confronting today, such as poor public transit and unaffordable housing. This laid bare the question: who really benefited from government planning decisions? Municipal planners learned about Beechville's history and place-based narratives through the eyes, experiences, and knowledge of its residents, many of whom have been advocating for decades. The relationships established between planners and community residents created allies and advocates within the municipal planning department. These allies and advocates pushed for policy change to support the community in their efforts and prioritize their needs through planning tools and policies, enabling planning practice to happen differently.

A Black Planning Lens: People, Place, Pedagogy and Practice

Applying a Black Planning lens to our work as planners, requires that we interrogate who is doing planning, how planning is done, and what are the impacts and outcomes of planning practices and policies on specific populations and geographies. I suggest that this starts with acknowledging and responding to the gaps in the areas of people, place, pedagogy, and practice. The table below offers a guide for how planners might apply a Black planning lens through outlining a set of reflection questions, issues to acknowledge, actions to take, and resources to read.

Applying a Black Planning lens to our work as planners, requires that we interrogate who is doing planning, how planning is done, and what are the impacts and outcomes of planning practices and policies on specific populations and geographies.

	Questions for Reflection	*Issues to Acknowledge*	*Actions to Take*	*Resources to Read*
People	Who is planning Black communities? Who is considered a part of planning communities?	Planning is not representative of Black voices and perspectives.	Ask whose voice and perspective is not being heard.	*Why is urban planning so white?* (Ahsan et al., 2020) *Whiteness and Urban Planning* (Goetz et al., 2020)
Place	How have planning decisions and policies affected the environments and quality of life in Black, racialized, and lower-income communities?	Planning was not designed for (or by) Black individuals - to uplift spaces for Black individuals or where Black people predominantly live.	Become familiar with the history of Black spaces.	*Fight the Power* (Allen, 2019) *Planning History and the Black Urban Experience* (Thomas, 1994) *Interpretations & Imaginaries: Toward an Instrumental Black Planning History* (Roberts, 2018)
Pedagogy	What is taught about planning? And do we learn about planning? How is Black thought, knowledge, and history reflected in planning curriculum and pedagogy?	Planning histories, knowledge and thought excludes, ignores, and misrepresents Black experiences.	Work alongside the community, letting them lead.	*On Plantations, Prisons, and a Black Sense of Place.* (McKittrick, 2011) *The Paradox of Black Life* (Mohamud, 2020) *Educating Planners: Unified Diversity for Social Action* (Thomas, 1996)
Practice	What can we learn from the knowledge Black communities hold about the spaces where they live? How do the knowledge and experiences of Black communities transform how we engage in planning practice?	Planning practice is rarely led by Black individuals, has not, and still largely does not, reflect Black perspectives, and rarely operates to facilitate 'public good' for Blacks collectively	Learn from community to inform practice	*Beechville Planning Strategy Review and Community Benefit Action Plan* (Beechville Community Development Association, 2020) *A Black business conversation on planning for the future of Black businesses and residents on Eglinton Avenue* West. (Black Urbansim Toronto, 2020)

© 2020 by the Black Planning Project

Conclusion

It is critical for planners to acknowledge and address place-based planning inequities. To have different outcomes on the ground requires changing who is engaged in planning, how planning is taught, learned, and discussed, and how we engage in planning. Who is doing planning and how planning decisions are made determines the impacts and outcomes on people and places. To shape just and equitable spaces, it is our responsibility as planners to understand the impact of dominant planning practices and decisions on particular populations, people, and places, including those communities that have been historically excluded from planning benefits and harmed by planning practice. With this knowledge, we can depart from planning as usual and set a new path.

Author's Note: I would like to acknowledge the Beechville Community Development Association for leading this work. With the commitment over many years from Carolann Wright, Jenee Jarvis and Danielle Jackson and numerous others in the community as well as those who have passed on, we would not have the opportunity to learn from this work.

Abigail Moriah is a connector, facilitator and planner specializing in affordable housing and equity in development. In 2018 Abigail founded the Black Planning Project and through her practice is elevating Black Planning to center Black experiences and engagement in planning and development. She co-founded the Mentorship Initiative for Indigenous, Black and Planners of Colour (MIIPOC) in 2019 and also serves as a Founding Board member for the Black Planners and Urbanists Association established in 2020.

@planning_black | ***www.blackplanningproject.com***

Additional Resources

People

Ahsan, S., Belay, R., Moriah, A., & Nash, G. (2020, August 25). **Why is urban planning so white?** *Spacing Magazine*. Available from ***http://spacing.ca/toronto/2020/08/25/why-is-urban-planning-so-white/***

Goetz, E. G., Williams, R. A., & Damiano, A. (2020). **Whiteness and urban planning.** *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 86(2), 142-156 ***DOI:10.1080/01944363.2019.1693907***

Place

Allen, S. (2019). *Fight the Power: Redressing Displacement and Building a Just City for Black Lives in Vancouver.* Simon Fraser University.

Mohamud, J. (2020). *Anti-Black Racism in the Livable City and Canada.* Ontario Professional Planners Institute Blog.

Roberts, A. (2018). **Interpretations & Imaginaries: Toward an Instrumental Black Planning History.** *Planning Theory & Practice.* 19(2), 254-288.

Thomas, J.M. (1994). **Planning History and the Black Urban Experience: Linkages and Contemporary Implications**. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 14(1),1-11.

Yasin, A. (2020, June 18). *Whose Streets? Black Streets*. Available from ***https://thetyee.ca/Analysis/2020/06/18/Whose-Streets-Black-Streets/***

Pedagogy

McKittrick, K. (2011). **On Plantations, Prisons, and a Black Sense of Place**. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 12(8), 947-963.

Mohamud, J. (2020). **The Paradox of Black Life: Discourses of Urban (Un)livability**. [Master's Thesis, York University] Available from ***https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10315/38252/JM%20MES%20MP%20final.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y***

Thomas, J.M. (1996). **Educating Planners: Unified Diversity for Social Action**. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 15(3), 171-182.

Practice

Beechville Community Development Association. (2020). **Beechville Planning Strategy Review and Community Benefit Action Plan**. Available from ***https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/200929rc1116.pdf***

Black Urbanism Toronto. (2020). **A Black business conversation on planning for the future of Black businesses and residents on Eglinton Avenue West**. Available from ***https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ee50028e2a496763f512cc1/t/5fc5997d5147b14804f35347/1606785495837/LITTLE+JAMAICA+REPORT+-+2020-09-23***

Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI). (2021). **Anti Black Racism in Planning Task Force Recommendations**. Available from ***https://ontarioplanners.ca/inspiring-knowledge/anti-black-racism-in-planning-task-force***

BIPOC Planning as Giving Voice to the People

Sean I. Robin

BIPOC Planning in a manner that is authentic, respectful and in true solidarity (in meaningful partnership) with the community in question is invariably, on some level, planning against the grain. If the planner is to be in service of the People, who are themselves cultural and political minorities in North America, then they will find themselves working against the grain of dominant and mainstream forces. As such, this is a practice that assumes a level of resistance against forces (and persons) that would maintain our "minority status."

BIPOC Planning is also rooted within the People, community, place and heritage, and works to give voice to the People's efforts to assert and determine their own desired future. The planner is not necessarily the spokesperson, but helps to ensure the conditions for this voice to emerge in a clear and strong way. This voice may be defiant, and/or the tone may be celebratory, or it may have some other character and timber. Clyde Woods referred to a "Blues Epistemology" when writing about African American struggles of the Mississippi Delta, making the case that in this context the Black voice has a culturally distinct timbre.

It is important to acknowledge that there have always been BIPOC Planners, even if in recent times very few of us have had the professional credentials currently recognized. We would not have survived, endured and even thrived otherwise.

We use the terms BIPOC and communities of color interchangeably here to refer to Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities, and others who have political and cultural "minority" status within North America. While all these groups have experienced some form of racism, there is of course a variety of differences between them, making generalizations difficult. And yet, in the spirit of unity and coalition building, we have found it meaningful to look at them together in the context of planning. What follows are a series of principles, tenets or knowings that I feel resonate with many communities of color in some way. Space will only allow me to elaborate on a few of them in this piece[1].

1. People thrive in community.
2. Ordinary people have all of the answers.
3. People have a basic right to determine their own future (issues of sovereignty and freedom).
4. Oppression continues to be a force that devastates people (exploitation, dispossession).
5. The people are beautiful. Already.
6. A good (respectful) relationship to the Land (place) and the natural world is fundamental to community health, well-being and heritage[2].
7. There exists another way more nurturing, balanced and rooted than what currently prevails.

Together these tenets are a way of expressing the seeds of a new planning paradigm. Each community of color engaged in planning would no doubt have a different list of tenets, but I would wager it would include most of these. There have been several proposed names used to describe this emerging approach to planning, each of which emphasizes some aspect of it: Indigenous planning (today used most commonly for Native Americans), reparatory and restorative planning, abolition planning, transformative community planning, and also planning and decolonization. In all cases there has been a need to re-invent planning, reclaiming it from historical (mis-)uses by mainstream society that have not always been kind to communities of color.

I will now elaborate on three of the above tenets.

Ordinary people have all the answers. We must rid ourselves of tendencies to see the university trained planner or professional as any form of savior figure. This insults the people where respect, dignity and listening must be the first operating principles of any practitioner or activist who would join the People in their planning process. The university degree and professional appointment represents a form of privileged access that the

1 I have written about the first five in my article, "the Story of Indigenous Planning with its basic principles," in the Indigenous Planning Times, volume 1, number 1, 1995.

2 I am indebted to the work of Ted Jojola and other "Indigenous planners" on this point.

planner may need to spend many years apologizing for and becoming worthy of, given they represent a tiny minority of the People that the system risks converting to its special elite. Every community has its inherent wisdom, know-how, cultural traditions and intrinsic expression of leadership. Everyone has the seeds to express a part of the vision of their People. It is the most marginalized that often have the clearest insight into the better path forward. We must learn to listen to them. They are probably already speaking to us. By "ordinary people" we mean folks who may not have been anointed with mainstream signifiers or positions of power, wealth and status. Such people may in fact have been bestowed great stature and recognition within their local community, according to its own traditions and history. Perhaps not. In any event, as the planner continues to engage within the community, she soon learns that in fact *there are no "ordinary" people*.

The People are beautiful. Already. Great beauty and intelligence is already inherent in the People. A failure to grasp this represents myopia, clouded vision, and perhaps a closed heart. Those who truly love the People, can already see their beauty. It is a beauty that does not wait for the planner to arrive, or anyone else from afar bringing "improvements." It is intrinsic to the life of the community itself. One of the planners' tasks is to work to better "see" and understand the inherent beauty of those they are in the midst of. In the 1960s, the term *Black is beautiful* became prevalent. The Diné (Navajo) have the saying *Walk in beauty*. These are among the ways the People have come to value themselves and their community, despite a history that has attempted to demean us.

Every community has its inherent wisdom, know-how, cultural traditions and intrinsic expression of leadership.

There exists another way more nurturing, balanced and rooted than what currently prevails. We are still working to undo the harm of colonization and other oppressive systems that our grandparents set out to challenge before us. We are not there yet. I do not trust that simply learning the mainstream planning "tools" and applying them in a technical or non-reflective way will get us there. Any technique developed elsewhere will likely need to be significantly refigured to have relevance in a new context. And yet if we scan the history of any people, or listen to their current dreams, we will encounter clues to a better, more loving way.

As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of the beloved community." The Civil Rights Movement set the tone for many Black planners for several generations. Statement's like this one by Dr. King embolden the idea of struggling

for a more *nurturing* society. Mel King, the renowned Black activist and planner from Boston wrote about embedding the values of *Sharing, Compassion, Creativity* and *Respect* in the work to realize his vision for the City of Boston. For him, planning was intrinsically bound to the struggle for Freedom (King, 1981). The Mvskoke planner Laura Harjo stresses a "Community Knowledge" that can be "based on Indigenous ways of being which can be embodied, felt, or dreamt" when expressing her vision of planning (2019). These are all expressions of wisdom and values that transcend a purely technocratic approach, bringing in emotion, feeling and caring for others. They suggest that for BIPOC Planning, the work is about tending to people and relationships first.

Sean I. Robin is former editor of Indigenous Planning Times and a convener of the BIPOC Planning Collective. He currently serves as Assistant Commissioner of Co-op Readiness for the NYC Department of Housing, Preservation & Development.

References

Harjo, L (2019). *Spiral to the Stars: Mvskoke Tools of Futurity*. The University of Arizona Press.

King, M. (1981). *Chain of Change: Struggles for Black Community Development*. South End Press.

One of the planners' tasks is to work to better "see" and understand the inherent beauty of those they are in the midst of.

Planning has a Credibility Problem. Embedded Planning is a Solution

Jonathan Pacheco Bell

The Credibility Gap in Planning

Planning has a credibility problem. If we define "credibility" as being trustworthy and believable, planners are contending with a legacy of harm that's part of this profession. As emerging planners, you should know these harms.

- Redlining, the practice that codified disinvestment-as-policy with deleterious consequences in communities we still see today.
- The euphemism of urban "renewal" as a way to legalize place erasure.
- Massive freeway expansion that's almost always planned to divide communities of color.
- A long history of racist land use controls enforcing segregation – the codification of a racially and spatially divided society.
- This backdrop is the jumping-off point driving this commentary.

The last several years—***especially since the Summer of 2020***—have been a time of increasing interrogation of planning's legacies of injustice. As part of a repair and healing process, planners are seeking more and better ways to build meaningful community partnerships. We don't want to reproduce inequities in the built environment.

> The last several years have been a time of increasing interrogation of planning's legacies of injustice.

Meanwhile, since the 1960s, we have seen an increasing embrace of participatory engagement that helps democratize the planning process. Yet much of planning work still evades long-term relationship building.

I have a hypothesis as to why. Look at where and how planners conduct their work. We plan from our desks. This norm of detachment means we don't know our communities, and communities don't know us. Our field sets up planners to be deskbound bureaucrats. We come to the community when we need something. We come with our hand out.

Our attempts at relationship building are project-based. There is no continuity. To the community, this comes across as transactional, short-term, one-off, extractive, and insincere. We get what we need and get out. The relationship ends, only to repeat this cycle for the next project.

This builds nothing.

Communities deserve better from planners. There is a better way to plan. I've been doing it for nearly two decades. Mine is one solution to planning's credibility gap. It goes beyond project-driven interaction to build lasting community partnerships on the ground. I call it Embedded Planning praxis.

What is Embedded Planning Praxis?

I created Embedded Planning when I worked as a county planner in the Florence-Firestone community in South Central Los Angeles. ***Florence-Firestone*** is an unincorporated area just north of historic Watts. The County of Los Angeles provides all of Florence-Firestone's municipal services, including planning. A predominately Latinx and Black community, Florence-Firestone has been subject to decades of damaging planning practices: redlining, environmental racism, systemic disinvestment and more. It's a geography that needs tailored, empathetic planning services. In 2009, I became the community's new zoning enforcement planner. But I went far beyond responding to code complaints. I turned enforcement on its head and used my field assignment to build relationships, show neighbors I was trustworthy, and do planning from the street. I was always there. I worked from their spaces.

After doing Embedded Planning for years, after explaining it in community spaces, planning conferences, and academic guest lectures, and after telling any planner who would listen,

the American Planning Association invited me to write about it. I declared this praxis exists in the October 2018 issue of Planning. My 1-page manifesto is titled, ***"We Cannot Plan From Our Desks."*** This is the rallying cry I wrote to galvanize support for the praxis. I call for a transformation of how we do planning based on where we site our work as planners.

New concepts need definitions, so let's define this praxis.

Embedded Planning means the planner *moves with intention* to work on the ground in the community to:

- Understand people's needs
- Build trust and authentic relationships
- Increase participation for marginalized communities through street-level engagement
- Participate in daily community life, and, ultimately
- Advance equity.

My phrase "move with intention" is crucial. It means you push your work as much as possible to the spaces and places of the community. Embedded Planning is a praxis because it puts ideas into action to better our communities. You can do this too.

What follows is an overview of how I've implemented Embedded Planning in practice. This is not prescriptive but rather a non-exhaustive list of examples with vignettes that can be adapted and applied in other communities.

The author (center) on a community walk explaining the history of a vacant lot on Florence Avenue in the Florence-Firestone neighborhood in South Central Los Angeles. Photo: Jonathan Pacheco Bell

Engage Directly With Community Members in Their Spaces

First and foremost: get out from behind your desk and get into the streets. Relocate your planning work as much as you can to the street-level. Put your feet on the ground. Deinstitutionalize planning. Take planning to people's homes, businesses, recreation spaces, places of worship, travel modalities – anywhere they are. Make the community your office. This is what I did as a county planner in Florence-Firestone. I moved with intention to work from community spaces. My approach helped rebuild relationships in a community that felt forgotten by the local government. It also helped legitimize planning. This field-based approach aligns with more recent and righteous calls for planners to "meet people where they are."

While there, it's crucial to engage with community residents in unorthodox ways. That is, you can engage them in a mobile fashion by organizing and taking part in neighborhood walks. You can also partake in community-led events like cookouts, quinceañeras, and luaus. These are some of the most intimate spaces you can be in as a planner, allowing you to experience planning issues up close. You use all your senses while you're out there. With this immersion, you discuss strategies in situ. This is a mutually beneficial process. For example, I organized community walks on Florence Avenue in Florence-Firestone. On one such walk, I particularly highlighted examples of what James Rojas calls Latino Urbanism and I identified sites of place erasure, including a former golden age cinema demolished and replaced with big box retail. Equally important, I learned from community members what these sites mean to them and the importance of preserving memories and history.

Partner With Communities

Having engaged with community members and learned their stories and histories, you can partner with them to publicize the stories that might otherwise remain untold. Case in point, I served as a co-author for, A Paseo Through Time in Florence-Firestone. Funded by the County of LA and led by CalArts, this would become the first-ever history book written about Florence-Firestone. We prioritized sharing authority by having community members co-author chapters with us. Our book project is instructive to planners and communities alike. You can partner up to tell their story.

The author (center) with Mike The PoeT Sonken at East LA Renaissance Academy teaching high school students about the Theory/Practice Gap in urban planning. Photo: Public Matters, LLC

You can also partner up to ensure code compliance. Planners and code enforcement officials are often at odds. They have competing interests. Planners write codes with little reference to street-level implementation. Code enforcement staff focus on implementation with little regard for its long-term policy implications. Instead of pointing fingers, planners and inspectors can learn from each other. I know this because I worked both roles simultaneously at the County of Los Angeles, where planners do code enforcement. What results is a community-rooted approach to zoning enforcement. This involves going out to implement the zoning code with empathy, patience, respect, in plain language and the languages of the community. It also means understanding why folks are out of compliance. Work with people to find solutions.

Go To The Classroom

As issues like gentrification and the houselessness crisis spread to communities large and small, more K-12 students are learning about urban planning. No longer must we start capturing their attention at the college level. Embed yourself in classrooms. Do guest talks. Become "teacher for the day." Explain what planners do. Show students who the planners are. Demystify planning.

I've used this approach to build the next generation of planners. For this, we venture a few miles northeast of Florence-Firestone to another historic unincorporated community: East Los Angeles. Arguably the West Coast's Latinx mecca, East LA is where I grew up. For several years, I was a guest lecturer at the East LA Renaissance Academy (ELARA) located within Esteban Torres High School. ELARA is a public high school program that teaches students urban planning, one of only three in the nation. I shared my trajectory from teenage tagger, to architecture school drop-out, to embedded planner. They see a planner who looks like them, talks like them, and knows their same streets. This is representation in action.

Challenges of Embedded Planning

Let's be clear: This will not be easy. Confronting orthodoxy in planning while building relationships from the ground up will present challenges. You should expect resistance. From my experience, here are three key challenges to be ready for.

Agency buy-in

People in power may say Embedded Planning is too political. By taking planning to the street, you're empowering the community to lead the planning process. You're sharing authority with community members. This work strives to center decision-making about the community squarely in the community. Working in local spaces means you're away from the gaze of top-level management. In a tense meeting years ago, one suspicious administrator told me, "We don't know what you're sharing out there." You're removing their influence over decisions in favor of the community proper. That lack of control unsettles people in power.

In the face of agency resistance, find allies. Organize like-minded coworkers as well as your community members. Build bottom-up support for Embedded Planning.

Earning community trust

Planners are making strides to redress the credibility gap. Increasing focus on equity in zoning and policy shows promise. We're actively working to repair the field's legacies of harm. Given the long-term effects of some planning policies, earning the trust of communities is not an easy endeavor.

The best way to do this is through face-to-face relationships formed in community spaces. I think of the community member who once told me, "You're always here! I see you everywhere." In the neighborhood, at meetings, walking the block – I was there. My presence itself was meaningful. The community member went on to share, "I may not trust your department, but I trust you." That is the start of a partnership.

In your Embedded Planning praxis, be intentional, consistent, and authentic. Community members see this. In time, you will go from the unnamed planner to a faithful ally.

Stress from being close

On the ground work is intimate. Proximity creates social bonds. You get close to people. But that cuts both ways. You see people in various states of being. You learn what folks are going through, life's highs and lows. People will share their trauma. In all honesty, you may not be ready for it. I have memories of things I wish I could unsee.

Embedded planners must practice self-care. You have to open up and reflect. Talk to family, friends, and colleagues. Write and speak your feelings.

I started doing public talks as a form of self-care. After conducting housing enforcement for many years, one case led me to question everything I'd done – and tell my story. In my 2018 ***manifesto on Embedded Planning***, I shared the plight of the Medina Family. Their backyard rental unit, built informally, triggered a code complaint. After inspection, I had to initiate an abatement process that summarily removed the little house. Reflecting on my planning enforcement results, I had a moral crisis. To cope, not only did I stop doing housing enforcement, but with the family's permission, I developed a public talk on the Medina Family ADU story wherein I shared our collective ordeal. This talk became a nine-city speaking tour in 2018-2019. The conversations during Q & A helped me process my emotions.

We're trying to change the world, but we must also care for ourselves. So, take time to share and decompress. Go a step further by turning off planning mode. Find enjoyment outside of work. Think about anything but planning. Recharge and come back to fight another day.

Benefits of Embedded Planning

The benefits of this praxis outweigh the challenges. Below are two of the many benefits of Embedded Planning.

Planning with street knowledge will help redistribute community power

"You are now about to witness the strength of street knowledge." This is Dr. Dre's opening line to NWA's iconic album ***Straight Outta Compton***. I first heard that line in 1988 when I got the album on cassette, and it remains truer than ever for me 35 years later as a planner.

Think of the credibility gap examples from the opening of this commentary. Those legacies of harm remain. Think of the power to zone, to declare certain land uses legal or illegal. Think of eminent domain. Planners hold power. Many communities don't – because of planning. As part of healing and repair, planners owe it to communities to make amends. By taking planning to the street, we redistribute power and authority back to communities.

Embedded Planning shows what this looks like. Bring planning knowledge buried in codes and documents to the people. Translate our planner jargon into plain language. Interpret the meaning of policies, codes, and programs in the spaces where they're implemented. This is how, through Embedded Planning, we progress from one-directional outreach, to multidirectional engagement that can still be extractive, to long-term and meaningful 360-degree community partnerships.

NWA was right. Tap into the strength of street knowledge.

Barriers get removed

The planning apparatus erects barriers to participation. Take our standard meeting places. Planning Commission hearings are typically held on weekdays in the early mornings when people are at work or after work when people have life responsibilities. Hearings occur in stuffy municipal auditoriums rigidly orchestrated by Robert's Rules of Order. Discussion is in English-only despite the prevalence of multilingual communities. We ask people to provide commentary but limit it to a few minutes, sometimes literally to one.

Embedded Planning is one way to remove these barriers. We deinstitutionalize planning by taking it to the street. We plan in and from the people's spaces. You plan in plain language and the languages of the community.

NWA was right. Tap into the strength of street knowledge.

Looking Ahead

Embedded Planning belongs to all of us. This is a horizontal, decentralized movement at the vanguard of planning practice. Anyone can do Embedded Planning. If you endeavor to push your work to the street, you are an embedded planner.

Yet, I worried about the praxis when COVID hit. Recall that we were quarantined. Even in such dark times, I devised ***strategies to embed myself in many virtual spaces***. The Coronavirus didn't stop the praxis. This gives me so much confidence that Embedded Planning is resilient and will thrive if planners are determined.

So I ask you: If you want to build lasting community partnerships rooted in trust, that redistribute community power, and help us bridge our entrenched credibility gap: What will your Embedded Planning look like? Who will you organize with? Where can you see it take shape?

Move with intention. Envision your praxis – make the plan – bring it to life.

Relationships formed through Embedded Planning create partnerships beyond projects. You create partnerships that last a lifetime.

We are the future of planning.

Author's note: This article was adapted from my public talks, ***"Embedded Planning Is Worth The Struggle"*** at the Columbia GSAPP Lectures in Planning Series on November 29, 2022, and ***"Building Community Partnerships Through Embedded Planning"*** at the APA Iowa Conference on October 14, 2022.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell (@c1typlann3r) is a Los Angeles-based Embedded Planner with over 20 years of experience in urban planning, architecture, and community libraries. In addition to professional practice, he's a Lecturer at Cal Poly Pomona Department of Urban and Regional Planning and Vice President of the nonprofit Florence-Firestone Community Organization in South Central LA.

Some Reflections about Planning and the LGBTQ Community

Petra L. Doan

While the American Association of Geographers (AAG) has had a Sex and Space Interest Group for many years, the field of planning has lagged behind. In 1992, some lesbian and gay planners met informally at the national conference of the American Planning Association (APA) to create solidarity and discuss mutual interests. This group slowly got organized and in 1997 successfully proposed that the APA create the Gays and Lesbians in Planning Division (GALIP). When the formation of GALIP was announced publicly, there was considerable backlash from some conservative planners who wrote scathing letters in Planning Magazine excoriating the leadership of APA for "pandering" to homosexuals because there were no legitimate planning issues linked to these groups (see Doan, 2011). Eventually, in 2016 the name of this division was changed to the LGBTQ and Planning Division, finally recognizing a wider array of identity positions within the planning profession.

In the third decade of the 21st century, it is perhaps hard to imagine the silencing of queer voices that was routine during the 1980s and 1990s. During graduate school in the 1980s, the words 'gay' and 'lesbian' did not appear in any of the readings and planning curricula that I encountered. In the late 1990s, shortly after I came out as a trans woman, a friend recounted to me the words of another senior colleague that there were no progressive issues around LGBT neighborhoods because they were filled with wealthy white gay men. Around the same time, a senior colleague at my university tried to dissuade me from changing my research interest to focus on LGBTQ issues because that kind of research was NOT publishable.

Despite that advice, and perhaps because of the rancor it generated within me, I persisted and became fixated on publishing in this area. I had just been awarded tenure and was the most visible trans academic in the field, so I jumped in with both feet. I found some very interesting work in geography journals published by planning academics, including Sy Adler (and his colleague Joanna Brenner), Ann Forsyth, as well as Mickey Lauria (and his student Larry Knopp). However, there was nothing in the big three US planning journals, the Journal of the American Planning Association (JAPA), the Journal of Planning Education and Research (JPER), and the Journal of Planning Literature (JPL). The first article in the planning literature (JAPA, JPER, and JPL) to address LGBTQ issues in any substantive way was Ann Forsyth's (2001) comprehensive literature review titled "Sexuality and Space: Nonconformist Populations and Planning Practice," in the Journal of Planning Literature. This was followed in short order by Michael Frisch's (2002) excellent piece in the Journal of Planning Education and Research with the provocative title, "Planning as a Heterosexist Project."

At roughly the same time, Ann Forsyth and George Cheung organized a special issue of Progressive Planning (subsequently Progressive City Magazine) with the theme of Queers and Planning. I was invited to contribute an article on the vulnerability of the trans population in urban spaces. My article was complemented by Gail Dubrow's piece on the importance of LGBTQ historic preservation and Gwen Urey's article highlighting the use of zoning to exclude queer populations. Each of these pieces of research helped to demonstrate that there were indeed critical planning issues linked to LGBTQ identity and the places in which these marginalized populations gathered to live, work, and play. But a field like planning adapts slowly, and it was a good while longer until LGBTQ issues really became mainstream. Just a few years earlier, as a newly tenured Associate Professor at Florida State University, I was encouraged NOT to publish on LGBTQ issues because a senior colleague felt that such work would never be publishable.

[A] field like planning adapts slowly, and it was a good while longer until LGBTQ issues really became mainstream.

At the urging of Gail Dubrow, I went on to edit a volume published in 2011 with the title Queerying Planning: Challenging Heteronormative Assumptions and Reframing Planning Practice. In that volume, I included several queer geographers in addition to some of the planners discussed above. I was frustrated that I had trouble identifying any new planners to contribute apart from Katrin Anacker. Evidently, the silencing of queer issues in planning continued.

Perhaps the publication of this volume opened the door and encouraged the analysis of other planning issues linked to LGBTQ issues. By 2015 there were quite a few additional planners interested in the topic. I edited a second volume, Planning and LGBTQ Communities: The Need for Inclusive Queer Spaces. In the same year, two Australian planners, Paul Maginn and Christine Steinmetz, co-edited another volume titled (Sub)urban Sexscapes: Geographies and Regulation of the Sex Industry. More recently, Alex Bitterman and Daniel Hess produced in 2021 another edited volume called provocatively, The Life and Afterlife of Gay Neighborhoods: Renaissance and Resurgence. These four books today provide a rich set of perspectives on the topic of planning for diverse and often marginalized LGBTQ people and the spaces that are important to them. An ongoing theme has been the tendency of planners to overlook the role played by queer populations in reclaiming marginal (sometimes industrial) areas of the city and creating vibrant queer spaces. While these spaces are frequently dominated by white gays, they are mostly welcoming spaces for other queer folks whose gender non-normative or racial identities create intersectional difficulties.

An ongoing theme has been the tendency of planners to overlook the role played by queer populations in reclaiming marginal areas of the city and creating vibrant queer spaces.

At the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century, the lessons provided by these volumes, as well as a host of articles that are now regularly published in planning journals, seem more important than ever. It remains to be seen if the conservative push to once again demonize difference will spread more broadly. Certainly, people of color and trans youth remain highly marginalized and have been demonized by legislative actions that limit the teaching of critical race theory, restrict medical care for trans youth, and attempt to limit their ability to transition as needed. The task for queer planners and supporters over the next decade will be to explore whether these intersectional cultural politics are succeeding in re-shaping the urban landscape.

Petra Doan is Professor Emerita of Urban and Regional Planning at Florida State University. She conducts research on the relationship between urban planning and the LGBTQ community. She has published numerous academic articles and edited three books: Queerying Planning: Challenging Heteronormative Assumptions and Reframing Planning Practice (2011), Planning and LGBTQ Communities: the Need for Inclusive Queer Space (2015), and Rethinking Transgender Identities: Reflections from Around the Globe with Lynda Johnston (2022).

References

Bitterman, A., & Hess, D. B. (Eds.). (2021). The Life and Afterlife of Gay Neighborhoods: Resurgence and Renaissance. Springer International Publishing.

Doan, P. L. (2001, March 19). Are the Transgendered the Mine Shaft Canaries of Urban Areas? Progressive Planning [Online], 146. Available at: ***https://www.plannersnetwork.org/2001/03/are-the-transgendered-the-mine-shaft-canaries-of-urban-areas/***

Doan, P. L. (Ed.). (2011). Queerying Planning: Challenging Heteronormative Assumptions and Reframing Planning Practice. Routledge.

Doan, P. L. (Ed.). (2015). Planning and LGBTQ Communities: The Need for Inclusive Queer Space. Routledge.

Dubrow, G. (2001, January 19). Deviant history, deviant heritage. Progressive Planning [Online], 146. Available at: ***http://www.plannersnetwork.org/2001/01/deviant-history-defiant-heritage/***

Forsyth, A. (2001). Sexuality and space: nonconformist populations and planning practice. Journal of Planning Literature, 15, 339-358.

Frisch, M. (2002). Planning as a heterosexist project. Journal of Planning Education and Research, 21(3), 254-266.

Maginn, P. & Steinmetz, C. (Eds.) (2015). (Sub)Urban Sexscapes Geographies and Regulation of the Sex Industry. Routledge.

Urey, G. (2001, March 19). Zoning that excludes queers: what a difference a phrase makes. Progressive Planning [Online], 146. Available at: ***https://www.plannersnetwork.org/2001/03/zoning-that-excludes-queers-what-a-difference-a-phrase-makes/***

Placemaking when Black Lives Matter

Annette Koh

What would placemaking look like when Black lives matter? Washington D.C.'s director of planning illustrated the racial limits of DIY optimism, ***stating***, "I've told my staff that PARK(ing) Day is really nice. But if five Black males took over a parking spot and had a barbecue and listened to music … would they last 10 minutes?" Who gets to "***disrupt***" the public space paradigm, and who gets arrested for disturbing the peace? Twenty years earlier, Oakland-based landscape architect ***Walter Hood*** pointed out the irony that "congregating on corners implies illicit activities and trouble" in inner city communities, while in other areas of the city, it is encouraged and seen as a sign of vitality and community spirit. How much have things really changed?

Placemaking as a policy is no longer a flash in the pan fad. These projects to "collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces" ***run the gamut*** from DIY pallet furniture to multi-million dollar park renovations. A flurry of foundations, private and public, now offer placemaking grants and dozens of American municipalities have embraced pop-up plazas and parklets as low cost ways to increase livability. Placemaking has captured imaginations because it emphasizes the active over the static, the small-scale intervention over the mega project and creative engagement instead of passive provision. The bottom up nature of placemaking lends its street cred and the participatory process avoids the contentiousness of public hearings.

Given the planning profession's track record of spatial discrimination dressed up as urban panacea—Exhibit A is urban renewal—this speedy popularization of placemaking has also prompted criticism and reflection. Last year, Project for Public Spaces issued a call to planners and designers to formulate a ***placemaking code of ethics***. Guideline #7 reads: "We will actively promote inclusion in all of our projects. We know that ***place*** is a common denominator for all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or income, and we will not engage in projects that discriminate against any community or individual."

> When we talk about "activating public space", we should talk about who is already active in those spaces—people who in fact may have nowhere else to go. The ability to define an activity as desirable or undesirable, or define a "great place" or a "sketchy place" is a form of power that planners exert unthinkingly.

The intent is laudable. But "inclusion" doesn't undo existing injustices. In particular, viewing place as a "common denominator" runs the risk of erasing major differences in the ways people experience place and public spaces. In the United States, these major differences cleave along racial and class lines.

Persistent inequalities and decades of discrimination mean a code of ethics isn't going to cut it. We need an actual politics of placemaking. Our naiveté borders on negligence if we don't explicitly address how the very presence of certain bodies in public has been ***criminalized*** and the color of your skin can render you automatically "out of place." Stop-and-frisk policies have criminalized an entire generation of Black and Latino youth in the name of public safety. What kind of places are we making in American cities where a 12-year old kid is ***shot in his own neighborhood park***?

The fundamental problem with placemaking as currently popularized is that it does not challenge the logics that undergird discriminatory policies such as broken windows policing. Urban design arguments for the activation of public space still take "disorder" as a neutral category, rather than one shaped by legacies of vagrancy laws and Jim Crow. As the murder of Alton Sterling revealed, the idea that "***public space and culture should belong to those who produce them***" does not apply to all.

When placed in the context of ongoing struggles, placemaking's proverbs take on a sinister tone. Jane Jacobs's injunction that neighborhoods need "eyes on the street" has been embraced by placemaking advocates as a beneficial outcome to increased attention to public spaces. We should ask ourselves if those eyes are attached to a person socialized to see non-white people as ***inherently dangerous***. Having more

"eyes on the street" might only result in ***more calls to the police*** about "suspicious behavior" or worse yet, armed vigilantism.

Saying that "***great places benefit everyone***" and will connect all residents, rather than divide or displace, is unrealistic given deeply embedded racism and classism. When we say a park is under-used, we should qualify that by saying "underused by middle-class professionals" if what we are objecting to is the presence of poor and homeless people who cannot afford to purchase a cappuccino as "rent" for a coffee shop table. When we talk about "activating public space", we should talk about who is already active in those spaces—people who in fact may have nowhere else to go. The ability to define an activity as desirable or undesirable, or define a "great place" or a "sketchy place" is a form of power that planners exert unthinkingly.

Quality of life and livability are not value-neutral concepts. As planners and urban designers, we render and enact particular visions of the good life that are often coded in racial and class terms—sipping a craft cocktail at a sidewalk cafe versus brown bagging a forty on the corner. ***William H. Whyte***'s work on the social life of small urban spaces is a touchstone text for placemaking advocates. But while we remember the importance of people-watching perches, we pay less attention to his insistence that we must welcome the weirdos and the bag ladies too. ***Whyte argued*** that public space is for "controversy, soapboxing, passing of leaflets, impromptu entertaining, happenings, or eccentric behavior." Placemaking must make room for politics because public space is inherently political. Some uses and users will be controversial.

Placemaking must make room for politics because public space is inherently political.

Oft-repeated mantras to "activate under-utilized space" skirt perilously close to Manifest Destiny justifications that indigenous peoples weren't properly improving the land that colonists wanted to control. Underutilized was deployed by a University of California official in the People's Park struggle to delegitimize the presence of protestors and homeless campers nearly 30 years ago: "The park is underutilized. Only a small group of people use the park and they are not representative of the community."

After the killing of Philando Castile during a traffic stop, ***one transportation planner*** called for colleagues to "advocate against slippery measures that are used as pretext in racism." The article on ***Vision Zero in Progressive City*** is another example of how a seemingly uncontroversial pedestrian safety program might make New York City less safe for many residents.

Placemaking promises ***resident-led urban revitalization*** instead of top-down urban renewal. Instead of taking a meat ax to the Bronx, we are invited to practice urban acupuncture to revive neglected neighborhoods and stimulate investment. But the ***racial and spatial inequalities of American cities shape placemaking*** possibilities in ways

Planners need to grapple with the reality that placemaking can and does replicate inequalities and exclusionary practices. We should constantly examine best practices and concepts such as accessibility and livability for implicit bias.

that undermine good intentions. Street food and multimodal streets are celebrated as the future of urban livability, but depending on who and where, the same activities morph from good ideas to criminal behavior, e.g. permit violations and jaywalking tickets. When we talk about livability, we need to talk about how livelihoods have been criminalized. Making ends meet in a post-industrial America can put you in jail for misdemeanor violations or worse. As Eric Garner said just before his death, "This stops today."

Planners need to grapple with the reality that placemaking can and does replicate inequalities and exclusionary practices. We should constantly examine best practices and concepts such as accessibility and livability for implicit bias. In my most optimistic moods, I imagine placemaking as a gateway concept to the right to the city. But we need to ask ourselves uncomfortable questions and make a pointed political commitment to ensure it doesn't become an aesthetically pleasing fig leaf for the exclusionary policies of the 21st century revanchist city. A first step would be to adopt the ***Movement for Black Lives*** policy platform. Placemaking for all is impossible to achieve with the over-policing of communities of color.

Editor's note: This article was originally published in *Progressive City* in 2017.

Annette Koh is a Lecturer in Urban and Regional Planning at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona and working on a series of Planning zines for the PDX Zine Symposium.

Disability Justice and Planning for Accessibility

Interview with Aimi Hamraie by Cara Chellew

For this interview, **Cara Chellew**, *PhD student in Urban Planning, Policy & Design at McGill University connected with* **Aimi Hamraie**, *Associate Professor of Medicine, Health, & Society and American Studies at Vanderbilt University via email.*

Chellew: Can you tell me a bit about yourself and what inspired you to pursue an academic career in disability, design, and technology?

Hamraie: I am a disabled designer and researcher, and I grew up in a family and community with a lot of disabled people. Some of the people who shaped who I am were themselves disabled designers. Watching them navigate the built environment—and generate creative design solutions—inspired me to study how disabled people are shaping the built environment on the whole, whether through concrete interventions or ideas about how to think about disability differently.

Chellew: Why should planners and designers prioritize accessibility and who benefits from barrier-free environments?

Hamraie: Environments are created in reference to the types of people we imagine will use them. If planners and designers take a narrow perspective of who is likely to use an environment, they shape access to public life and participation for disabled people, often by creating barriers. These barriers, in turn, lead the general public to believe that environments are usable and functional, when many disabled people are just not able to use them and therefore not as apparent in public.

Disability justice is a social movement framework that is offered by disabled people of color and queer disabled people.

There are many types of barriers that can exist within environments. People who have low energy and chronic fatigue can experience cities as barriers when they are difficult to navigate, if public transit is unavailable, or if they require walking or biking. People who use assistive devices like wheelchairs face barriers when streets do not have curb cuts or buildings do not have ramps and elevators. People with sensory disabilities, such as blindness, may experience barriers when streets do not provide tactile clues for navigation. People who experience sensory overwhelm from sounds and lights may find cities in general very difficult to navigate. Disability is thus a broad category, and accessibility can mean many things. Typically, creating environments that ensure ease and access for disabled people also means that there are many options for how the broader population navigates cities, as well. Sometimes, nondisabled people may find that they did not know they needed a certain form of accessibility until it was introduced first for disabled people.

Chellew: What is disability justice and how can it inform the planning and design of more inclusive cities?

Hamraie: Disability justice is a social movement framework that is offered by disabled people of color and queer disabled people. It brings attention to how capitalism and the state often create disability while failing to support disabled people. Disability justice is different from the disability rights provided by laws such as the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). It has different priorities and can address different issues. For example, the ADA focuses quite a bit on accessibility to employment and places of public accommodation where disabled consumers could go and spend money. On the other hand, disability justice more broadly focuses on how accessibility may impact very marginalized disabled people, such as people who are institutionalized and unhoused, people who are at risk of police violence, and people whose non-normative identities intersect with their disabilities to make the experience of using public space more fraught. As the late disability justice organizer Stacey Park Milbern noted, sometimes disability rights are used against disability justice, for example when the ADA is used to carry out sweeps of encampments for unhoused people, many of whom are also disabled.

In my research, I am thinking through ways that a shift to a disability justice framework could better inform urban planning. One way is to broaden our understanding of who is considered disabled. If planners would like to be in solidarity with disabled people, then figuring out how to navigate issues around the public right of way must be more than a technical problem. Planners must also consider how access to housing, susceptibility to

police violence, and economic access shape the experience of disabled people. Another consideration is how we talk about phenomena such as "walkable cities." In one sense, a more walkable city could create more access for disabled people such as wheelchair users by providing more paved sidewalks. But if such a city does not provide curb cuts or benches for rest, it may also decrease access. As more of the population becomes disabled through aging and Long COVID, a condition that creates chronic fatigue, cities that are built on "active transportation" may become less usable to much of the population. Planners can support disability justice by ensuring that their understanding of what makes a city more livable and vibrant also includes ways of getting around or dwelling in space that are not premised on being able-bodied.

Chellew: What is the Critical Design Lab and what kind of work do you do?

Hamraie: The Critical Design Lab is a collaborative of disabled researchers, artists, and designers. We work on accessibility through the framework of disability culture. This means that we participate in and study the contributions of disabled people to shaping our world, and we apply principles and methods from disability communities to design at all scales. We have worked on projects as diverse as digital media, architecture, campus and urban planning, and community archiving. We also create public education materials to help translate critical disability scholarship for designers.

Chellew: You write about 'crip technoscience' in your work and have co-written a manifesto with Kelly Fritsch. Can you explain this concept?

Hamraie: Crip technoscience refers to the way that disabled people often engage in political practices by doing design work, and how disabled-led design changes the world. I studied crip technoscience in my book, Building Access: Universal Design and the Politics of Disability (2017), looking at how radical disability movements had used design alongside more public practices of protest. One prominent example is the disability organization ADAPT, which fought for accessible public transit in cities by doing guerilla urbanist demonstrations, such as smashing sidewalks with sledgehammers and using bags of cement to pour curb cuts. This example shows the long history of do-it-yourself (DIY) urban design as part of disability politics. Fritsch and I co-authored the "Crip Technoscience Manifesto" (2019) to explain some of the political and design principles of this approach. I am currently finishing a book manuscript (Crip Technosciences), which will further elaborate the philosophy and practices of crip technoscience through the work of the Critical Design Lab.

If planners would like to be in solidarity with disabled people, then figuring out how to navigate issues around the public right of way must be more than a technical problem.

Chellew: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is over 30 years old, yet accessibility is still a peripheral concept in many planning schools and programs. Why do you think this is the case?

Hamraie: In my book, Building Access, I studied in part the history of how accessible design has entered into design education. For at least fifty years, there have been efforts towards educating architects about the standards that eventually became part of the ADA. Yet, accessibility tends to be treated as a technical matter, rather than a cultural or creative portal into designing environments that better meet the needs of the population on the whole. My sense is that the entrance of accessibility into urban planning discourses is even more recent. I am excited by the work of landscape architects such as Alexa Vaughn-Brainard, who is Deaf and has created DeafSpace principles based on Universal Design ideas for accessible streetscapes. I have also spent over six years working in different contexts alongside urban planners. In general, I have found a lot of interest in learning more expansively about accessibility but often not a lot of a sense of where to start. One of the Critical Design Lab's current projects—the Critical Access Primer—is trying to provide a starting place for designers and planners who are interested in more in-depth explorations of accessibility. We want to get beyond the "Disability 101" type material that is out there and help designers and planners enter into the more complex discussions that are taking place around disability justice and the city.

Chellew: Do you have any advice for students who would like to pursue disability studies and planning for accessibility?

Hamraie: I know that many students are interested in these intersections. Some may be disabled people themselves, and they may be the first disabled students in their programs or schools. Others may be nondisabled allies. We need both to get to the depth and rigor around this issue that we can ideally have. My advice is for students to find one another and form networks where they can commiserate, support one another, and also exchange resources. It is really hard to do it by yourself. Disability culture and community give us so many important ideas, and engaging communally also frees up our energy to really fight for what we want.

I am excited about a new Critical Design Project, Labs for Liberation, which we are doing alongside Dr. Moya Bailey's Digital Apothecary at Northwestern University. Soon, we will be hosting "Disability and Design" summer schools for design students and disability studies students who would like to learn alongside one another. We hope that this will bridge some of the gaps in design and planning education, and also provide opportunities for community-building.

Aimi Hamraie (they/them) is an Associate Professor of Medicine, Health, & Society and American Studies at Vanderbilt University, and director of the Critical Design Lab. They are also a public member of the U.S. Access Board.

The "Syllabus":

An Environmental Justice Resource for Planners

Danielle Zoe Rivera

Environmental justice (EJ) is a term with deep roots in planning, both in terms of what generated the systems being fought against and who was advocating for justice within its early movements. However, the deep histories of the term remains undertaught in planning schools. Yet, since the advent of the term "environmental justice" in the 1980s, its popularity and usage in policy has grown substantially. Today, EJ and climate justice (CJ) are used expansively to describe a multitude of systemic injustices; however, this proliferation has also opened the potential for malevolent appropriation and decentering of the Black, Latinx, and/or Indigenous peoples who originated this line of activism and organizing. In this manner, I always return to this question posed by Schnaiberg (1980):

> ...it is never sufficient to point to the environment as having been protected. The question must always be asked, for whom and from whom?
>
> Allan Schnaiberg

To center the Black, Latinx, and/or Indigenous voices who began the EJ movement, and its continuation and expansion, I began the ***Environmental + Climate Justice Syllabus*** (affectionately referred to as the "Syllabus") in 2022. The Syllabus is an open access database of over 100 key books, book chapters, articles, and reports on the topics of EJ and

CJ relative to planning and urban studies. The Syllabus is an easily searchable, accessible, and ever-growing list beginning with the ideas of EJ and CJ. Recently, it has been expanded to include related ideas on energy justice, disaster justice, economic justice, and food justice (see Figure 1).

From the Syllabus, there is much that planners can learn both historically and currently about the depth of EJ as it has been theorized and acted upon. As an introduction to this rich and deep archive, I examine the parallel origins of EJ to illuminate its key historical ideas and its implications for planners today.

The Origins of Environmental Justice (With Lessons Along the Way)

The Syllabus depicts, in two manners, the origins of the environmental justice movement: (1) the etymological basis of the term we now use today and (2) early incarnations of these concepts in Black, Indigenous, and/or Latinx activism.

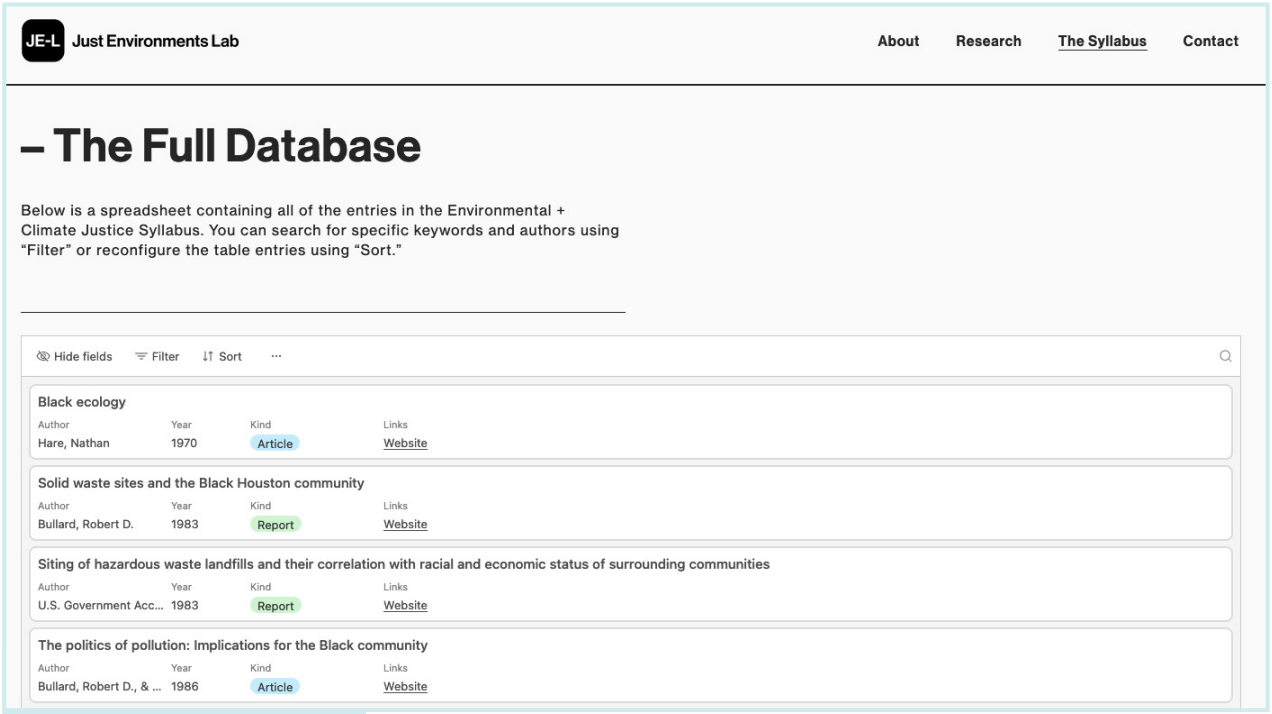


Figure 1: Histogram of items in the Environmental and Climate Justice Syllabus database by year from 1983 to 2022 (Rivera, 2022).

[T]he differences between "environmentalism" and "environmental justice" are crucial to comprehend, as early environmental movements in the mid-20th century were highly exclusionary, forcing Black, Indigenous, and/or Latinx peoples to create their own EJ movements.

"Environmental justice," as the concept widely used in policy today, originated in 1983 with the publishing of both a United States (U.S.) General Accounting Office (GAO) report and Dr. Robert D. Bullard's article in Sociological Inquiry (see Figure 2). Both pieces are rooted in anti-pollution activism occurring across Black Southern communities in the 1970s and 1980s. While the GAO report and Bullard's article remain pillars of the broader adoption of EJ, through reading historical EJ accounts within the Syllabus, it is evident that the theoretical basis begins well before 1983. This emphasizes just how significant the 1983 writings are. They crystallized several movements and theories into a comprehensive framework that then served as the foundations for:

- *The First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit* in 1991, which assembled activists across Black, Indigenous, and/or Latinx communities fighting for EJ. The summit established the 17 Principles of Environmental Justice and formed a major foundation for the climate justice movement.
- New EJ positions and offices within the federal government, particularly within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) throughout the 1990s, which officially recognized EJ in communities across the US and opened programs and policies to support EJ activist work.

Furthermore, the differences between "environmentalism" and "environmental justice" are crucial to comprehend, as early environmental movements in the mid-20th century were highly exclusionary, forcing Black, Indigenous, and/or Latinx peoples to create their own EJ movements (Ranganathan, 2017; Taylor, 2016). Examples come from numerous communities prior to the advent of "environmental justice" as a term. Here, I specifically highlight three such examples.

First, in the 1960s, the United Farm Workers (UFW) established an anti-pollution movement to fight mainstream environmentalists advocating for laws banning pesticides in food products, but not for safe pesticide usage protecting farmworkers in fields (Pulido, 2000). The biggest concern emerged with the passing of policies like the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), among others. These policies were counter to the aims of activists of color, centering the legal system as the primary means for redressing environmental harms.

Second, speaking against the siting of a PCB-tainted landfill in a Black-majority community in Warren County, North Carolina in the late 1970s, Reverend Benjamin F. Chavis, established the connections between racism and environmental risks and hazards by defining "environmental racism" as:

> ...racial discrimination in environmental policy making, the enforcement of regulations and laws, the deliberate targeting of communities of color for toxic waste facilities, the official sanctioning of the life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants in our communities, and the history of excluding people of color from leadership of the ecology movements.
>
> Reverend Benjamin F. Chavis [1]

Environmental racism is a critical concept in understanding what creates environmental injustices. Without this framing, EJ is primarily focused on highlighting disparities, failing to identify their origins and thereby failing to address them.

1 As quoted in Robert D. Bullard, Dumping in Dixie, First (Westview, 1990).

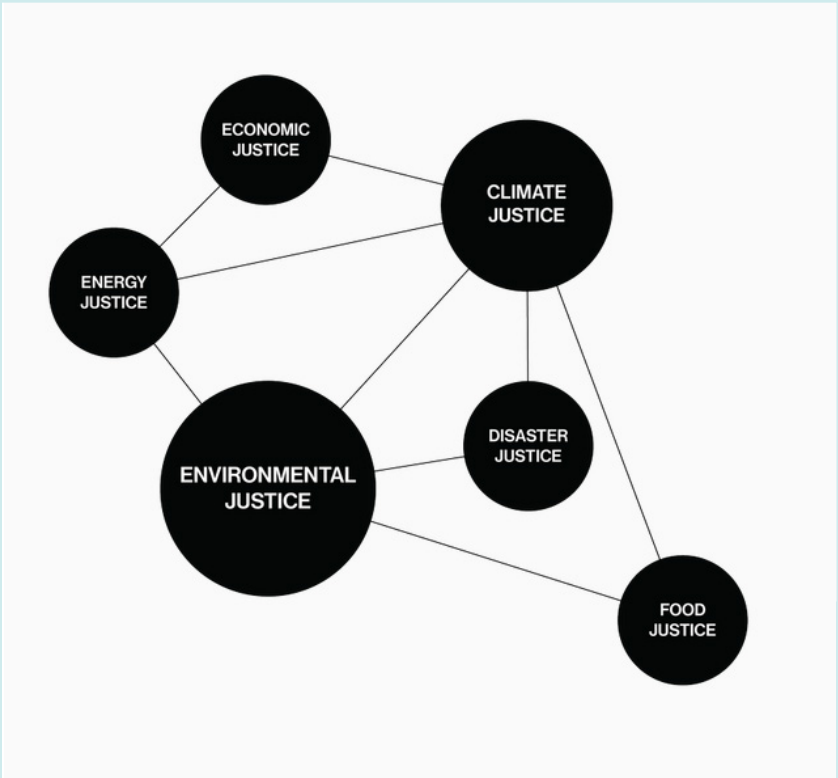


Figure 2: Screenshot of the Environmental + Climate Justice Syllabus's homepage on the Just Environments Lab's website (Rivera, June 2023).

Third, Indigenous EJ theories span centuries. Indigenous EJ activists define the term relative to land relations and forced displacement, as Gilio-Whitaker (2019) notes:

> ...environmental disruption via forced displacement constitutes the foundation of what we think of today as Indigenous environmental injustice.
>
> Dina Gilio-Whitaker [Colville Confederated Tribes]

Indigenous EJ activism resists colonial systems by advocating for positive land relations (Gilio-Whitaker, 2019; Liboiron, 2021). Dr. Kyle Powys Whyte [Potawatomi] (2106) ties this conceptualization of EJ to the idea of "collective continuance" or:

> "...the idea of systems of responsibilities adapting without sustaining preventable harms, [...] refers to a group's capacity to adapt to external forces, from naturally occurring environmental change..."
>
> Kyle Powys Whyte [Potawatomi]

Leveraging this, environmental injustice is framed as one society prohibiting another's collective continuance. Again, this definition moves past disparities to engage with histories of erasure and forced displacement disrupting crucial individual and community ties to specific ecosystems.

Takeaways: Contributing to Environmental Justice Movements as Progressive Planners

Many possibilities exist for delving more deeply into EJ, its histories, and its relevance to planning, but here I end with three key takeaways:

Defining and theorizing environmental justice is multifaceted. Multiple definitions and theories exist for "environmental (in)justice," and these theories originate in specific spaces. Knowing the EJ histories and theories relevant to the work at-hand is critical for planners hoping to redress environmental injustices.

Environmental justice is the starting point for myriad other movements. Environmental justice directly underpins or strongly influences other forms of justice, such as climate justice, food justice, and disaster justice. Again, using these connections will strengthen and historically situate planning efforts toward EJ.

Environmental justice moves beyond pointing out "disparities." Environmental racism (as both Reverend Chavis and Dr. Robert Bullard noted early in the EJ movement) remains inextricably linked with environmental injustice. Often, contemporary EJ work attempts to "point out" disparities in environmental risk without naming why these disparities exist (racism, patriarchy, colonialism), this sidesteps movement towards lasting justice (Jacobs, 2019).

Danielle Zoe Rivera is an Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture & Environmental Planning at the University of California Berkeley. Her research examines the hazards and risks stemming from environmental and climate injustices.

References

Bullard, R. D. (1983). Solid waste sites and the Black Houston community. Sociological inquiry, 53(2-3), 273-288.

Bullard, R. D. (1990). *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality*. Westview Press.

Gilio-Whitaker, D. (2019). *As long as grass grows: The Indigenous fight for environmental justice, from colonization to Standing Rock*. Beacon Press.

Jacobs, F. (2019). **Black feminism and radical planning: New directions for disaster planning research**. *Planning Theory*, 18(1), 24-39.

Liboiron, M. (2021). *Pollution is colonialism*. Duke University Press.

Pellow, D. N. (2004). *Garbage wars: The struggle for environmental justice in Chicago*. Mit Press.

Pulido, L. (2000). **Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California**. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 90(1), 12–40.

Ranganathan, M. (2017). **The environment as freedom: A decolonial reimagining**. *Social Science Research Council Items*, 13.

Schnaiberg, A. (1980). *The Environment: From Surplus to Scarcity*. Oxford University Press.

Taylor, D. E. (2016). *The rise of the American conservation movement: Power, privilege, and environmental protection*. Duke University Press.

U.S. General Accounting Office. (GAO). (1983). Siting of Hazardous Waste Landfills and Their Correlation with Racial and Economic Status Surrounding Communities. Washington, DC: GAO.

Whyte, K. (2016). **Indigenous experience, environmental justice and settler colonialism**. *Social Science Research Network.*

Just Transportation through Transformative Planning: Another World is Possible

Diana Benitez

Built environments like public transportation have been physically shaped and enforced by intentional human-enacted policies and practices that have harmed low-income communities and communities of color. This harm has denied equitable access to not only public transportation to meet daily mobility needs, but safety, amenities and culture. Growing up in Los Angeles and living in the Bay Area, I have seen similar policies and practices that have been codified into ***zoning codes***, ***policies*** and ***investments.***

As planners, it is our duty to acknowledge this harm, remove harmful policies and practices, and prevent any further harm from occurring in these communities.

At ***Just Cities*** we're working alongside community members and partners to do transformative planning to make this a reality in East Oakland and other Bay area cities. We are a policy and planning research organization that designs cities that recognize the human rights of all by advancing racial and policy justice with communities.

My colleagues and I conducted a ***racial equity and restorative justice analysis*** of East Oakland Displacement Status and Impacts from the East Bay Bus Rapid Transit (EBBRT) project for the ***East Oakland Mobility Action Plan (EOMAP)***. East Oakland is a sub-region in Oakland, California. We highlighted that Black/African American, Latinx, and Asian American people have been harmed by gentrification and racialized displacement, and experience safety and business displacement impacts from the EBBRT. During our analysis I saw hundreds of business licenses along the corridor that disappeared from 2014 to 2019. My colleagues and a Resident Advisory Council ground truthed this data through their lived experiences and identified what businesses in the displacement analysis were still on the corridor, how many legacy businesses remained and developed profiles on some of the displaced East Oakland staples like Perry's Fine French Furniture Store and Thalia's Jewelry shop.

Alameda County Transit Authority (AC Transit) spent 12 years pre-developing and constructing the 9.5-mile BRT from San Leandro to Oakland, including International Blvd in East Oakland. AC Transit promised improved bus service with decreased wait and ride times and a dedicated bus lane. However, the agency largely trivialized or ignored community concerns of impacts to business, traffic, and safety. This transportation improvement launched in August 2020 and led to East Oakland residents losing access to transportation, businesses, safety, and culture in the following three ways:

1. Prioritizing connectivity for people getting from downtown Oakland to downtown San Leandro, while removing 30 bus stops for East Oakland residents. Some of these residents must now walk longer distances to their home.
2. Decreasing safety and accessibility for pedestrians (+26% collisions within the first year of construction) with single car lanes and median bus stops along all of International Blvd, a high injury network street. This made it difficult for drivers to navigate and increased collisions both during and after construction, and

3. Decreasing the number of businesses by 37% (502) along International Blvd. from 2014-2019. Many were local mom and pop shops that could not survive the prolonged construction and reduced parking.

How do we prevent and not just mitigate harm in these projects? It requires a shift in planning frameworks, methodology, policies and practices, and the people who lead planning efforts. From 2019-2021, the Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT) co-developed the EOMAP with community partners, East Oakland Collective, TransForm, and Just Cities. It centers the mobility needs of lower-income Black East Oakland residents and outlines a 5-year action plan, projects and funding opportunities. These actions include centering racial justice in planning processes, hiring Black planners, and developing community partnership agreements with local community-based organizations. This plan that will be released in the Fall documents OAKDOTs intention to prevent harm and show us that another world is possible. In addition, Just Cities recommends that agencies like OakDOT must: center community safety, the needs and voices of most impacted populations, and integrate existing community-driven strategies.

Editor's note: This piece was originally published in 2021 as part of Progressive City's Planning for Just Transport series.

Diana Benitez is the Senior Manager of Advocacy and Engagement at ***Canal Alliance***. She wrote this article while she was working at ***Just Cities***. Her research contributions have included health equity and racial disparities analysis, student equity need indices, early care and education gap analysis, climate hazards analysis, and greenhouse gas reductions. Diana is a Steering Committee member of the American Planning Association (APA) California ***Planners4Health Initiative*** and received her MURP from UCLA.

Respuestas Cívicas al Boom Hipotecario e Inmobiliario Mexicano

Alejandra Reyes

Editor's note: English translation to follow.

En las últimas décadas, el sector financiero ha influenciado y restructurado las políticas de vivienda de varios países alrededor del mundo, a expensas del bienestar de sociedades enteras. Esto ha impactado la capacidad de amplios segmentos poblacionales para acceder a una vivienda habitable. Varios países de América Latina, por ejemplo, se han visto forzados a restructurar sus economías para promover políticas de austeridad y desregulación financiera (Aalbers, 2019; Molina et al., 2019; Rolnik, 2013). En México, se promovió desde finales de los años noventa una gran expansión de créditos hipotecarios financiados por el Instituto del Fondo Nacional de la Vivienda para los Trabajadores (Infonavit), e inversión nacional y extranjera. Este flujo crediticio, así como otros incentivos fiscales, inversión y legislación pública, permitieron que un puñado de compañías inmobiliarias capitalizaran y monopolizaran la producción masiva de vivienda a lo largo y ancho del país. A su vez, familias con ingresos bajos y medios adquirieron hipotecas impagables para mudarse a viviendas diminutas y con frecuentes fallas estructurales en áreas peri urbanas y remotas con acceso limitado a servicios, infraestructura urbana y oportunidades de empleo (Boils, 2004; Reyes, 2020, 2021; Schteingart & García, 2006).

Sin embargo, movilizaciones cívicas en distintos contextos han intentado contraponerse a estas tendencias globales. En España, por ejemplo, las implicaciones de la crisis económica del 2008, llevaron a la sociedad civil a organizarse para denunciar préstamos predatorios, prevenir desalojos, negociar o cancelar la deuda de personas desalojadas,

ocupar viviendas deshabitadas y promover reformas legislativas. La Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH) se formó en 2009 y logró consolidar apoyo de la sociedad civil alrededor de dichas acciones promoviendo debate y escrutinio público (Barbero, 2015; De Weerdt & Garcia, 2016; Díaz-Parra & Mena, 2015; García, 2010; García Lamarca, 2017; Gonick, 2016). Asimismo, múltiples regiones y poblaciones en México se han confrontando a las consecuencias del boom hipotecario e inmobiliario más grande de la historia en el subcontinente Latinoamericano. A su vez, varios habitantes de estos nuevos complejos se han organizado para hacer frente a sus problemas colectivos de vivienda y demandar políticas de vivienda y financiamiento más justas y adecuadas. Estas batallas cívicas se han enfrentado con varias limitantes, pero también han logrado influenciar algunos cambios importantes a nivel local y nacional.

El Frente Mexiquense en Defensa para una Vivienda Digna, por ejemplo, se conformó en el 2008 a través de una asamblea general que conjunto a jubilados, maestros, taxistas, profesionistas y otros residentes de clase trabajadora en Tecámac, un municipio peri urbano de la zona metropolitana de la Ciudad de México. Algunas asociaciones vecinales habían comenzado a organizarse para documentar y denunciar fallas estructurales en sus domicilios y problemáticas de infraestructura, como el recurrente desabasto de agua y los apagones eléctricos que los forzaban rutinariamente a comprar pipas de agua y generadores de Diesel. Eventualmente, las movilizaciones se expandieron a municipios aledaños y evolucionaron en los años posteriores para denunciar prácticas hipotecarias abusivas, frenar desalojos y promover acciones legales en contra de funcionarios públicos, desarrolladores e instituciones financieras por eludir regulaciones y códigos gubernamentales, la sobrevaluación de viviendas, irregularidades e incumplimiento de contratos, la venta de viviendas antes de su municipalización y la construcción en tierras ejidales sin pleno dominio (Marosi, 2017).

Al ser ignorados por entes financieros, inmobiliarios y gubernamentales, decidieron dejar de pagar sus infladas hipotecas en 2009. Aun cuando el Infonavit posteriormente subastó viviendas a inmobiliarias a fracciones tan bajas como el catorce por ciento de sus precios originales, varios miembros del Frente fueron desalojados de sus viviendas por las fuerzas armadas del estado en 2010. Sin embargo, los miembros del Frente hicieron notar que su estado no tenía legislación hipotecaria y que los desalojos a través de procesos civiles o comerciales, usados para recuperar bienes como coches, constituía una violación procesal dado el derecho constitucional a la vivienda en México. Esto ayudó a frenar algunos juicios hipotecarios y miles de desalojos. El movimiento continuó sus protestas en contra de instituciones financieras, la Sociedad Hipotecaria Federal (SHF), los poderes ejecutivos y judiciales. En 2014, también lograron poner en marcha una investigación estatal que determinó que los sistemas de agua en varios

complejos residenciales sólo tenían la capacidad de servir a la mitad de los habitantes para los que fueron autorizados. Esto a su vez facilitó la construcción de un pozo y depósito adicionales (Reyes, 2021)[1]

Las movilizaciones eventualmente cruzaron líneas estatales, impulsando demandas legales en contra de desarrolladores, prestamistas, y funcionarios públicos por problemáticas similares. Algunas de estas acciones han sido apoyadas por el Frente, pero otras organizaciones se han también sumado brindando apoyo. En Tijuana, Baja California, El Barzón, fundado hace décadas para apoyar a agricultores endeudados, comenzó también a apoyar con servicios legales a familias enfrentando juicios hipotecarios y desalojos. Distintas organizaciones en el país, como el Movimiento Urbano Popular, también han logrado forjar importantes vínculos para, por ejemplo, renegociar deudas hipotecarias de manera colectiva. Estos apoyos, sin embargo, son generalmente inaccesibles para los deudores de más bajos recursos, quienes se enfrentan con muchas limitantes para poder restructurar o pagar sus deudas. Así mismo, dadas las múltiples irregularidades del sistema judicial mexicano, incluyendo el encarcelamiento de miembros del Frente en 2015 por intentar frenar desalojos, algunos miembros decidieron entrar al ámbito electoral, apoyando a Andrés Manuel López Obrador en sus campañas presidenciales del 2012 y 2018. Junto a López Obrador, algunos fueron elegidos a cargos públicos en 2018. A su vez, la presente administración ha detenido los desalojos de viviendas financiadas por el Infonavit e instituido tasas de interés de 1.9 por ciento para los derechohabientes con menores recursos (Reyes & Basile, 2022). No obstante, El Frente se ha seguido movilizando en contra de la SHF por su manejo de carteras de prestamistas que continúan promoviendo desalojos.

La financiarización de la vivienda y sus implicaciones en México han promovido organización comunitaria en varias regiones del país para exigir mejores condiciones de financiamiento y vivienda, así como rendición de cuentas pública y privada. Estas movilizaciones también son muestra de cómo los movimientos sociales y de vivienda pueden influenciar el actuar de aparatos gubernamentales y hacer frente a procesos aparentemente hegemónicos. Movimientos como el Frente y el Barzón han también expandido sus acciones para impactar distintas causas, como el uso político del sistema judicial mexicano.

Alejandra Reyes es profesora asistente de Planificación Urbana y Políticas Públicas en la Universidad de California, Irvine. Su investigación se centra en cuestiones de gobernanza en torno a la política de vivienda, las finanzas, la producción y el acceso, y destaca la influencia crítica de los factores políticos y económicos en la vivienda y el desarrollo urbano.

[Las referencias se incluirán después de la traducción al inglés.]

1 http://www.frentemex.org.mx/

Civic Responses to the Mexican Mortgage and Real Estate Boom

Alejandra Reyes translated by Rodrigo Victoriano

In recent decades, the financial sector has influenced and restructured the housing policies of several countries around the world, at the expense of the well-being of entire societies. This has impacted the ability of large segments of the population to access habitable housing. Several Latin American countries, for example, have been forced to restructure their economies to promote austerity policies and financial deregulation (Aalbers, 2019; Molina et al., 2019; Rolnik, 2013). In Mexico, a large expansion of mortgage loans financed by the National Workers' Housing Fund Institute (Instituto del Fondo Nacional de la Vivienda para los Trabajadores; Infonavit), and domestic and foreign investment, was promoted since the late 1990s. This credit flow, as well as other tax incentives, investment, and public legislation, allowed a handful of real estate companies to capitalize and monopolize the mass production of housing throughout the country. In turn, low- and middle-income families acquired unpayable mortgages to move into tiny and often structurally flawed homes in peri-urban and remote areas with limited access to services, urban infrastructure, and employment opportunities (Boils, 2004; Reyes, 2020, 2021; Schteingart & García, 2006).

However, civic mobilizations in different contexts have attempted to counter these global trends. In Spain, for example, the implications of the 2008 economic crisis led civil society to organize to denounce predatory lending, prevent evictions, negotiate or cancel evicted people's debts, occupy uninhabited homes, and promote legislative reforms. The Platform of People Affected by Mortgages (Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca; PAH) was formed in 2009 and managed to consolidate civil society support around such actions by promoting debate and public scrutiny (Barbero, 2015; De Weerdt & Garcia, 2016; Díaz-Parra & Mena, 2015; García, 2010; García-Lamarca, 2017; Gonick, 2016). Likewise, multiple regions and populations in Mexico have been confronted with the consequences of the largest mortgage and real estate boom in the history of the Latin American subcontinent. Consequently, a number of inhabitants of these new complexes have organized to confront their collective housing problems and demand fairer and more adequate housing and financing policies. These civic battles have faced a number of constraints, but have also managed to influence some important changes at the local and national levels.

> Several Latin American countries, have been forced to restructure their economies to promote austerity policies and financial deregulation.

The State of Mexico Front in Defense of Dignified Housing (Frente Mexiquense en Defensa para una Vivienda Digna; El Frente, for short), for example, was formed in 2008 through a general assembly that brought together retirees, teachers, cab drivers, professionals, and other working-class residents in Tecámac, a peri-urban municipality in the Mexico City Metropolitan Area. Some neighborhood associations had begun to organize to document and denounce structural failures in their homes and infrastructure problems, such as recurring water shortages and power outages that routinely forced them to purchase water pipes and diesel generators. Eventually, the mobilizations expanded to surrounding municipalities and evolved in subsequent years to denounce abusive mortgage practices and stop evictions. Most importantly, legal actions were advanced against public officials, developers, and financial institutions for circumventing government regulations and codes, overvaluation of housing, irregularities and breach of contracts, sale of homes before municipalization, and construction on ejido lands (communal lands) without full ownership (Marosi, 2017).

Ignored by financial, real estate, and government entities, they decided to stop paying their inflated mortgages in 2009. Even when Infonavit subsequently auctioned homes to realtors at fractions as low as fourteen percent of their original prices, several Frente

members were evicted from their homes by the state's armed forces in 2010. However, Frente members noted that the state had no mortgage legislation and that evictions through civil or commercial proceedings used to repossess property such as cars, constituted a procedural violation given Mexico's constitutional right to housing. This helped to stop some foreclosures and thousands of evictions. The movement continued its protests against financial institutions, the Federal Mortgage Society (Sociedad Hipotecaria Federal; SHF), and the executive and judicial branches. In 2014, they also succeeded in launching a state investigation that determined that the water systems in several residential complexes only had the capacity to serve half of the inhabitants for which they were authorized. This, in turn, facilitated the construction of an additional well and reservoir (Reyes, 2021)[1].

Mobilizations eventually crossed state lines, pushing for lawsuits against developers, lenders, and public officials for similar issues. El Frente has supported some of these actions, but other organizations have also joined in providing support. In Tijuana, Baja California, El Barzón – an organization that was founded decades ago to support indebted farmers – has also begun to provide legal support to families facing mortgage lawsuits and evictions. Different organizations in Mexico, such as the Popular Urban Movement (Movimiento Urbano Popular), have also managed to forge important links to, for example, renegotiate mortgage debts collectively. These supports, however, are generally inaccessible to the lowest-income debtors, who face many constraints in being able to restructure or pay their debts[2]. Also, given the multiple irregularities of the Mexican judicial system, including the imprisonment of Frente members in 2015 for attempting to stop evictions, some members decided to enter the political arena, supporting Andrés Manuel López Obrador in his 2012 and 2018 presidential campaigns. In 2018, some Frente members directly pursued public office and were successfully elected. This strengthened the movement with political support from the current administration. Evictions of housing financed by Infonavit were halted and interest rates were set at 1.9 percent for low-income beneficiaries (Reyes & Basile, 2022). To sustain the efforts, El Frente has continued to mobilize against the SHF for its handling of lenders' portfolios that continue to promote evictions.

The financialization of housing and its implications in Mexico has promoted community organizing in several regions of the country to demand better financing and housing

1 ***http://www.frentemex.org.mx/***

2 Interviewees included members of El Barzón, El Frente Mexiquense and Movimiento Urbano Popular; ***https://elbarzonbc.com/***

conditions, as well as public and private accountability. These mobilizations are also an example of how social and housing movements can influence the actions of governmental apparatuses and confront apparently hegemonic processes. Movements such as El Frente and El Barzón have also expanded their actions to impact different causes, such as the political use of the Mexican judicial system.

Alejandra Reyes is an Assistant Professor of Urban Planning and Public Policy at the University of California, Irvine. Her research centers on questions of governance around housing policy, finance, production, and access – and highlights the critical influence of political and economic factors on housing and urban development.

Rodrigo Victoriano is in the third year of his PhD in Urban Planning at McGill University. His research interests include urban transport planning, travel behavior, and the design and analysis of longitudinal travel surveys.

References

Aalbers, M.B. (2019). Financialization. In: D. Richardson, N. Castree, M.F. Goodchild, A.L. Kobayashi & R. Marston (Eds.), The international encyclopedia of geography: People, the earth, environment, and technology. Oxford: Wiley.

Barbero, I. (2015). When rights need to be (re) claimed: Austerity measures, neoliberal housing policies and anti-eviction activism in Spain. Critical Social Policy, 35(2), 270-280.

Boils, G. (2004). The World Bank and housing policy in Mexico *[In Spanish]. Revista mexicana de sociología*, 66(2), 345-367.

De Weerdt, J., & Garcia, M. (2016). **Housing crisis: The Platform of Mortgage Victims (PAH) movement in Barcelona and innovations in governance**. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 31(3), 471-493.

Díaz-Parra, I., & Mena, J. C. (2015). **Squatting, the 15-M movement, and struggles for housing in the context of the Spanish social crisis**. *Human Geography,* 8(1), 40-53.

García, M. (2010) **The breakdown of the Spanish urban growth model: social and territorial effects of the global crisis**. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 34(4), 978– 980.

García-Lamarca, M. (2017). **From occupying plazas to recuperating housing: Insurgent practices in Spain**. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 41(1), 37-53.

Gonick, S. (2016). **From occupation to recuperation: property, politics and provincialization in contemporary Madrid**. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 40(4), 833-848.

Marosi, R. (2017, November 26). **Mexico's Housing Debacle**. *The Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from ***http://www.latimes.com/projects/la-me-mexico-housing/***

Molina, I., Czischke, D., & Rolnik, R. (2019). **Housing policy issues in contemporary South America: an introduction**. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 19(3), 277-287.

Reyes, A. (2020). Mexico's Housing Paradox: Tensions Between Financialization and Access. Housing Policy Debate, 30(4), 486-511.

Reyes, A. (2021). **Mexico's housing crisis: vacancy, limited access & Deaf policy responses**. *International Journal of Urban Sciences*, 25(1), 167-194.

Reyes, A. & Basile, P. (2022). **The Distinctive Evolution of Housing Financialization in Brazil & Mexico**. *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research*, 46(6), 933-953. ***https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.13142***

Rolnik, R. (2013). **Late neoliberalism: The financialization of homeownership and housing rights**. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37(3), 1058–1066.

Schteingart, M. & García, B. (2006). **New housing policies in Mexico: New relations between the public and private sectors and challenges for the future**, in: *A. Borjas & M. Bucio (Eds.), Housing in Mexico: Building analysis and proposals* (pp. 39–50) [In Spanish]. México: Centro de Estudios Sociales y de Opinión Pública.

Planners Network Event on "Confronting the Carceral State in Planning"

Annette Koh, Sheryl-Ann Simpson, Silky Shah, Deshonay Dozier and Courtney Knapp

Editor's note: This is an excerpt from a ***PN webinar*** held October 1, 2020.

Annette Koh (moderator): What does the carceral state, or prison industrial complex, mean? What is abolition and how does planning fit into it?

Sheryl-Ann Simpson: I'll start backwards: I think the question of what abolition is to me, in some ways, is really simple. I think it's the idea of removing and refusing resources to systems that harm. Systems of surveillance, systems of incarceration, systems of banishment—removing resources from those systems and putting them into systems of care. At base, I think that's what abolition is. Those resources could be financial but they're also about our time, they're also about our imaginations. That refusal of putting our time into these systems of harm and putting our imagination and putting our time into systems of care. That's what I think about when I think about abolition.

I think the name is really important. Phrases like 'defund the police' are good rallying cries, but the name abolition is really important because it ties directly to the abolitionist/abolition movement against chattel slavery and by using the term 'abolition,' I think part of what folks were doing was really intentional, which was tying/linking directly current systems of incarceration back to—especially in an American case but in other places as well—the idea of chattel slavery and the idea that there's a direct link from systems of chattel slavery into the system of the prison industrial complex that we have right now. Those links are about capitalism, they're about racial capitalism, and they're about colonialism.

In terms of planning, for better or for worse, these connections are all over it. Planning has played a huge part in and continues to play a huge part in maintaining capitalism, racial capitalism, and colonialism. In the introduction to the special issue ***[Journal of Planning Education and Research Vol 40, Issue 2]***, one of my co-editors, Justin Steele, went through that history. In the essay we go through a little bit of a history of zoning laws in the US and how some of them started in Baltimore. It was this reaction the neighborhood had because a Black professional couple had moved into their neighborhood and so an entire system was built around this idea of keeping these people out of the neighborhood.

> Phrases like 'defund the police' are good rallying cries, but the name abolition is really important because it ties directly to the abolitionist/ abolition movement against chattel slavery.

With such precision, one of the interesting details that Justin wrote about is the idea that Black folks were banned from living in these neighborhoods with the exception of domestics. So, if somebody was living in this neighborhood because they were taking care of your baby or they were cleaning your house, they could be there. This again really speaks to the tie to chattel slavery, the tie to capitalism, to racial capitalism, to colonialism, that is that tether.

Silky Shah: Thank you so much for having me on this. It's been really wonderful to be in this space with folks who are thinking about planning because in so many ways the work that we do at Detention Watch Network—trying to combat the expansion of immigration detention—is so related to planning but we don't talk about it in that way, so it's been a really incredible experience for me to think about things in that way and think about what strategies we have, given what we know about planning.

For me, there are two reasons that we choose to abolish detention: one is that it's a part of the fabric of the prison industrial complex in the U.S. It's an expanding space where you see more and more people being targeted both in the context of [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] ICE but also in the context of a lot of other agencies in the US that incarcerate immigrants specifically. But beyond that it's also one of the key drivers of deportation. So the ability for ICE and the US Government to deport people is their ability to have the space of detention to hold them for that deportation.

To Sheryl-Ann's point, there's no question that a lot of this is about exclusion and banishment. When you think about the consequences that people face for choosing to migrate or for choosing to migrate and then maybe committing an act that might

be considered a crime and then being punished by the criminal justice system—or the criminal punishment system—in the US but also then the immigration system, and then being deported out of the system, and then negotiating whatever happens on the other side. There's just so many layers and when "Abolish ICE" became the rallying cry for the left of the movement, I think a lot of people were fearful and saying, "well that's just open borders and that's so scary." People really have no idea what ICE does in so many ways.

For us, working on the issue of immigration detention, it was really hard to talk about detention because it was such an invisible space where people went and people didn't know where they were, but what they felt was the deportation—they felt people being taken away from them. So in the context of abolition broadly within immigration, it's layered in all these spaces, not just its relationship to the criminal punishment system in the US. In terms of planning, one of the biggest things we tackle in trying to abolish the immigration detention system is this dependency—the industrial complex aspect of this—on federal dollars for all these communities. Rural communities that often don't have the resources to care for themselves or think about what investments they make and now they're in this game of just trying to get federal contracts to hold people. So it's not even about privatization, but really about communities being impacted because of planning.

Courtney Knapp: Coming into this with a background in housing and economic development planning, I'm as interested in the history of police and the police state and the violent kind of enactments as I am in the more benign ways in which inequalities and exclusions get perpetuated. Particularly, how they acutely affect people who have gotten caught up in the criminal justice system.

To Sheryl-Ann's point on zoning—this benign thing, yet it's got this police power. An entire field, which is planning, has defaulted to assuming a more bureaucratic administrative role in communities at the expense of folks who are being damaged by those processes. I'm interested in those more benign, insidious ways that this stuff happens and abolition—going back to echo Sheryl-Ann's point—is rooted in this legacy of action, of resistance, of demanding something different and seizing the terms of that new model. As a planner, but also as a planning

An entire field, which is planning, has defaulted to assuming a more bureaucratic administrative role in communities at the expense of folks who are being damaged by those processes.

academic who teaches people who are going to go out to be part of this field, I am interested in thinking about how we organize actions and alternatives both within and against this more benign, neutral version of cities. The writing is all over the wall with how planning is implicated in these issues and I'm really interested in that aspect of it.

Deshonay Dozier: I just want to add that for me abolition means abolishing the conditions—going back to what Sheryl-Ann said—of what would lead to the carceral state. It means placing planning in a position not as a professional entity or an entity of expertise, but actually thinking about histories of resistance as planning and ultimately engaging with how these practices shape and reshape the urban in many ways. One of my mentors, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, writes about how the carceral state develops in California [through] organizing prisons for labor purposes. So there is an intent in using the carceral state as a means of accumulation and furthering government production in that way.

But also in my work in Skid Row I see the ways in which homeless people experience the serial creation of containment and dispossession and how they work to combat that through what would be considered mundane practices of reclaiming rights but [which] ultimately try to reshape the foundations of property that underpin the carceral state. I actually don't approach the conversation from the idea that I'm a planner—I'm not, I'm a geographer and I'm a Black person before any of that—so what I push for is Black liberation: how over time Black people have worked to reshape the urban core through various forms of resistance through government means, planning organizations, as well as rebellion.

Annette Koh: I was thinking about the forms of carceral state and the idea that the criminalization of homelessness is such a clear example of the ways that planning logics and systems get tangled in that. I don't remember the exact numbers, but the Safer Cities initiative in LA's Skid Row—the amount of money and time spent on arresting folks who live in Skid Row for misdemeanors like jaywalking plus bench warrants and the ways that you get entangled in the larger carceral system. The LAPD was like, "well we're helping them by getting them into the system"—this really absurd logic that is embedded in our homelessness programs in many cities.

What has changed in this current moment since the horrific murders of Brianna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky and George Floyd in Minneapolis? I think there's been concerted attention on both Black Lives Matter as a movement but also more radical changes.

How can we build upon the power and energy of folks who've already gone before us but also move it forward?

Deshonay Dozier: I am beyond grateful for how these calls for defund and divestment have taken a national and international stage and that's [as] someone who had been active in New York City with the ***Coalition to End Broken Windows*** as well as other organizations to stop various forms of policing in and throughout New York City's Black and brown neighborhoods. It's great to see the fruits of my labor and [those] of many others over the last few decades and so seeing a swift change in the national discourse, it's been really great.

I think about this as part of a movement and legacy. One that didn't start like back in May, but [one] that people have been developing for decades. With Eric Garner back in New York we fought for divestment immediately and at the same time, various other organizations and the city were pushing for accountability and training through more surveillance through body cameras. We reshaped the discourse by saying, "no, we need to divest from police," and then to see five years later people are saying no again: divest, defund, abolish. That's been amazing to see just within the last five to seven years in my engagement with police abolition work.

Courtney Knapp: I did the survey of planning directors to try to understand whether they were engaging with these issues and, if so, how? I was not expecting to find much and did not. Although I did not frame it as a confirmatory study, it [confirmed] a hunch I had that planning institutions—public institutions—were not taking these issues on, or [saw] themselves as implicated in both the problems and the solutions of decarceration. This was research that was conducted a few years ago and just came out so there's been a lot of push in the interim. [In] this present moment, I would hope that this is becoming a moment for folks who are finding themselves working within this bureaucratic administrative planning state that I'm describing to start to get real with themselves—with ourselves—because I was part of that as a regional planner for several years. But get real with ourselves about how our actions and inactions perpetuate these problems.

> [A]lthough planners do have a lot of knowledge about how systems of exclusion and inclusion get enacted in the environment, they're not necessarily putting that together with decarceration.

And then to Deshonay's point, particularly the moment of defund, divestment and all of the

possibility that opens up combining that with movements toward participatory budgeting and different things that can start to reimagine and reappropriate and redistribute resources in ways that center folks who have been wrapped up in the criminal justice system in one way or another is extremely exciting. I would hope that all of that coming together would give those of us who often get into planning for the right reasons but then find themselves incredibly disempowered by a system that doesn't allow for radical push to maybe make more make stronger demands [and] force their institutions to reckon with the reality [that] we are very much a part of the problem and perhaps a part of the solution.

> It [confirmed] a hunch I had that planning institutions—public institutions—were not taking these issues on, or [saw] themselves as implicated in both the problems and the solutions of decarceration.

But I believe that what my research showed is that, although planners do have a lot of knowledge about how systems of exclusion and inclusion get enacted in the environment, they're not necessarily putting that together with decarceration. There's a lot more work that can be done and I'm excited and feeling very hopeful about this moment. But I think that it's going to take a lot of brave souls speaking truth to power and I feel encouraged by my students every day—that they're going to be entering these places and doing that. But it takes not only newcomers, but also people at the top, so I hope that this is a moment that we can all seize.

Silky Shah: It was interesting to negotiate the rallying cry around 'free them all' prior to the uprisings happening and this moment of, "hey wait there's all these people in these situations where they're susceptible to this global pandemic that's happening and why are we doing this?" Maybe people weren't fully in the abolition space, but there was a little bit of like, "there's so many people who are in pre-trial detention—why do we even do that in the first place?"

My introduction to choosing to be an abolitionist was at the 2003 Critical Assistance Conference in New Orleans and having a real perspective on "okay wait, this is my calling I want to do this" and then sort of ended up in the immigrant rights movement in the US, which is not a racial justice movement in a lot of ways. It's very much a movement that was there to pass a bill to get legalization and not even really have a conversation about the border and legalization in the context of a lot more enforcement, a lot more

detention and deportation and militarization of the border. There's this reckoning that's been happening for some time—you have this world of white women caring about kids in cages or even recently with the really horrifying stories about forced gynecological procedures out of the Irwin detention center in Georgia [with] some forced hysterectomies. These sort of extreme situations where everyone's like, "this is just so bad and we need investigations" or "these specific things shouldn't happen," but not fully getting to this question that Courtney was talking about before, which is the banality of evil: this system just exists to do these things and we're not going to be worked up about that. I think it was an interesting moment to push the movement and say hey, "[defund] the police." We have a big campaign called ***Defund Hate*** that's trying to get money away from ICE and [Customs and Border Protection] CBP and so you could make these connections more, which was really exciting.

There's so much more work to do. As somebody who's been an abolitionist for a long time, I was inspired every day and also in the moment feeling very sad about the grim possibilities of the world. I started this job in the first year of the Obama administration in 2009 and people were just like, "no we can't end mandatory detention, that's too hard to do." Now we have mainstream folks within the immigrant rights movement who are actually saying, "okay, phase out detention, it doesn't make sense [and] we can't make this better" and that's something we've really pushed for and I think so much of what's happening around the movement for Black lives is a huge part of that.

Sheryl-Ann Simpson: On the one hand it's so amazing to see the fruits of the labor and the love that people have put into this idea of divesting and defending and abolition and seeing, like you're saying, nice white ladies in the suburbs talking about these things—there's something really powerful about that. But the other point that you both make is that's ten plus years of organizing and there's ten plus years of organizing before that. So I think one of the things about this moment is really figuring out how to make it not a moment.

That idea of turning a moment into a movement is really important and Silky, the thing that is really amazing about your work and why I'm so glad that you're on this call is also the idea of making those connections. Because especially

> I really feel like the possibilities are great and if we could build a critical mass of people who are embedding themselves within the communities that we're planning with and really try to speak truth to power as much as we can and offer alternatives, then that's at least a place to start.

for folks that are just coming into this, it's a little bit harder to make those connections. So thinking about the idea of the movement for Black lives also being connected to systems of immigrant detention, being so connected to settler colonialism—this idea of connecting the dots is really important particularly for planners.

Annette Koh: I just wanted to insert a question from [the audience]. Public sector planners are often so entangled with police, whether [through] code inspections, going to community meetings, town halls... is there a way to disentangle? How do you work on abolition when the system is all about policing?

How do you work on abolition when the system is all about policing?

Courtney Knapp: This notion that like you could be a code enforcement planner and still and push back against as much of that system from your positionality within that bureaucracy as possible—that you could demand to step away from your desk and embed yourself within communities [and] form relationships with people who you may ultimately have to enforce something [upon]. You have to come down on that other side, but there is something that's really important in terms of the relationships that are built and also the ways in which you transform as an individual and as a practitioner when you step out on that limb and push back even when you encounter naysaying—that's where you start. Then it's just a matter of how far we take that. I really feel like the possibilities are great and if we could build a critical mass of people who are embedding themselves within the communities that we're planning with and really try to speak truth to power as much as we can and offer alternatives, then that's at least a place to start. I don't want to paint it through rose colored glasses—I'm not super optimistic about the possibilities of the state, but I do think that it comes down to individuals pushing back against their own limitations within the bureaucracy.

Annette Koh: One thing I've been really inspired by is the work of *The Untokening* around mobility justice. This came out in April and one of their demands is to define street safety in a way that centers the most oppressed and vulnerable groups. Policing is not a tool for healing our divided communities and official street closures usually involve police. These are not a solution for equitable street safety and communities of color. So when we talk about open streets and [the] need to have more public spaces, entangled in that is the assumption that police will be enforcing that. Whatever new public health regulations we have are going to be enforced by police. The work that

people have done on delivery workers and mobility justice in New York—the number of folks who get ticketed for being out or riding without a mask. But how does this involve police or how does this involve the criminal justice system or categorizing someone as illegal or out of place?

Courtney Knapp: It's police and citizens groups that consider themselves accessories to that. So again going back to that study, I found that, at least in my sample, there was virtually no engagement with incarcerated people, formerly incarcerated people, their families, or their immediate support service groups. But there was a whole lot of engagement with the police and with neighborhood watch groups. So there's that layer and then there's also people who have, in this vigilante sense, taken up this notion that they're enforcing some standard.

Sheryl-Ann Simpson: Having not worked in public planning—my professional work being in community development—I think it's not just divesting our funds but also divesting our attachments and divesting our imaginations. So the idea that a police officer always has to come and report to the community meeting—there's probably no law that says that actually has to happen. It's probably a practice or a habit that we've gotten into. So who are the people that are actually engaging with safety in the community that you could bring into that community meeting instead of a police officer? In community development work we see this a lot as well because engaging with the police is a way of validating our work sometimes—because it's a connection to the state and the connection to the state makes our work more valid. So again, it's this idea of divesting our imagination and divesting our attachments as well divesting our funding.

Deshonay Dozier: A lot of work that's been both theorized and experimented in thinking about the public is often going back to this kind of conversation around capitalism and colonialism. Not a lot of people have access to public space simply because they are working. And then when they are in it, they're either more criminalized in that space or [don't have] the means to engage in public space, which is highly commercialized and privatized over the last several couple of decades due to redevelopment and gentrification.

So part of organizing work that I engaged in as early as 2013 was to think about safety beyond policing and ultimately how do we work to make communities more whole—how do we work to reimagine and reproduce our communities as a space where it is livable and without police. So as much as we talk about this question around safety and how do we get police out of public space, I think there's a question [of] what abolition is about—abolishing the conditions that make the police and/or carceral state what it is today.

This is something that I've tried to push even at the Left Forum a long time ago. I was on a panel with Tom Angotti, Sam Stein and Rob Robinson and I was sharing that we can't de-link a conversation about housing from policing. If you are still poor working class your access to housing is continuously punitive and policed. There was a link put up to ***Million Dollar Hoods***, which is amazing. Eddie Ellis talked about ***Million Dollar Blocks*** on the east coast and how we can again divest and reinvest into actually making communities whole. Again we're holding on to things that maybe we can do without. I mean, I love parks too—I'm not saying that—but I'm just saying what is the investment in the planning idea of the public space and ultimately how can we be invested in making communities whole.

Annette Koh: Just to echo what you were saying, I am sharing the *Critical Resistance* definition of abolition. I know they have many, but this is one that has stuck out for me:

> Abolition isn't just about getting rid of buildings full of cages. It is also about undoing the society we live in because the prison industrial complex both feeds on and maintains oppression and inequalities through punishment, violence, and controlling millions.

Affordable housing is part of this conversation around abolition—if people are being criminalized and arrested for being homeless, for sitting on a public sidewalk, then 100% housing needs to be part of that conversation.

How did you get here? What shaped your thinking? Is there a person or a scholar or an experience that really pushed you to embrace abolition?

Deshonay Dozier: For me, it was back in my undergrad at Cal State Northridge where Debby Burton and Becky Dennison visited my social work class and talked about the policing that they were experiencing in Skid Row. I was studying gentrification at the time and, going into graduate school, I took the onus into learning and wanting to come back home to LA, so I took a focus on Skid Row as a course of dissertation research. From there, the ***Los Angeles Community Action Network*** who I worked with taught me a great deal about police abolition. It taught me a great deal about the stakes of their organizing and their fight and pushed me as a Black person and as a scholar and as an activist to connect with people in New York and keep that fight going. That ushered me into a lot of activism.

I was doing [work] with the Coalition to End Broken Windows and many other organizations like ***Stop the LAPD Spying Coalition*** to stop policing practices—to call things out and to have that hard fight. So that's what inspires me. I just so happened to have been going to CUNY and I did not know Ruth Wilson Gilmore before I went to grad school, but I soon did after. Just being able to be in New York and learn from people has been amazing as well. It's been great and also so disappointing at times, but I think that we're in a good space.

Sheryl-Ann Simpson: For me it's mostly been through service—working with organizations that are run by people who have been the most impacted by these systems. That's everything from working in service as just some random kid in their 20s to using my position as a university professor to offer the labor of my students to organizations that are doing this work [through] a reciprocal relationship where the organizations are supported by the resources of the university and the students are, hopefully, also going to learn something from that process of service to the organization.

For example, when I taught at University of California Davis I worked with Fathers and Families of San Joaquin County, which is an amazing organization, and had a couple of groups of students work with them. Universities are incredibly well-resourced institutions in a lot of ways even though we cry poor compared to the organizations that are doing this work on the ground. So if I can lend the resources of the university to those organizations, that's another way that I can hopefully continue this.

Courtney Knapp: My trajectory was from an academic perspective for a long time. I had been thinking about these topics and studying them, but it really became personal for me when I was living in Chattanooga, Tennessee. This was back in 2012. I was working on my dissertation, which involved a participatory action research project with a community-based group there called Chattanooga Organized for Action. One of the things that we did was organize a planning free school out of the public library and as part of that we had these issue-based discussion groups.

We were convening these conversations around employment and workforce development. The whole idea was: come if you want to have a conversation about this and you feel dissatisfied by the public processes that have been offered in the city up until now. If you want to center justice, come to the space. There was not really a big agenda beyond that. There was a gentleman who showed up a few times and didn't say much and then finally one day he just piped up and he said, "I came because I'm interested in these conversations. I spent time in prison, but since I'm back in my community now and I've paid my dues, it is really difficult for me to find work and this is the first time in my life that anyone is asking me about what I want from my city."

It was just me and a few other people doing this little ragtag thing off on the side in the public library and it was my 'oh shit' moment of "how have I understood this from an academic perspective and not put two and two together up until this moment?" And so that really inspired me to take these issues on much more seriously and I think it manifests itself through like some of that research that we described.

I have been collaborating with New York City probation's NeON [***Neighborhood Opportunity Network***] centers which call themselves experimental community centers and they're doing good things. They're also not perfect, but they are trying to critically examine the role of probation in communities and the role of [the] probation agency. How do we destigmatize the probation-client-community relationship? How do we try to start to address some of the root causes that produce these conditions that we're talking about? I find that work really interesting and I think there are lots of other places to go from there. But that was the thing that committed me to this work—meeting this gentleman and hearing him say that to me. It was truly a rude awakening.

Panelists:

Annette Koh is a Lecturer in Urban and Regional Planning at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona and working on a series of Planning zines for the PDX Zine Symposium.

Sheryl-Ann Simpson is an Associate Professor of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University and lead on the research project Planning for Abolition.

Deshonay Dozier is an Assistant Professor of Cultural Studies at Claremont Graduate University.

Courtney Knapp is a Professor of Urban and Community Planning in the Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. She teaches a course at Pratt on Abolitionist Planning and researches (among other topics) how planning institutions and actors interface with the reentry, decarceration, and abolitionist arenas in the United States and Canada.

Silky Shah is the Executive Director of Detention Watch Network, which is a national coalition working to abolish immigration detention in the US.

Special Issues

(2015) Prisons, Policing and Planning [Special Issue] Progressive Planning Magazine.

Retrieved from ***http://www.plannersnetwork.org/2015/06/spring-2015-prisons-policing-and-planning/***

Simpson, S-A., Steil, J. & Mehta, A. (Eds.)(2020). Planning Beyond Mass Incarceration [Special Issue]. Journal of Planning Education and Research, 40(2). Retrieved from ***https://journals.sagepub.com/toc/jpea/40/2***

Recommended Readings & Resources

Abbot, T., Aslan, R., O'Brien, R. & Serafin, N. (2018). ***Embrace Abolitionist Planning to Fight Trumpism***. Progressive City.

Abolition Journal Study Guide: ***https://abolitionjournal.org/studyguide/***

Biking Public Project (2018). ***A More Equitable Definition of Safety***. Medium.

Critical Resistance: ***https://criticalresistance.org/***

Dozier, D. (2018). ***A Response to Abolitionist Planning: There is No Room for Planners in the Movement for Abolition***. Progressive City.

Gilmore, R. W. (2007). Golden gulag: prisons, surplus, crisis, and opposition in globalizing california. University of California Press.

Koh, A., Simpson, S-A., Shah, S., Dozier, D. & Knapp, C. (2020) ***Confronting the Carceral State in Planning*** [Webinar]. Planners Network.

Million Dollar Blocks (NYC): ***https://c4sr.columbia.edu/projects/million-dollar-blocks***

Million Dollar Hoods (LA) : ***https://milliondollarhoods.pre.ss.ucla.edu/***

Stolper, H. (2019). ***New Neighbors and the Over-Policing of Communities of Color: An Analysis of NYPD-Referred 311 Complaints in New York City.*** Community Service Society.

Stop LAPD Spying Coalition: ***https://stoplapdspying.org/***

New Directions in Planning through Transnational Solidarities

A Conversation with Faranak Miraftab and Ken Salo by Efadul Huq

For this interview, **Efadul Huq**, Assistant Professor in Environmental Science & Policy at Smith College, met with **Faranak Miraftab** and **Ken Salo**, who teach in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (full bios further below), over Zoom during their visits in Spain and South Africa, respectively.

Huq: Thank you for agreeing to this interview. Over decades of research and teaching, you have been bringing to North American classrooms and planning scholarship important insights on practices of grassroots and how they contribute to making of just cities. You emphasize the importance of these global insights for constructing solidarities. I look forward to our conversation today on transnational solidarity and its relation to just planning.

Miraftab: If I am addressing urban planners, it's important for me to tell planners [they] are not unique actors. Professional planners are one of the many urban planning actors. Urban planning practice is not done solely by urban planners and is also done by a lot of the citizens, groups, and activist movements. As such, transnational solidarities are valuable not only for professional urban planners, but for whichever actors may be involved in building, producing, developing, making and using urban spaces.

Huq: Your words remind me that we need a broader definition of planning. Tell us a bit more about why we need to expand planning in that way.

Assuming that professional planning is in charge of city-making is not only naive but also a dangerous position. We should have a position of humility.

Miraftab: Most of the urban world is developed and built not by planning professionals so to speak. The last time I looked up the numbers for Mexico City, two-thirds of the urban space was developed through informal practices, which means that the city was developing outside the books of professional plans. This is indeed a notable case in many other urban centers; a lot of what is urban development is not happening by professional urban plans. Professional planning is neither leading such development nor are they able to singularly influence them. It's a broad range of actors, including the "bad guys" (like developers and financiers) who are determining urban development. You know, in your own scholarship and case studies of Dhaka, the land making was in part happening by real estate developers that were filling the watersheds and producing land, and the other part was by squatters and informal systems that were filling up the watershed. So, a very small proportion of what constitutes Dhaka's urban development is actually led and directed by professional planning. I think we have to hold that humbling perspective that recognizes that we are one of many in the range of actors with conflicting interests that are shaping the urban environment and urban development. Assuming that professional planning is in charge of city-making is not only naive but also a dangerous position. We should have a position of humility.

Huq: Ken, would you have anything to add to that? Or perhaps, we can move into the conversation about transnational solidarity. We can start with the building blocks. What does transnational solidarity mean for you?

Salo: Thanks again for the opportunity to rethink the project of transnational solidarities for the practice and pedagogy of spatial planning practices for social justice – that is the idea that planners or geographers or spatial scientists can exercise their profession to the interests of socio-spatial justice. I think one of the key contributions the Disorientation Guide makes is perhaps best summarized by the notion of the social production of space, right? Unlike the rationalist Euclidean approach, here the idea is that space is not a neutral stage for performances but is socially produced. Speaking from the perspective of someone schooled in legal positivism and its associated bureaucratic fields of practice, I think planners within the PN tradition have made important moves away from

scientific rationalist planning practices to embrace social constructivist arguments that places are socially produced and a key dimension in reconstructing just social relations. Hence their embrace of David Harvey's "right to the city" thesis in the mid-70s. At Urbana-Champaign we've had ongoing dialogues on current frames and expressions of social justice. We re-read texts like Harvey's "Social Justice and The City", and Iris Marion Young's "faces of oppression" and Nancy Fraser's notions of global justice when we grapple with notions of transnational solidarities as we witness the rising form of reactionary nationalism.

So, for me, we need to rethink ideas of transnational oppression that emerged during the period of neoliberal globalization. Ideas of "transnationalism from below", as a critique of corporate led transnationalism "from above" such as Faranak's work on "insurgent citizenship" needs revision as a much more anti-nationalist approach, right? Meaning that the national has now become very reactionary, even fascistically so and Americans in particular. American education is standing inwards, disastrously so, even in planning. Planners Network has been the one progressive group that has reached out and looked at the transnational question. I remember there was one or two dialogues on transborder transnational organizing. So I think the question remains valid and even more urgently now. There's a dire lack of inter- or transnational literacy and sharing multiple worldviews amongst American students, right? At least in my experience.

My recent project is on how immigrants' grapple with contradictions of American citizenship as both a nationalist assimilationist and universalistic cosmopolitan forms of belonging. I think there's a dire need now for PN to grapple with these contradictions of national citizenship in our increasingly multi-polar world. Specifically, what are the new fault lines between nationalist American values, internationalist discourses of individual human rights and cosmopolitan conversations of collective social and territorial rights as entry points to new notions of solidarity. Planning practice and pedagogy needs to take seriously the multiple perspectives, as anti-colonial and anti-nationalistic feminists insist.

The two points: spatial planning for social justice as social practice grounded in historical and sociological traditions; and transnational as an anti-nationalist or anti-imperialist approach is urgent. I'll leave it at that for now.

Huq: Would you like to add more about why we need a transnational perspective or transnational solidarity, Faranak? What do we mean by transnational solidarity?

Miraftab: Transnational perspective is really about being conscious of the power dynamics and implications of what we do here and now, for elsewhere and other times. It's about asking, what is the weight of our actions historically and geographically elsewhere? It's about recognizing what we do here now is sitting on what has been done before, and also what is done elsewhere. So that kind of consciousness about the history and about the transnational basis, both temporal and spatial implication of our lifestyle, and how we occupy space and our urban life with the rest of the world, and within the longitude of history. I think it is at the core of trying to address the mess that we are in today. We have to have a consciousness of the power dynamics, of the interconnectedness, and the implication of everything that happens everywhere with what is experienced somewhere else. And we cannot just think that "I can fix this neighborhood. I can fix the plans for this city, this region by itself." And you know, that has been the kind of blinders that professional planning has had on itself whether at the scale of national or at the scale of regional or urban. Thinking that we can fix one isolated island of prosperity in the sea of poverty, in a world of misery. Thinking that you can fix the environmental crisis by reaching carbon neutral in one city. It's true we have to start locally somewhere to fix the problems. But it has to be in the context of transnational consciousness, alliances, solidarities, and basically respect and supportive relations with elsewhere, and those connections have to be there. That's why we need transnational solidarities meaning consciousness, support, alliance and collaboration with similar struggles elsewhere. Our fight is not something that can be done in one place, in isolation from the rest of the world.

Transnational perspective is really about being conscious of the power dynamics and implications of what we do here and now, for elsewhere and other times. It's about asking, what is the weight of our actions historically and geographically elsewhere?

One of your questions was about pedagogy, and if we can switch to that, I think that transnational solidarities should be an important agenda of our planning pedagogy in the 21st century and future. We can't continue what Ken was referring to as a nationalistic approach or a localist approach, especially to address a monster that is now planetary in scale. In our pedagogy also, we can't keep pretending like we are doing

it right, and that we can do it separate from the rest of the world. So, we need the kind of teaching which helps our students see how they are part and parcel of the problem and the solution at the scale that starts with the individual, but goes all the way up. We need to create intellectual ability in students to move across these connections, across the scales, both in defining the problem and proposing the solutions. It's something that hopefully we can teach in forward-looking pedagogies of planning that would very much be rooted in a transnational and transtemporal perspective of solidarity and support.

Huq: I'm wondering if you want to share any story of a movement or organization that reflects the kind of transnational solidarity that you just talked about, or maybe a teaching experience or a course that reflects the kind of transnational pedagogy that you talked about?

Salo: As another example, I will say a bit about my recent work on racialization, immigration, and transnational migration. Anti-immigrant racism requires that students recognize the politics of difference and borders, right? The challenge, as Iris Marion Young cautions, is to find ways of differentiated belonging grounded in interconnection and interdependency beyond racialized binaries like black and white. It recognizes that our world has been created by centuries of colonial displacements and patterns of migration whereas national citizenship is reproducing hierarchies of social belonging. Subaltern movements of urban collectives in South Africa, where I work, sometimes recognize this contradiction, and hence oppose state projects that seek to divide them by giving preferential rights to legal citizens. We are exploring the idea of creating an anti-nationalistic citizen commons that recognizes the rights of displaced migrants and refugees to local and trans-local cross borders and boundaries. These collectives reach out for support of international institutions. So solidarity for me is a collective project and transnationalism is an approach, a methodology or way of seeing the world in a differentiated way without hierarchical constructs like national citizenship.

Solidarity for me is a collective project and transnationalism is an approach, a methodology or way of seeing the world in a differentiated way without hierarchical constructs like national citizenship

Miraftab: I want to move away from planning in talking about the value of transnational solidarity. I have been listening to Angela Davis's autobiography, narrated in her own voice. It's incredibly powerful. I always had this question of "how did she get

away?" I mean in this monstrous system, you know, the viciousness of the American right politics. As I'm getting to the last chapters, what her autobiography is outlining is how it was a transnational global movement in her support that saved her life. As vicious and murderous as the US system has been against anti-racist and social justice movements, this one survived. She was educated in Europe. She networked with a group of international intellectuals and activists outside the US. That gave her the advantage so that she could mobilize a transnational solidarity campaign in her name, and I think I am convinced that that was the reason she was saved. And that's just one example of how we need transnational solidarity in response to the toxic mix of patriarchal racial-capitalism. I think one place outside the urban development realm where we can glaringly see how a global transnational solidarity could stand against even the most vicious, powerful forces is the Angela Davis story and the global campaign to free her.

> There's no way that professional planning in the US can solve urban problems by professional planners alone or by focusing on the US alone.

But in a more urban rooted example, I fall back on Cochabamba, where a monstrous multinational with its contract for water monopoly in Bolivia was brought down and kicked out. They basically had to take back the contract because there was a movement that spread from the local region to the broader Bolivian national context and gained attention and news coverage all over the world. The world was watching, and I think that was another example of how in the urban development scene this kind of international campaigning was able to help make a difference. We don't have enough of these examples, you know. I wish I had two dozen examples from 2023. But that is why we need to work on building a transnational consciousness that leads to international campaigns and solidarity movements.

Huq: What became clear in both of your comments is that the classroom is an important site for transnational consciousness raising. Do you see any role of planning organizations, whether that's at the university level or not, organizations like the PN, [Association of Collegiate School of Planning] ACSP, [and the American Planning Association] APA, in transnational solidarities?

Miraftab: Planners Network has been wonderful in that. Even though PN gives itself the name planners network, by planners they don't mean only professional planners. Their membership and everything about them expands the idea of who is a planner. And it's

a network of planners that go way beyond professional planners. So, I think they are already doing that, and maybe increasingly they are internationalizing contributions and voices that they give a platform to. So that should be something that APA does too. The name of it is American Planning Association so it's very much focused on the United States, maybe Canada, but they have to expand in every possible direction in what they do because there's no way that professional planning in the US can solve urban problems by professional planners alone or by focusing on the US alone. ACSP, due to a lot of efforts by committed colleagues, has made efforts and has made progress in internationalizing debates and conversations. It's a separate and more detailed kind of question to ask what specific steps could be taken in promoting an international and transnational perspective of solidarity and consciousness of the global power dynamics involved. But overall, organized under the Global Planning Educators Interest Group (GPEIG), ACSP membership is trying. In short and to circle back to planning pedagogy, if we are to solve any problem and not add to it, at the core of all of these organizations must be consciousness about the implications of our lifestyle, the spaces we create, the plans we make and practice, for elsewhere and for others. Their core effort should be to expose the implications of our privileges for the rest of the world, the rest of the region, for times before us, for times after us.

Huq: Ken, would you like to add to that?

Salo: Yeah, it's a great question. Just to play off Faranak's remarks, institutional forms of association are important sources of power. So, PN, as I understand it, developed in opposition to nationalistic forms of institutionalized power during the turbulent seventies and presently engaged in a similar project during this turbulent period of polarizing power and social segmentation. Hence, the idea of the network is again relevant for initiating any anti-nationalist project. I think our task is to develop and build networks against those forms of nationalism, particularly fascist nationalism as we are starting to see worldwide, and of course, in the US. Lastly, PN also needs to mobilize its archive to ensure that planning practice and pedagogy is relevant for the next generation. So, this is an intergenerational project. And for younger faculty and educators, the question is where and how could my students get involved in progressive planning? And I think PN can facilitate those sorts of spaces where

I think our task is to develop and build networks against those forms of nationalism, particularly fascist nationalism as we are starting to see worldwide, and of course, in the US.

students are allowed to develop their own sense of agency, coming to their own critique of the discipline, and sometimes their own frustrations with the professionalization of it. So, it's about creating what Fred Moten would call "fugitive" spaces. I mean in the apartheid context we were told you have to go university to get certified, but not get education. As Mark Twain put it differently, don't let your school get in the way of your education. Your education happens elsewhere. And I think that's PN's role, to walk on both feet, you know, between the gaps of the formal and the informal, the institution and the community. PN's been a flourishing network at some occasions, and others not so flourishing. But it's exactly that it's not institutionalized; it doesn't go through a Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) and all of those performances. But people are able to redirect and redistribute resources. The more that PN can begin to spin out those projects and faculty can bring students into these sorts of projects, I see a bright future.

Huq: Is there anything else that you want to add to this conversation before I ask the last question.

Salo: Well, I guess there are two things. One in terms of our current work where we are thinking through what Faranak would call a multi-sited or multilingual project about bringing multilingual people into a dialogue across continents, and that's become a lot easier especially through technology. I mean what we are doing right now and we literally are on three continents. So, I'm exploring and PN needs to be focusing on what are the promises and limits of the new technology or virtual engagement for this type of work. And then, of course, there's the issue of what is the potential of an immigrant force or of displaced people to counter rising forms of fascist white nationalisms that are emerging worldwide. Those are the two things I would suggest could be a key focus in the politics of transnationalism or transnational solidarities.

Huq: Did you have anything to add, Faranak?

Miraftab: I don't know what is your final question. But I think one of the questions you had mentioned earlier was about the role of technology. And I can speak to that. Looking at the last project (2016-2018) we did before COVID-19 where we were trying to facilitate transnational dialogue among activists in different parts of the world, the technological challenges we faced then and in comparison, the ease at which we facilitate these virtual dialogues today, make me optimistic about future of constructing transnational solidarities for a just humane urbanism. Today, you don't need to have technical knowledge. You don't need fancy equipment. We all can have conversations

across continents. So global connectedness has expanded and is no longer an exclusive privilege of a few based in universities. Activists, people with limited formal education and technological knowledge and resources are increasingly able to join virtual conversations. In that sense, for transnational solidarities and knowledge co-production with grassroots we face a positive development in the post pandemic era. That should in any case allow us to have more successful possibilities in achieving solidarity consciousness, responsibility, and global care towards each other and vis-à-vis others.

Huq: Thank you. I wanted to end on a note of hope and both of you went in that direction talking about the new possibilities of how we can organize differently. And that's so true for me too. Even back in 2017, I couldn't get on call with everyone in the informal settlements in Bangladesh, but now I am able to communicate and organize with settlement dwellers much more easily. What's the ongoing transnational solidarity and labor of love that you are involved in right now or you're drawing inspiration from?

Miraftab: It's the project that you are part of and as you know we are building it with radical patience. In "Imagining Humane Urbanism: Co-creating Knowledge about Radical Practices of Care, Reciprocity and Hope for Transnational Solidarities" we are taking small, tiny steps with colleagues and activists from the US, Brazil, South Africa, Spain, and hoping that we will patiently but care-fully (that is, full of care) build a network, a conversation, and solidarities towards action. We will be facilitating the activists in different places that are fighting the same villains to connect with each other, to have a shared and stronger front against the global villains. So that is the project we are currently building and it is based on what we learned from the last project (2016-18) that Ken and I along with you and other colleagues launched which was called "Transnational Dialogues for a Humane Urbanism."

Salo: The latest iteration is framed around the principles of reciprocity and redistribution. I think it's based on Faranak's work on social reproduction, and perhaps to emphasize the earlier point, there's a kind of urgency. It's not the same moment that PN was in during the seventies, or even when that Disorientation Guide was produced. I think it's actually a much more dangerous moment with this endless war that the unipolar hegemon has pushed everybody, and as Chomsky argues, to the brink of an actual military confrontation between nuclear superpowers. That could go down the abyss (I don't like the term 'go south' because it's the North that causes all of these problems). So that's just to emphasize this idea of a transnational literacy where we are in this

world together. Though maybe King would say “woven in this interconnected garment of human destiny”. That urgency should inspire us to take the project further. From an intergenerational perspective, there is that urgency of now. But as other philosophers point out every urgency is also an emergence of something new. That is the hope we have against the history that we know.

Maybe the last thing to add on that question of migration is I think, to bring the three of us personally into focus, we’re all from elsewhere. We sort of naturalized into what Du Boise called “double vision” right? That you need to at least be conscious of the other and I don’t see that in the American national, so to speak. And maybe that’s because people who are immigrants are able to have a foot in both camps and recognize partial ways of belonging. So when I’m back in South Africa, I’m home and when I’m in the US, I’m also home. So there are multiple ways of belonging. And that is the essence of being able to see difference. And maybe we can teach that. I hope we can teach that through our own lived experiences as well. So that’s just to end off on our contribution, and to situate ourselves and what we could bring to counter the dangerous nationalisms emerging at this point.

Faranak Miraftab is a Professor of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA. As a prolific and esteemed urban scholar of globalization, Miraftab's scholarship sits at the intersection of planning, geography, feminist studies, and postcolonial studies. Her interdisciplinary research is empirically based in cities of Latin America, southern Africa, the Middle East, and North America. Her research and teaching concerns global inequalities, in particular the global and local processes involved in the formation of cities and citizens' struggles to access dignified urban livelihoods. She investigates social and institutional aspects of urban development and planning that address basic human needs, including housing and urban infrastructure and services that support it—particularly how groups disadvantaged by class, gender, race, or ethnicity mobilize to obtain resources such as shelter, basic infrastructure, and services and how institutional arrangements facilitate and frustrate provision of and access to vital urban resources. Her most recent book, Global Heartland, which received the Paul Davidoff award in 2017, reveals global displacement and emplacement by migrant laborers and the army of families and institutions in their communities of origin that make for revitalization of the US Rust Belt.

Ken Salo is a professor based in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA, teaches and conducts research in the areas of environmental justice, environmental racism, law and international environmental policy, trans-local solidarities and global justice movements, international development and planning, and negotiation and conflict management.

Efadul Huq is an assistant professor of Environmental Science & Policy and faculty affiliate in Urban Studies and Study of Women & Gender at Smith College, Massachusetts, USA.

Neoliberalism and Planning

Kanishka Goonewardena

What is neoliberalism? And how is it related to planning? These are hardly original questions, given the extensive and familiar literature on them, but I would like to offer here a provocation concerning the fraught relationship between neoliberalism and planning.

Typically, neoliberalism has been understood as a political-economic ideology promoting the supposed virtues of 'free markets' against forms of planning undertaken by the welfare state to cope with crises of capitalist accumulation. In this kind of common sense, neoliberalism often appears as the enemy of planning, which is identified with the state. But this is misleading, to the extent that the capitalist state as we know it, or what Lenin thought of as the 'dictatorship of the bourgeoisie', has also been a prime instrument of neoliberalism—the essence of which is class struggle, in conjunction with inextricably related struggles over nature, patriarchy, colonialism and imperialism. Against the view that neoliberalism and planning are simply antithetical, we may recall Karl Polanyi's famous words: 'laissez-faire was planned, planning was not'. Neoliberalism is therefore best understood as a political project for the enrichment of the ruling classes by any means necessary—economic compulsion, political coercion, 'regime change', warfare and, of course, planning.

In spite of its pretension to be the ideology of the free market, which equates economic liberalism and political freedom with seductive appeals to human rights,

neoliberalism is also a product of planning. It is a plan by, for and of the ruling classes of the world, to enhance their powers, privileges and profits in response to the crisis of the Fordist-Keynesian regime of accumulation punctuated by the global economic depression of 1973—at the expense of the organized and disorganized workers of the world, in factories, fields and households. More than a universal expansion of free markets, neoliberalism represents in fact a rigging of markets to enrich global elites, by dispossessing in various ways the subaltern classes worldwide. As Nancy Fraser has shown in Cannibal Capitalism, it is the characteristic assemblage of profit-making procedures in the latest stage of capitalism, combining forms of 'so-called original accumulation' critiqued by Marx with every conceivable method of extracting surplus value—employing all the tricks in the book of capital, from ground rent to financial speculation to unpaid labour.

We ought to be familiar with the mechanics of this epochal transfer of value from the poor to the rich, from the multi-scaled peripheries to the centres of our world, thanks to the writings of eminent scholars such as Mike Davis, David Harvey, Neil Smith, Jamie Peck, Peter Marcuse and Margit Mayer. They enlighten us especially on the urban consequences of neoliberalism involving housing, gentrification, precarity, policing and targeted disempowerment, but we must not forget the rural dimension of the same global process involving a new wave of peasant dispossession, powerfully documented by Utsa Patnaik and Palagummi Sainath. Nature too suffers from neoliberalism, as it is relentlessly condemned to the private property form and primed for climate change. To properly register the role played by planning in neoliberalism, however, a few new historical studies are also helpful. In this regard, Quinn Slobodian's recent book Globalists tells a fascinating story, detailing how neoliberalism as a political project was conceived by intellectuals like Friedrich von Hayek between the World Wars and implemented by neo-conservative politicians led by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. Such scholarship urges us to reflect on how scores of liberal, social democratic and even pseudo-Marxist thinkers have opportunistically rallied to its ruling class agenda.

Indeed, much of the discursive hegemony of neoliberalism stems from its success in co-opting a motley crew of radical anti-statist critics and libertarian advocates of creative subjectivity—from Austrian neoconservatives to French poststructuralists to Italian autonomists. As far as the contemporary urban manifestations of neoliberal hegemony are concerned, the paradigms of 'smart city' and 'creative city' are exemplary. As the German scholar Klaus Ronneberger says in an illuminating essay on Henri Lefebvre's conceptions of autogestion and right to the city, the 'Marxist' Richard Florida and the liberal Charles Landry are both 'outstanding examples of a neoliberal program, which can be understood as cultural governmentality of the city in the spirit of Michel Foucault'. Needless to add,

the recent appearance of many 'schools' and 'institutes' of cities and urbanism in entrepreneurial universities too is very much a part of neoliberal grand strategy. In Undoing the Demos, Wendy Brown theorizes it as a fundamentally undemocratic political project encompassing not merely economics, but the totality of social life.

The government of social relations by discourses of diversity, creativity, resilience, self-help, wellness and even mindfulness are popular features of the cultural-ideological front of neoliberalism, at the level of everyday as much as professional life. In the academic world, the watchword of neoliberalism is 'excellence'. It is but a name for the impossible yet routine requirement for students, professors, departments, faculties and universities to advertise their superiority over peers, in competition against rather than cooperation with them—all for the vulgar materialist purpose of gobbling up a disproportionate share of the proverbial pie of financial rewards, baked in the last instance by extractors of value. When education itself becomes a commodity manufactured in the neoliberal university ruled by productivity metrics, the fetish character assumed by our own intellectual labour is named 'excellence'.

No reckoning with the nature of neoliberalism should avoid the truth that it is not only the latest stage in the self-serving pursuit of riches by ruling classes, but also the folly of a fundamentally unsustainable way of life plagued by multiple crises—political, economic, social, ideological and ecological. We must note that the built in contradictions and inherent injustices of neoliberalism have produced widespread opposition to it, led by variously organised political movements yearning for a radically different world. The vocation of progressive planners in the face of neoliberalism therefore rests on their resolve to join hands with these mass mobilizations around the world. That would necessarily be premised on drawing a line between planning for and against neoliberalism, a line that runs through the professional and academic establishments of planning while beckoning beyond them—towards alliances of radical planners with masses of anti-neoliberal and indeed anti-capitalist political subjects.

The decisive struggle is certainly not between neoliberalism and planning, but between two kinds of planning—neoliberal planning and revolutionary planning. That struggle demands in practice a dual power response from those aligned with the radical principles of collectives such as Planners Network (PN), International Network of Urban Research and Action (INURA) and the Right to the City Alliance (RTTC), on the terrain of official institutions and beyond, to align the power of planning with the damned of the earth.

Kanishka Goonewardena, trained as an architect in Sri Lanka and as a planner in the US, is Professor, Department of Geography and Planning, University of Toronto. He teaches urban design, planning and geography and writes on critical theories of space, ideology and capital, presently with a focus on tiers-mondiste conceptions of imperialism and the history of left politics in Sri Lanka.

What's the Matter with "Good" Planning

Peter Marcuse

I. Good Planning in the Mainstream

Planning, urban design, and development are in the public mind today. The increasing public interest in city development has grown out of exposure to architectural and design ventures, interest in historical preservation, studies of city growth and shrinkage, and new concepts around the relationship between physical design and human welfare. And the interest ranges from the very practical (zoning, building heights, transportation alternatives, the design of public spaces) to a call for alternatives to mainstream planning practice. The interest is driven not just by progressivism, but also by the calls for visionary alternatives in the planning of new cities in new countries and fields, redefining "urban" as a way of life, and seeing cities as engines of prospect.

The actual characteristics of what planners do in the field and what they produce range widely from the very limited practical to the seemingly utopian. Some planners approach problems from a very practical point of view, focusing on what their clients want and what is politically feasible, economical, and implementable. Other planners incorporate imagination, innovation, and bold new ideas into their practice, disrupting the status quo. And, in most mainstream cases, neither the values of the practitioners or communities nor the social justice issues involved are highlighted, if they play any role at all.

A classic example of mainstream planning practice is a set of stories and projects highlighted in The New York Times special section of its July 20, 2016 edition titled "Cities for Tomorrow."[1] The articles present illuminating examples of innovative solutions to the challenges cities face and are well worth reading. The contributors include eminent scholars, architects, and planners; the contributions are informative, well-written, and well-intentioned. And The New York Times is not a bad representative of the mainstream understanding of planning. Examples of what the articles propose include:

> The actual characteristics of what planners do in the field and what they produce range widely from the very limited practical to the seemingly utopian.

- Pursuing inner peace in more human interactions and get people the help they need;
- Teaching hi-tech internet skills and foster the sharing of innovative, environmentally friendly, agricultural practices;
- Using new technologies in cities including replacing old public pay phones with gigabyte Wi-Fi stations;
- Designing tall buildings so "to make it possible for people to at least have a visual connection to each other " in common areas;
- Preparing for the effects of new technologies, such as self-driving cars and drones, on our transportation and shipping systems;
- Mixing newly-developed live-work spaces that capitalize on the blurred lines between life and work;
- Promoting the use of environmentally friendly initiatives, such as light rail transit in Los Angeles or innovative urban agricultural practices;
- Supporting emerging practices in neighborhood revitalization such as the development of pedestrian-friendly parks and restaurants and bars to spur further development,
- Replacing "11 aging bridges across a one-mile stretch of highway cutting through downtown with bridges that are green, artful and iconic," and;
- Developing "an ethnically diverse food hall, … on the ground floor of [a] redeveloped department store, transforming 535 acres into …a convention center, hotels, 1,500 apartments, offices, and retail."

1 There are several versions of its content, some in the July 20 edition, some only in the New York City edition of July 21, from which the below quotes are taken.

These examples represent what I believe to be "Good Planning" within mainstream planning work today. While these proposals are presented as innovative and futuristic, they conceal major systemic problems. The programs presented provide at best ameliorative solutions to systemic inequality in cities, do not discuss the social justice consequences of what they propose, and fail to address the causes of the problems they face.

What is key to these articles, and Good Planning practice, is that there is an absolute acceptance of the process of urbanization as it now takes place. Good Planning never attempts to address the systems of urbanization itself. Good Planners simply want the systems which drive urbanization to abide by basic rules without obvious corruption.

[The designation "Good Planning" is not intended to be derogatory, but only to suggest that it is planning limited in scope and avoiding the critical approach of what is here called "Progressive Planning," likewise capitalized, and described in further detail below.]

Good Planners depoliticize urban issues, and thus, propose non-controversial solutions that avoid addressing or even revealing the realities of inequality in the city. Implicitly, Good Planners are conservative, refraining from critical consideration of the causes of inequality. Their net political impact is represented as much by what they omit as what they say or do.

Examples of issues that were omitted from the "Cities for the Future" special section include:

- Segregation and the existence of racial tensions;
- Inequality and poverty;
- Working conditions and labor relations;
- The political environment, including the deep conflict of interests and ideologies that shape political decisions in cities;
- National urban policy; and
- Land values.

Because important issues in planning are not addressed or even mentioned, progressive alternatives are not presented, leaving a whitewashed set of solutions that do not address critical urban problems.

Because important issues in planning are not addressed or even mentioned, progressive alternatives are not presented, leaving a whitewashed set of solutions that do not address critical urban problems. Progressive solutions missing from these articles, and rarely highlighted in Good Planning, include:

- Regulation of land speculation through real property or income taxes;
- Rent control;
- The provision of affordable housing and the necessary subsidies required;
- Alternate forms of non-profit tenure which provide permanently available and financially feasible affordable housing, such as limited equity co-ops, mutual housing associations, and community land trusts;
- The strengthening and democratization of urban planning controls such as zoning and land use regulations;
- Planning practices that affirmatively support gender equality; and
- Planning practices that affirmatively deal with segregation along racial and ethnic lines, or examine approaches to income inequality in residential and services provision.

The practical approaches of Good Planners neglect these issues. They simply want the system to abide by the existing rules, and not to be rigged or corrupt. Good Planning does not question the ultimate purpose of those rules; what they do or say, the values affected by their impact, and most importantly, whom they benefit and whom they hurt. A more critical view than that of Good Planning is necessary to address the foundational flaws of such a practice.

II. Progressive Planning

A critical view requires a practice that reveals who the actors are in the city, what positions of power they hold, and how their decisions determine the outcomes of planning proposals in the city. In The New York Times' examples, "cities" are the actors, with no reference to who within the city is making decisions, nor who is benefiting or suffering from them. By removing the actors from the conversation, these articles obscure who is in fact responsible. An alternative view to Good Planning, Progressive Planning, would require the goals of any plan or proposal include the values of social justice, equality, democracy, citizen participation, environmental protection, and historical preservation, to name a few—all values held to be those of planning by the profession itself. An alternate view to Good Planning would address the omissions in the Times' examples.

Progressive Planning is then a useful name for such an alternative. It would not be a rejection of Good Planning, but would rather go beyond conventional practice such as that celebrated by the Times. Progressive Planners question some aspects of conventional practice, and accept and build on others through actively embedding critical values and goals into practice. The

> [O]ne could say that the key distinction between Good and Progressive Planning is that Progressive Planning strives to alter the conditions that lead to inequality and injustice, while Good Planning works to temper the effects.

theoretical bases for Good Planning and Progressive Planning are also different. Both types of planning express concerns about social issues, but their rationales for doing so are different. In Good Planning, economic growth is almost always a top priority. While social issues are important, they take a back seat to economic growth. In Progressive Planning, social issues are cardinal. Progressive Planners may go so far as to assert that growth that does not promote social justice is not worthwhile. On a rough continuum from conventional Good Planning to Progressive Planning, we could posit different approaches on key issues. Poverty, for instance, is a key issue in both types of planning. Both would agree that it should be reduced. However, there are differences in the way each type approaches poverty: how they measure it, whether they address the causes, and whether they advocate private growth or public measures to combat it. Establishing a minimum standard of living for what is acceptable in a decent society should be the goal of both, although that standard may look different along the continuum between Good and Progressive Planning.

Both practices value economic equality, with a focus on reducing poverty. Bernie Sanders' campaign has shown there is widespread agreement that the reduction of poverty is an essential policy to pursue. Good Planning acknowledges that the gap between the 1% and the 99% must be reduced, but it is to be done by improving the conditions of the poor, not narrowing the income gap from the top down. A $15 an hour minimum wage, decent welfare provisions, mandatory parental leave, and job training are all desirable proposals in both Good and Progressive Planning. But redistribution from rich to poor, both as a necessity for getting the resources to combat poverty and as desirable in itself to reduce income inequality, is characteristic of Progressive Planning. Profit sharing by a business is a weak form of redistribution that attributes the making of a profit untouched as the motor of the business, rather than as a result of the injustice of depriving workers for the value they have produced. Thus, rather than achieving social justice, Good Planning leaves equality as the product of bargaining in the market.

Equality, but with a focus on both ends of the spectrum (rich and poor), is a foundational concern of Progressive Planning. A focus on the poor can leave the rich untouched; a focus on inequality can lead to a questioning of the causes of poverty, examining whether the poor are poor because the rich are rich. A much more controversial point

from which mainstream planning shies away, but Progressive Planning pursues. Might not thinking of a minimum wage suggest thinking of a maximum wage, if the present difference between the top and the bottom is really held to be unjust?

Social justice, in practice, means addressing the overall fairness of income and wealth, especially in terms of their relationship to working conditions, labor expended, and needs met in society. Fairness at this level is not something with which Good Planning willingly deals. Good Planning takes for granted that the fundamental distribution of wealth is determined by the prevailing economic system; capitalism is sometimes, but rarely, mentioned. Progressive Planning makes capitalism, and its effect on distribution of wealth and power, a central concern, both in analysis and recommendations. The criteria for justice may be debated, but precision in the definition need not be sought at this point, because the achievement of justice simply equated with fairness (the basic Rawls definition) is thus far enough. Society is so far from that goal of fairness that it may be generally stated as the desired direction in debates on concrete policy alternatives, without the ends being precisely laid out. Which direction is fairer can almost always be agreed on without an exact definition of ultimate fairness. In light of these points, one could say that the key distinction between Good and Progressive Planning is that Progressive Planning strives to alter the conditions that lead to inequality and injustice, while Good Planning works to temper the effects.

III. Transformative Planning

It would be easy to say a fully progressive approach to planning is idealistic and unrealistic today. However ideal Progressive Planning's goals and values are to those who adopt them, they must recognize that compromise will be a constant theme in their pursuit. For progressives, it would be desirable for conventional planning to move along the spectrum from Good Planning to Progressive Planning. In practice, the transformation from one to the other will not be easy. Absent a revolution hardly in sight today, Progressive Planners need to have their immediate goals set substantially lower than the ultimate results they believe are necessary for justice. Practical and attainable solutions to immediate issues must be pursued.

Why then waste time on theoretical discussion of what is not immediately practical and attainable, if it does not further the goals of Progressive Planning?

Such an objection to this discussion, if it is today only theoretical and useless, is valid. But how then, abandoning the theoretically desirable for the concretely feasible, can decisions be made as to which planning proposals will lead in the future beyond Good Planning to advance the more difficult but fundamental goals of Progressive Planning?

The answer to this tension between Good Planning and Progressive Planning is a focus on the transformative aspects of plans and proposals. Transformative actions are plans or proposals that meet the requirements of Good Planning, including being implementable, but also include explicit goals that open the door to more progressive results, raising the need for policies that may be politically infeasible today but should be pursued into the future. This allows for the insertion of the values of Progressive Planning into conventional planning practice.

The following practical examples are illustrative of such a planning approach.[2]

Family leave

Mainstream family leave policy proposals include requiring family leave for employees who are in the early child-rearing process. Good and Progressive Planning would support this proposal. Conceptually, this policy suggests that a mandatory part of employment should be a concern for the individual needs of the employee. Family leave is an example of a progressive idea, leading the way to a more progressive understanding of the employee-employer relationship. Benefits should not be based on the employee's capabilities or profit contributions, but rather based on the need of the employee. Family leave is an implementable policy, laying the framework for a more radical reframing of employment.

Housing

Good Planning comfortably accepts housing policies including standards for decent, safe, and sanitary housing, zoning bonuses that enable the profitable provision of affordable housing, and public subsidies to prevent homelessness and incentivize private development of limited affordable housing. Clearly, even many policies that fall under Good Planning practice will require increased taxes to raise the necessary revenues to pay for public subsidies. But if a minimum standard of housing is an accepted public obligation, why not go all the way and argue that fair housing would require those revenues to be grounded in fairness? Such a proposal would call for those who have housing in excess of their needs to contribute to the costs of housing for those with unmet needs. Why not propose a progressive luxury housing tax with rates that increase as the market value of a home increases at some point at the high end of the market? Why not propose a progressive speculative profits tax on the profits gained from the sale or exchange of land, which is, after all, only private as a result of public decisions?

---

2 See my blog, urban and political, at pmarcuse.wordpress.com, Blogs #30 and 31, Transformative proposals and Transformational Provocations, for further examples.

Public Participation

Democratic participation in public decision-making is hardly a radical idea; public participation in planning is accepted in mainstream Good Planning and espoused by Progressive Planners. Government currently holds hearings on zoning matters, provides information on new policies, and opens debates to the public. But if public participation is an accepted part of democratic decision-making in Good Planning, why not go further? Why not include public participation as a tool for decision-making? Why not require public participation such as participatory budgeting[3] in all decisions, including the expenditure of public funds, affecting land for economic development?

Land Use

If, as all planners would agree, all decisions affecting the uses of land are appropriately matters of public interest, why not formally consider the expansion of community land trust policies to all land under public control? Such trusts typically consist of non-profit entities that hold the title to land on which housing is built and lease it to residents with restrictions on their right to dispose of its use for a profit. Going further than community land trusts, would it be possible to put all land into public ownership to begin with, with community-based planning deciding on its best uses?

These are examples of Transformative Planning: turning an idea accepted by Good Planning into a radical progressive one. In this pursuit, the goal is not necessarily to pursue such a change overnight but to open the conversation to more progressive policies. Pursuing Transformative Planning, constantly raising controversial issues that produce no immediate transformation but indicate that there is always more that remains to be done, is not likely to endear planners to conventional political leaders or clients of Good Planners. It may, however, give hope to advocates who are fighting for radical change in their communities. This approach may also remove the fear of advancing progressive ideas by at least putting them on the table. In the end, Good Planning does not go far enough to address systemic inequality, and Progressive Planning is not implementable in the short-term. A Transformative approach begins to address the shortcomings of Good Planning while pursuing the changes necessary to begin to address and combat the systems of power in cities which contribute to mass inequality along economic, racial, and gender lines.

3 Progressive planners might also want to explore the question of defining "community" or "public" in such a way as to not permit wealthy communities from acting to create exclusive communities, perhaps by setting substantive requirements on the creation or of such groups or their proposals.

APPENDIX

I. Key Terms

Mainstream planning may be bad or good, conservative or progressive, depending on the time and circumstances, and represents the norms in planning in that time and place. Conventional planning, likewise differing from time and place, might be a synonym to mainstream planning. It might include bad planning as well as planning held to be good at that given time and place, but is less likely to involve progressive tactics. Conventional planning will inevitably reflect current power, political, social, and economic relationships.

Bad Planning, rarely used here, is planning that holds itself out to be mainstream, but whose goals are unjust or environmentally harmful. It may be considered bad by the eventual judgment of history (e.g. slave plantations, fascist enclaves, Jewish ghettoes, deliberate racial segregation). Bad planning may be mainstream when undertaken (fascist Germany) but later criticized (e.g. urban redevelopment policies in the U.S. a la Robert Moses in New York City, including slum clearance, auto-use facilitation, extensive highway construction, residential relocation, and top-down authoritative planning decisions).

Good Planning, as used here, is simply what is considered good and/or desirable innovative planning in professional, governmental, and most establishment urban development circles today. The New York Times' treatment of planning issues is used here as representative of that view. Good Planning has, if not always initially, the support of the key established holders of decision-making power over its adoption. Its definition will vary over time and place.

Progressive Planning, as used here[4], gives priority concern to issues of social justice. It is typically associated with concepts such as: progressive redistribution of resources,

---

4There are other largely parallel definitions available, often more detailed and adding richness to the term, that deserve new attention. See, as a direct predecessor to the discussion here and still a key document highlighting the relationship to advocacy planning and community-based planning: Tom Angotti, "***Advocacy and Community Planning: Past, Present and Future,"*** April 22, 2007, Progressive Planning Magazine. See also Pierre Clavel, arguing for redistribution and participation as the cornerstone of Progressive Planning: ***"What is "Progressive?,"*** February 21, 2011 and ***"Progressive Cities and Neighborhood Planning,"*** May 2, 2016, available at ***progressivecities.org***

equality, rights to housing, spatial justice, public ownership, anti-speculation and anti-privatization measures, land as a public trust, citizen participation, community-led planning, affordable housing, and diversity. This approach to planning, if not always identified as such, is espoused by social movements and community activists among the 99%. It will generally have little concern with protecting or extending the prosperity of the 1%. Consequently, it is likely to be critical of Good Planning. There may, however, be plans and proposals that meet the requirements of both Good Planning and Progressive Planning. Compromises among plans and proposals render the dividing lines between Good and Progressive somewhat fluid. Community and participatory planning, for instance, may be held to be Good Planning or Progressive Planning depending on how community is defined or whose participation is involved. Idealism will be found among proponents of Good as well as of Progressive Planning, but is likely to be much more openly class-conscious in Progressive Planning.

The most prominent operational difference between Good and Progressive Planning concerns the relationship of each to government. In theory, Good Planning sees government as a necessary evil, while Progressive Planning sees good government as a necessary support for the best social objectives of planning. In practice, Good Planning is likely to rely on the basic benevolence of government[5] to implement plans, while Progressive Planning will examine carefully the distribution of power in figuring out how to bring its plans to fruition.

Transformative Planning is an appropriate term for an approach to Progressive Planning that has broader goals than its own implementation, without downplaying idealism. Transformative Planning raises questions as to what might be necessary to achieve what is desired in a progressive city, putting together and pursuing the contributions and implications of Progressive Planning to their logical ends.[6]

Peter Marcuse (1928-2022) was Professor Emeritus of Urban Planning at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. He served on the planning commissions of several cities, was a member of the editorial boards of multiple journals, and wrote extensively in English and German on topics such as racial discrimination, housing policy, comparative planning, and globalization. He was a key member of Planners Network from its founding in 1975 until 2022.

5See David Madden and Peter Marcuse, "The Myth of the Benevolent State," in ***Defence of Housing***, Verso Press, London.

6It is discussed with examples in Section V. above.

Additional Resources

Accessibility & Disability Justice

Access is Love

Access Is Love aims to help build a world where accessibility is understood as an act of love, instead of a burden or an after-thought. It is an initiative to raise awareness about accessibility and encourage people to incorporate access in their everyday practices and lives.
Link: ***www.disabilityintersectionalitysummit.com/access-is-love***

AccessNow

At AccessNow our mission is to establish a go-to resource for accessibility information. We are building a connected platform to empower people to discover a world of accessible opportunities, make better decisions and remove barriers.
Link: ***accessnow.com***

Critical Access Primer

Since fall 2021, members of the Critical Design Lab have been working on exploring, defining, and responding to the emerging vocabularies of critical access and the field of critical access studies.
Link: ***www.mapping-access.com/critical-access-primer***

Critical Design Lab

Critical Design Lab is a multi-disciplinary arts and design collaborative centered in disability culture and crip technoscience. Our work pivots around the concept of access: access is our ethic, our creative content, and our methodology. We use digital media and social practice to craft replicable protocols that treat accessibility as research-creation, an aesthetic world-building practice, and an invitation to assemble community.
Link: ***www.mapping-access.com***

Disability Visibility Project

The Disability Visibility Project is an online community dedicated to creating, sharing, and amplifying disability media and culture.
Link: ***disabilityvisibilityproject.com***

Architecture & Design

Association for Community Design (ACD)

ACD envisions a practice of design that dismantles systemic injustice and creates an equitable built environment. Through our programs, we provide resources, connections, and support for practitioners working to advance equity and justice in the built environment.
Link: ***www.communitydesign.org***

Black + Indigenous Design Collective

The Black + Indigenous Design Collective's mission is building capacity and celebrating the advancement of Black and Indigenous voices and ingenuity in the spatial design fields, and public art through place-making. As a social enterprise, our goal is to advocate for the visibility, well-being, and interests of Black and Indigenous peoples through spatial interventions, scholarship, community engagement, and decolonizing public spaces through art & design.
Link: ***www.bidc.ca***

Common Space Coalition

We are a newly established non-profit organization whose goal is to combat systemic racism in landscape architectural professional practice. We seek to engage in a professional, positive, and transparent relationship with our professional bodies as an arms-length advocacy group.
Link: ***commonspacecoalition.com***

Design as Protest

Design as Protest is a collective of designers mobilizing strategy to dismantle the privilege and power structures that use architecture and design as tools of oppression.
Link: ***www.dapcollective.com***

Design Justice Network

We wield our collective power and experiences to bring forth worlds that are safer, more just, more accessible, and more sustainable. We uplift liberatory experiences, practices, and tools, and critically question the role of design and designers. Rooted in a sense of abundance, possibility, and joy, we provide connection, care, and community for design justice practitioners.
Link: ***designjustice.org***

The Architecture Lobby

The Architecture Lobby (TAL) is a grassroots organization of architectural workers — architects, landscape architects, planners, designers, students, and others — advocating for just labor practices and an equitable (built) environment. We believe that building solidarity between architectural workers and fostering capacity for organizing labor is a critical tool in confronting the white supremacist and heteropatriarchal systems woven through the architecture and design fields.
Link: ***architecture-lobby.org***

Black Planning & Urbanism

Black Planners & Urbanists Association

We are a network of 40+ Black professionals working in planning, design, and real estate development. A few of us began to connect through involvement in the Black Planning Project and this quickly developed into periodic times of professional discussions over dinners in Fall 2018.
Link: ***www.blackplanners.ca***

Black Planning Project

Mission: To amplify Black voices and perspectives in city and community building, planning, and development with the goal of reshaping planning practice and facilitating more sustainable and resilient communities.
Link: ***www.blackplanningproject.com***

Black + Urban

Black + Urban was created as a safe space for Black, Latino, Indigenous and other underrepresented urban planners, designers and forward thinkers. The platform is intended to document practical and visionary solutions for the issues that plague Black and Brown urban spaces through the lens of research, experiences and case studies.
Link: ***www.blackandurban.com***, Instagram: ***blackandurban***

Engaging Black People and Power

Created by placemaker, author, and CUI's Senior Fellow of Equity-Based Placemaking, Jay Pitter, in collaboration with students and scholars in York University's Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change, this publication highlights engagement practice and policy approaches for addressing spatialized anti-Blackness in cities across North America.
Link: ***canurb.org/publications/engaging-black-people-and-power***

Decarceration & Abolition

Abolition Journal Study Guide

Abolition is, in addition to being about dismantling and building, also about transforming things. And perhaps first and foremost, it is about transforming ourselves in concert with others. Sometimes this happens when we study together!
Link: ***abolitionjournal.org/studyguide***

Critical Resistance

Critical Resistance seeks to build an international movement to end the prison industrial complex (PIC) by challenging the belief that caging and controlling people makes us safe.
Link: ***criticalresistance.org***

Defund Hate

We are committed to divestment from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), agencies that tear apart loved ones and harm our communities. Instead, we want our tax dollars used to strengthen our families and communities. We are committed to investment in education, housing, green infrastructure and health care programs that create thriving communities.
Link: ***defundhatenow.org***

Detention Watch Network

Detention Watch Network (DWN) is a national coalition building power through collective advocacy, grassroots organizing, and strategic communications to abolish immigration detention in the United States.
Link: ***www.detentionwatchnetwork.org***

Million Dollar Blocks (NYC)

Using rarely accessible data from the criminal justice system, we have created maps of "million dollar blocks" and of the city-prison-city-prison migration flow for five of the nation's cities.
Link: ***c4sr.columbia.edu/projects/million-dollar-blocks***

Million Dollar Hoods (LA)

Million Dollar Hoods maps and documents the human and fiscal costs of mass incarceration in Los Angeles and beyond. Launched in September 2016, the Million Dollar Hoods website began by hosting digital maps that show how much is spent per neighborhood on incarceration in Los Angeles County.
Link: ***milliondollarhoods.pre.ss.ucla.edu***

Planning for Abolition

What does abolition mean and need today? What do urban planners know about the relationships between planning, policing and prisons? How can planning support abolition presents and futures?
Link: ***wheretohere.com/planning-for-abolition***

Planners toward Liberation

Planners toward liberation is a resource guide and framework for planners who are thinking beyond mainstream, state-based, capitalist, liberal and settler colonial planning, and about revolutionary and communist planning as the way forward toward racial, environmental, social, and economic justice, and democracy.
Link: ***www.planforliberation.space***; Created by @sabrinafbazile (Twitter)

Stop Cop City

The City of Atlanta has leased 381-acres of Weelaunee Forest, stolen Muscogee land, to the Atlanta Police Foundation for a police military facility funded by corporations. Cop City will never be built. #StopCopCity #DefendWeelaunee
Link: ***stopcop.city***

Environmental & Climate Justice

Climate Justice Alliance

Formed in 2013 to create a new center of gravity in the climate movement by uniting frontline communities and organizations into a formidable force. Our translocal organizing strategy and mobilizing capacity is building a Just Transition away from extractive systems of production, consumption and political oppression, and towards resilient, regenerative and equitable economies. We believe that the process of transition must place race, gender and class at the center of the solutions equation in order to make it a truly Just Transition.
Link: ***climatejusticealliance.org***

Environmental + Climate Justice Syllabus

The goal of the Environmental and Climate Justice Syllabus is to assemble readings, articles, case studies, and biographies from key writers, scholars, and activists working for environmental freedom (to borrow Malini Ranganathan's phrase!). Our emphasis, here, is to generate a searchable and citable list of Black, Indigenous, and/or Latinx individuals, organizations, and movements which are indispensably foundational in the continued fight for environmental and climate justice.
Link: ***www.just-environments.org/the-syllabus***

Extinction Rebellion

Extinction Rebellion is a decentralised, international and politically non-partisan movement using non-violent direct action and civil disobedience to persuade governments to act justly on the Climate and Ecological Emergency.
Link: ***rebellion.global/about-us***

Global Center for Climate Justice

We are a multidisciplinary resource center dedicated to advancing a more transformative and emancipatory climate justice politics. We show how solutions to the climate crisis are inseparable from the resolution of other major social injustices, how unjust power relations are the root cause of all crises, and how deep structural reforms and systemic changes to power relations are required to create a more just and sustainable future for all.
Link: ***www.climatejusticecenter.org***

Indigenous Environmental Network

Established in 1990 within the United States, IEN was formed by grassroots Indigenous peoples and individuals to address environmental and economic justice issues (EJ). IEN's activities include building the capacity of Indigenous communities and tribal governments to develop mechanisms to protect our sacred sites, land, water, air, natural resources, health of both our people and all living things, and to build economically sustainable communities.
Link: ***www.ienearth.org/about***

Sunrise Movement

Sunrise is building a movement of young people across race and class to stop the climate crisis and win a Green New Deal. We will force the government to end the reign of fossil fuel elites, invest in Black, brown and working class communities, and create millions of good union jobs.
Link: ***www.sunrisemovement.org***

350 ContraCoast Action

350 Contra Costa Action advocates for socially equitable solutions to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and restore natural systems for a healthier, sustainable future for our communities. Based in Contra Coast County, California.
Link: ***350contracostaaction.org***

Housing Justice & Anti-Poverty

Alliance for Housing Justice

AHJ was formed to address the nation's affordable housing and displacement crisis, advance the rights of tenants, respond to harmful public policy actions, and shift the narrative from housing as a commodity to a human right. Our primary strategy to achieve these goals is building and supporting the infrastructure needed for a powerful, grassroots-led housing justice movement.
Link: ***www.allianceforhousingjustice.org***

Anti-Eviction Mapping Project

The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project is a data-visualization, critical cartography, and multimedia storytelling collective documenting dispossession and resistance upon gentrifying landscapes.
Link: ***antievictionmap.com***

Asian Coalition for Housing Rights

The Asian Coalition for Housing Rights is a regional network of grassroots community organizations, NGO's and professionals actively involved with urban poor development processes in Asian cities. The coalition is action-orientated, highly decentralised, and aims to provide an alternative model of urban development based on Asian realities and experiences.
Link: ***www.achr.net***

Autonomous Tenants Union Network

A North American collaborative of tenant unions committed to building tenant power.
Link: ***atun-rsia.org***

BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights

BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights is an independent, community-based non-profit organization mandated to protect and promote the rights of Palestinian refugees and internally displaced persons.
Link: ***www.badil.org***

Canadian Network of Community Land Trusts

The Canadian Network of Community Land Trusts (CNCLT) is a non-profit, member-based organization. We are the convening place for CLTs across Canada.
Link: ***www.communityland.ca***

Center for Community Land Trust Innovation

The Center for Community Land Trust Innovation is a not-for-profit nongovernmental organization established in 2018 to promote and to support community land trusts and similar strategies of community-led development on community-owned land in countries throughout the world.
Link: ***cltweb.org***

Debt Collective

The Debt Collective is a membership-based union for debtors and our allies. Our current economic system forces us into debt: student debt for education; a mortgage or soaring rent for housing; unpaid bills for utilities, phone, medical care, and even incarceration. No one should have to go into debt to meet their basic needs. These debts are illegitimate and the system needs to change, and we are united to win that change. How? Through the power of our union.
Link: ***debtcollective.org***

Habitat International Coalition (HIC)

HIC is the Global Coalition for the rights to habitat and social justice that promotes human rights related to housing and land in both rural and urban areas.
Link: ***www.hic-net.org***

Housing Justice for All

Housing Justice for All is a statewide coalition of over 80 groups representing tenants and homeless New Yorkers, united in our fight for housing as a human right.
Link: ***housingjusticeforall.org***

Housing Research Collaborative

The Housing Research Collaborative (HRC), based at the University of British Columbia, is a community of housing researchers, providers and policymakers focused on understanding systemic impediments in the housing system and to address housing unaffordability.
Link: ***housingresearchcollaborative.allard.ubc.ca***

Indian Instititute for Housing Settlements (IIHS)

IIHS is an institution committed to the equitable, sustainable and efficient transformation of Indian Settlements.
Link: ***iihs.co.in***

Just Cities Institute

Activists and seekers of community equity through restorative justice in policy, planning, and development. Based in Oakland, California.
Link: ***www.justcities.work***

PolicyLink

A national research and action institute advancing racial and economic equity by Lifting Up What Works®.
Link: ***www.policylink.org***

Poverty & Race Research Action Council (PRRAC)

The Poverty & Race Research Action Council (PRRAC) is a civil rights law and policy organization based in Washington, D.C. Our mission is to promote research-based advocacy strategies to address structural inequality and disrupt the systems that disadvantage low-income people of color.
Link: ***www.prrac.org***

Rio on Watch

Rio Olympics Neighborhood Watch (RioOnWatch) was launched in 2010 to bring visibility to favela community voices in the lead-up to the 2016 Olympics, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
Link: ***rioonwatch.org/?page_id=14992***

Shelterforce

Shelterforce is the only independent, non-academic publication covering the worlds of community development, affordable housing, and neighborhood stabilization.
Link: ***shelterforce.org/about***

THE SHIFT

THE SHIFT recognizes housing as a human right, not a commodity or an extractive industry. The Shift restores the understanding of housing as home, challenging the ways financial actors undermine the right to housing. Using a human rights framework, The Shift provokes action to end homelessness, unaffordability, and evictions globally.
Link: ***make-the-shift.org***

Slum Dwellers International (SDI)

SDI is a global network of slum dwellers driving a collective, bottom-up change agenda for inclusive and resilient cities.
Link: ***sdinet.org***

Indigenous Planning & Urbanism

Indigenous Design + Planning Institute (iD+Pi)

iD+Pi is a new initiative of the School of Architecture + Planning, University of New Mexico. It was created in the Fall of 2011. Its goal is to educate and inform Indigenous design and planning by engaging faculty, students, professionals and community leaders in culturally responsive practices. Its three principal areas of activity are academic, professional, and tribal.
Link: ***idpi.unm.edu***

Native Land Digital

Native Land Digital strives to create and foster conversations about the history of colonialism, Indigenous ways of knowing, and settler-Indigenous relations, through educational resources such as our map and Territory Acknowledgement Guide. We strive to go beyond old ways of talking about Indigenous people and to develop a platform where Indigenous communities can represent themselves and their histories on their own terms.
Link: ***native-land.ca***

Gender & LGBTQ+ Justice

Center for Reproductive Rights

The Center for Reproductive Rights is a global human rights organization of lawyers and advocates who ensure reproductive rights are protected in law as fundamental human rights for the dignity, equality, health, and well-being of every person.
Link: ***reproductiverights.org***

CODEPINK

CODEPINK is a feminist grassroots organization working to end U.S. warfare and imperialism, support peace and human rights initiatives, and redirect resources into healthcare, education, green jobs and other life-affirming* programs. Join us!
Link: ***www.codepink.org***

El/La Para TransLatinas

El/La is an organization for translatinas that works to build collective vision and action to promote our survival and improve our quality of life in the San Francisco Bay Area. Because we exist in a world that fears and hates transgender people, women and immigrants, we fight for justice. We respond to those who see us as shameful, disposable or less than human. We are here to reflect the style and grace of our survival, and to make new paths for ourselves.
Link: ***ellaparatranslatinas.org***

JusticeTrans

Our mission is to improve access to justice for Two Spirit, trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming (2STNBGN) communities. We aim to provide accessible legal education to 2STNBGN people by challenging transphobic policy and advocating for community-based transformative social justice.
Link: ***justicetrans.org/en***

National Center for Transgender Equality

The National Center for Transgender Equality advocates to change policies and society to increase understanding and acceptance of transgender people. In the nation's capital and throughout the country, NCTE works to replace disrespect, discrimination, and violence with empathy, opportunity, and justice.
Link: ***transequality.org***

Sexual Rights Initiative

The Sexual Rights Initiative is a coalition of national and regional organizations based in Canada, Poland, India, Egypt, Argentina that work together to advance human rights related to sexuality at the United Nations.
Link: ***www.sexualrightsinitiative.org***

The Audre Lorde Project

The Audre Lorde Project is a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two Spirit, Trans and Gender Non-Conforming People of Color community organizing center, focusing on the New York City area.
Link: ***alp.org***

Trans Justice Initiative

The transgender community is beautiful, strong and one of the most resilient in the LGBTQ+ community. HRC's Transgender Justice Initiative works with community-based advocates across the country to make impactful changes for trans people. Together we combat stigma and discrimination, help end trans violence and HIV, promote sexual health and equity, and provide access to work opportunities, professional development and education.
Link: ***www.hrc.org/resources/trans-justice-initiative***

Mobility & Transportation Justice

Mobilizing Justice

Mobilizing Justice is a multi-sector research partnership committed to solving transportation inequities in Canadian cities. We are an unprecedented coalition that includes 33 academics from 6 Canadian provinces and 3 countries, 14 government agencies, 7 transportation companies, and 7 non-profit organizations. All of our partners are steadfastly committed to delivering equitable transportation systems.
Link: ***mobilizingjustice.ca***

People for Mobility Justice

People for Mobility Justice operates with loving accountability, joy, and solidarity centered on black and brown communities in order to transcend systems of oppression and violence. We uplift each other to actively resist displacement, the police state, transphobia, homophobia, sexism, racism, classism, ageism, ableism, anti-Blackness, xenophobia, Islamophobia, Eurocentric indoctrination, tokenization, exploitation, oppression, and colonization. We embrace growth and the challenges that come with it.
Link: ***www.peopleformobilityjustice.org***

The Untokening

The Untokening is a multiracial collective that centers the lived experiences of marginalized communities to address mobility justice and equity.
Link: ***www.untokening.org/summary***

Progressive & Radical Planning Networks

Global Planning Education Association Network (GPEAN)

Global Planning Education Association Network (GPEAN) is a network of 11 planning schools associations from around the world. Established in the wake of the first World Planning Schools Congress in 2001 in Shanghai, the main goal of the network is to improve the quality of planning education and the visibility of the planning profession by putting spatial planning and its education at the forefront of the global agenda.
Link: ***www.gpean-planning.org***

International Network of Urban Research and Action (INURA)

INURA is a network of people involved in action and research in localities and cities. The Network consists of activists and researchers from community and environmental groups, universities, and local administrations, who wish to share experiences and to participate in common research.
Link: ***www.inura.org/v2***

Just Space London

An informal alliance of around 80 community groups, campaigns and concerned independent organisations which was formed to act as a voice for Londoners at grass-roots level during the formulation of London's major planning strategy, particularly the London Plan.
Link: ***justspace.org.uk***

Planners Network - Ireland

Planners Network Ireland is a loose collective of progressive practitioners, students, academics and activists that wants to develop and support critical thinking about the current state of planning in Ireland. Our joint aim is to bring together the voices of those concerned about current ecological and social justice debates, and promote progressive alternatives for planning in Ireland.
Link: ***irishplannersnetwork.wordpress.com***

Right to the City Alliance (RTTC)

We are a national alliance of more than 90 community-based racial, economic, gender & environmental justice organizations growing grassroots power to halt gentrification and displacement, and build democratic, just, and sustainable communities.
Link: ***www.righttothecity.org***

Right to the City Global Platform

Action-oriented advocacy network committed to social change by promoting the 'Right to the City' as a core value for policies & actions worldwide.
Link: ***www.right2city.org***

Small Business Anti-Displacement Network

The Small Business Anti-Displacement Network (SBAN) is combating conditions that make neighborhood small businesses vulnerable to displacement, particularly BIPOC- and immigrant-owned businesses. We are policymakers, nonprofits, technical assistance providers, scholars, government agencies, and small business owners working together to identify, evaluate, and share promising anti-displacement strategies and advocate for effective policies in cities across the United States and internationally.
Link: ***antidisplacement.org***

Progressive / Radical Planning & Urbanism Platforms

Arab Urbanism magazine

A platform for critical ideas on the past, present, and future of cities and urbanism in the Arab region.
Link: ***www.araburbanism.com***

Metropolitics

An online journal of public scholarship about cities and urban politics.
Link: ***metropolitics.org***

Progressive Cities

In the late 1960s, U.S. cities faced urban policies that tolerated job losses and neighborhood decline. It was effectively a national retreat from public sector commitments established in the New Deal period, and it soon became the dominant modus operandi in city and nation. But a few cities fought back by opening their city halls to wider participation and by redistributing resources to poor neighborhoods. Our purpose is to establish the reality and preserve the memory of these efforts. This website links to several kinds of resources, but we present our main content under three topics: Cities, Neighborhoods, and People & Organization.
Link: ***progressivecities.org***

Radical Housing Journal

The Radical Housing Journal (RHJ) is an orientation, a praxis for doing research and action. It seeks to critically intervene in pre and post-crisis housing experiences and activist strategies from around the world without being confined to the strict dogmatism of academic knowledge production.
Link: ***radicalhousingjournal.org***

Radical Planning Videos

Critiques on neoliberal cities and land policies with an American context.
Link: ***www.youtube.com/@radicalplanning***; Twitter: ***@rad_planner***

The Davidoff Tapes Project

The Davidoff Tapes Project is an initiative of the MS in Urban Planning and Community Development, which seeks to address a significant gap in the contemporary urban planning literature related to the life and work of Paul Davidoff as a planning scholar, professional educator, planning practitioner, and Civil Rights activist.
Link: ***pauldavidoff.com/project-description***

Podcasts

Arrested Mobility

Why are Black Americans and other people of color disproportionately victims of overly aggressive police enforcement and brutality while walking, running, riding bicycles, taking public transit, or while driving? This podcast explores the ways in which people of color have had their mobility arrested.
Link: ***arrestedmobility.com***

Ear to the Pavement

Ear to the Pavement is a podcast about politics and social movements. We feature interviews with people who are thinking, writing, working, and organizing on the front lines of planning and policy. Ear to the Pavement is produced by Allison Lirish Dean, in association with Progressive City: Radical Alternatives.
Link: ***progressivecity.net/podcast***; Twitter: ***@ear2thepavement***

Four Degrees to the Streets

Four Degrees to the Streets is designed to empower anyone curious about places and spaces, not just persons with professional degrees or backgrounds. Here we will cover a host of topics, including transportation, health, housing, and the environment, through the lens of racism, classism, and sexism and give listeners the tools they need to overcome institutional barriers...Tune in every other Tuesday where Nimo and Jas keep it Four Degrees to the Streets. Views and opinions are our own.
Link: ***linktr.ee/the4degreespod***

Sad Francisco

A podcast that looks at San Francisco urban issues, "Inside the neoliberal nightmare generator."
Link: ***www.sadfrancis.co***; Twitter: ***@sadfrancisco69***

Zoned Out

A monthly show where we analyze the capitalist city and try to imagine how the socialist city could replace it.
Link: ***zonedoutpodcast.buzzsprout.com***

Urban Political

The Urban Political podcast delves into contemporary urban issues with activists, scholars and policy-makers from around the world. Providing informed views, state-of-the-art knowledge, and unusual insights, the podcast aims to decolonize knowledge-production, advance our understanding of urban environments, and reflect on how we might make them more just and democratic.
Link: ***urbanpolitical.online***; Twitter: ***@political_urban***

Urban Research Labs

Affordable Housing Challenge Project

The Affordable Housing Challenge Project, directed by Susannah Bunce and Alan Walks, is an initiative of the University of Toronto School of Cities. The AHCP collective brings together scholars from across the University of Toronto, who are researching issues related to housing affordability from different disciplinary perspectives, with the objective of working together to research, discuss and debate the causes, processes, policies and consequences of declining housing affordability.
Link: ***affordablehousingchallenge.ca***

African Centre for Cities

ACC is an interdisciplinary hub at the University of Cape Town with a mandate to conduct meaningful research on how to understand, recast and address pressing urban crises. Since most urban challenges—for example, food security, climate change adaptation, economic inclusion, cultural vitality and tolerance—are inherently interdisciplinary and spatially layered, ACC nurtures the co-production of knowledge between academia and other social sectors. Furthermore, research gets designed with multiple publics in mind and a concern with continuously enriching curriculum and postgraduate development.
Link: ***www.africancentreforcities.net***

African Cities Research Consortium

The African Cities Research Consortium is a collaborative approach to tackling complex problems in the continent's rapidly changing cities.
Link: ***www.african-cities.org***

Barcelona Lab for Urban Environmental Justice and Sustainability

Part of the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology at the Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona (ICTA-UAB). Our lab examines the structural and systemic drivers of social inequalities, exclusion, oppression, and neo-colonization in cities. Building on the theory and methods from urban planning, public policy, urban and environmental sociology, urban geography and public health, we analyze the extent to which urban plans and policy decisions contribute to more just, resilient, healthy, and sustainable cities, and how community groups in distressed neighborhoods contest environmental inequities as a result of urban (re)development processes and policies.
Link: ***www.bcnuej.org/about***

Balanced Supply of Housing Research Cluster (UBC)

A crisis has emerged in housing in many parts of the country, especially in major urban centres, with rampant homelessness and significant mismatches between housing costs and average incomes. In search of solutions, we frame our research cluster around the central goal of creating a balanced supply of housing, and what that would mean for housing policies and programs.
Link: ***housingresearch.ubc.ca***

Beirut Urban Lab

The Beirut Urban Lab is a collaborative and interdisciplinary research space. The Lab produces scholarship on urbanization by documenting and analyzing ongoing transformation processes in Lebanon and its region's natural and built environments. It intervenes as an interlocutor and contributor to academic debates about historical and contemporary urbanization from its position in the Global South. We work towards materializing our vision of an ecosystem of change empowered by critical inquiry and engaged research, and driven by committed urban citizens and collectives aspiring to just, inclusive, and viable cities.
Link: ***beiruturbanlab.com***

Beyond Inhabitation: A Collective Study Lab

An infrastructure to facilitate a process of collective study around the shifting terrain and politics of inhabitation globally. The goal is to investigate how inhabitation is re-worked from the ground across urban geographies in everyday life endurances that can morph, often silently, into struggles against contemporary and historical forms of dispossession. We read these processes in a situated, decolonial and intersectional way, beyond the conventions of humanitarian and technocratic approaches.
Link: ***beyondinhabitation.org***

Great Cities Institute

The University of Illinois at Chicago's Great Cities Institute is a research hub for scholars, policymakers, and stakeholders who share an interest in finding answers to the question, "What can cities and regions do to make themselves into great places?"
Link: ***greatcities.uic.edu***

Initiative on Cities

The Initiative on Cities serves as a hub for urban related research and teaching across Boston University. We engage with urban leaders, policymakers, academics, and students from around the world to work toward sustainable, just, and inclusive urban transformation. Led by Dr. Loretta Lees.
Link: ***www.bu.edu/ioc***

Institute on Inequality and Democracy

The UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy, directed by Dr. Ananya Roy, advances research and scholarship concerned with displacement and dispossession in Los Angeles and elsewhere in the world. Working in alliance with social movements and communities on the frontlines of struggle, the Institute seeks to abolish structures of inequality.
Link: ***challengeinequality.luskin.ucla.edu***

Karachi Urban Lab (KUL)

KUL is a collaborative experiment in critical urban thinking. It is housed in the School of Economics & Social Sciences at the Institute of Business Administration, Karachi.
Link: ***karachiurbanlab.com/index.html***

Metropolitan Policy Center

The Metropolitan Studies hub of the American University School of Public Affairs. Our mission is to create knowledge and propose solutions to our 21st century urban challenges.
Link: ***www.american.edu/spa/metro-policy***

Post-Conflict Cities Lab

The Post Conflict Cities Lab is an interdisciplinary research lab based at the Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation (GSAPP) at Columbia University, led by Dr. Hiba Bou Akar. The core mission of the Post Conflict Cities Lab is to develop, through research, practice, and pedagogy, alternatives to current post-conflict planning and reconstruction projects.
Link: ***www.arch.columbia.edu/research/labs/16-post-conflict-cities-lab***

Pratt Center for Community Development

Pratt Center for Community Development works for a more just, equitable and sustainable New York City in partnership with community-based groups, small businesses, and policymakers.
Link: ***prattcenter.net/about_us/mission***

Sustainable Solutions Lab

The Sustainable Solutions Lab, or SSL (sɪsəl), at UMass Boston is a collaborative research and action institute focused on keeping historically excluded people and communities safe and healthy in the face of climate change. We are a groundbreaking, cross-university initiative based in the Provost's office.
Link: ***www.umb.edu/ssl***

The Center of Excellence for Housing and Community Development Policy Research (CEHCDR)

CEHCDR conducts research focusing on racial equity benefiting low-income communities of color and plays a significant role in expanding housing and community development research produced at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). CEHCDR is led by Dr. Jeffrey S. Lowe, Director, and Dr. Laura Solitare, Associate Director, and based at Texas Southern University.
Link: ***www.tsu.edu/academics/colleges-and-schools/bjml-school-public-affairs/center-of-excellence-for-housing-and-community-development-policy-research***

The City Institute at York University (CITY)

The City Institute at York University (CITY), currently directed by Dr. Luisa Sotomayor, brings together the university's urban scholars—faculty members, post-doctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students and visiting scholars—from across the social sciences and the humanities with particular strengths in geography, environmental studies, planning, anthropology, sociology and political science. As an interdisciplinary institute, CITY facilitates critical and collaborative research, providing new knowledge and innovative approaches to comprehending and addressing the complexity of the urban arena.
Link: ***www.yorku.ca/cityinstitute***

The Texas Freedom Colonies Project

Founded by Dr. Andrea Roberts in 2014, The Texas Freedom Colonies Project™ is a research, educational, and social justice initiative dedicated to preserving the spaces within and heritage of Texas' historic African American settlements. Our goal is to prevent the erasure, destruction, and decay of cultural properties within settlements in partnership with descendant communities.
Link: ***www.thetexasfreedomcoloniesproject.com***

UCL Urban Laboratory

We are a world-leading cross-disciplinary centre promoting critical, creative and collaborative inquiry into urgent urban problems, based at University College London.
Link: ***www.ucl.ac.uk/urban-lab/welcome-ucl-urban-laboratory***

UCSC Institute for Social Transformation

Rooted in the Social Sciences Division at UC Santa Cruz, the institute supports innovative scholarship that changes the world. The institute is a critical intellectual and social hub, connecting scholars across UC Santa Cruz and partners beyond the University, developing research-based solutions to urgent problems in the world.
Link: ***transform.ucsc.edu***

UPGo: The Urban Politics and Governance Research Group

UPGo, the Urban Politics and Governance research group at McGill University, addresses pressing urban governance problems with rigorous and publicly-oriented research. Our research themes are 1) local and regional economic development; 2) urban sustainability; 3) housing policy. UPGo is led by Prof. David Wachsmuth of the School of Urban Planning.
Link: ***upgo.lab.mcgill.ca***

Urban Institute

An international research centre at the University of Sheffied which examines how cities are responding to the challenges and opportunities of intensified urbanisation, technological innovation and resource constraint. With critical social science expertise, we are recognised for the imaginative, generative, and propositional nature of our research agenda focussed on the socio-technical, political, cultural and ecological dynamics of contemporary urban life. We are committed to interdisciplinary comparative research in the Global south and north, working with urban labs around the world in equitable partnerships.
Link: ***www.sheffield.ac.uk/urban-institute***

Urban Studies Institute - Georgia State University

The mission of the Urban Studies Institute is to generate a better understanding and management of the complex challenges facing cities and urbanizing regions. We promote the creation of more productive, livable, inclusive, and sustainable cities as a key challenge of the 21st century.
Link: ***urbaninstitute.gsu.edu***

Urban Theory Lab

The University of Chicago's Urban Theory Lab (UTL), directed by Dr. Neil Brenner, seeks to develop frameworks of critical spatial knowledge that illuminate the planetary dynamics of urbanization and environmental transformation under modern capitalism.
Link: ***urbantheorylab.net***

List of photos & illustrations

Page No.	Description	Image Credit
5	Blueberry beadwork on a tan leather background.	Bert Whitecrow
7	Sunflowers and residential towers.	Cara Chellew
11	Development notice in a parking lot with constructin machinery and reisdential apartment buildings in the background.	Cara Chellew
13	Children participating in Zuni iTown planning and design studio.	Theodore Jojola, photo from Zuni iTown iD+Pi studios
16	Mural of trees on a brick wall.	Cara Chellew
18	Protest in city street against war in Gaza. People in the crowd giving the peace sign and a Palestinian flag.	Marzia Riaz
20/21	Infographic of "Israel's Closure of Gaza Started Long Before the Blockade". timeline of events from the introducction of the permit system in 1991 to the blockade imposed in 2007.	Visualizing Palestine
22	Infographic. Brown water poured out of a plastic bottle with text "Undrinkable. 97% of Gaza's water is contaminated due to Israel's blockade and military occupation."	Visualizing Palestine
23	Infographic. Hands reaching up from water with statistics on Gaza health access under Israeli seige.	Visualizing Palestine
24	Infographic illustrating the fourteen years of childhood in Gaza.	Visualizing Palestine
25	Infographic showing villages of Palestinian refugees killed in Gaza's Great March of Return.	Visualizing Palestine
26	Illustration of 'ashla' the aftermath of a bombardment of neighbourhoods in Gaza.	Samir Harb
27	Community walk in Beechville, Nova Scotia.	Jodie Laborde, BURPl
34	Mural of a Black woman with text "Reggae Lane".	Assumedform, ***Wikimedia***, used under Creative Commons license
38	Lot being redeveloped behind a fence.	Cara Chellew
40	People gathered for a community walk.	Jonathan Pacheco Bell
42	High school classroom with students and guest speakers.	Public Matters, LLC

Page No.	Description	Image Credit
47	Demonstration in support of LGBTQ+ rights with light blue, pink, and white trans flag in foreground.	Cara Chellew
51	Mural depicting struggle between Brown and Black community members and police.	Cara Chellew
55	Deck Cupcake Party, used under Creative Commons Liscene, from Disabled and Here	Chona Kasinger, ***Disabled And Here***, used under Creative Commons license
59	Climate change protest featuring a sign of the planet shaped as a heart.	Cara Chellew
60	historiogram of items in the Environmental and Climate Justice Syllabus by year	Rivera, June 2023
62	screenshot of the Environmental and Climate Justice Syllabus homepage, 2023	Rivera, June 2023
65	The front and back of two Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) streetcars, going in opposite directions.	Dan Seljak
68	Houses on the Hill - Guanajuato Mexico, June 6, 2009.	Chanilim714, ***Wikimedia***, used under Creative Commons license
71	Entrance to Paradise Village Grand Marina Villas gated community in Neuvo Vallarta, Mexico, Oct 30, 2005.	Coolcaesar, ***Wikimedia***, used under Creative Commons license
76	Dozens of police in riot gear line up next to picnic tables in a city street.	Cara Chellew
89	Woman, Life, Freedom protest in Nathan Phillips Square, Toronto, Canada.	Anoosha Kargarfard
98	Sign written with red, green and black markets stuck between the bars on a fence. Text reads: Palestine is not for sale! We'll fight until we prevail.	Cara Chellew
100	An encampment in a park in front of condo towers.	Cara Chellew
103	Road blocked off for high-rise development. Heritage buildings preserved in the foreground.	Dan Seljak
113	A weathered poster depicting a fist raised in the black power salute against a yellow background pasted on a brick wall.	Cara Chellew

Image Contributors

Cara Chellew

Cara is a PhD student in Urban Planning, Policy, and Design at McGIll University in Montreal.

Samir Harb

Samir is a Palestinian artist calling for a #CEASFIRE NOW in Gaza and elsewhere!

Anoosha Kargarfard

Anoosha is a Toronto based emotive storyteller through photography and film. Her published works with artists and athletes highlight women's resilience and power.

Marzia Riaz

Marzia is a Toronto based visual storyteller. Her recent work highlights different communities and their impact on Toronto's cultural landscape.

Dan Seljak

Dan is a communications professional and photographer passionate about cities and the people who live in them.

Bert Whitecrow

Bert Whitecrow is an Anishinaabe multidisciplinary artist from Seine River First Nation (Jiima'aaganing). Their work centres visual storytelling, through preserving and practicing ancestral knowledge. Bert explores the ideas of Indigenous futurisms and their relationship to place throughout their artistic practice.