THE PARADOX OF URBAN SPACE

Inequality and Transformation in Marginalized Communities

Edited by Sharon E. Sutton and Susan P. Kemp

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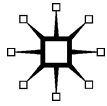

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This book is dedicated to the low-income and minority youth and adults throughout the country who, through their tenacity in improving their lives and their communities, give us hope that a better, more just world is possible.

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Foreword

People reflect the places they inhabit because places interpenetrate the human body, heart, and mind. Fundamentally, places matter. But so often, they are invisible, simply there. Places do not come into consciousness unless their inhabitants experience them as distressed, as rapidly changing, or as exceptionally beautiful. In modern Western cultures—in which the virtual becomes more real every day and in which professionals and experts have taken over the making of the spatial world—place has become the background of everyday life, neutral and inevitable. But such perceptions, or lack thereof, belie the unremitting presence of place in human life, especially for those confined, literally, in the margins of society.

Perhaps it is the invisibility or "naturalness" of place that makes its use as a site of power so effective. Through policy and habit, dominant groups have throughout time sequestered the most desirable, resource-rich places, selecting who has access to those places, enforcing such access through laws, and communicating through specific spatial practices who is welcome and who is not. The naturalness of place masks its use in power relations, making critical work difficult but not impossible, as is evident from this book, which uncovers and articulates the power of place to constrain and oppress marginalized communities.

Once activist scholars and practitioners, who form the audience for this volume, recognize the idea and materiality of place as contested terrain, the world of possibility changes. They can uncover and transform place from a site of oppression into a site of resistance and hope. The stories in *The Paradox of Urban Space* demonstrate how bringing place into consciousness and realizing that everyone has the potential to be makers of place changes not only the place but the people as well. The authors refer to the process by which place is claimed as "placemaking,"[1] which can involve small everyday activities such as sweeping the stoop and planting a garden or major activities such as taking legal action against a housing authority. Placemaking makes and unmakes communities within a milieu of institutional, cultural, and identity politics.

In the United States, so-called community development "experts" use their knowledge to circumscribe the places of the disenfranchised. These

experts, according to John Dewey, are "inevitably so removed from common interests as to become a class with private interests and private knowledge, which in social matters is not knowledge at all."[2] The knowledge and power of such experts, when overlaid onto impoverished places, have destroyed lives, homes, and communities in the name of "improvement," from slum clearance to urban renewal and HOPE VI redevelopment. Even though expert-driven community development has been, and continues to be, the dominant practice of making places for low-income communities of color, the popular and scholarly press offer inspiring examples of people demanding control over their places and lives and demanding that experts accept their knowledge as legitimate. The stories in this book reveal a more open and vulnerable form of practice that situates expert knowledge within the context of local place knowledge, resulting in shared knowledge, strategies, and collective action.[3]

The collaborative work of placemaking as a site of resistance and transformation is one of the few remaining spaces for true democratic and participatory action in a media-saturated world. Democracy cannot be taken for granted; it is fragile and "depends on us to sing it into existence each day, through our intimate, creative, and courageous use of its opportunities to bring care to all that is public and wild."[4]

This book sings of the power and insistence of both youth and adults to make their places and hence their lives. These stories of research and practice offer a model of a different kind of expertise committed to collaboration and mutual vulnerability, resulting in a shared power-to-do rather than power-over, a model grounded in the critical work of scholars who name and reveal the practice of placemaking as liberating. *The Paradox of Urban Space* reminds us of how a democracy works when places matter.

—Lynda H. Schneekloth, Professor
School of Architecture and Planning
University at Buffalo, SUNY

Notes

1. Lynda Schneekloth and Robert Shibley, *Placemaking: The Art and Practice of Building Communities* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1995).
2. John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (Chicago: The Swallow Press, 1927), 207.
3. Lynda Schneekloth and Robert Shibley, "Implacing Architecture into the Practice of Placemaking," *Journal of Architectural Education* 53 no. 3 (February 2000): 130–140.
4. Mary O'Brien, "Standing Up for This World," *Orion* 23 no. 2 (2004): 63.

Introduction: Place as Marginality and Possibility

Sharon E. Sutton and Susan P. Kemp

Place matters to the quality of human existence. Place is not a static, empty backdrop for social relationships. It is neither an architectural model, Geographic Information System (GIS) map, census tract, Google Earth image, nor cyberspace; rather place "is filled up by people, practices, objects, and representations."[1] Place is a dynamic material form—a process that requires cultural interpretation and brings people together in particular relationships. Place makes social structures endure; patterns activities; embodies cultural norms, identities, and memories; expresses ecological values; and plays a role in creating and sustaining people's sense of self. Place has purposefulness; it provides a framework not only for daily routines and actions but also for spectacle and revolutionary change. Within place, difference is produced, sustained, negotiated, and resisted.[2]

On the one hand, we maintain that place lies at the heart of the persistent structural inequities experienced in low-income ethnic minority communities.[3] Historically, dominant societies have imposed hegemonic conceptions of space and time, not only through force (conquest, imperialism, colonialism) but also by controlling mental structures and material practices, for example, by naming, measuring, and mapping the spatial world.[4] Throughout America, spatial policies and practices standardize the landscape to benefit dominant groups—guaranteeing profits for developers and individual property owners—while normalizing dominant values and lifestyles. The downside of this standardization occurs in racially and economically segregated neighborhoods, in which a high percentage of minority residents and concentrated poverty go hand-in-hand with a slew of inequities, including substandard housing, inadequate schools and social services, higher rates of unemployment, lower incomes with a higher

proportion of income paid in rent, more unwanted land uses, and lack of access to healthy foods.[5]

A given locale both reflects and contributes to one's social status. It offers certain material resources—housing, education, health care, services, transportation, employment, nature, recreation, even food, air, and water. It also offers social and human resources—normative behaviors and values, social networks, and cultural practices. Because these resources vary markedly depending upon the real estate value of a particular site,[6] resource-rich neighborhoods with high property values become ones of choice for affluent families, while deteriorated neighborhoods become ones of last resort for impoverished racial and ethnic minority families. At the same time, negative stereotyping of poor neighborhoods as disorganized, dangerous, toxic, and pathological tends to flow down and attach to residents. These realities shape one aim of this book, namely to demonstrate that place comprises a major source of inequality and oppression for communities of color.

On the other hand, we maintain that the way forward to social and environmental justice requires the involvement of low-income communities of color in redressing place-based inequities on their own terms. Thus, although we view place as a context in which communities of color experience racism, poverty, and environmental degradation, we also believe that place can become a site of collective action to achieve a more just, fair society. When low-income people come together to change their surroundings, they are making tangible improvements in untenable sociospatial conditions, for example by turning vacant lots into gardens, cleaning up polluted rivers, reclaiming streets ruled by gangs, commandeering the local media, reinvigorating indigenous practices, or creating affordable housing, jobs, and services where none exist. Moreover, they are making decisions about how to share what they have in common. In marginalized communities, involvement in decision making not only helps adults and youth develop practical skills; it also engages them in exercising their rights as citizens, in articulating a vision of how the world ought to be, and in developing a sense of interdependence. For these communities, place serves as a context for struggle, everyday action, and collective transformation.[7] Indeed, we will argue that place—this multifaceted concrete and notional mirror of social values and hierarchies—has profound relevance not only for individual well-being but also for achieving the ideals of a participative, democratic society.

The argument we put forth herein is a timely one as the race- and place-based gap between haves and have-nots continues to widen. Notwithstanding changing demographics and race relations, a looming environmental crisis brings a new sense of urgency to such unrelenting

problems as urban poverty, uneven development, and residential segregation. In considering place both as a site of oppression and transformation, we are seeking to unravel the persistent inequality of opportunity in communities of color while also proposing strategies for engaging their participation in developing more equitable metropolitan areas. Previous 1960s-inspired approaches to development sought to encourage grassroots participation in improving inner cities for marginalized populations while motivating the civic engagement of residents. Despite advances in advocacy and participatory planning and design, a prevailing concept of local control, its signature characteristic, doomed this approach. Although local control in inner cities typically referred to grassroots involvement in shaping top-down federal and state programs, more broadly it meant the right of citizens to control local boundaries. Under the banner of local control, resource-rich municipalities were able to hoard opportunities at the expense of other more needy ones, "reinforc[ing] and redefin[ing] local control in such a way as to retrench and eventually undermine the scope and promise of civil rights."[8]

We believe that today's social and environmental challenges demand an alternative to the city/suburb, black/white, rich/poor dichotomies of the post–Civil Rights era. Future scholars and professionals must be able to conceive a metropolitan landscape that enhances the quality of life for an economically and culturally diverse population while conserving natural resources and embracing the full participation of previously marginalized communities of color. As the Earth's ecosystems reach their carrying capacity and even the politically and economically powerful begin to feel the effects of environmental degradation, the poor and powerless will find inescapable such ravages as heat stress, flooding and droughts, inadequate food and water supplies, and unfavorably altered habitats and ecosystems. These fundamental threats to the survival of disenfranchised populations call for a new approach to equitable development that considers how people can share resources not only locally but within a regional and global context. This book seeks to lay a foundation for the new thinking and action that such an approach will require.

Although some of our chapters take a national or international perspective, about half focus in the Puget Sound region of Washington State, which is an ideal site for investigating our topic. This region is part of the Puget Sound Georgia Basin ecosystem, a watershed that extends from northern British Columbia in Canada to central western Washington in the United States. The area has one of the most diverse ecosystems in North America, underpinning its quality of life, economy, and collective ethos. We believe Puget Sound case studies have broad relevance first and foremost because the demographics of this region will soon be the national

norm. Although it lacks some of the historical black/white antagonisms that characterize older industrial cities in the Northeast and Midwest, the area's multicultural population typifies emerging demographics across the nation, with Caucasians, Asians, African Americans, and Latinos coexisting alongside many indigenous communities and recent arrivals from Africa, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere.

Second, the area is undergoing exponential growth, with immigration accounting for much of a projected doubling of its current population of over six million people. This unprecedented growth means many local communities are facing radical cultural and ecological disruptions, a phenomenon other areas of the country will also experience. Third—perhaps because of its dramatic landscape—grassroots groups in Puget Sound, which have historically engaged in political and environmental activism, are currently pursuing widely applicable innovations in sustainable development. At the same time, discrimination against people of color persists despite a pervasive denial of racism in this reputedly progressive region. Thus, we believe Puget Sound exemplifies the challenges communities everywhere will face as populations expand and become more culturally diverse while natural resources diminish and racism goes underground. It is an ideal study site for investigating the inequities that communities of color experience *and* the ways in which these communities enact transformation through their engagement with place.

Exploring a Hypothesis about Place

Our central hypothesis in this book is that place matters for low-income communities of color because it is simultaneously a source of inequality and oppression *and* a context of transformation and possibility. To explore this hypothesis, we bring together two streams of environmental design and social science theory and practice. On the one hand, we draw from literature that demonstrates the inequalities embedded in place, whether by revealing explicit place-based discriminatory practices, inequitable allocation of resources, or hegemonic belief systems about who should do what and where. On the other hand, we draw from literature that describes specific participatory research, practice, and policymaking strategies that help low-income adults and youth shape their own surroundings. In short, we look at two well-researched and tested arguments, overlaying them to reveal the tension between place-as-inequality and place-as-transformation—a tension that lies in the gap between reality and possibility, which we believe can serve as a bridge to groundbreaking change in communities of color.

Our hypothesis results from sustained dialogue among a group of activist public scholars who are committed to addressing the escalating problems in disadvantaged communities while also advancing the capacity for self-determination in those communities. We are faculty, students, and community members who have worked together through the University of Washington's Center for Environment Education and Design Studies (CEEDS),[9] building theory within the confines of academia and simultaneously testing those theories in practice, primarily in the Puget Sound area but also through projects that extend nationally and internationally. Together CEEDS affiliates have studied the displacement of historic populations from communities, documented the contributions of youth to the revitalization of inner cities nationally, carried out many local demonstration projects ranging from involving youth in cognitive mapping of their neighborhoods to facilitating community design workshops and creating public art with elementary school children. Through the lens of our own backgrounds as both U.S.- and foreign-born members of diverse racial and ethnic groups, we have sought to understand the spatial component of cultural conflicts.

Our collaborative teaching, research, and service has helped us work across the tensions created by our own generational and disciplinary differences to develop the elasticity to embrace simultaneously the harsh realities we observe and the imagined possibilities for changing those realities. The sustained collaboration within CEEDS has greatly influenced this volume and focused the questions we asked authors to address.

Further encouragement and institutional validation came in 2006 from the University of Washington's Diversity Research Institute (DRI), a newly formed entity funded by the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity to generate innovative, interdisciplinary knowledge about diversity, social justice, and institutional transformation. We (the book's editors) co-chaired DRI's inaugural annual conference, entitled *Place Matters: Creating Equity in a Diverse Society*, which provided an invaluable opportunity for intellectual exchange on place as it relates to diversity research. Several of the chapters in this book began as presentations at that conference.

Part I: Place, Race, and Power

In this first part of the book, we asked authors to consider how hegemonic spatial policies and practices alienate disenfranchised communities while reinforcing negative stereotypes of race and class. It begins with

an examination in our framing chapter of several place-related social constructions—the American Dream, racialized places, globalization, citizen participation, geographies of urban youth—that limit access to opportunity and maintain social inequality. In particular, we show that impoverished communities of color not only lack opportunities for residential mobility and all the material, social, and human resources that would imply, but that their typical status as renters disassociates them from the positive character traits that adhere to homeowners. We also show the ineffectiveness of the 1960s Model Cities template for citizen participation in ameliorating this marginalization, demonstrating its especially negative consequences for youth.

Four case studies in this part of the book provide an on-the-ground understanding of these race- and class-based spatial inequities. One chapter by architect Sharon E. Sutton uses the evolution of a public housing project to structure a critical analysis of the housing literature, thereby underscoring the nation's historical ambivalence toward subsidized shelter. Sutton shows how the prevailing norm of homeownership has denigrated impoverished (and disproportionately minority) families, painting them as incompetent to manage their lives. Another by social ecologist Anne Taufen Wessells argues that the "blue space" of urban waterways—like the open space of parks and plazas—should be welcoming of a diverse public. Yet, Wessells contends, its location in neighborhoods that are overwhelmingly white—along with the exclusive white identity of water-based recreational programs, such as rowing—reinforces blue space as a site of racial and social exclusion. A third by environmental psychologist Lynne C. Manzo examines the mandated citizen participation required by a federal program known as HOPE VI (Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere), which has effectively forced public housing residents to participate in their own displacement. Manzo argues that such displacement creates a reorganization of space and place that can further alienate already disenfranchised people while disrupting their potential for collective agency. A fourth chapter by social welfare scholar Linda Hurley Ishem questions the community development literature's prevailing characterization of insiders and outsiders in poor and working-class African American urban neighborhoods. To the contrary, Ishem offers evidence that respondents in one study had moved beyond such static, divisive stereotypes to construct complex, multidimensional conceptions of diverse community stakeholders. Together these chapters illustrate the first premise of this book: low-income, predominantly minority communities face persistent place-based marginalization.

Part II: Placemaking as Living Democracy

In the next part of the book, we asked authors to consider how grassroots and policy-level placemaking strategies can help create sustainable communities while advancing the ideals of participative democracy. To set the stage, our framing chapter demonstrates that despite egregious circumstances, marginalized communities have often demonstrated an ability to transform their surroundings and, in the process, transform themselves as individuals and as communities. We acknowledge that sometimes their endeavors simply soften harsh conditions without bringing about structural change. Yet, we argue, at its best, the activism of poor people and their advocates so affects normative beliefs and practices that it leads to more equitable public policy and practice. From among the array of spatial interventions in which communities might engage, those we chose to illustrate collective models of ownership, appropriation of space (through impromptu encampments, community gardens, and community households), community-university partnerships, youth leadership, and geographic interdependence.

The case studies that put these concepts into practice take place in divergent settings with divergent goals and outcomes. One chapter by social welfare scholar Susan P. Kemp counterposes two effective but different community-based youth development programs to bring into view the central role of program philosophy in shaping the place-centered activities and opportunities these programs offer low-income youth and families of color. Kemp demonstrates that transformative youth programs share many core elements with normative youth development programs while also engaging youth in a critical, collectivist approach to placemaking. A second chapter by architect Roberta M. Feldman documents her use of participatory research and design processes to support public housing activists in exercising control over their lives. In a narrative about two community-university partnerships, she provides a first-person account of how one group of resident leaders saved their development from demolition, whereas another negotiated considerably improved terms for their neighborhood's redevelopment.

While Feldman's chapter demonstrates the transformative potential of sociopolitical processes, a companion photographic essay by architect Steve Badanes depicts a multi-year partnership in which university students slowly transformed a garden in a low-income pan-Asian neighborhood by designing and constructing small projects. Badanes illustrates the power of ground-level change efforts, showing how the students created a more secure, delightful, and accessible place for the elderly gardeners while they exposed students to a unique sociocultural setting. Together these

chapters provide evidence of successful, theoretically grounded placemaking strategies that change agents in a wide variety of disciplines can use with both youth and adults.

Part III: New Tools, New Professional Roles

In the last part of the book, we asked authors to examine critically the new technologies placemaking professionals are using to advance equity in marginalized communities. In an opening chapter, social welfare and urban studies scholar Amy Hillier highlights the increasingly convenient digital mapping tools researchers can exploit in these communities, showing how she uses them to document spatial discrimination, attract the political attention needed to bring about policy changes, and help youth access the unwritten histories of their communities. Even as Hillier demonstrates that community information systems, community asset mapping, and technology-assisted field data collection can open up creative opportunities for placemaking professionals, she also acknowledges the challenges of learning to use these new technologies critically to understand and address spatial oppression. A second chapter by geographer Matthew Kelley calls attention to the narratives of poverty, crime, unemployment, and general socioeconomic distress in low-income neighborhoods that derive from conventional aggregate data, proposing instead that participatory geospatial programs offer a better understanding of complex sociocultural and economic landscapes. Kelley illustrates how inexpensive participatory geospatial technology (GST) programs can help placemaking professionals codify the experiential spatial knowledge of neighborhood residents, enabling them to write asset-based narratives and focus outside efforts upon enhancing the most valued aspects of their communities.

A third chapter by urban and youth studies scholars Caitlin Cahill and Matt Bradley describes their collaborative work with primarily Latino/a high school students, which incorporated new video technology into traditional participatory research methods. They explain that, although the technology offered a powerful medium for communicating to a broad public audience the racism students experience, it also has drawbacks, including the need for an enlarged set of technical skills and the ethics of asking research participants to discuss racism in front of a camera crew. A final chapter by freelance writer and aspiring landscape architect David Smolker and social welfare doctoral student Caroline Lanza—a chapter that inspired this part of the book—describes an advocacy organization that uses online collaboration to link local communities to a global network of design resources. Noting that socially conscious design has remained in

the margins of mainstream practice since its advent in the 1960s, Smolker and Lanza propose that this organization's Web-based design methodology can expand the potential of designers to serve impoverished and imperiled communities.

In the conclusions, we look across all our case studies to synthesize the intersecting social constructions that stifle opportunity and maintain social inequality, and to articulate strategies that can create spaces of resistance and social transformation. Finally, we look to the future and speculate about a placemaking model that can stanch the spread of global capitalism on an ever shrinking planet.

Notes

1. Thomas F. Gieryn, "A Space for Place in Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 465.
2. For a discussion of the multifaceted nature of place, see Edward S. Casey, "Between Geography and Philosophy: What Does It Mean to Be in the Place-World?," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 91 no. 4 (December 2001): 683–693; Gieryn, "A Space for Place"; John Dixon and Kevin Durrheim, "Displacing Place-Identity: A Discursive Approach to Locating Self and Other," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 39 (2000): 27–44; John Harner, "Place Identity and Copper Mining in Sonora, Mexico," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 91 no. 4 (December 2001): 660–680.
3. For a discussion of place-based inequities, see for example Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004); Gieryn, "A Space for Place"; Doreen B. Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).
4. For a discussion of hegemonic spatial practices, see David Diaz, *Barrio Urbanism: Chicanos, Planning, and American Cities* (London: Routledge, 2005); David Harvey, "Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80 no. 3 (1990): 418–434; James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).
5. Robert D. Bullard, "Smart Growth Meets Environmental Justice," in *Growing Smarter: Achieving Livable Communities, Environmental Justice, and Regional Equity*, ed. Robert D. Bullard (Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT Press, 2007), 23–49; John W. Frazier, Florence M. Margai, and Eugene Tettey-Fio, *Race and Place: Equity Issues in Urban America* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003).
6. Hugh Matthews and Melanie Limb, "Defining an Agenda for the Geography of Children: Review and Prospect," *Progress in Human Geography* 23 no. 1 (1999): 61–90; Ricardo D. Stanton-Salazar, "A Social Capital Framework for Understanding the Socialization of Racial Minority Children and Youths," *Harvard Educational Review* 67 no. 1 (1997): 1–39.
7. Cresswell, *Place*.

8. john a. powell, "Structural Racism and Spatial Jim Crow," in *The Black Metropolis in the Twenty-first Century*, ed. Robert D. Bullard (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2007), 41–65.
9. CEEDS is a research center of the University of Washington College of Built Environments. For more information, see http://ceeds.caup.washington.edu/.

Part I
Place, Race, and Power

Chapter One
Place: A Site of Social and Environmental Inequity

Sharon E. Sutton and Susan P. Kemp

Acknowledging the importance of place as the lived experience of individuals and groups,[1] this part of the book explores how place irrevocably re-creates and reinforces the larger societal structures of privilege and oppression.[2] Through four case studies, it looks at the ways in which hegemonic spatial policies and practices disenfranchise poor and minority communities while also reinforcing negative stereotypes of class and race. In particular, we focus in this section of the book upon race, place, and power as intersecting social constructions that limit access to opportunity and maintain social inequality.[3]

Race as an Overarching Source of Inequality

> *Racial inequality in America has become so deeply embedded—especially in housing patterns—that literally where you live could stand as a proxy for what your life opportunities will be.*[4]

Notwithstanding profound recent progress in civil rights, we contend that a legacy of racism continues to shape the nation's landscape. Racialized spatial practices have resulted in the decline of services and infrastructure in the urban areas and older suburbs in which people of color most likely live, creating the pattern of segregated housing, schools, and jobs that characterizes the country's current geography.[5] These practices not only determine who has access to resources and opportunities in the present, but they also affect future access for today's children. In this framing chapter, we explore the inequities embedded in a social construction known as the "American Dream," along with those deriving from racialized places,

globalization, citizen participation, and the geographies of urban youth, thus laying the foundation for the case studies that follow.

Social Construction of the American Dream

The American Dream has its roots in ancient anthropocentric conceptions of people-place relationships. These deeply ingrained notions, which dominate our collective consciousness, derive from a patriarchal society that rested upon two interrelated social constructions, namely private property (arising from the need to establish permanent places of residency) and slavery (arising from the need to have enough labor to develop those places). As the propertied classes consolidated their power through militarism and institutionalized slavery, they undertook ambitious, resource-consumptive building programs and irrigation projects that left a decided imprint of their presence upon the Earth.[6] Such anthropocentric notions of place advanced during the Industrial Revolution, when a scientific worldview emerged that furthered the domination of nature for human purposes. During this period, as European industrialists denuded forests, turned fields into pastures, drained swamps, and mined subterranean wealth, they began to envisage nature primarily for its instrumental value—as a resource for nonrenewable energy.[7] To guarantee their power to control this resource, they also constructed the companion notion of property rights, which somehow became comparable to the inalienable rights of liberty, equality, and security.[8]

However, the first European settlers in North America took the notion of private property to new heights. Exulted by an abundance of land and the prospect of widely distributed individual ownership, early settlers "sought to establish property relations as the legal and moral underpinning of the new colonies,"[9] envisioning landownership as the legal mechanism that would free them from the constraints of Europe's feudal relationships.[10] Although most residents of the nation's early industrial cities were renters, policy makers and the public soon associated landownership with citizenship, democracy, and positive character traits (hard work, individualism, thrift). By the same token, they assumed that the virtues attached to property ownership—and property owners—were absent among property-less tenants, resulting in a strongly shared belief in the United States in the superiority of homeownership.[11]

After World War II, this belief contributed to federal and local policies that fueled a racially marked flight to the suburbs and solidified sprawling single-family development as exemplary of a proper white middle-class family life. Mortgage guarantees, highway construction, and exclusionary

zoning laws combined with a people-over-place ethos to make housing tenure

> part of an overall pattern of structured inequality. Tenant households are more likely than owner households to be low-income, headed by a single person, headed by a woman, smaller in household size, minority (black and Hispanic), elderly, and non-union. Rental housing is more likely than owner-occupied housing to have structural defects, to be older, and to be overcrowded.[12]

According to the latest figures available, 68 percent of the U.S. population resides in owner-occupied housing, with fully 58 percent of homeowners residing in sprawling suburbs and exurbs.[13] Such housing contributes to "urban infrastructure decline; increased energy consumption; automobile dependency; and threats to public health and the environment such as air pollution, flooding, climate change, and encroachment on farmland and wildlife habitat."[14] Yet single-family homeownership remains firmly fixed in the American mind—and in U.S. public policy—as the ideal. Individuals are overwhelmingly viewed as the scientific managers of nature, whose resources they have a natural or civil right to control. "Despite changes in social structure and values since colonial times, . . . [property ownership] is perhaps one of the few core values that has persisted throughout the more than two centuries of US society."[15] Yet in reality access to property ownership is markedly disproportional; in 1995, the bottom 78 percent of landowners owned just 3 percent of private land, compared to the top 5 percent, who had title to 75 percent.[16] Undeniably, a normative American Dream and its forerunner, private property, enable and buttress a pervasive pattern of social inequality and ecological degradation.

The Racialization of Place

> *"Racialization" is . . . the process by which racialized groups are identified, given stereotypical characteristics, and coerced into specific living conditions often involving social/spatial segregation. It is one of the most enduring and fundamental means of organizing society.*[17]

Certainly, residential segregation characterized the U.S. metropolis in the last half of the twentieth century.[18] Some researchers attribute such segregation to preference for same-race neighbors, interest in maintaining cultural ties, fears about crime or declining property values, or avoidance of living nearby poverty.[19] However, such attributions do not adequately account for the place-based disparities accompanying segregation.[20]

More likely, racial prejudice has been—and is—the driving factor in residential segregation, especially with regards to African Americans, for whom residential isolation persists across all levels of socioeconomic attainment.[21]

Historical instances of federally legislated segregation suggest that spatial homogeneity "has indeed been central in the construction of American national identity."[22] Federal housing and transportation policies reinforced, and continue to reinforce, that identity through the spatial distribution of opportunities.[23] Now local policies interface with federal ones to further racialize space, for example through zoning laws that restrict the development of affordable rental housing, local subsidies for the relocation of businesses to wealthier areas, public services financed by local revenues that vary widely between municipalities, and local control of decisions regarding the funding and administration of public schools. Through such mechanisms,

> racially and economically isolated municipalities retain few opportunities, while affluent largely white municipalities attract and subsidize a disproportionate amount of them. . . . Local government control over such matters as zoning, planning, public services, and public education has perpetuated the disparities between the high-need sectors and the "favored quarters."[24]

Commonplace racial stereotypes and prejudices further reinforce such government practices as the dominant group seeks to maintain its socially constructed group status and position.[25] As evidence of the discriminatory practices that result from place-based stereotyping: (a) "more than half of whites say they would not move into a neighborhood that is one-third black or more"[26] because they assume property values will be lower; (b) many employers and educators describe minority urban youth as dirty, aggressive, and too unreliable to succeed in the labor market or the educational system, contending "that the social and economic environment of urban neighborhoods instills these deficiencies in young residents";[27] and (c) irrespective of actual crime, many whites characterize minority neighborhoods as unsafe because they use the readily available visual cue of race to evaluate stranger threat and also accept pervasive stereotypes associating people of color—particularly African Americans—with crime.[28]

Black/white residential segregation increased in the United States during every decade between 1890 and 1970, when it began declining. To be sure, segregation is now at its lowest level since 1920, but notably "the decline was a result of the movement of blacks into formerly all-white neighborhoods, rather than the movement of whites into majority black neighborhoods."[29] Housing data reveal that the average white urbanite

lives in a neighborhood that is 80 percent white and 7 percent black, whereas the average black urbanite lives in a neighborhood that is 33 percent white and 51 percent black. And although most poor white families live in mixed-income communities with good schools, most poor black and Latino/a families live in impoverished neighborhoods where their children attend significantly underresourced schools.[30] Furthermore, the segregation of Latinos/as and Asians has not decreased even though their numbers have grown in recent years.[31]

Thus even as the nation increases in racial and ethnic diversity, it continues to be marked by a high degree of racial residential segregation,[32] hardened by old and new structures of oppression. Nor are these race-based inequities confined to metropolitan areas. Many suburban communities are facing as great or greater fiscal, social, and economic distress than urban ones, with the most distressed ones having a higher proportion of minority residents because of an increasingly common practice of steering—that is, "controlling or directing certain groups to move into certain neighborhoods."[33] Place-based inequities—inequities related to income, unemployment, residential tenure, education, and health—remain intractable, reinforced and re-created through the racialization of place in public policy and in popular opinion.

Globalization of Local Economies

Globalization, or the internationalization of economic activity, has been ongoing since the beginning of civilization.[34] The patterns of migration and demographic change associated with globalization are also familiar, frequently connected to job seeking and hopes for a better life, though sometimes forced politically or by nature. In its present manifestation, globalization began taking shape in the 1970s as a result of advances in communications and transportation. Marked by a shift from a manufacturing to a service and knowledge economy, today's globalization has radically increased mobility of capital, internationalization of production processes, and migration of dominant values and norms throughout various parts of the world.[35] In the United States, devolution has accompanied this world order since the mid-1980s, which means greater reliance upon the private sector combined with a reduction in federal subsidies for housing, recreation, and social services.

Although the benefits of globalization in terms of increased international interconnectivity are indisputable, such benefits can have profound costs for poor people. Globalization intensifies disparities, diminishes the power of the federal government to correct those disparities, and contributes to "an urban society that is increasingly socially and spatially

disconnected, fragmented, and polarized."[36] For example, concentrated wealth in the United States combined with declining government subsidies and lower wages for workers is resulting in a stratified population of highly paid internationally oriented elites, high-level service providers, and very poor, locally bound workers and the chronically unemployed. Whereas business and political elites occupy enclosed fortresses, often located in commercially zoned downtown areas, their professional and managerial employees and others in high-level service jobs—the yuppies—generally live in properties "left vacant by poorer households after a process of displacement and rising prices."[37] Like always, the poor live in ghettos, but today's ghettos no longer provide an essential source of cheap labor for local economies. Instead, they have become areas of abandonment and homelessness within an international marketplace. "Landlords with low-income tenants in poor neighborhoods find that funding maintenance for their buildings is more difficult to achieve, and a cynical endgame scenario of tax delinquency, sheriff's sales, crack houses, and, at times, arson becomes the fate of many neighborhoods."[38] Disconnected from economic life, residents of these disenfranchised ghettos have little hope of reentering the labor market.

Thus, while globalization has enabled greater mobility, it has also created a geography of jarring contrasts, where places of affluence coexist alongside, but fortified against, neglected places of poverty, rendering poor communities both separate from, and invisible to, the vast majority of more affluent citizens. Even as the devalued real estate in these invisible communities attracts development and gentrification, the supposed pathologies of their destitute residents preoccupy the imagination of social reformers and the larger public alike. This combination of exploitative and reformist motivations frequently results in interventions that are divorced from poor people's spatial and economic realities. Subject to a fatal combination of isolation, neglect, and intrusion, marginalized communities of color live outside the boundaries of democratic society.

Co-optation through the Promise of Citizen Participation

"Citizen participation, defined as deliberation on issues affecting one's life, is the normative core of democracy."[39] Participation is both a right and responsibility; it can validate political decision making while also enriching experts' abstract empirical knowledge with the practical wisdom of local people. As a community planning tool, citizen participation became formalized during the 1960s Model Cities program, undertaken in response to failed urban renewal efforts and mounting urban violence. Early attempts at citizen participation illustrate just how difficult deliberation

can be between those who hold power and disenfranchised communities of color. During the short-lived implementation of the Model Cities program, major impediments arose on both sides of the table that blocked the ideal of democratic deliberation on community development. In a nutshell, those who held power proved resistant to its redistribution, and disenfranchised communities of color had an inadequate "infrastructure and knowledge base, plus difficulties of organizing a representative and accountable citizens' group in the face of futility, alienation, and distrust."[40]

These impediments still prevail today and have become further exaggerated by globalization as "jobless neighborhoods are isolated from wealth, mainstream institutions, and social networks that provide mobility and status attainment opportunities."[41] Globalization, or the dispersal of power transnationally, combined with the federal government's devolution of responsibilities, revenues, and taxing powers to state and local governments, effectively localizes problem solving[42] and makes citizen groups responsible for curbing the effects of today's global economic crisis. Yet clearly local problem solving in isolation from transnational forces is a no-win enterprise, as shifts in the global flow of labor and capital have not only stripped neighborhoods and even cities and regions of the necessary resources for economic viability but also have put them into competition for attracting new markets.[43] Too often, citizen participation is

> relegated to the scale of the neighborhood, many times focusing resident energy on cleanups, surveillance, and meetings as opposed to the structuring of the relationship between a smaller piece of geography (i.e., the neighborhood) and the larger area in which it is embedded (i.e., the city), recognizing that both are implicated in, and constituted by, the scalar relationships that extend globally.[44]

When planners and policy makers focus the residents of abandoned neighborhoods upon strictly local issues, they are co-opting them into addressing problems that have been generated within a broader spatial context.

Although more powerful stakeholders tend to circumscribe the purview of impoverished residents locally, they themselves more likely position poor neighborhoods within a larger scheme of urban and regional development. Perhaps part of the sort of expert networks—of technicians, entrepreneurs, administrators, researchers, journalists—that increasingly provide policy advice to local politicians,[45] these stakeholders are also more likely to emphasize strategies for nurturing a good business climate. Without fail, this "means lowering wages to make businesses more competitive, depoliticizing the workforce so that it cannot organize against corporate interests, using tax abatements and subsidies for big business,

and deregulation."[46] Their vision of development consistently results in city policies that raise property taxes and provide incentives for condominium conversions, thereby increasing rents beyond the reach of impoverished residents.[47] While residents assume the daunting problem of alleviating poverty within a small geographic area, they are upstaged by power brokers who control, direct, and limit their involvement as poverty becomes ever more invisible and the rhetoric of participation creates an illusion of consensus.[48]

Thus have the historical impediments to citizen participation been magnified by global-local interactions that alter the scope of power brokering within cities. Impoverished residents whose efforts are directed toward local neighborhood redevelopment may find their hard work irrelevant within the larger political discourse as their neighborhood "becomes a central hinge on which a city's ability to maintain participation in a global political economy of place swings."[49]

Youth Geographies of Inequity

> *Neighborhoods shape children's development in many ways, although kindergartners are probably less susceptible to neighborhood influences than are adolescents. The risks posed by low-quality neighborhoods are most striking in high-poverty urban communities plagued by violence, gangs, drug activity, old housing stock, and vacant buildings, where watchful parents may not allow children to walk to school alone or play outside.*[50]

We have already documented the persistence of racially segregated neighborhoods and the greater likelihood of poor black and Latino/a families to live in impoverished neighborhoods as compared to poor white families.[51] Although studies suggest that neighborhood characteristics have a relatively low effect upon behavior and an even lower effect upon educational achievement, both of which can be mitigated by family characteristics,[52] still neighborhoods are "a potent source of unequal opportunity" for ethnic minority youth.[53] Living in impoverished neighborhoods, youth experience pervasive violence, limited role models, negative peer influences, overcrowded schools, unhealthy food, pollution, and ecological degradation, which surely diminish their well-being. In general, researchers have paid little attention to young people's perceptions of their surroundings or to their changing spatial needs, further marginalizing youth in places that reflect the worldview not only of adults but of the most privileged adults.[54] "The gap in knowledge about how children experience place-based inequities is greatest for impoverished racial and ethnic minority youth because even less attention has been paid to the particular challenges of growing up within a racialized society."[55]

In addition to negative neighborhood environments, poor minority youth are likely to experience housing inequities that magnify neighborhood characteristics. For one, poor households typically have a higher person-per-room ratio, which results in a lack of privacy, inadequate space for quiet study, and disrupted sleep. Crowding may result in children's inability to concentrate and to have constructive social interactions with parents and siblings, which may contribute to irritability, withdrawal, weariness, and poor physical and mental health.[56] Then, too, poor housing conditions expose children to such environmental health hazards as noise, lead paint, asbestos, decaying insects, and rodents.[57] Not only have African Americans historically lived, and continue to live, in more crowded conditions; as a group they are more likely to live in lower quality housing than their white counterparts.[58] Furthermore, homeownership serves as an important measure of race-based housing inequity "since African Americans have historically faced great difficulties in converting income gains into home ownership due to institutional and overt discrimination on the part of public and private creditors and on the part of real estate agents."[59] Homeownership is not only a proxy for the local tax base available to support good schools, but it also serves as a stand-in for the funds families have to finance their children's education because owning increases borrowing power (by creating assets) and decreases housing costs (because mortgage payments are typically less than rents).[60]

Although family characteristics can compensate for environmental inadequacies, the cumulative environmental risks that low-income youth of color experience are considerable.[61] Moreover, poor youth, youth of color, immigrant youth, and urban youth must contend with multiple forms of oppression and marginality,[62] especially in the public spaces of their communities. Both the popular and academic press advance a stereotype of these youth, not as victims of social and environmental injustice but "as perpetrators of crime, drug takers, school dropouts, or other problems of society."[63] The overwhelming tendency of adults to conceive older youth as menacing makes their very presence a jarring intrusion into the domain of adults, in itself justifying the need for aggressive law enforcement. "As streets are owned by white, middle-class, heterosexual males,"[64] these youth are ruled out of place in the public domain of their own neighborhoods.[65]

Reflecting the popular view of needing to control, punish, and contain young people, the after-school programs available in racially marked communities often treat adolescents as clients who require ameliorative services or interventions to overcome problematic behaviors. "Such programs not only tend to alienate young people due to their race, ethnicity, family income, gender, or sexual orientation, but also fail to recognize the structural inequities these youth encounter and their boundless capacity

for taking on injustice."[66] The paucity of welcoming community-based programs leaves low-income youth of color "underserved and more vulnerable to the drug abuse, school absenteeism, and violent behaviors that, in turn, cycle them toward increased social control and incarceration."[67]

Not only are youth primarily characterized as social problems, they are also set apart from adults as not fully mature, which focuses attention upon achieving developmental outcomes for the future rather than upon their capacity to contribute to the present.[68] "And although young people make considerable contributions to tackling the egregious social and environmental problems in their communities, the media, social scientists, and youth practitioners tend to emphasize their deficiencies and disengagement, rather than their accomplishments."[69] At the same time, deeply embedded notions of individualism in American society, reflected in the disciplinary traditions of psychology and education, encourage a focus upon individual achievement or, conversely, upon individual failure, which obscures the structural forces that produce positive or negative outcomes.[70] This individualistic focus magnifies the inequities youth of color experience and constitutes a potent barrier to helping them articulate shared values as collective agents of change.

In sum, low-income, ethnic minority youth occupy noisier, more crowded, lower quality homes than their middle-income, or even poor, white counterparts. They attend more dilapidated schools, eat less healthy food, and are exposed to more environmental pollutants. In addition to the violence, harassment, and bullying of their peers, older inner-city youth endure the institutionalized mistrust, surveillance, and regulation of adults when they enter the public realm. These youth not only experience tangible hardships, but they are also forced to be invisible on the streets of their neighborhoods, alienated from community decision-making processes, robbed of their self-confidence, and stigmatized as unfit for the higher rungs of the labor market. For these youth, place comprises a huge source of inequity.

The Intersection of Race, Place, and Power

Too many impoverished communities of color live in neighborhoods abandoned within a globalizing economy. Not only do these communities lack opportunities for residential mobility and all the material, social, and human resources that would imply, their way of life stands in stark contrast to the nation's preferred norm of single-family homeownership. Out of reach, the American Dream mocks the property-less status of low-income tenants who face imminent displacement from their derelict surroundings to even more poorly served and politically disenfranchised ones.

As a globalizing economy widens the gap between haves and have-nots, these communities have become even more isolated from the mainstream, and yet they often coexist alongside the extravagant enclaves of elites and the gentrified condominiums of yuppies. In another era, impoverished inner-city residents would have provided a source of cheap labor to their counterparts, but today they have little hope of employment in internationally oriented enterprises. Those minority families who do manage to play by the rules of the majority society find that unfair discrimination follows them to their American Dream in the suburbs as their communities become racially identifiable and resources erode. "Without the cultural and economic advantages that central cities possess, these at-risk communities are in many ways worse off than the large cities they border."[71]

Nor has the 1960s Model Cities template for citizen participation been able to ameliorate the persistence of race-based residential isolation and all its associated inequities. Instead, the voices of less disadvantaged community members, such as those with viable employment, are co-opted by more powerful stakeholders, creating an illusion of progress as the forces of gentrification render increasing poverty all but invisible. Though often characterized as druggies, dropouts, and perpetrators of crime, low-income ethnic minority youth experience hardships that threaten their physical and mental health, as well as their prospects for becoming contributing members of society.

The four interdisciplinary case studies in this part of the book explore several of these inequities in depth. Architect Sharon E. Sutton shows how the nation's investment in privately owned homes and the marketplace that produces them has resulted in a fundamental ambivalence toward subsidized housing, compelling poor people to live in dilapidated surroundings with which they themselves become associated. Social ecologist Anne Taufen Wessells demonstrates that the location of open space resources such as urban parks and waterways in overwhelmingly white well-to-do neighborhoods—along with the exclusive white identity of water-based recreational programs, like rowing—make these spaces and programs all but off-limits to youth of color. Environmental psychologist Lynne C. Manzo reveals the co-optation that occurs when public housing residents are invited to participate in shaping redevelopment plans for their communities after demolition decisions have already been made, effectively forcing them to participate in their own displacement. And social welfare scholar Linda Hurley Ishem offers evidence that traditional stereotypes of inner-city stakeholders as "insiders" (equated with blackness and dependence) and "outsiders" (equated with whiteness and power) are at odds with the more complex, multidimensional conceptions stakeholders have of themselves.

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Chapter Two

Struggling for the Right to Housing: A Critical Analysis of the Evolution of West Seattle's High Point

Sharon E. Sutton

The High Point neighborhood in West Seattle is just that. Nestled into a wooded bluff atop one of the city's highest elevations, this new development offers residents a beautifully designed, environmentally sustainable community—one of the city's most livable places. Not fully complete as of this publication, it replaces a deteriorated public housing project with a new economically and culturally diverse neighborhood, presenting low-income residents with what the federal government predicts will be new opportunities for self-sufficiency. According to Seattle's former mayor Greg Nickels, "the redevelopment not only revitalizes a great West Seattle neighborhood, but the sustainable buildings and design will enhance the health of the community and the environment for years to come."[1] And yet the housing policies that facilitated High Point's reinvention are anything but sustainable for the many former residents whose dispersal to other impoverished areas made possible its New Urbanist vision of middle-class harmony.

Numerous housing activists have disparaged the federal program that funded High Point. Known as HOPE VI (Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere), this program seeks to disperse the poverty found in deteriorated public housing projects, typically by demolishing existing units and encouraging private investment in new construction. Redevelopment plans, which require input from existing tenants, specify a mix of subsidized and market-rate dwellings that results in far fewer low-income units. Although HOPE VI represents the federal government's largest single cutback in subsidizing housing ever, this program is hardly the culprit for the nation's failure to house its impoverished citizens.

In 1988 when the housing crisis began spiraling out of control, I listened as activist Marian Wright Edelman implored an audience of emerging leaders to focus their talents upon improving poor children's health care and education. I asked, "Why not improve their housing, given its centrality to achieving all other constitutional rights?" Her response: "Housing is too complicated."[2] Although the literature documents a strikingly inevitable march toward the collapse of government-assisted housing, in this chapter I seek to evolve a critical understanding of this complicated issue. In particular, I want to identify the on-the-ground conditions that contributed to this country's failure to house its impoverished citizens, even in the forward-looking city of Seattle.

To advance such understanding, I trace the evolution of High Point from its construction in the 1940s to its demolition and redevelopment 60 years later. I use the particularities of this case to structure a thematic analysis of the housing literature while also using archival documents to understand the particularities of the case. This grounded, reiterative analysis brings to light the nation's profound resistance to the very idea of government-assisted housing and the hegemony of middle-class values in determining the nature of that housing. By unraveling the details of a complicated issue, I hope to lay a foundation for other authors in this book to discuss out-of-the-box approaches to housing the nation's impoverished citizens, especially as inner cities gentrify and poor people, their labor less essential within a global economy, become increasingly invisible in the urban landscape.

The Particularities of the High Point Case Study

High Point opened in 1942, financed as war housing at the height of World War II. After the war ended, the project accommodated veterans for a period, and then two federal housing acts ushered in its second phase—as housing for low-income families. This phase continued through the tumultuous years of the 1960s when Lyndon B. Johnson's Model Cities program initiated High Point's third phase. This program provided the first occasion to plan for High Point's redevelopment as a mixed-income community, but in 1973 Richard Nixon's moratorium on housing subsidies aborted this opportunity, putting the project on a trajectory of decline until 1999, when HOPE VI ushered in High Point's second—and successful—occasion to redevelop as a mixed-income community in its fourth and current phase.

I now describe each of these phases before looking across them for recurrent themes.

High Point 1937–1945: Housing Military Families and War Workers

Following passage of the first U.S. housing act in 1937, an advisory commission, formed to study Seattle's housing needs, rated more than 60 percent of the city's 114,000 dwellings as overcrowded, with many in need of major repairs or demolition.[3]

> A generation of stagnation and neglect, and a legacy of over speculation in real estate left the city with many empty houses and apartments, and many people living in shacks. . . . In a number of residential areas near downtown, the situation was bad enough so that no one would have lost much money had the houses been torn down.[4]

The advocacy of a young lawyer, Jesse Epstein, resulted in enabling state legislation, allowing the city to establish the Housing Authority of Seattle (SHA) in March 1939. Two months later—with Epstein as executive director—SHA received a federal grant of $3 million to construct low-rent housing. Epstein chose a 43-acre site immediately south of downtown, where he set about demolishing 868 deteriorated structures, replacing them with an equal number of new units at a density of 20 units per acre. Epstein engaged five architectural firms to design what became known as Yesler Terrace, the nation's first racially integrated public housing.[5]

Before that project was complete, World War II broke out and the city's attention turned toward sheltering the workers that manufacturers of war materials were recruiting from all over the Americas. These workers, who increased Seattle's population by 30 percent between 1940 and 1945, flocked to SHA in search of affordable housing: "Families from every state, as well as Canada, Alaska, South America, Mexico, and DC applied for housing assistance."[6] SHA responded, applying for financing through the Lanham Act approved by Congress to finance housing for war workers and military families, thereby adding 7,289 permanent and temporary units to Seattle's housing stock, including three permanent projects with 2,700 family units.

For one of these projects, Epstein negotiated a purchase price of $18,000 for a 165-acre site in West Seattle with an appraised value of $27,000—the brother of the lieutenant governor had offered $31,000 intending to construct private homes on the parcel but withdrew his offer when the county was unable to provide a title.[7] This property was sandwiched in between a wooded bluff and a sparsely settled area—a sloping, irregular site about twice as long in the north-south direction as in the east-west one. Located 520 feet above sea level with an elevation drop of almost 200 feet diagonally from northeast to southwest, some parts of the property offered expansive regional vistas.

Figure 2.1 Owing to the lack of a proper title, SHA was able to purchase 165 acres atop one of Seattle's highest elevations for the construction of High Point, paying just 60 percent of its appraised value in 1940. By 2001 SHA had sold 45 acres of the original parcel.

Epstein selected two architects and two landscape architects[8] to design what was first called Gatewood Heights and later became known as High Point.[9] The designers carved out a curvilinear suburban-style street pattern on the steeply sloped property but with unusually deep blocks and no clear division of outdoor space. Within this pattern, they dispersed elongated one- and two-story multifamily buildings with on-street parking leading to multiple front entries, placing additional buildings and small parking lots in the interior of the deep blocks. Originally planned for 700 units, High Point expanded during construction to become the largest of the three permanent projects, with 1,300 units in 406 buildings that sprawled over the hillside at eight dwelling units per acre,[10] or less than half the density of Yesler Terrace.

Like Yesler Terrace, Seattle's war housing projects were national models of racially integrated housing, but their hurried development put these projects at odds with their surroundings from the beginning.

> None was or could later be made to be what Yesler Terrace is, mostly because wartime shortages made it difficult to get the right materials and because their sites were chosen in somewhat remote areas that could be obtained

> with little negotiation and litigation. None is bad, but none has thrived either, and one reason for this must be that integrated projects in these remote areas tend to stick out, to be alien from the surrounding urban ecology, to stand as incitements to racism rather than replies to its follies.[11]

High Point 1945–1965: Housing for Low-income Families

When the war ended in 1945, veterans replaced war workers in High Point's moderate-rent units, which SHA managed on lease from the federal government.[12] However, the Housing Act of 1949 reenergized the production of low-rent units, providing financing for slum clearance and 800,000 new public housing units. To apply for financing, SHA documented the need for quadrupling Yesler Terrace's capacity, proposing to create 2,621 subsidized units by assuming ownership of the two smaller permanent war projects (Rainier Vista and Holly Park) and constructing 1,221 new units on sites throughout the city, with High Point being sold on the private market.[13]

In 1950, after homebuilders organized a three-to-one vote that, in effect, blocked construction of new subsidized units,[14] Congress provided an alternative route to expanding Seattle's stock of low-income housing by allowing for the transfer of war housing to local authorities. To explore this possibility, SHA interviewed one-third of the heads of households living in its three war housing projects, revealing that tenants, former war workers and veterans, were about 87 percent white, 11 percent black, and 2 percent others. They were longtime residents (almost one-quarter had a tenure of more than six years), with wage earners no longer concentrated in nearby war industries but rather employed throughout the city. Notably, only one-quarter of this stable population of workers would be eligible to stay under Congress's new income limits.

Ultimately SHA purchased all three projects, reasoning that replacement costs would be at least double the 1941–1942 construction cost, that the buildings were well constructed and maintained, and that they compared favorably with the city's other garden court apartments. The only objection to High Point's conversion to low-rent housing came from a nearby neighborhood organization that expressed concern about displacing over-income tenants.[15]

High Point 1966–1991: An Aborted Proposal for Mixed-income Housing

By 1970 High Point had become heavily minority and impoverished, with many elderly and under- or unemployed residents. The project was

further stigmatized by its high vacancy rate—approximately one-third of units were boarded up—barrack-like outdated structures, isolation resulting from poor public transit and negative "project" identity, run-down shopping facilities, a school that served only project children,[16] and especially by its absence of owner-occupied, single-family housing, which could be found in West Seattle's other, mostly white middle-class neighborhoods.

Taking advantage of a grant from the HUD, SHA, in partnership with the Seattle Model City Program (SMCP), developed a master plan for revitalizing High Point as a mixed-income community that was to include a small demonstration project.[17] Planning began with the formation of a resident committee and tenant participation activities, including a survey of households, workshops, and bus tours to revitalized communities. The survey revealed tenants' concern about dislocation and loss of low-income housing stock, but it also revealed their priorities for improvements, including a health clinic, convenience food shopping, expanded gymnasium, less vandalism and more security, and the demolition of vacant units.[18] Tenant participation activities culminated with over 300 signatures in support of a proposal to reduce the number of units from 1,100—a number already reduced from the original 1,300—to 650.[19]

A survey of the site, which by then comprised just 150 instead of 165 acres, revealed inefficient delivery of social services, which were scattered in converted housing units, and serious drainage problems (a consequence of extensive grading during initial construction), inadequate drains around foundations, and a high water table. The site survey also documented a substantial canopy of mature trees (originally planted when the project was converted from war to low-rent housing) and identified 4 of 12 building types that could be renovated more cost-effectively than new construction. To facilitate the "de-concentration of low-income housing units,"[20] the master plan indicated remodeled and new public housing on about 100 acres to the north and private development to the south, with Morgan Street as the clear demarcation between the two. The plan not only specified that a percentage of the public housing units "be converted over time to other modes of occupancy"[21] but that low-income homeownership be incorporated into the private development, along with high- and middle-income housing and park space. The privately developed land would be sold with restrictive covenants to guarantee compliance with design guidelines. An independent market study reinforced the master plan, also recommending that 42 acres south of Morgan Street be sold as private development because the street created a clear physical separation and the smallest boundary with the public housing—needed because of "the considerable social stigma and antagonism engendered by High Point."[22]

Coincidentally, the higher elevation of this part of the site also afforded the best regional views.

Overall, the plan called for a 58 percent reduction in the number of public housing units, with buildings at the perimeter being demolished to accommodate a linear park along the wooded bluff. Large buildings would be demolished to achieve a density of about five dwelling units per acre, with the remaining 350 units made to resemble single-family dwellings as much as possible. The plan located seniors along a main arterial near public transit in new multistory apartment buildings and low-rise units with yards, consolidated services and the management office in renovated buildings near the senior housing, and guaranteed residents first option for a one-move relocation within the redevelopment.[23] Exterior upgrades would include new windows, siding, roofing, and individual driveways where possible; interior upgrades would include enlarged kitchens and living rooms, new dining space and foyer, new bathrooms with showers, doors for closets, and soundproofing between units. Notably, the plan did not specify improvements to foundation drainage.

The city approved both the plan and demonstration project in November 1972, but a 1973 moratorium on housing subsidies and the end of the Model Cities program in 1974 halted the project.

High Point 1992–Present: A Successful Proposal for Mixed-income Housing

By 2000 High Point marked a sharp east-west division in West Seattle's landscape. Whereas the single-family neighborhood to the west consisted of a predominantly middle-income white population, the neighborhood to the east consisted of a predominantly impoverished minority population living in deteriorated, subsidized housing. At High Point—where crime rates outpaced those in the adjoining minority neighborhood—English as a second language, single-parent households, underachieving children, and unemployment prevailed. Not only did SHA describe High Point as "a tear in the urban fabric dividing West Seattle's middle-income neighborhoods from low-income areas,"[24] it blamed the project for depressed housing prices and rents within a radius of at least four to five blocks: "The immediate area around High Point should command some of the highest prices in West Seattle due to the neighborhood's excellent views. Instead, it has some of the lowest."[25]

On the site itself, now just 130 acres, deterioration had continued unabated. All the problems identified in 1972—poor site drainage, outdated barrack-like buildings, physical and social isolation—still existed, but time had magnified them. An undersized sewage system and settlement

from extensive grading in 1941 seemed likely causes of frequent sewer line breaks with the resultant poor drainage creating subsidence and weakened foundations; and while defective roof overhangs allowed rainwater to seep into exterior walls, a 1995 installation of vinyl siding had trapped this moisture, likely contributing to the presence of mold and mildew in one-third of the interiors. Additionally, new housing standards requiring the elimination of lead-based paint, energy conservation, and ADA-compliant streets and units further dated the project. Since 1972, SHA had demolished about 384 units, leaving just 716. Of those, HUD had approved the demolition of another 275 units, but they remained occupied because of the lack of relocation housing and because more demolition would have further reduced density, exacerbating the spatial conditions that enabled High Point's biggest problem—illegal and antisocial activities.[26]

Seattle's HUD-approved plan for housing and community development designated High Point as a mixed-income community that would "create momentum for revitalization of the surrounding neighborhood and attract higher-income households without displacing current numbers of affordable units."[27] SHA's 2000 application to HUD for HOPE VI funding specified that, except for a two-block area adjoining the main arterial, the highest and best use of the property would be single-purpose low-rise residential units with related community facilities, concluding that mixed-use or multifamily development would set High Point apart from its surroundings. The redevelopment would include public housing units, tax-credit rental units for households earning up to 60 percent of median, senior rental units, for-sale homes (affordable to households earning up to 80 percent of median), and affordable and market-rate condominiums sited in choice locations on the northeast and southeast corners. The resulting demographic would be 29 percent very low income, 21 percent low to moderate income, and 50 percent middle and upper income.

SHA's grant application detailed a relocation plan, certainly a challenge given that the agency already had 7,600 households on its Section 8 waiting list and 3,271 households on its public housing waiting list. To make up for the loss of subsidized units on-site, the plan specified 250 new units off-site and 400 additional Section 8 vouchers. In addition, SHA promised multilingual counseling, outreach to private apartment owners and managers, site visits to potential relocation sites, and follow-up of relocated residents.[28] Further, SHA pledged to offer both relocated and on-site residents complete support for achieving self-sufficiency, including employment and social services, and programs for youth and the elderly and disabled.[29]

By November 2001, Mithun, an architectural firm specializing in sustainability, was developing a plan for High Point that—following SHA's instructions to view the site as a clean slate—would completely reconfigure

the old street pattern as a New Urbanist grid. The new master plan indicated a network of streets, alleys, and trails linking large community parks and small neighborhood ones and offering views to the north and south. It specified two- and three-story buildings developed at a density of 12.3 units per acre, with service and community facilities situated in the northwest corner of the property adjoining the middle-income neighborhood. Because of the proposed realignment of streets, the plan required review by the Seattle Design Commission (SDC), which advises city officials on projects that affect the right-of-way. These reviews continued for almost two years through September 2003, when SDC recommended approval.[30]

In addition to the master plan, Mithun designed 600 of the development's 1,600 units—just over one-third of the site. SHA put the remainder of the property up for sale and then held focus groups with prospective buyers to produce block-by-block design guidelines. SHA designed and financed all of the infrastructure, including the parks, with those costs incorporated into the selling price of lots.[31] This infrastructure offers an

Figure 2.2 After decades of neglect, SHA declared High Point a "tear in the urban fabric." With HOPE VI financing, the site was redeveloped as mixed-income housing, the most panoramic portions being reserved for market-rate condominiums. Photographs courtesy of Seattle Housing Authority.

array of sustainable design features: the city's first and the nation's largest natural drainage system, soil-enhancing strategies, native drought-tolerant plants that eliminate the need for pesticides and chemical fertilizers, narrow streets and porous sidewalks, streets laid out so as to save existing mature trees, deconstruction rather than demolition of existing units, and high-performing new construction.[32]

Having collaborated with five homebuilders to complete the first, smaller phase of a two-phase project, SHA and Mithun are garnering international distinction.[33] Touted as a national model of achieving affordability through sustainable design, "High Point has attracted the attention of publications and prestigious professional associations all over the world"[34]—a radical transformation of a public housing project into a predominantly middle- and upper-income community.

Recurrent Themes in High Point's Evolution

From the start, this spectacularly situated site—with 165 acres in 1942 vanishing to just 120 acres in 2001—attracted private developers. The brother of the lieutenant governor would have purchased the property at top dollar to build private homes but was unable to obtain a title from the county. When the Housing Act of 1949 financed construction of low-rent units, SHA proposed to sell this, the largest of its properties, for private development while designating new and existing units as subsidized housing; homebuilders and citizens thwarted this plan, overwhelmingly rejecting any new subsidized housing. Once again in 1972, a Model Cities–funded master plan and supporting market study recommended selling part of the site, but the Nixon administration reversed housing and community development policies, upending that plan until 2000, when HOPE VI finally made possible the sale of the most desirable portions of the site.

Despite continuing pressure to sell the site, SHA maintained 73 percent of the original 165 acres as subsidized housing for the duration of its 60-year agreement with the federal government. During this time, project demographics changed radically from a primarily white working population to a disproportionately minority population of the elderly and unemployed. As demographics shifted, so did the physical condition of the property, which SHA initially described as similar to privately developed garden apartments but later characterized as a blight in West Seattle's fabric. Eventually, the 60-year agreement ended and SHA sold half of the remaining 120 acres for private middle- and upper-income housing.

High Point's redevelopment helped SHA address a legacy that had haunted the project from the beginning—its low density. The site was

initially planned at four units per acre, lower than the five and a half dwelling units found in most cities of that era but not quite suburban. However, in response to war workers streaming into Seattle, the project quickly (and undoubtedly somewhat haphazardly) expanded to a density of eight dwelling units per acre, still far less than the 20 units at Yesler Terrace. By 1972 High Point's density was seven dwelling units per acre, with one-third being vacant, and by 2000 the density was less than six dwelling units per acre, a density created arbitrarily by random demolition. Thus, whereas Yesler Terrace (with its flat roofs and long parallel row buildings) was compact and urban, High Point (with its too-low hip roofs and buildings scattered in an increasingly random pattern) was a bad imitation of its suburban neighbor. Neither urban nor suburban and tainted with the legacy of its first occupancy, High Point was forevermore described as barrack-like housing that "contrasts sharply with the beautiful geographic setting of West Seattle."[35]

Thus, although High Point was a site of convenience for housing workers during Seattle's war boom years, its permanent use for subsidized housing and its imitation suburban layout came into question almost immediately, as federal housing policies guaranteed an increasingly impoverished population and continued deterioration of hastily constructed structures—themes I develop more fully in the next section.

A Historical Struggle for the Right to Housing

High Point offers an on-the-ground look at how federal policies have buttressed privately owned housing as the norm, thus marginalizing rental housing, especially public housing. Ambivalence toward the very idea of subsidized housing has meant that politicians and the public often frame it as a temporary intervention that will boost the real estate market and provide deserving families with shelter, but with constraints that guarantee a very low-income population living in evermore deteriorated surroundings. Specifically, High Point is illustrative of subsidized housing built as (a) a temporary solution, (b) a boon to the housing industry, (c) a means of reinforcing dominant norms, and (d) a means of marginalizing poor people—themes that appear throughout the housing literature.

Subsidized Housing as a Temporary Solution

The delusion that poor people would only need shelter temporarily before moving up into the ranks of normal society must have begun in the early 1800s with the rationalizing of company towns. These towns housed young white workers in distant rural hamlets—away from the wickedness of

cities—until, so the reasoning went, they could become respectable farmers and housewives. However by mid-century, industrial growth no longer needed validation, and company towns came to be valued as a means of guaranteeing economic prosperity. Yet these towns continued to provide an illusion of temporariness because residents, often evicted for failing to supply the required number of workers, averaged only about a year in one location. "Many families simply moved from one mill and one rented cottage to another, but it looked as if the industrialists were preventing the creation of a permanent industrial proletariat."[36] Meantime, workers survived crowded into impermanent cottages, their damp dirt floors and poor sanitation and ventilation offering little respite from long days in the overwhelming heat, humidity, and dust-filled air of the mills.[37]

In this same period, other capitalists were recruiting foreign immigrants to central cities for jobs in small businesses and factories,[38] surging the U.S. population by 700 percent in the 30 years preceding the Civil War.[39] As in the case of impoverished rural workers, poor urban workers had no choice but to take in boarders to pay their rent. At the mercy of greedy landlords, they lived in wretched poverty, crowded into disease-ridden, airless dwellings that had been adapted from other uses or erected anew as tenements.[40] Despite these conditions and overwhelming evidence that even a philanthropic marketplace could not provide decent housing for much of the population, turn-of-the-century policy makers had not begun to envision a permanent housing remedy for low-wage workers.[41]

Then came World War I, when the federal government created 5,000 dwellings for military personnel and government workers, a first involvement in housing that terminated when the war ended. After that came the Depression, when—to create employment for laid-off workers—the Roosevelt administration launched a second foray into housing via the newly established Public Works Administration (PWA).[42] Still even amid that era's suffering, the idea of a permanent housing system did not emerge with policy makers regarding the first New Deal as a temporary response to a crisis. However as unrest increased, the Roosevelt administration fashioned a second New Deal that eventually addressed the housing problem[43] in 1935 when Senator Robert F. Wagner and Congressman Henry B. Steagall submitted a bill to underwrite a permanent public housing agency.

Wagner and Steagall argued that low-rent housing construction would stimulate economic growth while helping eliminate slums, with homebuilders and social conservatives countering that government intervention constituted unfair competition for private enterprise and an unwarranted subsidy to families who "have no more right to a free new home than to a free new car."[44] After a protracted debate, the Wagner-Steagall Act passed in 1937 on the last day of the 75th Congress, thus inaugurating

the government's first major effort to subsidize low-rent housing. Still nearly one-third of the units created by this legislation were for military purposes,[45] High Point's 1,300 units among them. At the end of the war, Washington abruptly curtailed public housing construction because "the government [had] no intention of remaining in the housing business when private enterprise [was] capable of doing the peacetime job."[46] Nevertheless, by various turns of fate, the housing constructed at High Point for Rosie the Riveter became a permanent fixture in the landscape. After 60 years of neglect, HOPE VI paved the way for an inevitable resumption of responsibility by the private market as its history of failure to provide decent low-cost housing faded from Seattle's collective consciousness.

Subsidized Housing as a Boon to the Homebuilding Industry

In 1940 SHA chair Georg W. Coplen sought local support from Washington State real estate regulators for the newly adopted federal housing act. Almost as background, Coplen noted that the act would create much-needed housing for the bottom third of the population but then zeroed in on the bailout it provided to those higher up on the economic ladder.

> The extent to which public housing construction activity has corrected fluctuating unemployment conditions in the construction industry is remarkable. . . . Hundreds of local people are being employed throughout the nation by local housing authorities for work in appraising and negotiating for land in proposed projects. Local architects and engineers are employed. Title companies and insurance companies are given new business. All monies spent on such wages and services flow into the channels of local trade, bettering local business conditions.[47]

U.S. public housing policy has evidenced this slant toward private interests since the 1890s, when middle-class Americans—informed of Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch's research on germ culture—became convinced that tenements were breeding grounds for disease. Since poor people did piecework there, officials in most U.S. cities began demolishing hundreds of buildings to eliminate the possibility that residents might produce contaminated products. Although the owners received compensation for their losses, the residents received nothing. "Large numbers of poor families and individuals had to find new homes wherever they could, at whatever price and condition, while the owners of the razed tenements recouped their losses."[48]

Since then, public housing policies have evidenced a similar private-sector tilt. For example, the 1937 Housing Act included a requirement that, for every new unit built, an old one had to be demolished (with

compensation to the owner) so that the overall housing stock would not increase.[49] Sometimes a local housing authority would use federal funds to equip a model apartment with modern heating and kitchen equipment. Attractive to curious middle-income visitors but also affordable on credit to prospective low-income tenants, the models generated business for manufacturers.[50] The 1949 Housing Act evidenced a similar private-sector tilt, simultaneously financing the acquisition and sale of inner-city property so private developers could construct middle-income housing at reduced costs (and increased profits) and local authorities could construct low-rent housing.[51] Though the legislation included no requirements for the former, it placed rigid restrictions on the latter, specifying rent and income levels, as well as design standards and operating budgets. These restrictions shifted the tenancy of low-rent projects, now massive high-rise buildings, away from the working-class families that might be housed by the private market and toward the very poor. Despite their later fate as social and architectural failures, the impressive images of newly built projects equipped with modern amenities provided yet another opportunity for manufacturers to market their goods to the broader public.[52]

After the 1968 HUD Act stimulated a surge in housing construction by subsidizing the developers of apartment buildings, a rollback in new subsidized housing began in the 1970s and continued through the 1990s, "when the most active source of public housing funding came in the form of grants for the demolition and privatization of the housing stock."[53] Recalling Coplen's 1940 speech, SHA's 2000 application to redevelop High Point outlined the benefits to the private market, reasoning that "over the long term, a HOPE VI grant of $35 million for the revitalization of High Point could realistically produce a final leveraged fund ratio of 1:9.6,"[54] or $336 million flowing through the construction industry.

And, as Coplen suggested, subsidized housing has also benefited professionals. Beginning in the 1900s, industrial towns "offered the professional urban planner unparalleled opportunities to carry out projects based upon modern theories of urban organization,"[55] as did the urban renewal projects of the 1950s and 1960s. High-rise public housing projects like Cabrini Green and the Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago and Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis provided U.S. architects with laboratories for applying the theories of famed Swiss-French urbanist Le Corbusier; and in Seattle, Yesler Terrace and High Point provided architect-engineer J. Lister Holmes with a decided boost to his career. With a fledgling residential and commercial practice in Seattle, Holmes had attracted attention with his design for Washington State's pavilion at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Immediately thereafter, he secured contracts from SHA to design thousands of housing units at Yesler Terrace and High Point and another

for a Seattle elementary school, all completed in just four years. With these and numerous other projects in his portfolio, Holmes was elected a fellow in the American Institute of Architects in 1955.[56]

Subsidized Housing as a Means of Reinforcing Dominant Norms

> *For centuries, Americans have seen domestic architecture as a way of encouraging certain kinds of family and social life. Diverse contingents have asserted that…domestic environments can reinforce certain character traits, promote family stability, and assure a good society.*[57]

Whether in company towns or urban tenements, the Anglo-Saxon Protestants who made up the nation's early social welfare system imposed their vision of domestic life. Believing that poor families would be uplifted by adopting middle-class standards of morality, they freely invaded their privacy to impose far-reaching behavioral norms. In company towns, social secretaries and house mothers ensured that workers complied with such standards of propriety as cleanliness; taking in boarders; hours of sleeping, eating, and socializing; and church attendance. To combat dancing, drinking, and other improper conduct, they instilled courteous manners, doled out incentives, inspected homes, and dispensed health care.[58]

Similarly, visiting housekeepers, nurses, statisticians, and social workers patrolled urban tenements, paying house calls under the auspices of local charities and settlement houses. Convinced that direct contact with middle-class accoutrements would inspire tenement dwellers to improve their lot, "idealistic, college educated women and men [began] to live among the poor and provide an uplifting example."[59] Although some crusaders sought to change the living habits of the poor, others believed that improved tenement design would ordain a proper family life. Among other interventions, the latter advocated smaller apartments to discourage families from taking in boarders combined with more capacious communal spaces to draw residents together—in central courts, on rooftops, in basements—while isolating them from the wickedness of street life.[60] Wherever possible, architects disguised multifamily tenements to resemble single-family houses, the icon of American individualism and private property rights. Whether intending to reform people or place, white tenement crusaders "considered their own taste to be a universal standard of beauty, hygiene, and human sentiment."[61]

In the early 1930s, as the notion of subsidized housing took shape, "government policy toward the unemployed, the poverty stricken, and the working poor remained, at best, one of benign neglect (and at worst one

of active repression)."[62] Nevertheless, the Depression brought on unprecedented militancy among the disenfranchised, forcing a change in the attitudes of social reformers. Whereas previously the middle and upper classes had articulated policies on behalf of the poor, "from 1934 on, the poor themselves came to play a central and direct role in gaining the reforms they needed."[63] Uncommon professionals did exist, for example architect Elizabeth Coit, who projected herself into the lived experience of the poor, seeking to understand their perspective on domestic space.[64] Still, dominant norms prevailed as the majority of architects, politicians, and housing authorities sought to mold low-income residents into their own vision of an orderly, close-knit community. "Poorer black and white citizens became the recipients of what others wanted them to have and were meant, in turn, to become what city leaders wanted them to be."[65] In addition, federal policy legislated "separate but equal" housing for blacks and whites without specifying what constituted "equal." Taking advantage of this loophole, local authorities used federal financing to replace centrally situated black neighborhoods with whites-only public housing that had access to city services and business districts, relocating African Americans to outlying areas that lacked retail, transportation, and employment opportunities.[66]

Unlike other local authorities, SHA accommodated a mix of white, black, and Asian families in low-income housing at Yesler Terrace and in the city's war housing. However, architects designed these projects as garden court apartments, reflecting prevailing urban planning theories, especially those of Sir Ebenezer Howard, Lewis Mumford, and Catherine Bauer, who envisioned communities isolated from their surroundings. In addition, Seattle's war housing sites were all in remote areas, with High Point further isolated by its positioning adjacent to a steep bluff. Reflecting a stripped-down garden city design, High Point focused inward on open space, a primary school, and social services but offered no commerce or industry. Although this scheme may have functioned for workers employed in nearby war industries, it forced High Point's evermore low-income, carless residents to imitate an idealized suburban life. Today High Point residents

> not only live under the gaze of their housing authority and its agents, but that of their neighbors. . . . Failure to comply with often culturally specific, white, middle-class standards of behavior invites sanctions, not from the police but from other residents, including other black residents.[67]

In 2007, with Phase II not yet underway, evidence of such sanctions surfaced as one condominium owner used a blog to organize neighbors to rid the area of a few "bad apples" who were not complying with middle-class norms.

Subsidized Housing as a Means of Marginalizing the Poor

Housing policy exemplifies the power of the state to define reality, especially the construction of poor people as the problem.[68]

Not only have poor (and often nonwhite) tenants needed to accommodate their lives to white middle-class norms, they have also had to live in undesirable environments, in turn becoming associated with those environments as themselves undesirable. Comparing the spatial quality of early privately developed communities to that of company towns, the former had a diversity of architectural styles, but the latter typically had just one. For industrialists, architects and planners, and builders, a single style created a sense of order, economy, and control over workers,[69] but it also set them apart from the norm. Furthermore, officials zoned privately developed land for specific uses but imposed no such regulations in company towns.[70] Consequently, working families lived among belching smokestacks in environments quite unlike the green, spacious suburbs of that era when notions of propriety depended upon a gendered separation of private and public space.

In nineteenth-century cities, "tenements differed conspicuously from other housing, not because of architectural embellishment—for many commercially built tenements had ornamental façades—but because of their monumental scale."[71] Companies bought up entire blocks with enough lots for dozens of separate buildings, developing them instead as single structures for hundreds of families. Whether urban or rural, factory owners paid workers such meager wages that one-quarter to one-half of all households were forced to take in boarders to make ends meet. The practice of unrelated people living in the same quarters set the occupants even further apart from civilized families than planning and design practices did, differentiating them as morally deficient.[72]

For a brief period after the Depression when the unemployed were put to work clearing slums and building homes, subsidized housing lost its stigmatized appearance. Frequently of better quality than private housing, projects were typically suburban low-rise row buildings with copper roofs, handsome windows, detailed brickwork, carved friezes, canopied entries, ceramic hallways, and the latest appliances.[73] But such amenities soon angered homebuilders, who organized to limit competition despite severe housing shortages. When Congress passed the 1949 Housing Act, private interests had become powerful enough to impose severe restrictions. In addition to being overwhelmingly oriented toward private suburban homebuilding, the act contained provisions that set public housing rents 20 percent lower than the lowest rents in the surrounding area, established income limits and legalized eviction for families exceeding those

limits, created design specifications that made public housing stand out from other dwellings, and set operating budgets at unsustainably low levels. Local authorities situated projects in center cities, and with white flight in progress, "the projects inherited the certainly, indisputably, and irreversibly poor."[74]

This legislation resulted in the exodus of 75 percent of High Point's lower-middle-income families. Over the next 20 years, as its physical condition deteriorated because of inadequate maintenance, the population shifted from being 87 percent white working families to being 57 percent minority families with significant numbers of elderly, female-headed, and unemployed households. The trajectory of the project's demographics and physical condition continued so that by 1999 SHA argued successfully for deconcentrating High Point's impoverished residents and demolishing its extremely deteriorated structures[75]—intersecting conditions created by 60 years of legislation that set poor people apart in poorly built, poorly maintained structures.

Future Prospects for the Complicated Issue of Housing

In this chapter, I set out to understand the failure of federal housing policy to address the needs of impoverished citizens. Hoping to derive a critical understanding of the complicated issue of housing, I compared the particularities of High Point's evolution to issues found in the housing literature, which resulted in four themes common to both. At High Point and in the literature, subsidized housing has been a temporary intervention—a response to crisis that was meant to stimulate the housing industry and reinforce dominant norms but one that also set poor people apart from mainstream society. From the outset, federal housing policies have reflected and reinforced normative middle-class values, reifying privately owned homes and the marketplace that produces them, both made possible by a huge, but unacknowledged, federal welfare program of tax-deductible mortgage interest for middle- and upper-class homeowners.[76] The nation's investment in support of homeownership and the private real estate market "contributes to the relative political marginalization of rental housing in general and the extreme marginalization of public subsidized housing in particular."[77] Lacking a basic commitment to sheltering needy families, shortsighted, crisis-driven policies have consistently failed to provide decent, affordable housing. From this perspective, HOPE VI constitutes merely the next step in a history of fundamental ambivalence on the part of politicians and the public, conservatives and liberals alike, toward the very idea of government-assisted housing.

A writer for Seattle's only mainstream newspaper recently disparaged High Point's current public housing policy as one that does not "help people to achieve and, as a result, obtain a better home."[78] In addition to a stern eviction policy for the smallest infraction, this writer proposed a five-year limit on living in subsidized housing, "after which residents could have the chance to purchase their unit. In time, the HOPE VI developments as a whole could be entirely owner-occupied,"[79] an idea that resurfaced throughout High Point's history. The prevailing hegemony of homeownership, strengthened by tax-deductible mortgage interest for resident homeowners, subordinates public housing and its occupants. "Homeownership appears normal because it has become the tenure of the majority of the population, with renting being disproportionately concentrated among lower-income groups."[80] Homeownership, linked historically to voting rights, has played a key role in the concentration of power within white society. Living outside this norm and characterized as unable to make the life choices that would help them purchase their own homes, impoverished and disproportionately minority families get blamed as the cause of their condition, social and spatial.

Despite the unprecedented mortgage delinquency and foreclosure rates that began in 2006, policy makers have been exploring cures for underwriting practices in nonprime mortgage markets[81] rather than questioning homeownership as the ideal of American life. Given the extraordinary hold of homeownership on the psyches of policy makers and the public, I have no doubt that sometime in the foreseeable future, High Point will become entirely owner occupied. My concern is with all the impoverished families around this nation that have been forced to move in silence to invisible locales. With Section 8 vouchers in hand, they have most likely landed in places as poor and segregated as the severely distressed ones they had to vacate[82]—places where they still face the problems of a declining economy and crumbling public school system, their labor superfluous in a global economy. With some living in buildings whose landlords have contracted with HUD to rent mostly, or entirely, to voucher recipients and others dispersed throughout poor communities, these tenants are surely less able to organize logistically.[83]

To engage displaced and largely invisible poor people in struggling for their inalienable right to housing, activist placemakers need new out-of-the-box strategies that can bring tenants together across dispersed geographic locales to instigate a housing movement. The housing problem, though complicated, can not be ignored.

Notes

1. Greg Nickels, *The West Seattle High Point Zine*, http://www.thehighpoint.com/zine.php (accessed 10 February 2010).

2. Marion Wright Edelman, presentation at the "Health and Education: Access and Quality Seminar," for the Kellogg National Fellowship Program, Group VII (Washington, DC: 7 March 1988).
3. "The Program of the United States Housing Authority: Its Meaning to Private Enterprise and to the Communities of the Pacific Northwest," a talk delivered by Georg W. Coplen, Chairman of the Seattle Housing Authority, before the Everett, WA, Real Estate Board (29 January 1940).
4. Roger Sale, *Seattle Past to Present* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1976), 164.
5. Ibid.
6. *The Housing Authority of the City of Seattle Sixth Annual Report, 1945: Housing the People* (Seattle, WA), np.
7. *Seattle Times*, 22 September 1941.
8. *Seattle Times*, 4 September 1941.
9. *Seattle Times*, 16 October 1941.
10. *The Housing Authority*.
11. Sale, *Seattle Past to Present*, 166.
12. "Appendix C," in *Report to the Mayor and Council of the City of Seattle Recommending Transfer of Permanent War Housing Projects, High Point, Holy Park, and Rainier Vista, to the Housing Authority* (Seattle, WA: Housing Authority of the City of Seattle, 1950).
13. Ibid.
14. Taiwo Oduola Adekanbi, *Evolution of Public Housing in the U.S., Using Seattle Public Housing Programs as Examples* (master's thesis, University of Washington, 1980).
15. *Report to the Mayor*.
16. *High Point Redevelopment 33140: Seattle Model City Program* (May 1971), 1.
17. *High Point Redevelopment: Phase I Summary—Analysis, Site Plan, and Unit Remodeling Plans* (Seattle Housing Authority, December 1972).
18. Ibid.
19. The SHA report does not specify whether each of the 300 signatures represented a single household or whether more than one person in a household might have signed. Assuming one signature per household, only 40–43 percent of households supported the plan, and possibly far fewer did.
20. *High Point Redevelopment: Phase I Summary*, 25.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid., 20.
23. Ibid.
24. *HOPE VI for High Point 2000* (Seattle, WA: Seattle Housing Authority, 2000), 1.
25. Ibid., 35.
26. Ibid.
27. "Attachment 35," in *HOPE VI for High Point*, 99.
28. The grant application specified follow-up for 18 months, but according to *High Point Master Plan Overview*, an unpublished synthesis of minutes from Seattle Design Commission meetings held between 2001 and 2003, SHA also intended to track residents for four years through an independent study by the University of Washington (UW) Evans School. Sutton, who was a

commissioner during this time period, compiled the synthesis from approved minutes for a conference at the UW that included a tour of High Point.

29. *HOPE VI for High Point*.
30. *High Point Master Plan Overview.*
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. For example in 2006, a division of the American Institute of Architects selected High Point as one of eight residential projects for its Show You're Green Award. In 2007 High Point received the Gold Nugget Award as the best master-planned community of the year. And that same year, High Point was one of five developments worldwide to receive the Urban Land Institute's Global Award for Excellence. See *Welcome to the High Point Neighborhood*, http://www.thehighpoint.com/ (accessed 10 January 2010).
34. Ibid.
35. "Exhibit A" in *Hope VI for High Point*.
36. Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 66.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1978).
40. Wright, *Building the Dream*.
41. Sarah Glynn, "If Public Housing Didn't Exist, We'd Have to Invent It," in *Where the Other Half Lives: Lower-Income Housing in a Neoliberal World*, ed. Sarah Glynn (London and New York: Pluto Press, 2009), 9–37.
42. William H. Ledbetter Jr., "Public Housing, a Social Experiment Seeks Acceptance," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 32 no. 3 (Summer 1967): 490–527.
43. John H. Ehrenreich, *The Altruistic Imagination: A History of Social Work and Social Policy in the United States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985).
44. Ledbetter, "Public Housing," 493.
45. Jason Hackworth, "Destroyed by Hope: Public Housing, Neoliberalism, and Progressive Housing Activism in the U.S.," in *Where the Other Half Lives*, 232–257.
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47. "The Program of the United States Housing Authority," np.
48. Wright, *Building the Dream*, 131.
49. Hackworth, "Destroyed by Hope."
50. Mark Barron, "Adequately Re-housing Low-Income Families: A Study of Class and Race in the Architecture of Public Housing, Marietta, Georgia, 1938–1941," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 11 (2004): 54–70.
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52. William G. Ramroth Jr., AIA, *Planning for Disaster: How Natural and Man-made Disasters Shape the Built Environment* (New York: Kaplan Publishers, 2007).

53. Hackworth, "Destroyed by Hope," 237.
54. *HOPE VI for High Point*, 3.
55. Wright, *Building the Dream*, 180.
56. Duane A. Dietz, "J. Lister Holmes," in *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to the Architects*, ed. Jeffrey Karl Ochsner (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press), 203–209.
57. Wright, *Building the Dream*, xv.
58. Similar descriptions of the oversight of company town workers appear in Barron, Glynn, and Wright.
59. Wright, *Building the Dream*, 128.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid., 134.
62. Ehrenreich, *The Altruistic Imagination*, 83.
63. Ibid, 94.
64. Mary Otis Stevens, "Struggle for Place: Women in Architecture: 1920–1960," in *Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective*, ed. Susana Torre (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1977), 88–102.
65. Barron, "Adequately Re-housing Low-Income Families," 54.
66. Ibid.
67. Marilyn M. Thomas-Houston and Mark Schuller, "Introduction: No Place Like Home, No Time Like the Present," in *Homing Devices: The Poor as Targets of Public Housing Policy and Practice*, eds. Marilyn M. Thomas-Houston and Mark Schuller (New York: Lexington Books, 2006), 14.
68. Ibid.
69. Wright, *Building the Dream*.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid., 124.
72. Ibid., 180.
73. Ibid.; Ledbetter, "Public Housing."
74. Ledbetter, "Public Housing," 496, quoting Lawrence Friedman, "Public Housing for the Poor: An Overview," *California Law Review* 1966: 642.
75. *Report to the Mayor*; *High Point Redevelopment: Phase I Summary*; *HOPE VI for High Point.*
76. Jason Hackworth notes that, in 2006, tax-deductible mortgage interest cost the federal government $76 billion. "The vast majority of benefits of this program have always gone to the wealthiest Americans whose mortgage payments are high enough to exceed the standardized deduction given to every tax-paying US citizen." See Hackworth, "Destroyed by Hope," 252, note 3.
77. Ibid., 233.
78. Howard Husock, "Public Housing Developments Bring HOPE but History Says Projects Call for Caution," *Seattle Post Intelligencer* (15 February 2004), http://www.seattlepi.com/opinion/159956_focus15.html (accessed 17 January 2010).
79. Ibid.
80. Glynn, "If Public Housing Didn't Exist," 26.

81. Xudong An and Raphael W. Bostic, "Policy Incentives and the Extension of Mortgage Credit: Increasing Market Discipline for Subprime Lending," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 28 no. 3 (Summer 2009): 340–365.
82. Hackworth, "Destroyed by Hope."
83. Ibid.

Chapter Three

The Ultimate Team Sport?: Urban Waterways and Youth Rowing in Seattle

Anne Taufen Wessells

Seattle, Washington's inland waterways are among the city's most significant public spaces. Centrally located, visible from interstate highways and hilltops throughout the city, and filled with sailboats, kayaks, canoes, yachts, powerboats, and rowing shells, Seattle's lakes and bays are as fundamental to the city's identity as the Space Needle or Pike Place Market. Importantly, however, these waterways are not readily accessible for use and enjoyment by many Seattle citizens.

In this chapter, I examine Seattle as a case study in the contemporary use of urban waterways, or "blue space." As a waterfront city that has been profoundly shaped by the economic, environmental, and social uses of its various waterways, Seattle is similar to other port cities around the country and the world.[1] Seattle's waterways are pervasive; literally (water surrounds and bisects much of the city), visually (its hills and bridges bring the water continually into view), and figuratively (boating and logging have both depended upon the city's waterways and loom large in its self-imagery), its waterways define the city. Seattle is not unique in this respect; for reasons of trade, agricultural irrigation, transportation, hydropower, human sustenance, and intense cultural signification, coastal and riparian waterways are the original, defining urban element.

However, at the start of the twenty-first century, as urban water-based economies have increasingly come to depend upon centralized, high-revenue land uses—namely commercial port complexes that consolidate maritime shipping activities through containerization and deepwater harbors and downtown waterfront districts that emphasize tourism, retail, and entertainment[2]—urban waterways themselves are available for recreational uses to an extent that has not been possible historically. Citizen

use of public waterways is an unremarked on yet potentially important, urban political phenomenon. Urban waterway spaces are not just a material reality of physical geography. They are also socially constructed places, in which some people belong and others, implicitly, do not.[3] In the following pages, I pose and attempt to answer these questions: Who belongs in these urban spaces, and why does it matter?

The chapter proceeds in four sections. First, I argue that urban waterways are an important species of public space and should be subject to the same goals of universal accessibility and user diversity that environmental justice advocates, geographers, urban planners, park enthusiasts, and others apply to city parks, plazas, and land-based open spaces. I advocate for the idea of urban blue space as an important conceptual and rhetorical move in urban policy and governance. This move to represent urban waterways as public space helps to bring them under the same evaluative lens that we hold for urban parks and therefore opens them to important social justice claims regarding the use and accessibility of public resources, as well as environmental justice claims about the allocation of environmental benefits.

Second, to consider the current use of urban waterways in some depth, I examine a form of urban water-based recreation that is prevalent in Seattle and with which I am personally familiar—high school and college rowing. I use the example of rowing in Seattle as a case-within-a-case to explore the implications of a particular and visible urban waterway use that is notably exclusive in its social construction and actual demographics. In this section, I examine the paradox of a sport that is lauded as a model of teamwork and collaboration yet maintains an exclusive, racialized white identity. I document the circumstances that reinforce this identity and discuss the creation of a new rowing program in Seattle designed to overcome them.

Third, I take on the lived experience of rowing as a social practice occurring on urban waterways—an ongoing interpersonal endeavor in the social construction of this particular species of urban space. I focus on the physicality of this practice and the ways in which it develops deeply internalized understandings of place. These normative intellectualized concepts are not presented, taught, or learned formally but rather are conveyed and assumed through the body and through many bodies in interaction with each other. They are what philosopher Charles Taylor refers to as "embodied practices"—understandings derived through physical experiences that make some spaces and places seem familiar, normal, and predictable.[4] The concept of embodied practice helps me theorize and critique how individuals get to the point where the use of an urban space, and its attendant constitution, is taken for granted as normal. Specifically, I am interested

in interrogating rowing's racial composition and examining its whiteness as an embodied sociospatial practice of exclusion.

Finally, I conclude with comments on the potential significance of the social construction of blue space for urban democracy and for the governance of urban space. Far from being mere side notes in the organization of urban society, sport and recreation are among the means through which adolescents and young adults establish and learn its implicit rules: within the urban ecology of a region, who belongs where, who interacts with whom, and who builds deep relationships with what places.

Through embodied practices such as rowing—and, presumably, other forms of recreational boating—urban waterways in Seattle and elsewhere become part of such practices, functioning not as value-free spatial elements in the city's geography ("the bay," "the lake," "the river," and so on) but rather as deeply value-laden socially constructed places that belong to some citizens and not to others. I argue that despite being public and centrally located, urban blue space is frequently a site of racial and social exclusion. This is a problem for social justice and for ecological citizenship,[5] not just in Seattle but also in rapidly urbanizing coastal and riparian zones around the world.

Urban Waterways as Blue Space

Urban blue space is a city's surface area that is on or connected to a body of water. Although blue space is especially prevalent in coastal cities,[6] it can characterize any city that is located adjacent to water, whether coastal or inland. For instance, Chicago's Lake Michigan is notable in the United States for its miles of urban, publicly accessible blue space. Inland U.S. river cities such as Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, have pinned extraordinary economic development hopes on the revitalization of their river-based blue space. As design theorist Diane Brand noted, ongoing urbanization around the world is concentrated in coastal zones, making "the association between cities and the sea one of the most important juxtapositions of the twenty-first century."[7] Accordingly, Brand introduced the notion of blue space as an important addition to urbanists' conceptual toolbox for theorizing the nature of contemporary urban public space. Brand identified nine distinct types of urban blue space, some of which are on the water, some of which are adjacent to it, and some of which are hybrid spaces, for instance, a pier or building that extends over the water.[8] For the purposes of this chapter, I am interested in a specific type of urban blue space: the space created by water bodies that accommodate recreational pursuits such as boating and swimming.

The concept of urban blue space, and its potential valence for open space advocates and governance officials, relies—and builds—upon its more familiar relative, "green space." Green space signals various public, land-based open spaces—for instance, parks, preserves, greenways, and landscaped plazas. Over the last several decades, investing in networks of publicly accessible, urban green space has become a notable policy priority for a diverse coalition of urbanists, including designers, environmentalists, economic development specialists, and public health researchers.[9] A consensus that once existed seems to be reemerging:[10] cities need public green space located where citizens can get to it and use it. Blue space signals a similarly variegated category for water-based open space. In simple terms, green space means trees and grass; blue space means water. Blue space cannot be planned and created as easily as green space, but its social and cultural significance for urban areas may be every bit as important.

Closely linked to Seattle's image as an outdoor paradise, as well as to its historic maritime economy, Lake Washington, Union Bay, Lake Washington ship canal, the Montlake Cut, Portage Bay, Lake Union ship canal, Lake Union, and Salmon Bay create a contiguous recreational space through the heart of the city, protected from the tides and heavy winds of Puget Sound. In Seattle's case, this interior blue space can also be understood as a continuous pathway, analogous to the idea of a greenway in open space design and planning.[11] Seattle's central blue space path is a designed environment, deliberately crafted and managed to enhance connectivity. In 1860 a narrow ditch was created across the natural isthmus between two of the city's inland lakes, Lake Washington and Lake Union, to carry logs from the Cascade foothills to the young trading port in Seattle. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deepened and widened this ditch when they sponsored the creation of the Lake Washington Ship Canal, stretching from Lake Washington to the Puget Sound. This project, completed in stages, was opened to waterway traffic in 1917. The Corps also built four bascule bridges between 1917 and 1934 to span the ship canal at strategic locations.[12] These bridges help characterize Seattle's inland blue space, as do the bridges for the region's major vehicular corridors, connecting across the ship canal and joining Seattle to the rolling foothills of the Cascades. Seattle's blue space path is illustrated in figure 3.1.

Seattle's blue space is an important relational element in the city's overall scheme of public space and in the life of its citizens. The popularity of boating in Seattle is directly linked to the availability of so much contiguous, protected water through which to sail, row, motor, or paddle—and to a culture of accommodating water-based activities. For example, Chittenden Locks take boaters from the inland, freshwater blue space to the Puget

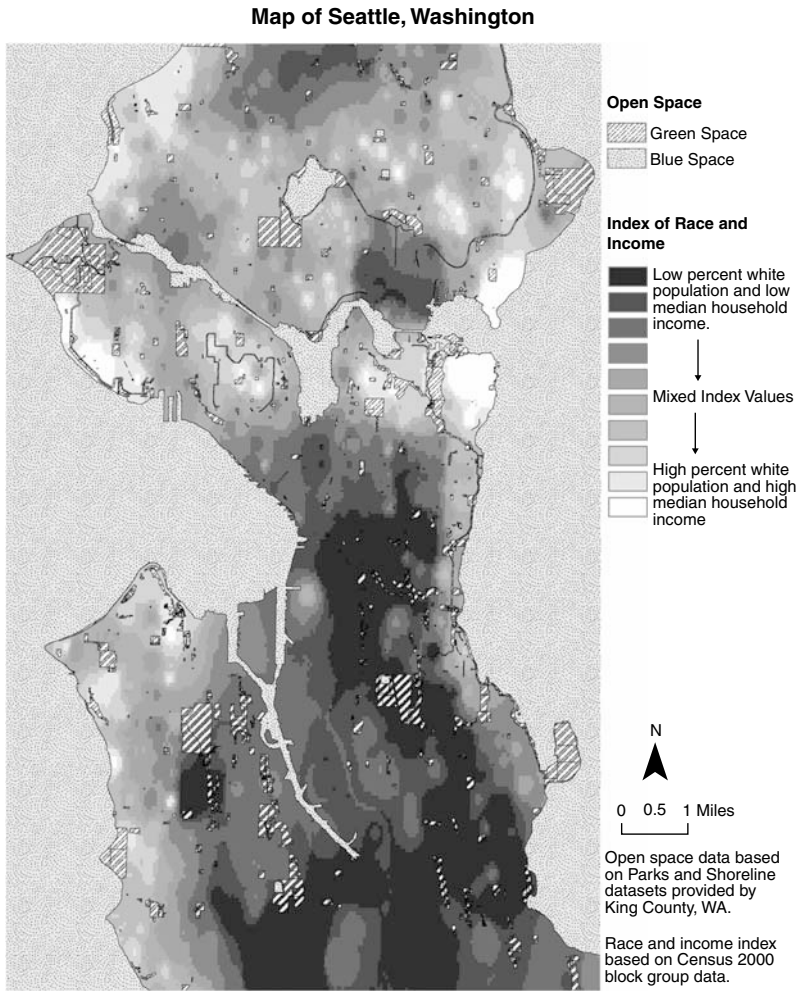

Figure 3.1 Whereas Seattle neighborhoods with close proximity to pristine parks and shorelines are predominantly white and wealthy, neighborhoods with fewer parks and the worst water access have low white population and low household income levels. Map courtesy of Matthew J. Kelley, UW-Tacoma Urban Studies program.

Sound; drawbridges open for passing sailboats while vehicular traffic idles; and rowers glide between the pontoons of highway bridges while cars and trucks speed past. The public dance that takes place on Seattle's inland blue space is no less dramatic than the constant activity on its adjacent open

space, the Burke-Gilman trail; in Gasworks Park, a heavily used 19-acre open space that juts into Lake Union; or in Magnuson Park, a 350-acre open space that occupies a mile of Lake Washington's shoreline. Importantly—similar to the city's inland blue space—these recreational spaces are most accessible to, and heavily used by, residents of the immediately adjacent neighborhoods, which are overwhelmingly white and well-to-do.

The proximity of Seattle's open space to white, affluent neighborhoods is consistent with recent research documenting the relative underperformance of urban open space on issues such as social equity and racial diversity,[13] with some authors suggesting that it frequently functions as a barrier rather than as a link between neighborhoods with different racial, income, and class characteristics.[14] In recent years, these barriers and the inequitable distribution of valuable urban open spaces have gained increasing attention among activists and scholars, who have come to understand the issue as one of environmental justice. Park-poor urban neighborhoods tend disproportionately to be minority, low-income neighborhoods. Problematizing this phenomenon involves an extension and inversion of the classic environmental justice frame, which has historically emphasized the environmental burdens that poor people of color overwhelmingly bear. Bringing open space (green space *and* blue space) into this frame demands that urbanists consider not just the spatial distribution of environmental burdens but also of environmental benefits.

The environmental justice movement emerged in response to the pervasive siting of undesirable land uses (toxic waste sites and polluting industries, for example) in or near minority, low-income neighborhoods.[15] Structural racism underlies the spatial arrangement of these environmental problems, resulting in a disproportionate burden of an urban region's environmental health risks being borne by low-income people of color.[16] However, this movement is not just about a preponderance of environmental burdens in minority neighborhoods; it is also about a relative dearth of environmental benefits, such as parks, open space, recreational amenities, and community gardens.[17] Although exposure to toxins portends dramatic and undeniable negative health effects for urban residents, so too does a lack of restorative, natural, and recreation environments. Open spaces for gathering, sport, unstructured play, reflection, walking, biking, skateboarding, and other forms of nonwork activity support the physical and psychosocial health of urban residents.

Increasingly, government officials and nonprofit leaders recognize that urban green space and greenways should be readily accessible to all citizens as an issue of procedural and distributional justice; the inclusion of blue space in the conceptual lexicon of urban public space demands the same normative, democratic expectation.

The George Pocock Rowing Foundation, which supports access to rowing in Seattle, reflects this environmental justice claim to urban blue space:

> Seattle is a town rich in opportunities for those who love outdoor sports. The city boasts more than 6,200 acres of green space in the metropolitan area. And there is nearly another third of that, more than three square miles, of "blue space," or recreational area for water sports, inside the city limits. . . . Community members who don't have access to this "blue space," actually miss out on significant opportunities.[18]

The environmental justice frame enables an understanding of Seattle's blue space as an "environmental good," a beneficial public resource that is part of the city's designed environment and deeply connected to its ethic of environmentalism and outdoor recreation. Currently, access to Seattle's blue space is effectively delimited along racial and economic lines, through neighborhood residential segregation and through embodied practices related to waterway recreation. This phenomenon serves to racialize the urban public realm and perpetuate patterns of inequity in urban and regional environmental governance. As "perhaps . . . the most ubiquitous [among] the water-based activities one can choose from in Seattle,"[19] rowing provides an excellent case study of how a chronically segregated sport helps to reify racialized social constructions of space.

The Use of Blue Space in Seattle: Rowing as a Case-within-a-Case

Rowing, or "crew" as it is often called, involves a paradoxical tension: a sport pursued on urban waterways around the country, lauded by participants and spectators alike as the epitome of teamwork and collective accomplishment, it simultaneously maintains a racialized white and exclusive identity. In Seattle and other cities, rowing enables the social construction of urban blue space as the purview of the privileged. In this section, I discuss rowing in Seattle as a highly visible use of the city's blue space and consider the barriers to participation in the sport that result from income, location, and race. In examining these barriers—and a programmatic effort to eliminate them—I argue that somewhat contrary to its mythic image of selfless cooperation, rowing illustrates an important mode of producing urban blue space as accessible only to a privileged elite.

Rowing is a highly visible, year-round use of the urban blue space illustrated in figure 3.1 and an important sport in Seattle's high school, collegiate, and Olympic athletic identity. The city's rowing community is a key component of a larger boating community and one of the most

active, populous, and well established in the country. At least eight major boathouses lodge rowing "shells" (or boats), teams, and individual rowers in Seattle.[20] The sport has an active year-round training and competition schedule, which, combined with Seattle's mild coastal climate, ensures that rowers are out on the water by the hundreds in the spring, summer, and fall and in somewhat reduced yet significant numbers in the winter.

The popularity of rowing in Seattle, combined with the city's unique topography, blue space, and roadway networks, means that the sport is visible to citizens when they glimpse the water, whether from the top of a hill or from one of the city's many bridges. The sight of two or three eight-person rowing shells, with a motorized coach's launch in pursuit, is familiar to Seattle residents who cross a central bascule bridge with any regularity. Several times a year, the Seattle rowing community participates in major local races that fill the blue space basin with crews from around the region and the country. The largest of these events, May's Opening Day Regatta, takes place at the Montlake Cut, site of the late-nineteenth-century logging flume between Lake Washington and Portage Bay.

Sponsored by the Seattle Yacht Club,[21] the regatta draws spectators to the shores of the Montlake Cut, Union Bay, and Portage Bay for the official start of the summer boating season. The Windermere Cup, sponsored by Windermere Real Estate Company and hosted by the University of Washington rowing program, starts the day's boating action with eight-person crews from local colleges, universities, high schools, and rowing clubs facing off against invited crews from around the country and even the world. The Windermere Cup is Seattle's largest and most publicized rowing regatta of the year. After the racing, sailboats and yachts, many of which are moored in Seattle's blue space throughout the year, parade through the cut to the sound of bands and spectator cheering. It is a crowded, raucous event: regional boating enthusiasts, local residents, and UW students hungry for the start of spring line up along both sides of the canal, on land, and on a nearby bridge. A party atmosphere prevails, with local media images documenting the costumed revelry of the spectators as well as the physical prowess of the athletes who take part in the morning's rowing duels. The synchronicity and speed of the crews moving through the water is an important part of the spectacle. However, a striking aspect of the rowers' semblance—which has nothing to do with rowing technique—is their white racial homogeneity.

Historically, the predominant barrier to participation in crew for many Americans has been the inaccessibility to educational settings where the sport is learned and practiced. Almost every high school, university, and club rowing team in the country can trace its existence to an avid oarsman from an Ivy League university. In this respect Seattle

is not unique. The first rowing shell in the city is linked to a Yale University graduate in 1893. The UW rowing program—one of the oldest in the country, notable not only for being at a public institution but also for instituting a women's program as early as 1903—was initiated by a native of Ithaca, New York, where the Cornell University crew resides, and coached by a Princeton University graduate.[22] Membership in urban boathouses across the country is typically based on informal networks of former teammates and classmates who come to know each other through university or (usually private) high school rowing experiences. Learning to row is a lengthy, labor-intensive process for both athlete and coach. Until very recently, urban boathouses were exclusively populated by the reliably initiated, with initiation taking place in elite educational settings. Before the introduction of standardized board exams, coeducation, and affirmative action policies, such educational settings were consistently restricted by race, class, and gender; so too, then, were the vast majority of boathouses and urban waterways. Although crew is no longer the sole purview of Anglo-Saxon Protestant men with ties to Ivy League universities, especially given exploding participation among women, state universities, and those with working- and middle-class backgrounds,[23] its white character and elitist social construction persists.

A primary culprit in the sport's persisting white elitism is its cost. At the high school level, where the sport is growing most quickly, rowing can be prohibitively expensive. Program registration, equipment, uniforms, and travel for a high school rower in Seattle is roughly equivalent to the minimum cost of attending community college for one year.[24] This is an unrealistic cost burden for many Seattle teenagers and their families, and those who *can* afford to row are more likely to be white. Consistent with demographic trends across the country, wealth in Seattle is disproportionately concentrated in white households, with poverty disproportionately borne by black, Asian, and Hispanic or Latino/a households,[25] putting rowing out of reach for many youth of color. High school rowing demands significant financial resources, which partially explains the lack of minority youth participation in Seattle and elsewhere.

Another explanation is found in place-based barriers to participation, which can correlate with and extend income barriers. As illustrated in figure 3.1, the location of open space resources such as urban parks and waterways strongly correlates with the presence of white middle-, upper-middle-, and higher-income households.[26] Households close to the water are spatially poised to access programs like youth rowing, and they are the best able to pay for them as well. Physical proximity to blue space does not guarantee accessibility but rather contributes to it. Some low-income and minority South Seattle neighborhoods are geographically close to Lake

Washington and nevertheless face profound social and cultural distances to water-based activities. Rowing and boating facilities are concentrated in or near higher-income enclaves, even if they are on public land. Therefore, it is possible to live relatively close to the water but still be at a great distance from its benefits.

For households that are not immediately adjacent to blue space, the cost of rowing programs can be one of numerous barriers to participation. Wealthy households throughout the city and region can not only afford program fees, but they can also arrange transportation to and from boathouse activities. This is no small feat and generally involves some combination of parent availability, licensed student drivers, personal vehicles, and disposable income for fuel. As the parent handbook for Seattle's publicly supported Green Lake Crew stated, "Unless your teen is able to drive, you will need to arrange transportation to and from Green Lake."[27] In effect, an additional tax on participation is added for those who do not live nearby: the cost of getting to and from practice. For teenagers from regional households with significant financial resources, this may not pose a problem. However for those who might already struggle to pay program costs, the additional transportation costs can be prohibitive.

Although youth rowing programs in Seattle are among the most numerous and well established in the country, they are inaccessible for many high school students because of cost and location barriers that correlate with race. These barriers help perpetuate the sport's predominant whiteness. Another aspect of the sport that may minimize participation by children of color is the requirement in all Seattle youth rowing programs to pass a "float test." Because rowing shells occasionally capsize, as a safety precaution rowers must be able to swim, which poses a problem for the many urban minority youth who do not know how to swim. Controlling for income and education level, urban children of color across the country are less likely to be able to swim than their white counterparts.[28] Thus, urban blue space is inaccessible to citizens of color for reasons that go beyond simple measures of social class and have antecedents in the historical racial segregation of public swimming pools and beaches throughout much of the twentieth century.

As these barriers to participation document, rowing as demanding, synchronized teamwork is only half of the sport's deserved reputation. The other half is expensive, elitist, white. Despite the public nature of the blue space on which it takes place, and despite the fact that many of the nation's most prestigious boathouses sit on publicly owned shoreline properties, rowing's participants remain overwhelmingly Caucasian and upper-middle class.

In 2008 the Seattle-based George Pocock Rowing Foundation acted decisively to address this lack of diversity in the sport and on the city's waterways. Consolidating several existing programs that offered rowing instruction as short-term, after-school, or summer camp options at reduced and subsidized rates, the foundation formed a partnership with the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation and the Mount Baker Boating Advisory Council to create a full-year, competitive, novice rowing program specifically designed to serve South Seattle adolescents. As figure 3.1 indicates, South Seattle has a lower-income, less white population than other parts of the city, with neighborhoods contiguous to blue space; yet its residents are underrepresented in water-based recreation. Participants for this new program, Rainier Valley Rowing, were actively recruited in South Seattle educational, civic, and religious settings. The program offered reduced fees, transportation to and from practice, swimming lessons to prepare for the float test, and tutoring support. However, one of the most difficult barriers to effective recruitment was the persisting perception of the sport as white and elitist.

When African American high school students in South Seattle saw fliers for Rainier Valley Rowing, their reactions were emblematic of the self-reinforcing power of this perception:

> "I figured they'd be…" Hesitating as if searching for diplomatic phrasing but deciding none was to be found, she concludes "white, mostly" (17 year-old female).
>
> "Cost a lot of money, a private-school thing, in a faraway, affluent place" (14 year-old male).[29]

Although rowing in Seattle is in many cases publicly supported,[30] and the sport is an important source of the city's Olympic and intercollegiate athletic pride, many residents do not perceive it as a realistic option. The rowing recruits just quoted articulated this understanding; were they to join the new team, they would be challenging stereotypes of the sport and crossing invisible but potent spatial and social barriers.

Demographic data from the Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center, where Rainier Valley Rowing has been gradually and deliberately integrated into its well-established Mount Baker Junior Crew, help underscore this reality. Last year, the center, which is located between two lakefront neighborhoods in South Seattle, had approximately 120 junior rowers, 8th to 12th graders who hail from over 30 regional middle and high schools.[31] During a time period that included the first spring season and second fall season of Rainier Valley Rowing. junior rowers identified as 77 percent Caucasian, 15 percent Asian, 7 percent black or African American,

3 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent Indian.[32] Even following the inception of the Pocock Foundation's access initiative for South Seattle teens, and despite the demographics of the surrounding neighborhoods, the center remained predominantly white.

The Social Construction of Blue Space: An Embodied Practice of Exclusion

Rowing's barriers to participation have the effect of maintaining a racially exclusive sport on Seattle's waterways. In this section, I discuss the implications of rowing's homogeneity, both for those who participate and for those who do not. First, I elaborate the idea of "embodied practice" as a way of understanding the rowing endeavor. I enlist this concept from philosopher Charles Taylor, who examined the way that sociocultural understandings unconsciously developed through familiar physical action, as opposed to rational thought.[33] I extend the concept of embodied practice to the urban environment in which rowing takes place to emphasize the role of water-based sport in the social construction of Seattle's blue space. Next, I examine the tacit understandings of place that emerge through the embodied practice of rowing: for rowers, a sense of belonging to and in the urban blue space; for others, an experience of physical and mental distance from this highly visible and yet largely inaccessible urban space. Finally, I suggest that these taken-for-granted aspects of the use of Seattle's blue space are only fully exposed by the deliberate creation of rowing programs that seek to overcome barriers to participation for low-income people of color in Seattle.

Seattle's blue space and its boating activities are racialized as white through the accumulation of habituated social practices, physically enacted and reenacted over time such that they come to be understood through implicit, largely unconscious rules as to who belongs.[34] According to Taylor, such rule following is guided by mostly unexamined practical knowledge—learned behaviors, acculturated expectations, and social mores, or what Bourdieu calls the "habitus."[35] Thus, the rules of rowing that construct the urban blue space as a place of privilege are not written policies but rather are physical, spatialized norms that govern access to, and participation in, the sport. They reflect who is able to pay the fees, buy the gear, obtain the coaching, access transportation to and from the facility, feel welcomed at the boathouse, and pass the float test. These are the gatekeeping rules of how rowing is enacted in Seattle and elsewhere; the habitus they rely upon and perpetuate determines who feels "in place" and who feels "out of place" in urban blue space.[36]

The embodiment perspective relies upon a physical account of rule following, in contrast to a written or verbalized one. This distinction is important for the conceptualization of racialized space and social practices,

which would not prove so intractable if rules could be changed with a pen or a policy. Taylor distinguished between rules that are practiced as rational, explicit, intellectualized, and clearly articulated (for example, "people of color shall not row on urban waterways") and those that are experiential, implicit, physically observed and demonstrated, and gradually habituated, if unarticulated verbally (for example, empirically, the Seattle rowing community is white). Taylor argued that rules of the latter kind are overwhelmingly responsible for ordering human social interaction and that social interaction and implicit rule following—including in urban places such as blue space and endeavors such as rowing—are socially constructed and perpetuated through physical actions whose power subsists in their remove from conscious thought.[37]

Embodied practice as an explicitly physical, material account of how humans construct social understandings "runs against the grain of much modern thought and culture, in particular . . . scientific culture and its associated epistemology."[38] Scientific epistemology overemphasizes the agency of rational thought and willful intention and neglects the more deeply embedded, reflexive norms that people act upon, whether they mean to or not. This helps explain how urban spaces and their associated practices continue to be sites of racialized oppression, absent any intent to construct them as such. As spatial scholars like Tim Cresswell (geography) and Setha Low (environmental psychology and anthropology) have argued, the actions of the body in space create powerful place meanings that typically reflect and reinforce broader social structures.[39]

Thus, the social practice of rowing helps to construct both the sport and the blue space as white. Spaces take on meaning and acquire deeply normative values through the social practices that transpire there; they carry assumptions about what happens there, in what ways, and by which people. Because Seattle's waterways do not belong to other citizens in the same immediate, personal, and physical sense that they belong to the athletes who row there, the sport becomes a (tacitly) rule-bound, embodied, habituated social practice of exclusion. Not only does this place not belong to those who do not take part in waterway sports (which might be innocuous enough), but those who do not take part in these sports do not belong in the place. The second formulation—reified through barriers to access based on income, location, and race—is more problematic.

Conceptualizing Seattle's inland-waterway blue space as an urban path provides a further means of considering the implications for citizens without access to the geographic range, physical perspective, aesthetic experience, and opportunities for meaning making that such a path through the city necessarily provides. As articulated by urban planning theorist Kevin Lynch, the path is the most significant design element in the experience

of urban form.[40] As a path through the city's center, the inland waterway shapes a unique and powerful experience of Seattle's unique topographic and hydrologic location. Arguably, to be excluded from such a central urban path experience is analogous to being banned from a major transportation arterial. In Cresswell's terms, implicit exclusion from blue space would mean being "out of place"—either through embodied norms of displacement, in which part of the city's population lacks a means of accessing the waterway, or through a merely proximal awareness, in which citizens are conscious of the waterway and of others being "in place" there while their own physical presence has no embodied practice through which to engage the space.

The pervasive, racialized whiteness of rowing is brought into pronounced relief by the nascent effort in Seattle to diversify the sport through Rainier Valley Rowing, which functions as a breach in established practices. The very process of organizing a program to recruit athletes from the South Seattle community exposes the norms that define the existing practice of rowing on the city's waterways: for instance, having the financial resources to participate, the wherewithal to get to the boathouse every day, and the prerequisite swimming proficiency. Cresswell explored such breaches in established practices of spatial exclusion as "transgressions" and noted, "We may have to experience some geographical transgression before we realize that a boundary even existed."[41] In this case, the year-round presence of Rainier Valley rowers at the Mount Baker boathouse has deliberately illuminated the socioeconomic chasm that has kept Seattle's blue space white for decades.

The Significance of Blue Space for Urban Democracy

The exclusivity of waterway sports such as rowing helps socially construct public blue space as the sole domain of an established urban elite, which has negative implications for its equitable use and potentially for urban democracy and environmental governance. Although this examination of rowing in Seattle considers particularities of a case necessarily bound by its regional location and historic time, it also elucidates a phenomenon faced by water-based cities globally. Urban blue space is a public environmental resource, typically valued by citizens throughout a city and region. Blue space is not an inert element in the urban environment; quite the opposite, its flows and lived connections to residents embed it directly, if deceptively, in their identity and sense of belonging.

Although rowing is not the only means through which citizen activity claims and socially constructs such urban blue space, it is representative of generally exclusive water-based sports and recreation that unofficially

restrict participation by socioeconomic variables such as income, residential location, and race. Along with sailing and powerboating, rowing is an important component of the boating community in Seattle and elsewhere and therefore plays a central role in determining the social meanings associated with urban blue space and its constitution as a place.

Beyond the day-to-day assertion of belonging—or exclusion—that emerges through waterway sports such as rowing, there is also evidence that such endeavors help constitute potent political entities within cities. Place-based affinity and activity groups, such as those focused on recreational activities, are important, powerful mobilization nodes in an era of environmental planning networks characterized by stakeholder groups, mandated citizen participation, and occasionally porous public decision-making processes. In the increasingly decentralized structures of urban and regional environmental governance, place-based citizen groups can wield significant political power. Participation in such groups thus has implications for representation and voice in urban environmental governance, beyond the activity or affinity that ostensibly draws the group together.[42] Thus, not only does the composition of boating communities such as rowing matter for the social construction of urban blue space; it matters in the political ecology of the city and the region.

Finally, an ideal of urban ecological citizenship demands that urbanists take the experience of local green and blue spaces seriously. A communal, civic environmentalism is needed that engages citizens in the collective stewardship of place through local, public, small-scale initiatives.[43] To the extent that it sustains groups of people in common endeavor in the urban outdoors, rowing has the potential to be such an initiative. The inequities that the sport reproduces, then, are both worrisome and instructive. If urban ecological citizenship is to be more than a place-based guild of privileged elites, the embodied practices that construct both the green and blue spaces of cities must become a truly inclusive public realm.

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Notes

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3. Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).
4. Charles Taylor, "To Follow a Rule," in *Philosophical Arguments*, Charles Taylor (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 165–180.
5. Andrew Light, "Urban Ecological Citizenship," *Journal of Social Philosophy* 34 (2003): 44–63.
6. Diane Brand, "Bluespace: A Typological Matrix for Port Cities," *Urban Design International* 12 (2007): 69–85. Brand defined blue space as "a place where (1) a physical space or social activity has an edge condition or adjacency that is coastal; (2) the context is urban in character" (70).
7. Ibid., 69.
8. Ibid., 71.
9. For examples of this phenomenon, see "Philadelphia Green," http://www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org/phlgreen/index.html; the Trust for Public Land's Parks for People program: "Parks for People," http://www.tpl.org/tier2_pa.cfm?folder_id=705; and the U.K.-based organization GreenSpace: "Welcome to GreenSpace Online," http://www.green-space.org.uk/index.php (accessed 31 March 2010).
10. For an overview of the U.S. urban parks movement, see Galen Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982).
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18. See the George Pocock Rowing Foundation Web site: "What is Access Rowing?" (Julian Zimlich, 2008), http://www.pocockrowing.org/access.html (accessed 14 December 2009).
19. Ibid.
20. These include school-based boathouses (at Seattle Pacific University, University of Washington, and Lakeside School) and park-based ones (at Lake Washington, Lake Union, Pocock, Green Lake, and Mount Baker).
21. The Seattle Yacht Club and Windermere Real Estate are significant financial supporters of the Rainier Valley Rowing program discussed later in this section.
22. See "Washington Rowing: 100+ Year History," http://www.huskycrew.com/washington_rowing_history.htm (accessed 11 April 2010).
23. This is largely the result of Title IX of the Education Amendments (1972), which barred discrimination, exclusion, and unequal opportunity on the basis of sex in education programs or activities receiving federal funding.
24. Total 2009–2010 costs at Seattle's Pocock Rowing Center are estimated at about $2,750 per year per rower. Total costs at Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center are estimated at about $2,000 per year. Estimated full-time (12-credit) tuition at Central Seattle Community College is $876 per quarter, or roughly $2,700 per academic year. For cost estimates and comparison data, see "Junior Rowing Programs," http://www.pocockrowingcenter.org/junior-rowing.html (accessed 15 March 2010); "Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center, 2010 *Annual Brochure*, Seattle Parks and Recreation," http://www.cityofseattle.net/Parks/Boats/Mtbaker.htm#junior (accessed 15 March 2010); "Central Seattle Community College Tuition and Fees," http://www.seattlecentral.edu/registration/tuition.php (accessed 17 May 2010).
25. As a measure of income/race inequality in Seattle, I note that the median household income for whites exceeds the median for the city as a whole

($49,667 compared to $45,736), while median income for black ($32,042), Asian ($39,124), and Hispanic or Latino/a ($35,699) households are each significantly below the city average. See "Census 2000 Demographic Profile Highlights," Median Household Income in 1999 Dollars, http://factfinder.census.gov/ (accessed 11 April 2010).

26. According to the last available census data, Lake Washington shoreline neighborhoods are predominantly white, with 1999 median annual household income an average of 20 percent higher than the city average.
27. See "Green Lake Crew," in *Green Lake Crew Handbook*, Seattle Parks and Recreation, 8, http://www.greenlakecrew.org/ (accessed 15 March 2010).
28. In a six-city study of 1,680 school-age students funded by USA Swimming, 57.5 percent of African American respondents were "at risk" for drowning (unable to swim or uncomfortable in the deep end of the pool); similarly, 56.2 percent of Hispanic/Latino/a children were "at risk," whereas just 30.9 percent of Caucasian children were "at risk." See Carol C. Irwin, Richard L. Irwin, Tim D. Ryan, and Joris Drayer, "Urban Minority Youth Swimming (In)ability in the United States and Associated Demographic Characteristics: Toward a Drowning Prevention Plan," *Injury Prevention* 15 (2009): 243–239; also Gitanjali Saluja, Ruth A. Brenner, Ann C. Trumble, Gordon S. Smith, Tom Schroeder, and Christopher Cox, "Swimming Pool Drownings Amongst U.S. Residents Aged 5–24: Understanding Racial/Ethnic Disparities," *American Journal of Public Health* 96 (2006): 728–733.
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31. See "Mount Baker Junior Crew," http://www.cityofseattle.net/Parks/Boats/Mtbaker.htm#junior (accessed 15 March 2010).
32. Demographic data from Seattle Parks and Recreation, "Registration Summary Report, January 1–November 24, 2009, Complex: Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center, Activity: Youth Rowing—Youth Novice or Varsity Crew, Registered Minorities." Some rowers chose more than one "Reported Ethnic Identification," thus total percentages add up to 103 percent.
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34. Ibid., 165, 173.
35. Ibid., 165–168; Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, ed. Richard Nice (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).
36. Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place*.
37. Ibid., 173.
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39. Ibid.; Setha Low, "Embodied Space(s): Anthropological Theories of Body, Space, and Culture," *Space and Culture* 6 (2003): 9–18.
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41. Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place*, 22.
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Chapter Four

Recognizing the Lived Experience of Place: Challenges to Genuine Participation in Redeveloping Public Housing Communities

Lynne C. Manzo

Historically, dominant groups have used the rhetoric of place in the service of certain social agendas, particularly regarding the poor and the minority, as evidenced in the discourse on slum clearance in the 1960s. This rhetoric has emerged anew in the recent discourse on mixed-income housing programs both in the United States and in Western Europe. In the United States, one such federal program, known as HOPE VI, Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere, has advocated for the eradication of "severely distressed" public housing, resulting in the demolition of tens of thousands of public housing units since its inception in 1993. Given that as many as 206 cities across the country have implemented 559 of these redevelopment projects, the magnitude of this program, and its effects on poor communities of color, cannot be understated.

According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which administers the program, HOPE VI has four main goals:

> (1) to improve the living environment for public housing residents of severely distressed public housing projects through the demolition, rehabilitation, reconfiguration, or replacement of obsolete public housing projects; (2) to revitalize sites on which such public housing projects are located and contribute to the improvement of the surrounding neighborhood; (3) to provide housing that will avoid or decrease the concentration of very low-income families; and (4) to build sustainable communities.[1]

The rhetoric in these goals is at once fascinating and ironic, as it is based on assumptions about the social isolation and pathology of the poor,

and it reflects a deep societal ambivalence toward those who are aided by governmental institutions.[2] However, disjunctures between the official rhetoric of "distress" and residents' lived experience of place suggest that these assumptions may be erroneous. Yet they form the basis of policies that have prompted the demolition of hundreds of public housing communities across the nation with a belief that public housing residents' living environments will be "improved" by redeveloping their "distressed" housing and dispersing families into other neighborhoods.

Numerous critical issues are embedded in the HOPE VI program: the intentions and implications of deconcentrating poverty and its attendant issues of power, class, and race; the disparity between the rhetoric of severe distress and people's lived experience of place; the question of the right of original residents to return to the redeveloped site; the degree of latitude that Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) are granted in implementing the program; the degree to which residents have a say in the redevelopment; and the question of whether disrupting the original communities is worth it in the long run.[3] Although a thorough treatment of all these issues goes beyond the scope of this chapter, I wish to emphasize three particular issues here. First, research has raised the question of whether all HOPE VI sites are "severely distressed" and whether the program adequately addresses the implications of disrupting what are, at least in some cases, socially well-functioning communities.[4] Second, HOPE VI has not always benefited original residents, even in sites that were deemed successful. A report summarizing a decade of HOPE VI resident outcomes argued that this "can be partly attributed to *a lack of meaningful resident participation in planning*, and insufficient attention to relocation strategies and services."[5] It is noteworthy, then, that the program mandates resident participation, which raises a third issue: whether genuine participation can be mandated, especially in a situation where the decision to demolish the existing housing and relocate residents is already determined. In such cases, participation is not only perfunctory; it also asks residents to participate in their own erasure from the landscape. Together, these three interrelated issues speak to the urgent need to better understand resident perspectives of their housing and the HOPE VI program and to involve residents in the decision-making process in more meaningful ways.

In this chapter, I first address the importance of place experience and local knowledge, highlighting the disparity between the rhetoric of severe distress and residents' lived experience of place. Then I examine the nature, role, and authenticity of participation in the context of HOPE VI to demonstrate the dire consequences for disenfranchised groups that can result from the disconnect between the lived experience of place and the rhetoric of the dominant discourse and policy. I conclude by arguing that HUD must not only substantially reconsider its conceptualization and

operationalization of participation; it must also go beyond superficial spatial solutions toward a framework that properly reflects the deeper significance and complexity of people-place interrelationships. The importance of these interrelationships repeatedly emerged as my colleague Rachel Kleit and I researched several HOPE VI sites in the Pacific Northwest over the past several years. In this chapter, I examine the value of understanding these interrelationships for fostering genuine participation.

HOPE VI is a particularly useful vehicle for this analysis because it is transforming public housing across the nation and because it has become a lightning rod for debates about poverty, segregation, the right to the city, and participation. Further, HOPE VI is only one of numerous mixed-income housing strategies both in the United States and abroad. Consequently, an examination of this program can shed light on larger issues that other such housing programs raise and reveal how activist researchers and practitioners can help level the playing field so marginalized communities can tell their stories and participate in decision making in a meaningful way.

The Rhetoric of Distress versus the Lived Experience of Place

Given the magnitude of HOPE VI and its potential effect on the lives of so many disenfranchised people, it is critical to understand residents' perspectives on their housing and the redevelopment and relocation PHAs require. Understanding the lived experience of place—the on-the-ground, emplaced perspective of people living their daily lives—necessitates a focus on place meanings, place attachments, and the social processes that give rise to these place meanings.[6] This approach is akin to what anthropologists call the emic, or resident-citizen, perspective and what participatory researchers and practitioners value as local knowledge. It enables an understanding of both the experience of place and of displacement, which, in turn, can offer insights into enhancements—as well as impediments—to resident participation in redevelopment programs like HOPE VI. Given that HUD considers HOPE VI sites severely distressed, it helps to know how residents view their housing and whether their perspective is congruent with this determination. Next, I review how HUD defines severe distress, which raises interesting questions about how housing policy makers view low-income communities.

HUD considers public housing to be severely distressed in the following cases: (a) when it requires "major redesign, reconstruction, or redevelopment, or partial or total demolition, to correct serious deficiencies in the original design"—which includes "inappropriately high population density"; (b) if it is perceived to contribute to the physical decline of, and disinvestment by, the surrounding neighborhood; (c) if it is occupied

predominantly by very low-income families with children, families who have unemployed members, or those who are dependent on various forms of public assistance; (d) if it has high rates of vandalism and criminal activity in comparison to other housing in the area; or (e) if is lacking in sufficient appropriate transportation, supportive services, and economic opportunity.[7] Ironically, these criteria also seem emblematic of communities struggling with institutionalized racism and bias against the poor.

Research on public housing residents' views of their housing, in cases where it meets one or more of the criteria for distress, contrasts sometimes considerably with this designation. Numerous researchers described the communities they studied as places to which residents were attached—as home.[8] In our research we discovered that some residents had lived in their homes for decades and raised their children there. As one elderly resident commented, "I like my home. . . . This is where I want to be when I die."[9] Before demolition some sites were socially vibrant communities where neighbors were richly embedded in place and engaged in an array of

Figure 4.1 A public housing neighborhood in the Pacific Northwest that was designated as severely distressed. Although the local housing authority called for its demolition, this was a community in which the tasks of everyday life unfolded for community members. Photograph courtesy of Lynne C. Manzo.

mutual support activities—sharing food, helping run errands, and looking after each other's houses and children. Even in ethnically diverse neighborhoods where residents spoke dozens of different languages, they still managed to engage in neighboring activities despite language barriers.[10] In fact, in such communities immigrants noted the benefits of having neighbors from the same homeland for maintaining identity, facilitating childcare, and obtaining services. Together, the stories in this research point to the value of "spatial concentration" as a supportive mechanism. Here it becomes clear that these housing communities are not abstracted "projects"—homogenized sites of distress that call for interventions and demolition; they are homes where the tasks of everyday life and the common project of living unfold.[11]

Because the lived experience of place is at once personal and political, it is important to understand how subject positions and places are mutually constituted and linked within and through discourses. That is, place meanings, however private, are nevertheless grounded in a socially constructed, communicated, and negotiated lifeworld—or what Jürgen Habermas called the communicatively rationalized lifeworld.[12] Herein lies the full complexity of place. It is in the nexus of this lifeworld that all the tensions and nuances of place and place meaning are expressed and contested, and it is here their narratives must be interrogated. Here the contrast between richly detailed practical knowledge (residents' perspectives and experiences of their communities) and the simplified accounts of those communities imposed through the agency of state power becomes visible. As John Scott noted, any large social process will inevitably be more complex than the schemata devised to represent it.[13] This observation is particularly true in state-imposed social engineering efforts in which simplified schema are used to impose formal order and rules on the process. However, by themselves, these simplified representations can never reflect the complexities of a functioning community because, even though they are derived from citizen accounts, they do not actually recognize the nuanced informal processes and practical knowledge of citizens.[14]

As I now turn to examine participation in the HOPE VI context, it is helpful to keep this disparity between the lived experience of place and the rhetoric of distress in mind, since it can affect whether and how disenfranchised people participate in their community's redevelopment. Correcting this disparity by learning to appreciate the lived experience of place seems essential to achieving resident participation and moving toward a vision of participation that is more genuinely about social justice. To argue for this change, I first examine the nature of participation as it now exists in the HOPE VI program.

Participation in HOPE VI

HUD requires that PHAs involve current residents in the redevelopment process—in both the development of a new master plan and in discussions of the relocation process. In other words, participation is government mandated. As such, several dimensions of participation warrant examination. In this section, I discuss HUD's participation policies, including its mandated nature, the mechanisms that allow residents to enforce these participation policies, and the extent to which they allow for genuine resident participation. In some ways, this dimension is about the mechanics of making information accessible and the vehicles for opening a dialogue between PHAs and residents. But it also goes well beyond that to fundamental issues of social justice and the degree to which those in power are willing to honor the dignity and rights of low-income communities of color and enable them to have a say in their own lives.

Governmental Perspectives on Participation

In a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA),[15] HUD spelled out expectations for resident participation in redevelopment projects, including the goal of resident participation "to ensure greater accountability and integrity in the provision of assistance," which is indeed laudable. The notice indicated HUD's desire for PHAs to involve residents in a meaningful way; it required that multiple public meetings be held on different days, that they be accessible according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and that they provide daycare, transportation, and interpreters where needed. However, in operationalizing this goal, participation becomes what HUD calls a "threshold requirement"—something that must be met in order for a PHA's application to be considered for funding. This means that PHAs must demonstrate fairly specific plans for participation before it all happens. HUD then evaluates the nature, extent, and quality of resident outreach and involvement using a rating system. Within this rating scheme, a HOPE VI application can be awarded a total of 120 possible points for anything from demonstrating the need for the revitalization and having a sound redevelopment plan to offering relocation and supportive services and involving residents in the process.

Notably, evidence of resident participation only adds four points to a HOPE VI application score. The qualifications for these points are rather precise. For example, one point can be given each for the following: (a) evidence that the PHA has communicated "regularly and significantly" with residents and members of the surrounding community—including evidence of a forum in which residents can contribute recommendations

and opinions; (b) a description of efforts, past and proposed, to make "appropriate HUD communications about HOPE VI" available to affected residents (this could be as simple as providing computer access to the HUD Web site); and (c) a description of plans to provide residents with "reasonable training" on the principles of development, technical assistance, and capacity building "so that residents may participate meaningfully in the development and implementation process."[16] A PHA can also receive one point if it has held "five or more public planning sessions leading to residents' acceptance of the plan."

Although one could see this point system as an indication of HUD's interest in ensuring that the process is inclusive, evidence that participation has occurred requires only signatures on attendance sheets and photographs of residents sitting in meetings at the community gymnasium. Much of what constitutes participation—of what constitutes "regular and significant" communication or "reasonable training"—is left totally open. Defining participation is left to the common sense of politicians, policy makers, and other government agents. Moreover, how is resident input, which may include negative reactions to the dismantling of the existing community, truly taken into account when the aforementioned "five or more planning sessions" earn points only if they lead to resident *acceptance* of the plan? What happens if after five meetings residents still do not accept the plan? This language reflects an approach to participation that seeks to involve people in the decision-making process in order to make it more likely they will accept proposed plans rather than looking for actual input that may inform or challenge the plan. This language also implies that a plan already exists separate from resident input, which is further evidenced by the fact that the PHA applying for a HOPE VI grant also receives a point if its preliminary site design is complete.

Problematizing Mandated Participation

In its report *False Hope*, the National Housing Law Project has pointed out that although HUD's HOPE VI policies appear very supportive of participation on the surface, residents have few mechanisms for actually enforcing these policies. It also points out that HUD has refused to issue regulations, which has frustrated resident participation efforts because no regulations means a lack of rules, and no rules makes knowing how the program operates and holding PHAs accountable for their redevelopment activities all the more challenging.[17] Even though there are grant agreements in HOPE VI, these expressly foreclose third parties from seeking to enforce their terms even regarding participation; that is, HUD spells out residents' participation rights but then denies the possibility of enforcing

these rights.[18] Put another way, although residents are required to participate, they are not given any third-party rights (veto or otherwise).

Moreover, residents are significantly limited as to where in the process they can participate and—because PHAs already do a lot of the decision making before most public meetings ever take place—in the kind of decisions they can make. Furthermore, the already-described NOFA only deals with the application process, meaning that once a HOPE VI project is granted, PHAs have little incentive to comply with promises made to residents or to involve residents after securing their support in the application stage.[19] These constraints raise the most difficult questions of all: What is the point of participation in HOPE VI? Does it create false hope? Is it more to gain acceptance of the program and to quell resistance and disorder? It seems that PHAs managing HOPE VI projects have taken the simplest interpretation of participation—just add people and stir.[20]

Although participation can be inclusive and empowering, in the context of HOPE VI, it is confounded by the disenfranchisement of this particular resident group and the stigma of poverty as evidenced by HUD's definition of severe distress, along with the level of control PHAs have over residents and their history of overlooking individual and collective human agency among public housing residents.[21] As such, HOPE VI policies are part of a larger trend toward more normative, institutionalized participation, which participation researchers and practitioners noted some time ago.[22] This trend begs the question: Can participation be successfully mandated? A mandate would seem to defeat the purpose of participation as conceived by planners and community organizers decades ago—to be transformative and achieve paradigmatic changes in traditional practice by dismantling reliance on the expert and accessing the emic (resident-citizen) perspective.[23] Studies of mandated citizen participation show that historically such mandates do not change the role of groups traditionally excluded from politics. For example, federal policies to encourage citizen input in the urban renewal programs of the 1950s limited residents' input to minor or peripheral issues.[24] A similar dynamic is evident in HOPE VI.

As with the urban renewal programs that preceded it, participation in HOPE VI is problematic because ultimately residents are displaced, yet their input is sought in the development of a community to which they may not be able to return because one-for-one replacement of public housing units is not required. Indeed, residents' willing participation in the redevelopment necessitates their departure. For genuine participation, it is critical for resident-citizens to resist the simplified, formulaic approach imposed by the state and tap into local and divergent practical knowledge.

Challenges to Including Resident Perspectives in Participatory Processes

The aforementioned context suggests three main challenges to greater inclusivity of resident perspectives in the HOPE VI participatory process. In this section, I wish to examine these challenges in an effort to identify ways to counter them.

Communication barriers pose the first challenge, making participation difficult not only in sites that house immigrants and nonnative English speakers but in any HOPE VI site because of the jargon that planners, developers, and designers typically use in the master planning process and public meetings. In the ethnically diverse HOPE VI sites that I have observed, PHAs made considerable efforts to accommodate different languages, offering simultaneous translations in multiple languages at public meetings, but they struggled to get HUD to understand the extent of their need for a translation budget given that residents in just one community spoke 24 different languages. Challenges also arise in terms of translating redevelopment and planning jargon into terms laypeople can readily understand. For example, in the resident meetings to discuss master planning that I witnessed in my research, designers talked about "street vacations," "footpath systems," and "storm water detention." I wondered whether this unique jargon had any meaning for residents when, in the middle of such presentations, invariably a resident would ask when they would have to vacate the premises. Other residents would stand up and say, "These pictures look so beautiful; I hope I have a chance to live here." Apparently, other more pressing issues like relocation and the right to return seemed to be on residents' minds more than footpath systems and storm water management.

Power differentials between PHAs and residents pose the second challenge to genuine participation. PHAs preemptively make critical decisions about whether to redevelop a site without giving residents much opportunity for input on those decisions. Moreover, residents are well aware that PHAs have the power to decide their fate in terms of whether and when they must relocate and whether and when they can return to the redeveloped site. For immigrants and refugees, their previous experiences with dictatorships and governmental corruption in their homelands amplifies this power differential, making it that much less likely they will voice any skepticism or resistance.

The fact that participation is based on prior decisions about what issues should receive resident input and what decisions are beyond their purview also evidences power differentials. For example, in one case residents wanted their community to be redeveloped in a greater number of stages so they could make on-site transfers as new housing got built, but the engineers

had already determined that staging was impossible because of problems with utilities and cost. In this case, technical expertise and cost assessments trumped local knowledge and desires. At the same time, those in power reiterated local concerns and knowledge back to the residents as a rhetorical device to affirm that the PHA has been listening. As one PHA staff member declared to residents in a public meeting, "You all have the hardest job of all in the process—moving!" Although such statements acknowledge the dislocation residents face, they ignore the fact that PHAs impose this displacement on residents without their full consent. This excerpt from an interview with one resident illustrates the effect of these strategies on residents' interpretation of the necessity for redevelopment and relocation:

A: It's difficult to even think about it, and I'm trying very hard not to be negative, 'cause I know this is a good thing for everybody, but selfishly I don't want it [the redevelopment] to happen, but I know it needs to happen.
Q: You know, the things that you have to say are really useful to hear because it's about how to make the process better, and it could be addressed in other HOPE VI projects down the line, then it might help the housing authorities learn.
A: But they can't. It's a personal issue, an internal struggle. It's gonna be done, it's got to be done. Like I said, that they've already going that extra mile, providing what they can to help people move. And giving them the options and choices. Like, OK, this is good. And that makes it seem like someone sat down and thought about this whole thing, and really took to heart that people were going to suffer from moving. So it's like, now you're stuck having to deal with your anxiety, 'cause they've done all they can do.

In this comment, the resident tried to come to terms with involuntary relocation, disinvesting the PHA of institutional responsibility as she struggled to take full personal responsibility for being unwilling and unhappy to move. Here, an individual sense of agency emerged yet was stifled by a process that does not allow its full expression.

The challenges to resident participation that power differentials create are also evident in cases in which residents agree with whatever the PHA tells them because they feel they have no choice but to comply. For some, especially elderly immigrants and refugees, it seems too risky to ignore the landlord's request for attendance at meetings, particularly when the landlord is the government. As one Cambodian refugee commented, "We can't order them. It's up to them. Because we are average people, in whatever condition they allow us to live is up to them. It's up to people at the top—high ranking officers." Another resident refugee summed it up with a Cambodian proverb: "Their boat is long and ours is short."

Clearly, cultural diversity presents challenges not only in bridging cultural difference but in addressing the social inequality that often accompanies difference.[25] The task is to figure out both how to accommodate difference and reduce social exclusion. As Leonie Sandercock argued, "We need to acknowledge the many ways of knowing that exist in culturally diverse populations to inform practice."[26] The inclusion of multiple worldviews is essential to an inclusive participatory process, which in turn helps secure the social justice that poor communities of color struggle to achieve in the face of institutionalized racism.

Finally, both HUD and individual PHAs overlook residents' lived experience of place and of the redevelopment, posing a third challenge of participation that indicates lack of respect for local knowledge and low-income people's right to make decisions based on that knowledge. Recognition of residents' perspective—the emic or resident-citizen perspective—is vital not only for genuine participation[27] but also for appreciating the sense of agency of people who are otherwise seen as pawns in a larger game. Policy makers and PHAs must understand not only the meanings of residents' housing community but also how residents negotiate different messages from the outside about their housing (in contrast to their own experience) and how residents make sense of the redevelopment and what PHAs tell them about the process. The human agency of residents—and its potential for resistance—is evident in their choice (however minimal) to become involved in the redevelopment or not and in the mechanisms they use to make sense of the redevelopment and the necessity to move.

This oversight of the resident perspective is also evident in the scholarly discourse on HOPE VI. Although the literature on the lived experience of place has great potential to inform housing studies in general, and HOPE VI in particular, it has been underutilized. Additionally, an understanding of resident agency, individual and collective, remains largely invisible in the research.[28] Yet these areas of research can, and should, inform the program. In fact, the very focus of HOPE VI research is largely to determine whether the program adequately addresses people's needs and contributes to their well-being. A more careful inclusion of the lived experience of place will enable policy makers to make more informed decisions about whether and how to redevelop housing for the poor and how to facilitate genuine participation.

Visioning Participation

Thus far, I have characterized simplified, bureaucratic notions of participation in HOPE VI as being at odds with genuine participation. So what constitutes genuine participation? Much has been written about this in social science,

planning, and design literature over the past 50 years.[29] Genuine participation has at its core the principles of representation, social responsiveness, reflexivity, care, recognition of the human agency of individual citizens, and, of course, social justice. It is about capacity building that uses community assets to achieve positive community change and, in doing so, combats the exploitation of ordinary citizens through bureaucratic structures and processes.[30]

Genuine participation is crucial to combat institutionalized racism and class bias against poor communities of color because injustice is not solely based on inequitable distribution but on a lack of recognition of group difference. If group difference exists and is attached to oppression and privilege, as Iris Marion Young argued, then social justice requires an examination of those differences to undermine their effect.[31] Recognition (through participation and other processes) is an essential part of social justice as a lack of recognition devalues people at both the individual and cultural level, damaging not only oppressed communities but also the image of those communities in the larger cultural and political realm.[32] Thus, "democratic and participatory decision making is both an element of, and condition for, social justice."[33]

Genuine participation presupposes a commitment to a set of values that takes an understanding of place meanings to a new level of political engagement—for example, by shifting the locus of power between resident-citizens and state agents one can transform redevelopment processes by including local knowledge and concerns in a more effective and just manner. As much as some scholars and practitioners of participation have remained vigilant against pseudoparticipation, transgressions against the true spirit of the approach—such as co-opting participatory processes for entrepreneurial gains or provoking NIMBY (not in my backyard) responses among those more privileged and familiar with local political processes—remain regular occurrences, particularly as participation itself has become institutionalized.[34]

To combat such trends in HOPE VI, residents must have enforceable rights of participation at every stage of the redevelopment process. HUD must give actual substance to its endorsement of resident participation, and these rights must extend beyond the application stage into all phases of the redevelopment.[35] In addition, as John Scott pointed out, it is critical to devise strategies that favor reversibility—that is, interventions that can be undone if they turn out to be mistakes. Although this might seem radical, it could minimize the continued disenfranchisement of already marginalized people. Scott argued that creating plans that begin with the premise of incomplete knowledge and then seek local, practical knowledge to inform practice could promote the individual and collective agency that is essential to genuine participation.

A more thoughtful consideration of residents' views and experiences as well as clearer policies about what constitutes participation in the context of HOPE VI are essential if participation is mandated. Both HUD and individual PHAs must substantially reconsider their conceptualization of participation, and residents must interrogate the assumptions underlying participation and the effort to mandate it. This includes careful consideration of when residents get involved and what issues fall within their purview. Residents must participate in the earliest, most critical decision-making phases—in determining the potential for rehabilitation rather than demolition—and in determining policies for relocation and the right to return.

In the context of HOPE VI, the need for participation is urgent because residents of these communities are among the nation's poorest and most vulnerable people—those who are continually marginalized and excluded. Perhaps to compensate for the displacement imposed on poor households, HUD requires evidence of resident participation in order for a PHA to receive a redevelopment grant. However no matter what the level of participation, the fact remains that residents' housing is being demolished, and they are being forced to relocate. What good is participation if the biggest decision—whether to choose wholesale demolition or not—is already decided? If residents are not part of that early decision, and instead are merely informed that they have to move, then resident input has limited value. Genuine participatory processes allow citizens to challenge proposals and plans even if this means conflict among various stakeholders. After all, conflict is the result of an involved citizenry even though it can make developing consensus more challenging.

The same holds true regarding the right of original residents to return to the redeveloped site. If participation does not include allowing residents a stronger voice—or vote—in developing the PHAs' return policies, it is of limited value. It is this very limitation that has sparked tenant organizing in some HOPE VI sites around displacement and one-for-one replacement of subsidized units. In San Francisco, tenants organized not only around one-for-one replacement but also to create a plan for cooperative ownership. Whereas the latter proposal was flatly refused by the PHA, tenants won on the replacement issue.[36] Genuine participation around these fundamental questions could have precluded time-consuming and costly lawsuits, although in the given context of class and race bias, these moments of resistance play an essential role in the continuing struggle toward social justice.

Beyond HOPE VI toward Emplaced Participation

The disconnect between the rhetoric of state agents and policy makers on the one hand and public housing residents' actual lived experience of place

on the other is not unique to the HOPE VI program or the United States. The same discourse and dynamics are evident in social housing in Western Europe. In Scandinavia, for example, scholars have noted that "the public definition of housing problems is partly independent of what residents think."[37] This has led to fractured images of social housing sites, where the internal experience among residents and the external perceptions of outsiders are disjointed.[38] Indeed, research on social housing in Belgium shows that, much like residents in HOPE VI sites in the United States, most tenants feel quite positively about their neighborhood and do not plan on leaving it in the near future.[39] In contrast, the popular image and policy discourse of the social rental sector views this housing as a "dreadful enclosure" where "incapable tenants" reside.[40] A Belgian commission, much like the one that precipitated HOPE VI in the United States, issued a report containing technical and architectural proposals to address the housing problems it identified.[41] Such strategies, wherever they are employed, seek superficial spatial solutions to larger, more complex social issues.

Although HOPE VI is being superseded by the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, this and other housing programs and policies both in the United States and abroad continue to emphasize income mixing and dispersal of poor communities. This trend reflects a neoliberal emphasis on free market enterprise and the power of the state to strategize urban development and reimage the city as a safe zone for the middle class and elites.[42] Despite the fact that these strategies appear to be place-based solutions, they fall far short of a truly emplaced approach to urban redevelopment because of a limited understanding of place phenomena and human-environment relationships. The understanding of place and people-place relations reflected in such strategies suggests place either as an inert backdrop to social relations, a container of demographics, or as having an exclusively instrumental capacity (that is, as enabling or constraining interaction and behavior).[43] However, these approaches to place overlook the deeper significance of human-environment relations and limit our capacity to understand how people invest everyday environments with symbolic and personal meanings. Dispersal, then, is "a form of 'dislocation'... that violates shared constructions of place and the forms of located subjectivity that they help to maintain."[44]

Programs like HOPE VI—and the mandated participation that is not only part of this dispersal program but has historically been part of HUD's subsidized housing programs—create a reorganization of space and place that transforms boundaries in ways that can further alienate already disenfranchised people. But if policy makers and researchers take the lived experience of place—and the lived experience of displacement—into consideration, they can better understand how people make sense of their environments and enable "new kinds of encounter and co-presence"[45] to

become possible. That, in turn, would facilitate an expression of the full human agency of the poor communities of color that are most directly affected by such dispersal programs. Shared place attachments have emancipatory potential and offer a foundation for collective agency through a better understanding of the emplaced lifeworld.[46] Personal and institutional perspectives must be examined together to better understand the dynamics of participation and its liberating potential for all involved citizens.

Notes

1. These goals were stated in U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "FY 2008, Notice of Funding Availability for HOPE VI Revitalization Grants," (accessed 17 March 2010).
2. For analysis of assumptions about the poor embedded in U.S. housing policy, see William J. Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass and Public Policy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987); see also Sudhir Ventakesh, *The American Project* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); and Lawrence Vale, *From the Puritans to the Projects: Public Housing and Public Neighbors* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).
3. A huge body of literature has amassed on these various dimensions of HOPE VI and on mixed-income housing strategies in general, the proper treatment of which goes beyond the scope of this paper. The Urban Institute has been reporting data on HOPE VI evaluations since its involvement in HOPE VI research in the 1990s. For a recent review of mixed-income strategies overall, see Mark Joseph, Robert Chaskin, and Henry Webber, "The Theoretical Basis for Addressing Poverty through Mixed-Income Development," *Urban Affairs Review* 42 (2007): 369–409.
4. See especially Lynne Manzo, Rachel Kleit, and Dawn Couch, "'Moving Once Is Like Having Your House on Fire Three Times': The Experience of Place and Displacement Among Residents of a Public Housing Site," *Urban Studies* 45 (2008): 1855–1878; Karen Gibson, "The Relocation of the Columbia Villa Community: Views from Residents," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 27 (2007): 5–19; Larry Bennett, Janet Smith, and Patricia Wright, *Where Are Poor People to Live?: Transforming Public Housing Communities* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2006).
5. Susan Popkin, Bruce Katz, Mary K. Cunningham, Karen D. Brown, Jeremy Gustafson, and Margery A. Turner, *A Decade of HOPE VI: Research Findings and Policy Challenges* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, May 2004); emphasis mine.
6. Lynne Manzo, "Beyond House and Haven: Toward a Revisioning of Place Attachment," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 23 (2003): 47–61.
7. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "FY 2008."
8. Manzo et al., "Moving Once"; Gibson, "The Relocation of the Columbia Villa Community"; and Bennett et al., *Where Are Poor People to Live?*

9. This and all other resident quotes in this chapter are drawn from research conducted by the author and Rachel Kleit as part of an evaluation of a HOPE VI redevelopment project. It included a survey with all heads of household (n=512) and in-depth interviews with a sample of 75 heads of household, all before redevelopment. This quote is from one of those interviews. Further details are withheld to protect the anonymity not only of residents but of the site and community.
10. Manzo et al., "Moving Once."
11. Ibid.
12. David Butz and John Eyles, "Reconceptualizing Senses of Place: Social Relations, Ideology and Ecology," *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography* 79 (1997): 1–25, citing Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Beacon Press, Boston, 1984).
13. John C. Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999).
14. Ibid.
15. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "FY 2008."
16. Ibid.
17. National Housing Law Project, Poverty and Race Research Action Council, Sherwood Research Associates, and Everywhere and Now Public Housing Residents Organizing Nationally Together (ENPHRONT), *False HOPE: A Critical Assessment of the HOPE VI Public Housing Redevelopment Program* (Oakland, CA: National Housing Law Project, 2002).
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Lawrence Vale, *Reclaiming Public Housing: A Half Century of Struggle in Three Public Neighborhoods* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).
21. Lawrence Vale, "Empathological Places: Residents' Ambivalence Toward Remaining in Public Housing, *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 16 (1997): 159–175.
22. Randolph Hester, "A Refrain with a View," *Places* 12 (1999): 12–25; Mark Francis, "Proactive Practice: Visionary Thought and Participatory Action in Environmental Design," Paper presented to the Environmental Design Research Association (Montreal, Canada, May 1997).
23. Lynne Manzo and Nathan Brightbill, "Toward a Participatory Ethics," in *Participatory Action Research Approaches and Methods: Connecting People, Participation and Place*, eds. Sara Kindon, Rachel Pain, and Michael Kesby (London: Routledge, 2008), 33–40.
24. Marilyn Gittell, "The Consequences of Mandating Citizen Participation," *Policy Studies Review* 3 (1983): 90–95.
25. Leonie Sandercock and Peter Lyssiotis, *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities in the 21st Century* (New York and London: Continuum, 2003).
26. Leonie Sandercock, *Towards Cosmopolis: Planning for Multicultural Cities* (Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, 1998), 5.
27. See especially Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995); and David

Schlossberg, "Reconceiving Environmental Justice: Global Movements and Political Theories," *Environmental Politics* 13 (2004): 517–540.

28. With the notable exceptions of work by Vale, *Reclaiming Public Housing*; and Sudhir Ventakesh, *American Project: The Rise and Fall of a Modern Ghetto* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).
29. See especially the writings of John Forrester, Henry Sanoff, and Randolph Hester.
30. Henry Sanoff, *Community Participation Methods in Design and Planning* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2000).
31. Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).
32. Schlossberg, "Reconceiving Environmental Justice."
33. Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, as quoted in Schlossberg, "Reconceiving Environmental Justice," 519.
34. Hester, "A Refrain with a View."
35. National Housing Law Project et al., *False HOPE*.
36. James Tracy, "Tenant Organizing Wins One-for-One Replacement," *Shelterforce Online* 109 (2000), http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/109/organize.html (accessed 17 March 2010).
37. Ingrid Sahlin, "From Deficient Planning to 'Incapable Tenants': Changing Discourses on Housing Problems in Sweden," *Scandinavian Housing and Planning Research* 13 (1996): 167–181, as quoted in Pascal de Decker and Isabelle Pannecoucke, "The Creation of the Incapable Social Tenant in Flanders, Belgium: An Appraisal," *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 19 (2004): 294, printed in the Netherlands.
38. Jo Dean and Annette Hastings, *Challenging Images: Housing Estates, Stigma, and Regeneration* (Bristol, UK: The Policy Press, 2000); Frank Wassenberg, "Large Social Housing Estates: From Stigma to Demolition?" *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 19 (2004): 223–232, printed in the Netherlands.
39. Isabelle Pannecoucke, Veerle Geurts, Rudi Van Dam, Pascal de Decker, Luc Goossens, and Bea Cantillon, *Profiel van de Sociale Huurder en Subjectieve Beleving van de Realisaties van de Sociale Huurders* (Antwerpen, Belgium: OASeS en CSB, UFSIA-Universiteit, 2001).
40. Sahlin, "From Deficient Planning."
41. Ibid.
42. Jeffrey Crump, "Deconcentration by Demolition: Public Housing, Poverty, and Urban Policy," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20 (2002): 581–596.
43. John Dixon and Kevin Durrheim, "Dislocating Identity: Desegregation and the Transformation of Place," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 24 (2004): 455–473.
44. Ibid., 456.
45. Ibid.
46. David Butz and John Eyles, "Reconceptualizing Senses of Place."

Chapter Five

Beyond Insiders and Outsiders: Conceptualizing Multiple Dimensions of Community Development Stakeholders

Linda Hurley Ishem

Following decades of neglect and disinvestment, urban neighborhoods historically identified as African American enclaves continue to evolve and encounter novel challenges. These communities—once marginalized and highly associated with drugs, blight, and chronic unemployment—were until recently neighborhoods of confinement, inhabited primarily by those unable to escape. Rapid population growth, global demographic trends, housing market crises, and evolving attitudes about the benefits of suburban living, however, are prompting dramatic neighborhood change. As undervalued, underutilized neighborhoods close to central business districts, black neighborhoods are on the front lines of the contest for upscale residential development and gentrification.[1] No longer communities of confinement, they are becoming communities of choice.

Contestation over increasingly desirable inner-ring neighborhoods pits the interests of longtime residents against those of recent arrivals. African American residents find themselves competing against, and coexisting with, no fewer than three categories of neighborhood newcomers. First, newcomers from trouble spots in the global south, particularly South Asia, Latin America, and East Africa, pursue these historic immigrant settlement communities. Second, young professionals and empty nesters of all races favor their trendy new residential developments, built with record private investment largely in response to a nationwide urban renaissance and antisprawl sentiment.[2] Third, first-time buyers, urban pioneers, and bargain hunters seek out their foreclosed properties courtesy of the mortgage and subprime lending crises that are disproportionately affecting

African American neighborhoods. Additionally, record gas prices, shrinking family sizes, and the prospect of extraordinary returns on investments on soft property in gentrifying neighborhoods conspire to create a dynamic environment while presenting novel challenges for their mostly poor and working-class African American residents.

Stakeholders in contested transitional neighborhoods are often reduced to dichotomous classifications resulting in white/black, rich/poor, and middle-class/working-class binaries that reinforce commonly held stereotypes. While binary representations help manage and simplify complexity, they simultaneously ascribe status, shape identities, and polarize groups. A/not-A classifications are infused with social and historical meanings that privilege one group at the expense of its opposite, effectively reinforcing social stereotypes and inequities.[3] Furthermore, binaries magnify tensions by emphasizing differences between groups while eliminating the vast variation, diversity, and multiple dimensions that represent social identities, between and within groups. Yet for the last two decades, community development literature has offered bifurcated representations of stakeholders in inner-city neighborhood development. Most often represented as insiders and outsiders, or experts and novices, such depictions emphasize polarizing tensions and conflicting interests,[4] making consensus among stakeholders elusive. Upon closer examination, these dichotomous representations seem seriously flawed in their reductive conceptualization of community stakeholders, their interests, and their perspectives.

In this chapter, I explore the literature's characterization of insider/outsider tension through a case study that investigated the attitudes of participants in a design workshop for a new cultural facility in a gentrifying African American community. To be located in an abandoned school building, the facility was in its early stages of development, allowing an opportunity for stakeholder input during the design workshop. Given the neighborhood's changing demographics, I wanted to know how participants perceived their own and other participants' status as stakeholders in the proposed facility. That is, I wanted to know who varied participants thought should have a say in the facility's design. The case study is a compelling one, not only because it provides insights into understanding how various interest groups perceive themselves and others, but because the facility itself—a *cultural* facility—stirred tensions that go to the heart of community change. It took shape after a long history of race/class conflict and abandonment by elected officials and private investors. The process of envisioning the new facility brought into sharp relief questions about what the future cultural identity of this historic African American community should be, given the rapid gentrification and displacement occurring there. Being able to engage stakeholders in addressing such questions is key to

facilitating community change in accordance with best practices in community development.

To begin, I provide a framework for examining community stakeholders' participation in relation to the insider/outsider binary. Moving beyond theory, I describe the case study in three parts, first explaining the historical and current circumstances surrounding the new facility, then providing a description of the stakeholders and their views on who had a right to decide its future development. I conclude with lessons learned about achieving inclusive participation in the development of multicultural communities.

The Ideal of Inclusive Participation in Community Development

Community development is a complex enterprise that involves a wide assortment of actors, including many from outside the neighborhood, such as elected officials, city planners, architects, and contractors. Additionally, urban revitalization is increasingly funded through private-public partnerships owing in part to retrenchment of federal funding, to adoption of neoliberal free market principles that privatized many public services, and to private investors' pursuit of extraordinary returns on investment.[5] New stakeholders accompany the shift in funding, adding another layer to the complex array of neighborhood residents and the many nonresident stakeholders involved in redevelopment initiatives.

Given the complexity of the task and the diversity of stakeholders, inclusion is a fundamental principle of the community development best practice known as "equitable development." Inclusion requires participation and representation by a full spectrum of community development stakeholders.[6] Most importantly, it requires meaningful participation that values neighborhood residents' vernacular knowledge, lived experience, and profound investment in their respective neighborhoods. Accordingly, equitable development encourages, supports, and elevates residents to leadership roles in determining the processes and the outcomes of change initiatives. Inclusion ensures that initiatives are grassroots-driven from inception to finish. Additionally, in recognition of the transience and mobility of individuals as well as the ways in which regional and local issues influence one another, inclusion extends to interested parties at a broader regional level. For example, former residents currently living in neighboring suburbs may have familial, cultural, institutional, and emotional connections to gentrifying inner-city communities.

In the context of equitable development, inclusion is comprehensive and multidimensional, encompassing not only who participates but also the nature and extent of their involvement. Inclusion covers the scope and

scale of neighborhood change, examining the causes, consequences, and remedies for neighborhood conditions. Proponents of equitable development assert that efforts to transform urban neighborhoods must simultaneously address short- and long-term physical, social, economic, and political factors at the local, the regional, and possibly the national levels.[7] Furthermore, inclusion values and accommodates different styles, methods, and ways of knowing because stakeholders from varied backgrounds possess different levels of expertise, experience, and preparation. From the perspective of equitable development, grassroots, common-sense, and vernacular knowledge are as valid as empirical, expert, and professional knowledge.

Inclusion goals notwithstanding, community development literature further suggests that escalating tensions between stakeholders characterized as insiders and outsiders may be an inevitable by-product of competing interests. Further, these tensions may diminish participation by key stakeholders, resulting in suboptimal outcomes. Before turning my attention to examining tensions, I will first summarize literature that defines insiders and outsiders.

Conventional Definitions of Insiders and Outsiders

Conventionally, the words "insider" and "outsider" carry spatial connotations suggesting that neighborhood residents are insiders and nonresidents are outsiders. In this context the insider/outsider binary would distinguish exclusively between those residing within and outside transitional neighborhoods. However, the literature points to numerous alternative manifestations of insiders and outsiders based on when, how, and by whom various stakeholders are categorized, with the distinctions that constitute each group being entirely subjective and circumstantial. Place of residence represents one dividing line, but others can include occupational status, race and ethnicity, economic class, age, gender, national origin, length of residence, or homeownership status—all of which affect access to power and influence. As the lens changes, so do characterizations of insiders and outsiders.[8]

Although demonstrating sensitivity to these nuances and acknowledging many possible categories of insiders and outsiders, the literature most often characterizes insiders as neighborhood residents. Until recent demographic shifts, insiders of urban neighborhoods were predominantly black, unskilled, poor or working class, and considered marginalized, subordinate citizens. Outsiders were nonresident stakeholders with an interest in the community change process, including representatives of funding agencies, philanthropists, city planners, developers, architects,

academics, elected officials, and business leaders. Outsiders were typically wealthy, influential, white, male, and professional. Not only do these two categories of stakeholders differ demographically; they also possess fundamentally different perspectives. Tension, conflict, and misunderstandings were likely as residents pursued an agenda that served their interests, despite their simultaneous dependence upon the resources and goodwill of external stakeholders with their own vision, priorities, and interests.[9]

For the past two decades, community change scholars and practitioners have acknowledged tensions inherent in the insider/outsider binary. As with most dichotomous representations, neighborhood insider/outsider categories are likewise infused with social and historical meaning—intrinsically imbalanced and tied to issues of race and power.[10] Whiteness, the presumed outsider, is equated with power; blackness, the presumed insider, is equated with dependence. Historically, nonresident whites had the power to allocate resources and influence the outcomes of community initiatives. Conversely, resident blacks and other disenfranchised inhabitants were the antithesis: no resources, no influence. Hence, by extension, personal characteristics—race, place of residence, and resources—got bundled, stereotyped, and reduced to individuals' status as insiders or outsiders. Specifically, insiders were stereotyped on the one hand as the people most knowledgeable about neighborhood conditions and most directly affected by proposed development; they were primarily, though not exclusively, African American and other disenfranchised neighborhood residents who lacked the necessary development resources. Outsiders on the other hand were stereotyped as primarily white nonresident stakeholders, including individuals and institutional elites who had the financial, political, or academic clout to bring about community change.

Thus, literature from the field of community development defines participation in ways that compel meaningful stakeholder involvement in all phases of development. Yet it also characterizes stakeholders as insiders or outsiders, largely relying on one, or a conflation, of three factors: race, residence, and resources that confer power and influence. This disjuncture in community development's theoretical foundation led me to wonder whether residents who participated in the design workshop would perceive the other stakeholders of the cultural facility in equally simplistic and possibly in binary terms. Given their historic exclusion from grassroots involvement, would they even express an expectation for meaningful inclusion in the design process? Because community change and development literature describes the insider/outsider tension in theoretical terms, the case study attempted to confirm empirically the nature of community change tensions on the ground, assessing neighborhood stakeholders'

perceptions of their own and others' status as insiders and outsiders and as meaningful participants in the community change process.

Seattle's Central District: A Case Study in Stakeholders

The case study neighborhood is located in Seattle in a place referred to as the Central District where, at the time of the study, the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle (ULMS) was initiating redevelopment of the long-abandoned Colman School. Specifically, ULMS planned to adapt the building for commercial and residential use, anchoring it with an African American museum. The history of Seattle's Central District (CD) is reminiscent of other northern inner-city neighborhoods; as is true nationally, the forces of demographic change and gentrification were unmistakable at the time of the study. A general sense of nervousness and distrust prevailed among African American residents at the prospect of losing their place in the community. Importantly, an African American museum had long been envisioned by longtime black residents, who believed it should become a lasting symbol of the community's black heritage. Yet by the time the facility was finally coming to fruition, many other stakeholders had materialized.

Evolution of a Multicultural Community in Transition

The CD has been Seattle's recognized black community since the late 1800s. However, the local black population remained negligible at less than 1 percent until the World War II era, when migration from the South and Midwest resulted in a total representation of 4 percent. Although the neighborhood would remain multiracial with blacks making up fewer than half its residents, discriminatory policies and practices confined over 80 percent of Seattle's black residents to this four-square-mile neighborhood.[11] Although few blacks gained employment in the region's dominant natural resource and transportation industries, they found plentiful employment in service and unskilled labor positions. Despite evidence of increasing racial antagonism, relative to other cities, race relations were decent and the city earned a reputation as liberal, racially tolerant, and welcoming to black migrants.

Exponential population growth from 1941 to 1960 precipitated severe overcrowding in the CD and intensified discrimination in housing and employment. Although the suburbs were expanding, restrictive covenants and other practices confined blacks to the least desirable sections of the CD. Employment segregation exacerbated poverty and unemployment, while suburbanization triggered a period of urban disinvestment and incipient

economic decline. Expanded white and, eventually, black middle-class flight to the suburbs further isolated and concentrated poor blacks in the CD. Eminent domain "takings" for urban renewal and highway construction threatened the social and spatial configuration of the CD and aggravated its housing shortage.[12] Whereas one highway expansion project divided the neighborhood into northern and southern sections, a planned but never constructed second highway would have created an east/west divide the full length of the neighborhood.[13] Resulting decline escalated tensions among blacks by class, as well as between blacks and other resident racial groups. Today, some 50 years later, within- and between-group tensions are heightened once again, as neighborhood change in the form of new interest and investment has transformed the CD into a neighborhood of choice for a variety of newcomers.

A Controversial Project

The case study at the center of this chapter draws from interviews with participants in a design workshop to generate ideas for redeveloping the Colman School as an African American museum. A centrally located landmark building constructed in 1909, the school had enrollments that reflected shifting neighborhood demographics. Before World War II, students were primarily European immigrants, Jewish, and Japanese, but by 1960 the student body was predominantly African American. The school closed in 1979 because of an aggressive school desegregation program that sent black students to distant schools rather than bringing white students to the CD. Around the same time, planned highway construction further fractured the community as it demolished hundreds of homes, dislocated residents and businesses, divided the community, and separated the school building from its neighborhood context. Seated at the crest of a hill in the center of the CD, surrounded by large expanses of property vacated for highway construction, its prominent geographic locale and Jacobean-style architecture made the building a neighborhood icon. For many current and former residents, it was a symbol of former glory, recalling its mostly African American teachers, administrators, and students, including some who gained national prominence. At the same time, its disrepair symbolized dreams deferred, broken promises, and neighborhood abandonment.[14]

Community activists proposed developing a museum at Colman as early as 1981. Four years later, frustrated at the lack of action and demolition threats, members of the group occupied the building in protest.[15] The controversial occupation ended eight years later when police forcibly removed the activists, who were heroes to some and lawbreakers to others in the community. During the eight-year occupation, much of the

community united behind the vision for a museum, yet over the years the various constituents achieved little agreement on strategies to achieve the goal and some still disagreed on the goal itself. Unexpectedly, however, the project gained momentum in 2001 during a period of escalating neighborhood gentrification when the school board agreed to sell the building. At the time of this study, ULMS was fund-raising, organizing support for the project, and seeking ideas on how to reconnect the building to its surrounding community. With upscale residential and commercial development causing mounting anxiety, an African American museum in this iconic building would be a symbolic reminder of the enduring presence of blacks in the CD. In search of affordable input on an urban design strategy to reconnect the building to its surroundings, ULMS staff contacted UW's Center for Environment Education and Design Studies, whose faculty offered to organize an intensive, but short-term, problem-solving workshop called a "charrette." Coincidentally, a charrette was also an ideal setting for examining the insider/outsider concept in this tension-filled community development project.

Engaging Central District Stakeholders through a Charrette

Several factors distinguish a charrette from conventional planning and design processes. When ideally organized and facilitated, charrettes are collaborations among a vast array of community stakeholders, with the success of the process and the quality of outcomes correlating with the number of people and varied perspectives represented. They are often multiday events incorporating an iterative feedback loop, including multiple opportunities for public input, feedback, and affirmation at public meetings. Charrettes are designed to harness the energy and vision of participants and transform that energy into a well-supported, feasible plan for community change.[16] From the university's perspective, they represent service learning opportunities to bring together planning and design students, faculty, and professionals, with local constituents to solve challenging spatial problems. From the community's perspective, they represent affordable forums for exploring a wide range of options guided by the university's expertise. The Colman School charrette in particular offered both the university and ULMS a nonthreatening setting for academic, professional, and community constituents to work together on an issue with a long, contentious history. After 21 years of dissension, a charrette seemed an ideal vehicle to introduce trust, enthusiasm, and a shared vision into this contested project.

Colman School charrette participants consisted of a multiracial, intergenerational mix of around 150 people, including 46 design and planning students, 9 team leaders—local and national design professionals and

academics—21 elementary school children,[17] a half dozen ULMS staff and consultants, 2 local videographers, 60 community constituents and several local government representatives who attended two public sessions. It was preceded by a three-month neighborhood needs assessment conducted by 16 graduate and undergraduate students that included work with the children and interviews with neighborhood residents. The charrette itself occurred over an intense five-day period, when activities were held at the university[18] two miles from the development site and at an elementary school adjacent to the site. The two sessions of greatest relevance to my case study were Tuesday at the university and Friday in the community, when I documented participants' social interactions and dialogue.

Tuesday evening involved participants in reviewing the history and possible future of the roughly one-and-a-half-square-mile neighborhood immediately surrounding the development site. Goals for this three-hour session were to create excitement, move toward a shared vision of the neighborhood, and provide insights and direction to the four design teams, each consisting of two team leaders and about a dozen students; community constituents (who had all participated in the needs assessment) were divided among the teams. After socializing and viewing the children's work, each team made and presented collages representing its visions of the neighborhood. The goal of Friday evening's public presentation was "to set the stage for champions of the [project] to emerge and take ownership of the design alternatives."[19] The evening began with an informal walkabout so community constituents could discuss charrette outcomes directly with team members, then each team made a formal presentation of its design proposal. To end the evening, the charrette facilitator invited community constituents to comment on what they had seen.

That spring, I assumed the task of evaluating the community-building aspects of the charrette to determine whether participation in a collaborative design process had helped set this controversial project on a more productive path to fruition. My tasks included reviewing literature to theorize the charrette, observing Tuesday's visioning session and Friday's community forum, and conducting post-charrette interviews. For the latter, I interviewed 24 charrette participants, including students, team leaders, ULMS representatives, and community constituents. I also transcribed commentaries from a videotape of Friday's walkabout. I used a subset of these data for the analysis of stakeholder perspectives that follows.

Documenting the Perspectives of CD Stakeholders

The principal question I seek to address in this chapter is this: How do stakeholders envision their own and others' right to participate in

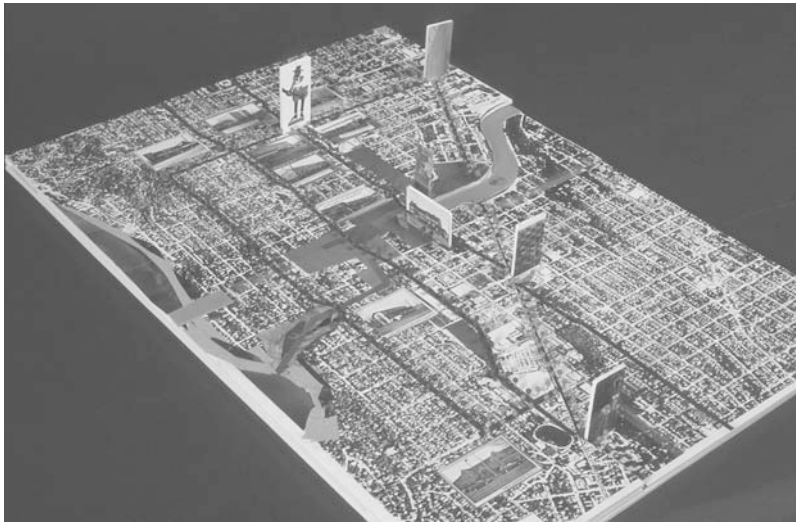

Figure 5.1 This model, one of the projects presented at Friday's community forum, developed from a sketch made at Tuesday's visioning session. It shows the Colman School at the center of many other treasured neighborhood landmarks, connected by pedestrian-friendly streets. Photograph courtesy of Sharon E. Sutton.

community redevelopment? In particular, I am concerned with the CD stakeholders' perceptions of their own and others' insider/outsider status relative to the proposed Colman School redevelopment.

The Stakeholders

For this analysis, I draw from a subset of 20 transcripts from the walkabout commentaries and post-charrette interviews, including 9 commentaries and 11 interviews collected from a total of 15 respondents consisting of 4 white people and 11 people of color.[20] These 15 respondents proved to have multiple stakeholder relationships with the project and the neighborhood. Some were current or former residents of the CD; others had a professional connection to the area, some of whom also lived there. Notably, all had deep emotional ties to the area; that is, none were truly "outsiders." Specifically, the 15 respondents include six current or former residents (designated R); seven individuals with professional ties (designated P), including employers, employees, and a visiting professional; and two individuals who fit into both categories (designated RP) (see table 5.1). Selection of the 20 records represents a purposive sampling, as I only included the transcripts

Table 5.1 Participant demographics

Gender		*Race*		*Relationship to Neighborhood*	*Interview*	*Comment*
Male	9	African American	8	Current or former residents	5	3
Female	6	White	4	Individuals with a professional relationship	5	5
		Asian American	2	Current or former residents who have a professional relationship	1	1
		Native American	1			
Total	15	Total	15	Total	11	9

of respondents who had economic and emotional ties to the neighborhood because of the nature of my investigation.[21] Fully transcribed, the 9 commentaries and 11 interviews yielded 109 pages of text for analysis.

Methods of Analysis

My analysis centers on what the 15 respondents said about insider/outsider status and the right to participate in the Colman School redevelopment. Notably, I did not specifically prompt respondents to consider these issues; rather I asked them about their perception of relationships in the community following the charrette. Yet many respondents addressed the issue, with the majority (66 percent) of responses coming from current or former residents, or those who are geographic "insiders." My analysis entailed coding data according to three categories drawn from the literature: (a) race, (b) residence, and (c) resources. I looked to the data for references to these personal characteristics to help unravel common stereotypes about insiders and outsiders, searching for themes and commonalities pursuant to the principles of grounded theory.[22]

Stakeholder Perspectives on Status and Participants

Respondents generally distinguished themselves, individually and collectively, from other stakeholders, using terms like "us" and "them" or "we" and "they" rather than "insiders" and "outsiders." Initially these designations appeared consistent with binary descriptions found in the literature. Insiders, I presumed, would be clearly differentiated from outsiders. The data confirmed that the former comprised mostly African American

residents; the latter mostly white nonresidents with professional or financial interests in neighborhood change. However, study results also revealed that respondents' casual, overlapping, and sometimes interchangeable references to, and reliance upon, a variety of distinguishing characteristics complicated stakeholder classifications. For example, an individual or group characterized as "us" in one reference might in a subsequent reference be characterized as "them" by the same respondent. Nevertheless given my initial decision to group responses under the three broad theoretical categories (race, residence, resources), I now summarize how stakeholders perceived these categories in distinguishing between self and other.

Race as a Criterion for Distinguishing Insider/Outsider Status

Several respondents inferred a black/white or African American/non–African American racial binary despite the multicultural neighborhood demographic and multicultural participation in the charrette. Others stressed the primacy of race and the importance of including African Americans as current and future insiders—users, occupants, and residents of the neighborhood. Some insisted that African American residents are entitled to inclusion; others invoked the black/white binary but later slipped into a more inclusive people-of-color, communities-of-color narrative that softened the black/white distinction. Overall, respondents, particularly the African Americans, were acutely attuned to race, noting a cultural affinity for the black professionals and team leaders (and the sometimes patronizing behavior of white outsiders).

> I was also impressed with the notion that citizens who will hopefully use this space in the next twenty years [the all-black school children] were able to participate in some way in the visioning. I think unfortunately not enough people knew about it. Of significance the ministers, people in the political arena, specifically African American folks, people of color, people who work and interface with that community of color, business people, people of moderate to high significance should have seen that occur (RP1).[23]

> We want *our* youth, African American youth, involved in the planning (R1).

> I was impressed to see two or three or four black architects or people in the design arena. To me that was amazingly effective. It was just good to see that of the few black architects in the country, we had like four of them. I think people were impressed, because they bought in credentialed people, who had diverse backgrounds, who looked and felt like me and you (RP1).

> Very often young people, white people, people who are not of color, they come into a community and they think well—they can do this "good" for us. They can change it (R2).

Conversely, a diverse group of respondents, including a South Asian, a Native American, and a white resident, expressed strong opposition to racial homogenization and the tendency to categorize people by race and ethnicity. They tended to view participation, inclusion, and insider status as both a privilege and responsibility shared by all neighborhood residents, regardless and in spite of race. This group expressed outrage at the racially imbalanced, nonrepresentative composition of charrette participants that reinforced a counterproductive black/white stereotype in the historically African American but increasingly multicultural community.

> People, not by virtue of they are black, but blacks that have been involved in the development of this area and show it. You know they show some sense of belonging to the area (P3).
>
> Indian people are left out of many process kind of things.... Their voice is silenced or ignored even when it pertains to land. If you look around at public spaces you don't see any idea that there were Indian people here. And the land has a memory. And I just thought it might be interesting to incorporate some of these memories, some of these stories into this land which was basically American Indian people living here (P4).
>
> They [Asians] don't expect to be invited so they don't show up. More Asian people didn't show up and they are a component of that area and they have needs (P7).
>
> Maybe they needed more—more diversity. Because maybe you needed people from, especially in that colored part of [the CD], you might be getting more Vietnamese people, people from Thailand and Cambodia. So I kind of thought they should have been included. The Native American people should have been included (P7).

As compelling and simplistic as the racial binaries may be, most study participants agreed race alone was insufficient for determining who should participate, who should be included, who should be represented, and who should be considered an insider or outsider. While recognizing the historic racial branding of the area as African American, overall respondents seemed poised to reject the black/white binary but had not yet settled on a suitable replacement.

Residence as a Criterion for Distinguishing Insider/Outsider Status

Geographically, neighborhood residents are insiders. They possess special vernacular knowledge, have emotional and relational ties, and will ultimately benefit from, or bear the burdens of, neighborhood change and development. Insider status attributed to residents is evident in the preceding discussion on race. Additionally, respondents expressed regret that so

few residents participated, particularly in light of their insider knowledge, perspective, and proximity to the proposed facility:

> It would have been good if more people who are affected were available to participate in the charrette. Anytime you can get people in the community active in the community it is helpful. So I thought there was lots of enthusiasm, but I was saddened that there were only three or four of us from the neighborhood [at the university for the visioning session] (R6).

Notwithstanding their numerous appeals to broaden definitions, or alternatively to drop constraining us/them stereotypes, study respondents collectively ascribed insider status to community residents. The lone dissenting voice was a former resident and current employee and community activist with close personal and professional ties to the design profession. For him, insider/outsider status was derived from an individual's expertise in community development. Despite their intimate knowledge of the community, residents, in his view, are outsiders in the development process, whereas design professionals are insiders. The category reversal inherent in this discursive turn nevertheless retains conflations of race, residence, and power as determinants of insider/outsider status and brings to mind resources, the third criterion for determining insider/outsider status.

Resources as a Criterion for Distinguishing Insider/Outsider Status

An individual's access to information, power, and influence over the proposed development proved the most contentious insider/outsider determinant. Residents especially expressed anger and frustration for their historic exclusion from community change processes. Well aware of the project's long, tumultuous history, they often said they felt like project outsiders, subordinate players in their own community. Lack of knowledge and access to information about planned development seems to have resulted in collective fear and distrust of external parties who respondents characterized as agents of community change. Several respondents expressed keen awareness of the imbalance in the sources and substance of knowledge between community insiders and outsiders.

> Too often when people are proposing change, a lot of the people who are impacted by the change are just not part of the process (P1).
>
> When you invite people to a charrette, you have to have real diverse representation from the community of folks who are going to use it, who are going to capitalize on it, who are going to be impacted positively or negatively by it. But just remembering who was there, I mean it was for the most part insiders [experts and professionals]. And I was sort of an external

> person. Definitely, I would focus on specific populations of folks around user-ship, typical user-ship (RP1).
>
> Those who understand the sociopolitical issues around the project, I don't believe professionally and personally that they understood the context of a charrette, what that is, what it means. [Charrette]'s a complex word that's not really used in our community (RP1).
>
> Those [insider experts] who had done most of the work may not have been aware of the recent social-political issues surrounding the project (RP1).

Although celebrating the long-awaited opportunity to participate in project planning, several respondents lamented the low community turnout. Many pleaded for expanded public outreach to, and inclusion of, those most profoundly affected by the proposed community change. Still others blamed the protracted and contentious process among neighborhood insiders and their ambivalence toward the project, which they felt created another advantage for expert outsiders.

> Not coming with a completely fresh set of eyes is no good. Not having any, not knowing the history, not having any kind of baggage—that's good. Because the project is just fraught with—its history is one of the most difficult aspects. And so being completely from the outside I think is positive. But I wish that more of the community would be interested in being involved. However they're exhausted and no one believes that [the development] will ever happen (R4).

Wary of their subordinate position and the enormous power differential between neighborhood residents and other community development stakeholders, several respondents were prompted to plead for inclusion, full consideration of their circumstances, and equitable treatment. Many thanked the students and professionals for their assistance and the opportunity to participate. Despite their gratitude, however, residents made clear their collective expectation for meaningful participation as a hedge against dislocation:

> When you're talking about who you're visiting and who you're getting your concepts from, make sure that they are representative of the people that probably, maybe, are going to be misplaced, replaced, and displaced (R2).
>
> Don't do us too many favors, don't be so benevolent to us that you're going to disenfranchise our minds (R2).
>
> Seeing four or five designs done by students, I feel a part of it. I don't feel like anybody is designing something that I don't have any ownership of. I've seen more [tonight], or as much as I've seen happen with the [site] in twenty years. . . . I have never been invited to review that much activity (RP1).

> Allow the community to feel that they are a part of what's going into the process . . . that we make up the questions that should be answered . . . that our concerns and values are translated to action. What do we see as the process? Why do we think the process is necessary? Do we think it is necessary? Do we even want [change] (R2)?

In summary, the case study revealed the insider/outsider binary as a misleading, counterproductive, and overly simplistic dichotomy. Respondents constructed community stakeholders in complex, subjective, multidimensional terms that included more than the classic conflations of race, residence, and resources. However, residents outnumbered nonresidents two to one in providing unprompted responses on the insider/outsider topic. Whereas both residents and nonresidents offered responses related to race, residents were especially vocal on residence and resources, the latter prompting the most vociferous responses. Overall, respondents were emphatic that regardless of how and whether others categorized them as insiders or outsiders, they nevertheless perceived themselves as entitled to full and meaningful participation in the redevelopment of the Colman School in particular and the neighborhood in general.

Implications for Multicultural Communities

Historic African American neighborhoods continue their progression toward unprecedented heterogeneity. In the ensuing contests for increasingly desirable inner-city neighborhoods, African Americans and other low-status, disenfranchised residents risk further marginalization and possible dislocation. Although contemporary community development best practices compel the adoption of equitable development principles, scholars in the field still often reduce stakeholders in gentrifying neighborhoods to insider/outsider classifications that obstruct consensus building. Because these false binaries reinforce stereotypes, ascribe status, and emphasize difference, new community development approaches are needed that reflect more nuanced understandings of stakeholder rights, roles, and relationships within multicultural communities.

Findings of this study suggest that current and former residents of diverse urban communities, as well as the professionals who have a stake in them, appear poised to embrace the changing demographic reality. With respect to who should participate in community development, respondents in the multicultural case study neighborhood emphatically rejected the insider/outsider binary in general and conventional black/white racial and resident/nonresident spatial binaries in particular. Nevertheless, residents, especially African American residents, revealed their continued concern

about the right to participate as stakeholders, as evidenced by the number of their unprompted responses in comparison to nonresidents. While cognizant of the need for broad collaborations to plan and implement community change, and expressing respect for different players and perspectives, they emphasized their rights as historic occupants of the neighborhood. Though embracing broadly inclusive participation, these residents wanted their concerns and values recognized as community change proceeds and conveyed fears about being "misplaced, replaced, and displaced" (R2). Perhaps beginning to feel more outside than inside, they validated the irrelevance of insider/outsider status as a prerequisite to full and meaningful participation.

In accord with the equitable development ideal, increasingly diverse stakeholders will seek solutions to common neighborhood problems, meaningful participation, fair and equitable treatment, and consideration of their context and reality; these stakeholders will find outdated, static, divisive stereotypes incompatible with their shifting experiences. No longer falling into traditional insider/outsider categories, all who participate in equitable development will eventually need to adapt and work together as equal partners in shaping changing neighborhoods while still recognizing the history of marginalization in those neighborhoods.

Notes

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3. Paul Cloke and Ron Johnston, "Deconstructing Human Geography's Binaries," in *Spaces of Geographical Thought*, eds. Paul Cloke and Ron Johnston (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005), 1–20.
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5. See Fraser and Lepofsky, "The Uses of Knowledge." In response to neoliberal demands for free market involvement in restoring American cities, community development follows a political trend in the privatization of public services; similar trends are seen in education, health care, national defense, and prison management.

6. Maureen Kennedy and Paul Leonard, "Dealing with Neighborhood Change: A Primer on Gentrification and Policy Choices" (Brookings Institution Discussion Paper Series and PolicyLink, April 2001), http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2001/04metropolitanpolicy.aspx (accessed 10 June 2010); Angela Glover Blackwell, "It Takes a Region," *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 31 no. 5 (2004): 1303–1320; Angela Glover Blackwell, "Building Policy from the Ground Up: Regionalism, Equitable Development, and Developing New Leaders," *National Civic Review* 94 no. 1 (Spring 2005): 29–36.
7. Blackwell, "It Takes a Region".
8. Ibid.; Fraser and Lepofsky, "The Uses of Knowledge"; Anne C. Kubisch, Prudence Brown, Robert Chaskin, Janice Hirato, Mark Joseph, Harold Richman, and Michelle Roberts, *Voices from the Field: Learning from the Early Work of Comprehensive Community Initiatives* (Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute, 1997). Practitioners and academics have noted that residents are often attuned to within-group differences among residents. Consequently residents may include or exclude their neighbors based on attributes such as ethnicity or length of residency.
9. Resources contributed by external parties can include funding, labor, expertise, or goods and materials. See James Fraser and Edward Kick, "Understanding Community Building in Urban America," *The Journal of Poverty* 9 no. 1 (2005): 23–44.
10. Rebecca Stone and Benjamin Butler, *Exploring Power and Race: Core Issues in Comprehensive Community-Building Initiatives* (Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago, 2000). On behalf of Chapin Hall, the authors interviewed 35 community development practitioners to explore the role of race and power in inner-city development initiatives. Their findings provide insight into race and power, two unspoken and formerly unacknowledged issues in community development.
11. Quintard Taylor, *The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1870 through the Civil Rights Era* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994).
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14. For a more complete history of the site, see Taylor, *The Forging of a Black Community*; Karen Gordon, *Report on Designation: Former Colman School* (Seattle, WA: Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board, 2005).
15. Trevor Griffey, "A Dream Fulfilled," *Colors Northwest* March 2008: 18–25.
16. Bill Lennertz, "The Charrette as an Agent of Change," in *New Urbanism: Comprehensive Report and Best Practices Guide*, eds. Rob Steuteville and Philip Langdon (Ithaca, NY: New Urban Publications, 2003), 12–18.

17. Although elementary school students participated in the charrette, only adults participated in the charrette evaluation.
18. The charrette was held at the university rather than in the community to minimize travel time for students, who had conflicting class schedules.
19. Sharon E. Sutton, *Charrette Brief for the Urban League Village at Colman School* (unpublished charrette document), 16.
20. Study data consisting of 20 transcripts from 15 respondents had an intentional overlap, in that I interviewed six of the nine people who commented at the Friday presentation.
21. Earl R. Babbie, *The Basics of Social Research* (Belmont: CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005). For example, whereas the original group of 24 interviewees included students, design professionals, ULMS representatives, and community constituents, the study subset excluded all the students and all but one of the design professionals because they did not specifically address the insider/outsider issue. That is, although I asked the entire study population to evaluate the charrette, I only included in my purposive sampling respondents who addressed the insider/outsider tension.
22. Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998). The authors, grounded theorists, describe three distinct types of coding. In selective coding, data are assembled around predetermined theoretical schemes, the methodology I chose to use.
23. In coding interview transcripts for the case study, I assigned "R" for current or former residents, "P" for individuals with professional ties, and "RP" for current or former residents with professional ties. I assigned numbers based on the order of the interviews.

Part II
Placemaking as Living Democracy

Chapter Six

Place: A Site of Individual and Collective Transformation

Sharon E. Sutton and Susan P. Kemp

> *Collective reflection by subordinate groups leads to recognition not only of the roles of dominant groups in constructing established beliefs and practices, but also of their own roles in that process and of their own potential power to reconstruct such beliefs and practices.*[1]

To establish our second premise—that place provides an opportunity for liberation—we demonstrate that marginalized communities can redress social and environmental inequity via spatial interventions, which we refer to as "placemaking." Like *empowerment* before it, the term *placemaking* has been claimed across the ideological spectrum, from grassroots activists to neoliberal New Urbanists, weakening its meaning. Nonetheless for marginalized populations, its characteristics—local activism, cooperative effort, and the struggle for place—comprise essential components of citizenship and community building. In particular, we are interested in a notion of placemaking that allows people of color to join together in collective resistance to the prevailing norms, policies, and practices that relegate them to racialized, underresourced, and politically disenfranchised surroundings.

Placemaking as Resistance to Oppression

> *Placemaking is the ongoing work of transforming the places we find ourselves into places in which we can truly dwell as individuals and communities of people. The practice of making our places changes and maintains the physical world and our ideas about it, while it also creates communities of people who share concerns, interests, and fears.*[2]

Though placemaking is often highly localized, in reality the problems of low-income communities of color result from "inequalities in economic resources and political power that stretch beyond the imagined frontiers of the inner city."[3] Thus, placemaking strategies with the potential to transform inequalities would encompass multiple levels, social and spatial, personal and political, local and global. Among other possible strategies, we emphasize collective models of ownership, appropriation of space, community-university partnerships, youth leadership, and spatial interdependence.

Collective Models of Ownership

As noted earlier, a cornerstone of sociospatial marginality is the dominant society's acceptance of landownership and segregated single-family housing as central to social status, citizenship, and even decency. Yet not only do wealthy individuals and corporations hold title to an increasing amount of private land, but in years past, the poorest ethnic minority populations lost their rights to vast regions of the nation, a reality that continues to contribute to their impoverishment.[4] Because self and community determination require land—as a site of production, income, and security and "as a principal element of the ecosystem upon which the pursuit of happiness and human sustenance depend"[5]—transformative placemaking would necessarily resist the false promise of the American Dream.

Despite the increasing tendency toward concentrated land ownership, notable examples of alternative ownership practices exist that placemaking professionals and grassroots activists can amplify. Cooperative housing, which has taken various forms over the last century, offers one such alternative.[6] Although "the pace of the development for all affordable housing, including cooperatives, has been reduced to its lowest level since the 1950s,"[7] this approach to creating affordable housing has a twofold benefit: it establishes joint ownership of a building by shareholders, and it empowers member-residents to exercise control over the cost and quality of their housing. In the case of limited-equity cooperatives, property deeds contain restrictions on the resale of membership shares, limiting them to moderate- or low-income families or limiting their resale value. "Because cooperatives require training and follow-up technical assistance for residents, they are more difficult to develop than rental properties. But cooperatives have lower operating costs and a better social environment than rental properties."[8]

Community land trusts, which expand upon the notion of cooperative affordable housing to encompass the broader concerns of community development, offer another alternative to private property. The

first community land trust formed in 1967 as a way to secure land for black farmers in Georgia.[9] Since then, the modern community land trust model has evolved as "a democratically controlled institution that would hold land for the common good and make it available to individuals through long-term land leases."[10] Reflecting a belief that land should result in both community and individual benefit, communities act as trustees via nonprofit corporations that have members and an elected governing board. Although individual members have the right to *use* the land through long-term leases, no one may *own* the land, and most have limited-equity policies that restrict its resale. To reduce costs, residents collectively own their buildings, but the trust owns the land, which is deeded separately.[11]

Community economic development offers an even more comprehensive alternative, combining cooperative housing and community land trusts with worker-owned companies. A community economic development model typically encompasses a network of nonprofit organizations, which are democratically owned and governed; a community land trust to acquire property; a community development corporation to develop an array of building types; a community finance institution to provide investment capital; and a consumer cooperative to provide retail goods and services.[12]

These types of cooperative structures have demonstrated great promise in saving and creating affordable housing, jobs, and social services in some of the poorest communities in the nation. More importantly, cooperative structures can help members "see place as the location of cooperation, stewardship, and social justice values rather than just sites to be dominated, enclosed, commodified, exploited, and segregated."[13]

Appropriation of Space

Individuals and groups appropriate space when they intentionally occupy it, change it, care for it, mark it, or represent it in words or images. "Appropriation of space not only provides a material resource necessary to meet needs for everyday life—a place [people] can call their own—but also is a potential source of both individual and collective empowerment."[14] In this section, we describe three space-appropriation mechanisms that disenfranchised communities have called upon to ameliorate the everyday injustices in their lives: impromptu encampments, community gardens, and kinship networks referred to as "community households." Though by no means a solution to the problem of impoverished, neglected surroundings, such acts as the ones we describe, no matter how small or transitory, represent significant acts of resistance to the status quo.

Impromptu Encampments

> *The decline and loss of institutions, bodegas, churches, social centers, schools, friends, and neighbors has led to a collective need for people to play an active role in rearranging the environment, and thereby restoring the community's well being.*[15]

For three decades beginning in the late 1960s, older cities like New York, Boston, and Chicago lost thousands of industrial jobs to globalization and as many low-income housing units to either disinvestment or gentrification, a double-edge blow that left many families living in extreme poverty and surrounded by tracts of rubble-strewn land. Neglected by city officials, some impoverished Puerto Rican families began creating impromptu encampments, transforming vacant lots by erecting small wood frame structures known as *casitas* (little houses).[16] A form of Caribbean vernacular architecture for the urban poor, *casitas* are built on stilts; they typically have a vegetable garden and an area for small animals (chickens, ducks, geese, rabbits). The *casita*'s corrugated metal gable roof, veranda, shuttered windows, and vibrant colors evoke the Puerto Rican countryside of another era and assert a Puerto Rican presence in cities where they have been alternately displaced by urban renewal, unscrupulous landlords, and arson.[17]

These impromptu spaces offer disenfranchised families a vehicle for creating order out of chaos and validating their Puerto Rican identity through an architecture of resistance.[18] "Planting a garden and erecting a wood structure are often strategic attempts to force out car thieves and drug dealers who use abandoned lots for illegal activities. Enclosed by a 20-foot chain link fence, the *casita* is a haven from the harsh realities of inner-city life, an oasis where temporary repose is possible."[19] Built primarily of recycled scrap lumber, billboards, and other discarded items, this architecture—deemed illegal but tolerated by local officials when constructed on devalued land—offers informal social services, provides a safe place for children to play, and serves as a gathering place for various cultural and religious activities. Most importantly, the act of building *casitas* helps families "take an active role in reshaping landscapes of despair into landscapes of hope—transforming fragmented and discontinuous urban landscapes into cultural forms with continuity that are rich in values and bring forth a sense of attachment."[20]

Similarly, encampments created by homeless people represent a struggle to overcome despair by creating impromptu residential communities while at the same time making homelessness visible to the dominant society. As poverty spreads in the current economic downturn, encampments of people who have nowhere else to go have been springing up with increasing

frequency from Seattle, Washington, to New Orleans, Louisiana.[21] Though lacking the cultural and aesthetic dimension of *casitas*, these modern-day Hoovervilles consist of makeshift wood, cardboard, or fabric shelters, as well as mobile homes and sleep-in cars and vans. They occupy found space (parking lots, highway and railroad rights-of-way, university campuses[22]) and often provide residents with basic sanitary services (portable toilets, showers, kitchens, waste receptacles).

Contrary to the popular view that homeless encampments house drug addicts and other villains, many have residents who work, mostly in temporary or day labor jobs, and many have codes of conduct that require abstinence from drugs and alcohol, as well as participation in site security and maintenance.[23] Housing advocates have tried a variety of scenarios for erecting mobile structures on private and public land with varied success. These scenarios range from putting structures up every evening and dismantling them every morning to relocating them after a specified period of time to—the most desirable alternative—leasing or purchasing campgrounds or other land to construct permanent cooperatively managed housing.[24]

Community Gardens

> *Gardens are totally about faith. When you go to a nursery and you buy a little Japanese maple that's in a four-inch pot and you're telling me about how much shade this tree is going to give you and, oh, the leaves will be so pretty, and I'm looking at the thing, it's three inches tall, and I'm thinking, "Boy, oh, boy, these people have faith in the future."*[25]

Urban farming began in the late nineteenth century, often during periods of crisis and with subsidies from local and federal governments.[26] The late-1960s federal disinvestment in cities was one such crisis. Just as Puerto Ricans moved in to reclaim and restore rubble-strewn lots to productive use, so did urban farmers. Like the *casitas*, community gardens in deteriorated areas serve as "safe havens that provide residents with a sense of nature, community, rootedness, and power."[27] However, unlike the *casitas*, community gardens can bring diverse constituents together around a shared connection to nature. They attract environmental stewards, as well as activists concerned with combating poverty in low-income neighborhoods.[28] They provide immigrants with an important tie back to the agricultural traditions of their homelands while allowing them to market fresh produce and make cross-cultural connections outside their community.[29] At the same time, a number of after-school gardening programs for youth engage participants in learning to grow produce and to sell it in farmers markets.[30] Sometimes youth gardeners

interact with adult immigrant gardeners, exchanging farming knowledge for translation services. Community gardens not only create a local source of healthy food, they provide income and opportunities for entrepreneurship. Occurring in springtime, garden-building work has proven an effective and festive way to mobilize a community and embrace all its populations, including children and youth, the elderly, the newly arrived, and the homeless.[31]

When urban farmers construct gardens on devalued land, they often have the support of city and federal governments, sometimes leasing or even securing the use of a site free of charge from a city government or an individual property owner.[32] However, despite the benefits of urban farming, when land values increase, developers purchase the lots and bulldoze these cherished community resources, offering token compensation in the form of a few low-income units in their projects.[33] Still today, community gardens stand a better chance of becoming permanent amenities. With increasing concerns about population growth and urbanization, "health professionals, urban planners, environmental activists, community organizers, and policy makers are recognizing the value of urban agriculture for economic development, food security, and preservation of green space."[34]

Community Households

Faced with untenable conditions in neglected rental buildings and public housing projects, individual residents sometimes connect with a larger group, which some researchers refer to as a "community household."[35] These groups extend the duties of homemaking into the building and neighborhood, expanding family networks "beyond the confines of the nuclear family to include children, youth, and adult neighbors."[36] Members of a community household share such responsibilities as cooking, celebrating holidays, caring for children, housekeeping, providing informal social services, even lending money—"helping someone out without the expectation that you will get anything immediately in return—but with a confidence that sometime in the future either that individual, or someone else, will return the favor."[37]

Longtime black female residents typically play a leadership role in nurturing these extended networks, drawing upon their domestic skills and a tradition of linking their religious commitments with civic engagement.[38] In addition to offering an important source of social support in managing adversity, the community household can serve as a site of community organizing and activism while contributing to individual and collective empowerment and transformation.

Community-University Partnerships

> *The past 30 years have seen a variety of efforts in the academy that aim to improve the quality of life in low-income, minority communities, ranging from long term partnerships to small projects. These efforts frequently involve collaborations across disciplines and with community members, ideally producing innovative solutions to the complex, and often racialized, problems that exist in these communities.*[39]

Within the landscape of community-university partnerships, which includes service learning, participatory action research, and partnerships focused upon particular problems or goals,[40] the design disciplines—architecture, environmental design, landscape architecture, urban design—often play an active and visible role. Because the mainstay of education in these disciplines consists of problem-based studios that consume up to 90 percent of degree requirements,[41] these disciplines offer an excellent context for service learning.

"Broadening the learning experience of the students to include the skills gained via direct interaction with clients and the values cultivated via community engagement and service,"[42] service learning can result in research reports, proposals, and even built projects. Research reports in the design disciplines might range from documentation of assets (historic landmarks, community gardens, social services, institutions) or problems (vacant and deteriorated buildings, vandalism, illegal dumping) to technical studies (alternative transportation systems, energy conservation methods, industrialized building strategies). Proposals might range from master plans to streetscape and storefront interventions to concepts for new and renovated buildings, parks, and playgrounds.[43] When proposals are small scale, students might actually construct them within what is known as a "design-build" studio, which offers an increasingly popular approach to service learning. These small student-built interventions have also been called "guerrilla architecture" because they offer an immediate, inexpensive means to ameliorate specific sociospatial problems.[44]

Fast-paced, participatory design workshops, called "design charrettes," offer another venue for universities to collaborate with communities on specific sociospatial problems. A ritual peculiar to the design disciplines, the term "charrette" historically referred to the frenetic activity of Parisian architecture students as they hurried to finish their assignments aboard horse-drawn carts (*en charrette*) on the way to their final reviews. Though the term still refers to the frenetic activity that precedes architecture reviews, today the term more generally describes the compressed creative brainstorming that occurs in design workshops.[45] Like design studios, design charrettes can result in built projects or published documents for

use in grant proposals or to lower professional fees.[46] However, charrettes have the added benefit of bringing stakeholders together to develop consensus on specific issues: "The most successful charrettes bring factions of a community together to focus mental energy, heighten awareness, and develop consensus on a difficult, timely problem. In rare instances, charrettes can provide a structure for helping people re-examine fundamental beliefs"[47] while also producing concrete outcomes.[48]

Though too many partnerships are driven by episodic projects and grants that tend to create superficial relationships with community groups,[49] other efforts involve different groups of students working in the same communities over a period of years under the auspices of community design centers or even individual faculty.[50] Student and faculty motivations vary. Whereas some see community outreach as an opportunity for gaining real-life construction experience, others are drawn by issues of social and environmental justice. Whatever the motivations, community-based projects not only result in tangible improvements, they help aspiring professionals "to be better citizens, better community advocates, and to understand the complexity of urban areas"[51]—the kind of engaged, responsive professionals that today's social and environmental challenges demand.

Youth Leadership

> *Participation and incorporation into decision-making processes are . . . a key step toward engaging [youth] as active members and citizens of their local environment, and thus toward the strengthening of democracy.*[52]

Many social movements have emphasized participatory parity as essential to increasing the power of minority populations, as have the thousands of nongovernmental and grassroots organizations that make up the environmental justice movement.[53] Although these advocates seldom consider youth, child welfare activists have organized in recent years to promote children's right to have a say in decisions that affect them.[54] Prevailing notions of youth within an adult-dominated world pose significant challenges to their inclusion in decision making, yet low-income and minority youth have demonstrated significant competence in bringing about positive change in their communities, especially in relation to education and the environment; housing and neighborhood development; violence, crime, and criminalization; and racism and discrimination. "In some of the nation's lowest-income areas, youth are solving problems, organizing action groups, planning local programs, and developing new services. Despite obstacles, they are bringing people together, making decisions, formulating action plans, and building support for implementation."[55]

Youth use multiple strategies to improve their surroundings while developing their own leadership capacities. Many engage in civic activism, mobilizing youth and adults around broad political issues or specific concerns (for example, relative to immigration reform or the environment). Some engage in community art, using the performing arts (theater, hip hop, rap, the spoken word), visual arts (videos and documentaries, photography, graphic design, mural making), journalism, or digital media to give voice to alternative visions of a better world. Others engage in community development, which brings youth and adults together to improve the socioeconomic and physical infrastructure of their communities. Still others engage in community service, providing charitable assistance to disenfranchised groups or—less frequently—tackling their systemic problems. And others engage in hands-on interventions, bringing about tangible improvements (by planning, designing, building, or managing places), or conducting applied research that can inform policy making and design (by surveying, mapping, or photographing places).[56]

When low-income youth of color attempt to transform the egregious circumstances in their communities, the outcomes can be impressive. At the individual level, youth can advance their own social development by increasing their knowledge, skills, critical awareness, self-confidence, civic engagement, leadership, and sense of connectedness, as well as their idealism and hope for a better future. At the community level, youth can contribute to the development of their programs and other local organizations by brokering support, obtaining resources, and gaining recognition for their accomplishments, thus advancing their own organizational capacities. Furthermore, youth in collaborative partnerships with allied adults can improve the livability of their communities, for example, by constructing affordable housing, renovating abandoned buildings, refurbishing playgrounds, restoring parks and habitats, establishing youth-run businesses, marketing fresh produce from youth-built community gardens, and demanding more equitable conditions in their schools.[57]

> When young people defend the rights of young people in public spaces, take actions against the construction of juvenile detention centers, raise awareness about racial profiling and housing gentrification, and defeat a policy to arm police in the schools—when they do these types of things, there are community changes.[58]

Furthermore, youth bring a special measure of joy and creativity to the placemaking process not only through their transgressive art forms but also because they naturally bring a playful spirit to all aspects of their lives.[59] In our experience, children and youth play a vital role in helping adults build

bridges not only across the many lines of difference in their communities but also between harsh realities and imagined possibilities.

> Young people have fresher, more unfiltered perspectives. Less socialized to dominant orthodoxies, they tend to think against the grain, offering new insights and ideas. For similar, developmental reasons, they typically express greater honesty about race and class differences, tolerate and engage more productively with dissension and debate, and remain more open to participating in inclusive spaces. Since they have not learned much about the structure of mainstream society, they can readily envision many other structures.[60]

Spatial Interdependence

Local conditions in poor communities of color connect to, and are constituted by, flows of goods, people, and opportunities at the metropolitan, regional, and global levels. Increasingly, activists' efforts to redress place-based inequities reflect a relational view of place, recognizing that spatial concentrations of poverty and race link to larger patterns of opportunity and disparity[61] and that interventions into place-based racial and social inequality must occur at multiple levels. Addressing inequity through the lens of spatial interdependence, sometimes referred to as "joined-up thinking,"[62] has at its core a sustained emphasis upon equity, along with a recognition and amplification of the connections that exist across scales, issues, and interests. Three emergent, and overlapping, approaches illustrate the possibilities inherent in joined-up thinking as a placemaking strategy: regional equity, sustainability and environmental justice, and global networking.

Regional Equity

Although local activism is essential in tackling place-based disparities, regional equity proponents argue that local efforts alone are insufficient to address the sociostructural patterns of advantage and disadvantage that occur across metropolitan regions. In the global economy, cities and their inner and outer suburbs serve as "the critical geographic unit . . . where inequities are manifest"[63]—the well-being of marginalized communities inextricably linked to more affluent ones that can attract resources and deflect risks. Whereas newer outer-ring suburbs, for example, benefit from highway, employment, and infrastructure development, abandoned urban neighborhoods and older inner-ring suburbs suffer from a declining tax base and services and a mismatch between housing affordability and jobs. With disparities from one place to the next reaching as high as ten to one, clearly some method of equalizing resources regionally is essential.[64]

Regions serve as a crucial setting for creating economic opportunity and integrating the urban (and suburban) poor into the regional economy. Proponents of regional responses to sociostructural inequities thus call for "strategies . . . [that] attempt to transform spatial and structural arrangements to benefit all persons within a region."[65] Efforts to promote regional equity primarily (and appropriately) promote policies that enhance collaboration across regional and local entities to equalize access to the building blocks of social and racial equality: quality schooling, affordable housing, viable and accessible employment opportunities, and functional transportation systems. Inclusionary zoning, revenue sharing, land banking to facilitate reuse and redevelopment of vacant properties, regional transportation to ameliorate the jobs-housing mismatch, and affordable housing that connects residents to other opportunities compose signature regional equity strategies.[66]

Notably, many of these strategies also form the core of smart growth, a strategy for reducing sprawl by concentrating growth in pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented cities that offer a mix of housing types and land uses. However, regional equity is distinctive in its explicit commitment to redressing racial and spatial inequalities via regional interventions. It encourages locally focused development while also linking residents to nonneighborhood opportunities, integrating grassroots efforts and local autonomy with region-wide policies and collaboration.[67] Regional equity is also distinctive in its emphasis upon "racially inclusive and genuinely participatory decision-making."[68] Believing that viable solutions require the participation of those who are most affected by, and have knowledge of, local problems—and underscoring the importance of their vision, energy, and aspirations—regional equity proponents encourage intentional capacity building so local people can participate effectively.[69]

Sustainability and Environmental Justice

Linked to regional equity (and its stepsister, smart growth)—and involving some of the same players—are efforts to build bridges between proponents of sustainability and those advocating for environmental justice, who despite their many commonalities have experienced long-standing racial and organizational separations.[70] For example, cities—where a growing percentage of the world's population lives, including many minority populations, and where a large share of natural resources are consumed—represent a primary concern for both sustainability and environmental justice advocates.[71] Yet many cities like Seattle and Boston that have aggressive sustainability programs fail to address equity concerns, prioritizing economic sustainability and livability without acknowledging environmental justice as a component of sustainability.[72]

Still, alliances between the proponents of sustainability and environmental justice hold considerable promise given their shared

> emphasis on community-based decision making; on economic policies that account fiscally for social and environmental externalities; on reductions in all forms of pollution; on building clean, livable communities for all people; and on an overall regard for the ecological integrity of the planet.[73]

From a practical perspective, more sustainable, environmentally just placemaking strategies are occurring, with advocates in both arenas utilizing a range of techniques (street activism, public-private partnering, local-national grassroots coalitions) to address issues of common concern. For example, land use planning approaches are emerging that bridge sustainability concerns for more efficient mixed-use, mixed-income development with environmental justice concerns for community outreach and participation to prioritize local needs.[74] Other areas of overlap include approaches to recycling trash that reduce the carbon footprint but do not burden poor communities with toxic waste or waste management facilities; technical and financial assistance to reduce utility costs and energy and water consumption in older, less energy-efficient housing where poor people most likely live; and, in particular, transportations systems that ameliorate the current differential quality in transit services for suburban commuters and those for poor urban residents.[75] Such efforts link the perspectives of people taking action to redress inequities on the ground, in local communities, with coalitions and interventions that take a broader approach.[76] Not surprisingly, the intersection of sustainability and environmental justice—also called "just sustainability"[77]—shares commonalities with regional equity.

Global Networking

If local and regional conditions are linked outward toward global resources, the latter can serve as a source of support and locality-based change. As Web-based technologies make global connectivity increasingly accessible, opportunities for new forms of global-local exchange, organizing, and action likewise expand exponentially. Some indigenous environmental movements, anchored irrevocably in deeply significant ties to particular tribal places, have become powerfully global, using the Internet as a site for sharing information and resources, building connections, and creating pan-indigenous resistance identities.[78] Alternatively, the Web affords opportunities for global, open source networking, for technical assistance, and, in nimble and fluid ways, for bringing a wide array of perspectives to bear on emergent local needs.[79] Both examples make clear the potential

for new synergies and coalitions—and at the same time raise important questions about the appropriate mix between local capacity building and self-determination, and allied resources distributed not only regionally but globally.

Placemaking as Transformation

Despite egregious circumstances, marginalized communities have often demonstrated an ability to work collectively, transforming the places in which they find themselves and, in the process, transforming themselves as individuals and as communities. Although sometimes their endeavors simply soften harsh conditions without bringing about structural change, in the best of cases, the activism of poor people and their advocates, including students engaged in service learning, so affects normative beliefs and practices that it leads to on-the-ground innovation or more equitable public policy. Only the imagination limits the array of spatial interventions in which communities might engage, nonetheless those identified in this framing chapter range from ones that provide extended support (through familial relationships or global networking) for youth and adults to others that represent (sometimes illegal) acts of resistance to still others that have been institutionalized through equitable revitalization plans or public policy.

Extended kinship relationships, referred to as community households, offer a reciprocal structure for individuals and families to manage adversity by sharing responsibility and pooling resources—social, physical, economic. These relationships extend private lives into the public domain, where residents articulate mutual concerns and develop the solidarity to take collective action. Acts of resistance consist of the many ways poor people and their advocates create order out of the chaos that surrounds them. They include (but are not limited to) impromptu residential encampments, community gardens, and many other small-scale installations that have a practical purpose but also heighten the sense of community. Innovative public policies establish a mechanism for formalizing the spirit of the community household on a broader scale. For example, at the local level, public policies can create legal frameworks for the cooperative ownership of housing, land, and business enterprises. At a regional level, they can promote spatial interdependence by establishing revenue sharing practices, guaranteeing access to public transportation systems, and distributing development opportunities, including employment and retail, in relation to those systems. Such policies attempt to rectify the uneven development that has resulted from racialized land use patterns while creating alternatives to private property ownership.

The interdisciplinary case studies in this and the third part of the book explore some of these placemaking strategies. The next chapter, by social welfare scholar Susan P. Kemp, demonstrates how transformative youth programs can promote individual development while also engaging youth in a critical, collectivist approach to place. A pair of chapters by architects Roberta M. Feldman and Steven Badanes provides insight into the potential of community-university partnerships that extend over a period of years. Whereas Feldman offers evidence of the empowerment that occurred as two activist community households struggled to maintain their homeplaces, Badanes illustrates (through images) students' hands-on endeavors to help elderly immigrants reclaim a devalued piece of urban land and reconnect with the farming traditions of their homelands.

The last part of the book brings forward the heightened opportunities for placemaking that new technologies make possible. It begins with a chapter by social welfare and urban studies scholar Amy Hiller, who demonstrates the power of digital mapping tools not only to bring about public policy changes that improve the health of marginalized communities but also to help youth access the invisible histories in those communities. A second chapter by geographer Matthew Kelley illustrates how inexpensive participatory GST programs can broaden service learning experiences, allowing students to codify the experiential spatial knowledge of local people, thereby substituting narratives of socioeconomic distress with ones describing a community's most valued aspects. A third chapter by urban and youth studies scholars Caitlin Cahill and Matt Bradley describes the active participation of primarily Latino high school students in a research project that integrated video technology to create a first-person understanding of stereotyping and racism in schools. A final chapter by aspiring landscape architect David Smolker and social welfare doctoral student Caroline Lanza describes the power of the Internet to create a global network of technical assistance focused upon addressing the survival needs of impoverished and imperiled communities.

The book ends with a thematic analysis of the case study findings and speculations about a future model of placemaking that can rectify the ravages of global capitalism in marginalized communities.

Notes

1. David W. Livingstone, *Critical Pedagogy and Cultural Power* (South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey, 1987), 8.
2. Lynda H. Schneekloth and Robert G. Shibley, "Placemaking: A Democratic Project," *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture* 5 no. 3 (2005): np, http://reconstruction.eserver.org/053/schneekloth.shtml (accessed 22 May 2010).

3. Steven Gregory, *Black Corona: Race and the Politics of Place in an Urban Community* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 10.
4. For example, as a result of colonization, Native American land decreased from about 150 million acres in the 1870s to roughly 54 million acres today; African American land decreased from 17 million acres at the dawn of the twentieth century to just 4 million acres today; Native Alaskans lost their aboriginal rights to untold acres in the 1970s; and many Mexican Americans claim that their property rights, guaranteed in the Treaty of Hidalgo, were never honored. See Charles C. Geisler, "Land and Poverty in the United States: Insights and Oversights," *Land Economics* 71 no. 1 (February 1995): 16–34.
5. Ibid., 26.
6. As early as 1918, ethnic and union groups began to draw upon principles of democratically controlled capital that workers in England developed in the 1800s to finance self-help cooperative housing. See Gerald W. Sazama, "Lessons from the History of Affordable Housing Cooperatives in the United States: A Case Study in American Affordable Housing Policy," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 59 no. 4 (October 2000): 573–608, citing Andrew S. Dolkart, "Homes for People: Nonprofit Cooperatives in New York City, 1919–1929," *Cooperative Housing Journal of the National Association of Housing Cooperatives* (1993): 13–22.

   In the 1950s many unions developed self-help projects for working families; in the 1960s and 1970s federal subsidies funded low-income cooperatives; and in the 1980s and 1990s public/private partnerships sustained the next generation of cooperatives. See Sazama, "Lessons from the History."
7. Sazama, "Lessons from the History," 599.
8. Ibid., 600.
9. For a description of this first community land trust, see Tom Peterson, "Community Land Trusts: An Introduction," *Planning Commissioners Journal* 23 (Summer 1996), http://www.plannersweb.com/articles/pet112.html#r-inside (accessed 22 May 2010). In 1984 the Burlington Community Land Trust (BCLT) in Vermont became the first municipally funded community land trust. With 2,500 members, it is currently the largest locally controlled land trust in the United States. BCLT provides a wide range of housing opportunities, including rental apartments and shared-appreciation single-family homes and condominiums. See Burlington Community Land Trust, http://www.bclt.net/aboutbclt.shtml (accessed 22 May 2010).
10. Tom Peterson, "Community Land Trusts," np.
11. Ibid.
12. For a description of a comprehensive community economic development strategy, see David L. Imbroscio, "Structure, Agency, and Democratic Theory," *Polity* 32 no. 1 (Autumn 1999): 45–66. For an application, see the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) in Roxbury, Massachusetts. Formed in 1984, DSNI has grown into a collaborative revitalization effort that involves more than 3,000 residents, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and religious institutions. Its primary activities include a community land trust that ensures affordable housing, a local merchants' organization that supports cooperatively owned businesses, an urban agriculture project run by youth, and an institute that hosts economic literacy workshops. See

Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, http://www.dsni.org (accessed 22 May 2010).

The InterValley Project (IVP) offers another model of community economic development. An organizing network in southern New England, IVP developed in response to a sharp decline in manufacturing that resulted in increased un- and underemployment, deteriorating downtowns, loss of decent affordable housing, and cutbacks in public services. Since 1983, IVP has helped organize four New England organizations, creating a network that builds leadership capacity to address common concerns across lines of religion, race, ethnicity, class, age, and geography. See InterValley Project, http://www.intervalleyproject.org (accessed 22 May 2010).

13. Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods, "Preface. No One Knows the Mysteries at the Bottom of the Ocean," in *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*, eds. Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2007), 6.
14. Roberta Feldman and Susan Stall, *The Dignity of Resistance: Women Residents' Activism in Chicago Public Housing* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 185.
15. Luis Aponte-Parés, "Casitas, Place, and Culture: Appropriating Place in Puerto Rican Barrios," *Places, a Forum of Environmental Design* 11 (Winter 1997): 55.
16. Joseph Sciorra and Martha Cooper, "I Feel Like I'm in My Country: Puerto Rican Casitas in New York City," *TDR (1988-)* 34 no. 4 (Winter 1990): 156–168.
17. Aponte-Parés, "Casitas, Place, and Culture," 52–61.
18. Ibid.
19. Sciorra and Cooper, "I Feel Like I'm in My Country," 158.
20. Aponte-Parés, "Casitas, Place, and Culture," 56.
21. Homeless encampments can be found in at least 15 states: Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Washington, and West Virginia. See Temporary Autonomous Shelter Research Portal, http://tentcity.wikidot.com (accessed 22 May 2010).
22. In February 2005, Seattle University (SU) became the first university to host a temporary encampment when it invited approximately 100 homeless women and men to set up tents on its tennis courts. A Jesuit institution, SU used the opportunity to engage law, nursing, and social work students in assisting needy people while exploring the social, legal, and theological implications of homelessness. See "Tent City Goes to College," *Seattle Times Editorial* 23 (January 2005): np, http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/editorialsopinion/2002157409_tented23.html (accessed 22 May 2010).
23. After two illegal tent cities in Seattle were forcibly closed, a court-ordered consent decree legalized them but restricted their establishment to private land (by invitation of a host) and set standards for their operation. The result was Tent City 3, which rotates around the city, making Seattle the first in the country to have homeless encampments organized by a sponsoring organization and largely accepted by local officials. A fourth encampment attempted to expand beyond the consent decree and use public land and resources. Meeting with

opposition, Tent City 4 was limited to places of worship outside the city. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tent_city (accessed 22 May 2010).

24. Temporary Autonomous Shelter Research Portal, note 21 this chapter.
25. Cindy Rosenthal, "The 'Common Green/Common Ground' Performance Project: The Personal, the Political, the Gardens, and NYU," *TDR (1988-)* 46 no. 3 (Autumn 2002): 132, quoting Topher Delaney, "Morning Edition," *National Public Radio* (10 October 2001).
26. Karen Schmelzkopf, "Urban Community Gardens as Contested Space," *Geographical Review* 85 no. 3 (July 1995): 364–381.
27. Ibid., 364.
28. For a description of gardening as environmental activism, see Kate H. Brown and Andrew L. Jameton, "Public Health Implications of Urban Agriculture," *Journal of Public Health Policy* 21 no. 1 (2000): 20–39. Also see Schmelzkopf, "Urban Community Gardens," who described the environmental activism of a group on New York's Lower East Side. In 1973 the group staged humorous demonstrations to gain access to a fenced-off vacant lot and—after tossing balloons filled with seeds and bulbs over the fence—received permission from the city to garden on the lot. The group eventually incorporated as the Green Guerillas, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to teach low-income New Yorkers the art of city gardening.
29. Seattle's P-Patch program partners with the local housing authority to develop gardens for public housing residents. Adults and youth—primarily South East Asians and East Africans—use some of the p-patches as income-producing market gardens. See Jim Diers, *Neighbor Power: Building Community the Seattle Way* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004).
30. Food from the 'Hood, a two-acre fruit and vegetable garden in South Central Los Angeles, is the most financially successful youth gardening program in the country. Created in an abandoned lot by students from Crenshaw High School, the program began in response to the 1992 riots. Students donate 25 percent of their produce to people in need and market the rest, using half their profits to support scholarships. In addition to produce, the students have developed bottled salad dressings, which they sell to stores nationwide and on Amazon.com. See Brown and Jameton, "Public Health Implications"; also see "Food from the 'Hood," http://www.certnyc.org/ffth.html (accessed 22 May 2010).
31. Diers, *Neighbor Power*.
32. After a defeat in 1972 owing to lobbying by agribusiness, Congress allocated funds in 1977 to promote community gardens in six cities across the country. See Brown and Jameton, "Public Health Implications."
33. Ibid.; Schmelzkopf, "Urban Community Gardens."
34. Brown and Jameton, "Public Health Implications," 20.
35. The concept "community household" appeared in an article by Susan Saegert, "Unlikely Leaders, Extreme Circumstances: Older Black Women Building Community Households," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 17 no. 3 (1989): 295–316. This article preceded her book with Jacqueline Leavitt, which used data from 88 in-depth interviews, along with survey data collected by city staff, to document the experiences of Harlem residents living in landlord-abandoned buildings during the 1980s, when the city had inherited

4,000 derelict properties through foreclosure. Countering prevailing notions of passivity in poor communities, Leavitt and Saegert described tenants who organized against landlord neglect and advocated for programs that eventually allowed tenant associations, community groups, and landlords with good track records to take ownership of derelict buildings. They characterized the kinship that existed among tenants as a community household—a social network that helps members improve their own lives and that of their communities. See Jacqueline Leavitt and Susan Saegert, *From Abandonment to Hope: Community-Households in Harlem* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

Feldman and Stahl used the same concept to characterize the social context for the activism of public housing residents in Wentworth Gardens on Chicago's South Side. Drawing upon data collected once a week for almost ten years, they described four decades of resistance to inequity that began when some residents challenged the closing of a fieldhouse and dismantling of youth recreational activities. Subsequently, resident activists fought against a proposed baseball stadium that required demolition of part of the housing project, secured planning funds to conduct a feasibility study for a shopping mall to replace retail that was lost to stadium construction, took advantage of HUD's resident management program to resist federal disinvestment in their housing, and took over a laundry after the housing authority closed it, recycling profits back into the community. Although the activists frequently met defeat, Feldman and Stahl contended that the social glue deriving from the community household offered a vital source of individual and community empowerment. See Feldman and Stahl, *The Dignity of Resistance*.

36. Feldman and Stahl, *The Dignity of Resistance*, 94.
37. Ibid., 100.
38. Ibid.; Leavitt and Saegert, *From Abandonment to Hope*.
39. Sharon E. Sutton and Susan P. Kemp, "Integrated Social Science and Design Inquiry through Interdisciplinary Design Charrettes: An Approach to Participatory Community Problem-solving," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 38 nos. 1–2 (September 2006): 125.
40. Sarena D. Seifer and Armand W. Carriere, "Symposium Overview," in *Community-University Partnerships: Translating Evidence into Action: A National Symposium*, jointly sponsored by Community-Campus Partnerships for Health and HUD's Office of University Partnerships, held in San Diego, CA (26 April 2003), http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/symposium_report%20(1).pdf (accessed 22 May 2010).
41. Dana Cuff, *Architecture: The Story of Practice* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1991).
42. David Hinson, "Design as Research: Learning from Doing in the Design-Build Studio," *Journal of Architectural Education* (2007): 23–26.
43. Student reports and proposals can provide the background information nonprofit groups need to write grant proposals and also decrease their investment in professional services. For example, in one University of Michigan graduate architecture studio, students worked with a church-based development corporation in Detroit to document housing needs and propose approaches to addressing those needs. Those studies helped the corporation get a planning

grant that covered the services of a licensed architect. In a follow-up studio, another group of students worked with the architect on conceptual explorations that allowed him to deliver a higher quality product at a lower fee. See Sharon E. Sutton, "Seeing the Whole of the Moon," in *Multicultural Teaching in the University*, eds. David Schoem, Linda Frankel, Ximena Zúñiga, and Edith A. Lewis (New York: Praeger Press, 1993), 161–171.

44. Rob Corser and Nils Gore, "Rebuilding for the Seventh Ward's Cultural Life," *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research* 10 no. 3 (2008): 73–80, citing Anthony Fontenot, "Reinventing New Orleans," *Domus* 905 (July–August 2007): 95–99.
45. See Sutton and Kemp, "Integrated Social Science."
46. Because student design work can reduce the up-front work of design professionals, the standard ethic of community outreach limits student services to communities in need and to problems that benefit from open-ended exploration.
47. Sutton and Kemp, "Integrated Social Science," 130, citing Henry Sanoff, *Community Participation Methods in Design and Planning* (New York: Wiley, 2000).
48. From 1999 to 2003 as part of our work at UW's Center for Environment Education and Design Studies, we held four week-long design charrettes as credit-bearing studio offerings, along with a fifth no-credit weekend charrette. One of the charrettes served as the catalyst for a four-year partnership, resulting in two public art installations and in presentations and publications that eventually culminated in sidewalks being installed in a suburban community. Drawings from a second charrette were integrated into Seattle's neighborhood design guidelines and also into a request for proposals from design consultants (See Sutton and Kemp, "Integrated Social Science"). Proposals from a third charrette were developed into working drawings by volunteer architects, who used them to construct a temporary preschool. Although the outcomes of the other two charrettes were purely academic, notably, data collected in relation to one of those charrettes resulted in a doctoral dissertation by Linda Hurley Ishem, who describes some of her findings in chapter five of this volume.
49. Barbara Holland, "Panel Moderator," in *Community-University Partnerships: Translating Evidence into Action: A National Symposium*, jointly sponsored by Community-Campus Partnerships for Health and HUD's Office of University Partnerships, held in San Diego, CA (26 April 2003).
50. In a partnership between the University of Arkansas and the Porch Cultural Organization, a fledgling community organization in the Seventh Ward of New Orleans, Rob Corser and Nils Gore engaged successive groups of students in designing and building small-scale interventions. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, students and community members worked together in an entrepreneurial manner, erecting five installations over a period of three years, which together helped rebuild a sense of community in the neighborhood. They included notice boards, a shade pavilion and tool shed in a community garden, a mobile stage, and an outdoor classroom. See Rob Corser and Nils Gore, "Insurgent Architecture," *Journal of Architectural Education* 62 no. 4 (2009): 32–39; Rob Corser and Nils Gore, "Rebuilding for the Seventh

Ward's Cultural Life," *Cityscape, the HUD Policy Development and Research Journal* (November 2008): 73–80. Also see Roberta M. Feldman, chapter eight this volume, and Steve Badanes, chapter 9 this volume.

51. David Sokol, "Teaching by Example—Eight Design-Build Educators Participate in a Roundtable Forum," *Architectural Record* (October 2008): 120, quoting roundtable participant Thomas A. Dutton.
52. Caspar Merkle, "Youth Participation in El Alto, Bolivia," *Environment and Urbanization* 15 no. 1 (April 2003): 205.
53. Nancy Fraser, *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition* (New York: Routledge, 1997); David Schlosberg, "Reconceiving Environmental Justice: Global Movements and Political Theories," *Environmental Politics* 13 no. 3 (Autumn 2004): 517–540.
54. For example, the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child specifies children's right to *provision* (i.e., the fulfillment of such basic needs as food, health care, education, recreation, and play), *protection* (i.e., from commercial or sexual exploitation, physical or mental abuse, or engagement in warfare), and *participation* (i.e., having a say in decisions that affect them). See for example Louise Chawla, "Chapter One: Introduction," in *Growing Up in an Urbanising World*, ed. Louise Chawla (London: Earthscan, 2002), 15–34.
55. Barry Checkoway, Katie Richards-Schuster, Shakira Abdullah, Margarita Aragon, Evelyn Facio, Lisa Figueroa, Ellen Reddy, Mary Welsh, and Al White, "Young People as Competent Citizens," *Community Development Journal* 38 no. 4 (October 2003): 303.
56. In a national study of 88 justice-oriented, community-based programs serving low-income and minority youth, almost three-quarters reported activities related to community change as their primary activity (29 percent reported civic activism, 16 percent reported community art, 15 percent reported community development, 5 percent reported community service, and 3 percent reported hands-on interventions). Only about one-quarter (24 percent) reported youth and identity development as their primary activity. See Sharon E. Sutton, Susan P. Kemp, Lorraine Guiterréz, and Susan Saegert, *Urban Youth Programs in America: A Study of Youth, Community, and Social Justice Conducted for the Ford Foundation* (Seattle: University of Washington, 2006).
57. In the same study, the outcomes reported by program directors include being an active participant (21 percent), making a social contribution (19 percent), being empowered (18 percent), being competent (16 percent), creating social capital (13 percent), and building community (12 percent). These data suggest that, given appropriate support, low-income youth of color can contribute both to society and to their own destinies. Ibid.

    See also Checkoway et al., "Young People"; Sharon E. Sutton, "A Social Justice Perspective on Youth and Community Development: Theorizing the Processes and Outcomes of Participation," *Children, Youth, and Environments* 17 no. 2 (2007): 616–645, http://thunder1.cudenver.edu/cye_journal/abstract.pl?n=1816 (accessed 22 May 2010).
58. Checkoway et al., "Young People," 304.

59. Anonymous, "Unpublished Staff Survey," from *Constructing a Social Justice Framework for Youth and Community Service*, a study conducted for the Ford Foundation (Seattle: University of Washington, 2004).
60. Sharon Egretta Sutton and Susan P. Kemp, "Young People's Participation in Constructing a Socially Just Public Sphere, in *Children and Their Environments: Learning, Using, and Designing Spaces*, eds. Christopher Spencer and Mark Blades (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 274–275.
61. John W. Frazier, Florence Margai, and Eugene Tettey-Fio, *Race and Place: Equity Issues in Urban America* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003).
62. Julian Agyeman, Robert D. Bullard, and Bob Evans, "Joined-up Thinking: Bringing Together Sustainability, Environmental Justice, and Equity," in *Just Sustainabilities: Development in an Unequal World*, eds. Julian Agyeman, Robert D. Bullard, and Bob Evans (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003), 1–16.
63. john a. powell, "Race, Poverty, and Urban Sprawl: Access to Opportunities through Regional Strategies," in *Growing Smarter: Achieving Livable Communities, Environmental Justice, and Regional Equity*, ed. Robert D. Bullard (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press), 55; see also Angela Glover Blackwell and Sarah Treuhaft, "Regional Equity and the Quest for Full Inclusion," *PolicyLink* (2008), http://www.regionalequity08.org/atf/cf/%7BF0BEAA1E-C0AD-4629-A5A9–9925BBAA1467%7D/summit%20framing%20paper_no%20cover.pdf (accessed 22 May 2010).
64. Myron Orfield, "Building Coalitions Between Cities and Suburbs," in *Growing Smarter*, 323–344.
65. powell, "Race, Poverty, and Urban Sprawl," 54; see also Blackwell and Treuhaft, "Regional Equity"; Orfield, "Building Coalitions"; Manuel Pastor Jr., "¿Quién Es Más Urbanista?: Latinos and Smart Growth," in *Growing Smarter*, 73–101.
66. For a summary of the principles of equitable development, see Angela Glover Blackwell, "Achieving Equitable Development," in *Growing Smarter*, 243–260. These principles include integrating people-based and place-based strategies; reducing local and regional disparities in access to, and distribution of, resources and opportunities; promoting double bottom-line investments—financial returns for investor along with economic and social benefits to residents; and ensuring meaningful community voice, participation, and leadership so that local residents and organizations have access to the tools, knowledge, and resources that can guarantee their significant participation.
67. Orfield, "Building Coalitions"; Pastor, "¿Quién Es Más Urbanista?"
68. powell, "Race, Poverty, and Urban Sprawl," 55.
69. Blackwell, "Achieving Equitable Development." Julian Agyeman also offered Fruitvale, California, a largely low-income and minority community, as an example of regional decision making. In this instance, a community development corporation in nearby Oakland, the Unity Council, worked collaboratively with Fruitvale residents and regional entities to intervene in a revitalization project. The council redesigned the project to include a new transit station, surrounded not by acres of surface parking but by affordable housing, a senior center, a community health center, day care facilities,

street-level retail shops, and a hidden parking garage. "Through multiple community meetings and design charrettes . . . the community created a plan for a transit village . . . designed around pedestrian access to BART, retail development, and transit-oriented housing." See Julian Agyeman, *Sustainable Communities and the Challenge of Environmental Justice* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 130.

70. Robert D. Bullard, "Smart Growth Meets Environmental Justice," in *Growing Smarter*, 23–49.
71. Julian Agyeman and Tom Evans, "Toward Just Sustainability in Urban Communities: Building Equity Rights with Sustainable Solutions," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 590 (November 2003): 35–53, citing David Satterthwaite, *Earthscan Reader in Sustainable Cities* (London: Earthscan, 1999).
72. Agyeman and Evans, "Toward Just Sustainability."
73. Ibid., 36–37.
74. Agyeman and Evans pointed to Urban Ecology in Oakland, California, as a model of sustainable, equitable land use planning. Through its Community Design program, Urban Ecology offers technical assistance so low-income residents can engage in community planning. At the same time, through its Sustainable Cities program, staff promote smart growth strategies to citizen groups and municipalities alike, offering workshops that prepare residents to advocate for sustainable land development.
75. Agyeman and Evans, "Toward Just Sustainability"; Julie Sze, *Noxious New York: The Racial Politics of Urban Health and Environmental Justice* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2007).
76. Bullard, "Smart Growth."
77. Agyeman, *Sustainable Communities*.
78. Paul Havemann, "Enmeshed in the Web: Indigenous People's Rights in the Networked Society," in *Global Social Movements*, eds. Robin Cohen and Shirin M. Rai (New York: Continuum International Press, 2004), 18–32.
79. For example, see Smolker and Lanza, chapter thirteen this volume.

Chapter Seven

"Leaders of Today, Builders of Tomorrow": Transforming Youth and Communities in Urban Youth Programs

Susan P. Kemp

> *Really good youth development happens when youth and communities develop together, not separately.*
>
> —Youth program director

Community-based youth programs meet urban youth where they live, engaging young people around the issues they experience daily and are most concerned about, and working collaboratively with them to change the social and spatial realities facing their communities. Situating youth firmly within the context of their neighborhood and community ecologies, community youth development frameworks thus affirm the value of young people's contributions to community life. Bridging youth and community development, they also pay close attention to youth's developmental needs.[1] When most transformative, these programs turn conventional youth programming wisdom on its head, viewing urban places not simply as barriers to youth's civic, educational, and social development but as the ground on which it necessarily occurs.[2] In transformative urban youth programs, place, in all its dimensions, provides a compelling container for "critical placemaking," defined here as the deliberate linking of critical reflection, youth empowerment, intergenerational alliances, and collective action to claim, and reclaim, place.

Community youth development, as programs that bridge youth and community development are commonly termed, encompasses a range of program models and approaches. In general, these programs

> [create] environments that provide constructive, affirmative, and encouraging relationships that are sustained over time with adults and peers,

> while concurrently providing an array of opportunities that enable youth to build their competencies and become engaged as partners in their own development, as well as in the development of their communities.[3]

Within this general rubric, programs vary on a number of dimensions, including the extent to which they take a normative or transformative approach to enhancing young people's development in concert with supporting positive changes in youth's local communities.

A significant core of community youth development programs builds on positive youth development frameworks, adding community into the mix but still focusing centrally on providing healthy developmental opportunities for individual youth.[4] For these programs, the engagement of youth in place and community typically has three main aims: providing them with opportunities for developing key life skills, strengthening their sense of connection to community, and creating communities that promote optimal youth development. Although many of these programs serve poor and minority youth, the aims embedded in positive youth development frameworks reflect a normative view of youth and community development that typically lacks critical analysis of the sociostructural challenges confronting marginalized youth and their communities.

Youth organizing programs, conversely, are forthrightly committed to engaging marginalized youth in advocacy and activism to change unjust and inequitable conditions.[5] Focusing primarily on youth as civic and political actors, these programs give less systematic attention to young people's other developmental needs, such as educational and job skills. Often a more attractive option for hard-to-reach older youth than other youth-serving settings, they emphasize culture and identity, encourage critical analysis and problem solving, and provide opportunities to develop leadership skills.[6] "Youth within these programs are seriously engaged in critical reflection about themselves and their society, uniting with their peers in positive collective action, and engaging community leaders to see uncommon innovative alternatives to chronic problems in our society."[7]

A third group of community youth development programs occupies a middle ground between these two poles. Many engage youth directly in place and placemaking through activities such as community gardening and environmental stewardship. Others engage youth creatively in community arts projects or media projects. Less directly focused on activism than youth organizing programs, but more critically informed than programs focused primarily on promoting healthy youth development, these programs often blend elements of each.

All three approaches share a commitment to involving youth in meaningful, embodied action in their everyday worlds. Implicit if not explicit in these models is the assumption that this involvement is transformative

of both youth and their local communities.[8] However little work has been done to explore how variability among program models differentially shapes the attainment of these transformative goals.

Findings from a national survey of exemplary community-based urban youth programs conducted by Sharon E. Sutton and her colleagues underscore the need to better understand the implications of diversity among community youth development programs.[9] By design, all the programs in the study self-identified as social justice–oriented programs "that not only recognize the debilitating inequities [urban] youth face but also engage them in struggling for social change."[10] Programs in the study represented a range of approaches to community youth development, from a primary focus on positive youth development within community to engaging youth in critically informed, community-based action. Within this spectrum of approaches, the research team scored programs on the extent to which their program philosophy reflected a commitment to youth and community change through intergenerational collaboration. Not surprisingly given the purposive nature of the sample, most programs scored at the transformative end of this scale (an average of 4.08 out of 5.0). And yet variability did exist within the study programs, leading the research team to recommend that community youth development programs be more intentional in articulating the links between youth and community development. As the team pointed out, "the most transformative programs in our study clearly have a vital role to play in connecting youth to their communities. Besides advancing youth development, such connectedness can enable young people and their adult allies to improve challenging urban conditions."[11]

Given that the majority of community youth development programs serve low-income youth of color living in distressed, underresourced, and often highly stigmatized communities, the diversity among justice-oriented programs warrants further scrutiny. In what ways do these programs vary, what accounts for their variation, and what are its implications? Using the lens of place, this chapter begins to address these questions, focusing on better understanding programmatic attributes that distinguish community youth development programs that are transformative of both youth and place from programs that provide effective services to youth and their communities but lack the critical edge characteristic of more transformative programs.

To make these differences visible and thus available for critical analysis, I use as a case study two exemplary community youth development programs drawn from the national study described earlier.[12] The programs are located in the same metropolitan area, and both primarily serve low-income youth and families of color. However, whereas one program scored considerably below average on the youth-community change philosophy

scale (2.5), the other scored at its most transformative end (5.0). The first program's philosophy and activities reflect a youth-centered approach to community youth development, informed by positive youth development frameworks.[13] The second program extends community youth development principles by incorporating a critical, collectivist approach in all elements of its work, from its efforts to support individual youth development to activism in its community.

By juxtaposing these two programs, each excellent in its own way, this chapter aims to sharpen awareness of the ways in which the deep structure of program philosophy shapes program practices, with implications for the degree to which a given program engages forthrightly in efforts to transform the inequitable sociospatial conditions that low-income youth of color experience. To illuminate similarities and differences between the two case study programs, I focus on each program's (a) orientation to place, (b) nature and function of intergenerational relationships, (c) approach to developing youth's educational and civic competencies, and (d) involvement of youth in community change activities. To frame the analysis, I draw from the literature on critical placemaking, identifying four key dimensions—critical analysis of the factors underlying inequalities in place, active engagement in efforts to change local conditions, intergenerational relationships as a base for collective action, and competency-development through action in everyday environments—that I argue are central to understanding the extent to which community youth development programs realize their goals of youth and community change.

Because the conceptual framework for my analysis focuses on critical placemaking, I provide an overview of its key dimensions in the next section. The body of the chapter presents the case study, following a brief summary of the larger study from which the data for the chapter are drawn. I then elaborate on the domains already noted, bringing data from each program together with relevant literature to illustrate key points. The chapter concludes with implications for the practice of critical placemaking in community youth development programs.

Critical Placemaking as a Means to Youth and Community Development

> *The practice of making our places changes and maintains the physical world and our ideas about it while it also creates communities of people who share concerns, interests, hopes, desires, and fears.*[14]

Opportunities for engaging with others in making place are essential not only to children's healthy development and long-term environmental

competence but also to the development of social citizenship. As Sutton and Kemp have argued, "positive sociospatial interactions are critical to children's maturation as *engaged citizens*, defined as persons who can participate in civic dialogue and take collective action on behalf of their communities."[15] For urban youth, whose lives and communities are profoundly shaped by spatial, racial, ethnic, and class exclusions, placemaking is fundamentally about social justice; it functions, in effect, as a "powerful 'public space' for the critical practice of democracy."[16] As young people make their places, they also make themselves—as competent individuals, as members of a community, and as full participants in civic society.

Recognizing the profound threats to place that face low-income, minority communities, I propose that critical placemaking can link the universal human activity of laying claim to place with critical analysis of the relationships between conditions in local places and the sociostructural processes that produce and reproduce their privilege and marginality. From a critical perspective, processes of exclusion, inequity, and injustice come to ground in place.[17] At the same time, place is the site where these processes are most vulnerable to examination and refusal via everyday activism.[18]

At its core, therefore, critical placemaking involves *praxis*, or the intentional linking of critical reflection and action in everyday environments.[19] In *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre identified two spatial practices as central to grappling with the inequitable power relations that give rise to urban injustices: (a) the right to participation, for example in decision making about urban conditions; and (b) the right to appropriation, or the "right of inhabitants to physically access, occupy, and use urban space," including the right to "produce urban space so that it meets the needs of its inhabitants."[20] Lefebvre's claim that citizens have a "right to the city" suggests that placemaking with urban youth should involve opportunities for young people to participate in actions that assert agency over conditions in their own communities. Hands-on engagement in real-world change is also consistent with arguments that empowerment is fundamentally a spatial practice, in the sense that it has everything to do with the ability to act effectively in everyday environments.[21] As Schneekloth and Shibley pointed out, "the practice of placemaking is inherently about transformations, modifications, changes, preservation—all acts of intervention."[22]

Although inequality in place is typically highly visible—marked by dilapidated buildings, empty lots, visible trash, crumbling streets, and an absence of amenities—the mechanisms that create it tend to be hidden, leaving residents feeling both blamed and powerless. The empowerment of urban youth therefore requires not only active engagement in their everyday worlds but critical analysis of the underlying sociostructural processes producing the inequalities they observe and experience in their own lives.

It entails, to borrow David Gruenewald's reworking of Freire's writing on critical praxis, a "critical pedagogy of place" that provides youth with opportunities to "read the world" and learn about the community, plan and implement change projects, and reflect on the process and outcomes of that engagement.[23]

Further, the empowerment of urban youth through critical placemaking necessarily involves *collective* action, that is, young people acting together with adults to transform with intentionality the places where they live. Community activist Grace Lee Boggs underscored the importance of collectivity and coalitions, noting that "place-consciousness . . . encourages us to come together around common, local experiences and organize around our hopes for the future of our communities and cities."[24] In critical placemaking, adults and youth can work in partnership toward issues in their communities of mutual concern.[25]

Not all that matters in critical placemaking focuses outward to neighborhood and the larger community. Marginalized groups also need access to private and semiprivate places in which people can come together across generations for support, renewal, and the development of collective agency in the face of oppressive circumstances. Within supportive neighborhood programs, for example, young people "in . . . constant confrontation with harsh and humiliating public representations of their race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality [can] . . . break down public representations for scrutiny and invent new ones."[26]

For low-income youth of color, these multifaceted connections within community also serve important developmental functions. Stanton-Salazar and Spina, for example, argued that the socialization of urban minority youth optimally involves a contextualized, social network–oriented approach, focused on "empowering forms of resiliency" that reside in family and community support systems.[27] As they pointed out, "the greater the ecological risks associated with racial and class segregation, the greater the need for a supportive web of socialization agents across institutional sites that can foster the development of resilient attributes."[28] These public and private webs of connection provide a mechanism for overcoming the disconnection marginalized youth often experience as they navigate a range of social worlds, offer safe spaces for exploring the effect of larger social factors in their lives, and support the development of the skills and confidence all youth need to participate in civic life.[29]

Scholarship on youth-in-community likewise points to the importance of multiple webs of connectivity in young people's lives. A multinational study of children's experiences in cities, for example, found that across countries children tend to value communities with the characteristics typical of urban villages, including dense social networks and a rich cultural

life.[30] Indeed, experiences of solidarity, cooperation, and care (or the lack of these social supports) shaped children's perceptions of the quality of their environments more than poverty or lack of material resources.[31]

Across these literatures, several dimensions of critical placemaking emerge as potentially central to transformative practice with urban youth. These include critical analysis of the sociostructural conditions giving rise to lived inequalities, active engagement in transforming local places, promotion of community within and beyond the program, and collective action in the environment linked to the development of individual agency and competence. In the following sections of the chapter, I explore the ways in which the case study programs enacted these elements.

A Study of Justice-oriented Community-based Urban Youth Programs

The analyses that follow draw on data from the aforementioned national study of community-based, justice-oriented urban youth programs,[32] which surveyed 88 urban, community-based youth programs that included a community service component and described themselves as committed to social justice.[33] Multiple data-gathering methods included telephone surveys conducted with all 88 program directors; case studies involving in-depth interviews with youth participants, parents, and program staff from six programs; focus groups involving open-ended interviews with youth participants, parents, and program staff from two programs; and analysis of mission statements. The data reported here are based on the program director surveys, focus group interviews, and mission statement analysis.

The Defining Characteristics of Transformative Program Philosophies

Prior to analyzing the survey data from the urban youth study, the research team used the literature on youth programs together with the analysis of participating programs' mission statements to construct a typology of youth program philosophies. These philosophies clustered broadly into three groups: prevention (a person-centered focus on enhancing development by reducing risks and preventing problems); promotion (an ecological focus on positive youth development and youth-in-community context); and transformation (a focus on socially transformative action benefiting youth and their communities).[34] For the purposes of this chapter, I explore the implications of this variability for community-based youth programs focusing on the ways in which they (a) engage youth in transforming the root causes of youth and community marginality via place-based action,

(b) view youth as change agents, and (c) attend to differences among youth in opportunities, social location, and identity.

The study found that transformative programs and their activities were centered on the premise that both youth and communities benefit from youth's socially transformative action. In particular, they were more likely to incorporate critical pedagogies or social critique into their program activities, to engage youth on multiple levels and in multiple ways, to provide youth with opportunities to understand and actively participate in their neighborhoods, to focus on communal behaviors, and to encourage them to become change agents. They were also much more likely than the other programs to engage youth actively in contributing to their communities.[35] As Sutton and her colleagues noted, "These [transformative] programs are significantly more likely to promote collaborative community work that helps youth understand the root causes of problems and develop effective solutions."[36] In contrast to findings by other scholars, the transformative programs in this sample did not focus centrally on identity development, leading the authors to speculate that they viewed identity development in communal and intergenerational rather than individual terms.[37]

The study also revealed that transformative programs had a range of characteristics not found in the other programs, including a vision of social justice that emphasized equal opportunities, fluid relationships between youth and adults, social critique as an element of program activities, and opportunities for youth to acquire community change skills and engage in activism within the program.[38] In general, these programs "promote collaborative community work that helps youth understand the root causes of problems and develop effective solutions."[39] However, having a transformative philosophy did not consistently translate into community-building outcomes, that is, outcomes focused outward on community change.[40] It was this finding that led the research team to conclude that such programs would benefit from a more intentional alignment of activities and outcomes with program philosophy, given that many mission statements indicated a commitment to community change.[41]

In Their Own Words: Youth, Parent, and Staff Perspectives on Two Exemplary Programs

To better understand how community youth development programs do, or do not, integrate transformative philosophies into their practice, I now turn to a more fine-grained examination of data from two community-based youth-serving programs located in contiguous neighborhoods in a major U.S. city. Both programs focused on youth development and community service or change activities, involved supportive adults in all aspects of the

youth programming, took an asset-based approach to youth participants, and networked extensively with other local organizations. However, they differed in their approaches to these core elements, providing an informative window into the ways in which program philosophy shapes program activities and outcomes.

Program A offers a range of after school activities, including academic tutoring, enrichment (drama, dance, chess, art, drumming, and poetry), conflict resolution and job-readiness training, field trips ("to explore the city"), family literacy, and mandatory community service (25 hours minimum annually).[42] Reflecting a positive youth development approach, the program director explained, "[I]t's basically empowering them themselves and changing their attitude and giving them tools. So that way they could be leaders in their own neighborhood if they could only change what they're like." Asset-building activities, for example, "help youth develop positive identities. It contributes to social justice by getting them to know themselves better and think about their own interests . . . to be a participant at some level . . . to think strategically and scaffold their hopes." Pointing to its value to local families, the director described the program as oversubscribed with a long waiting list.

Annually, Program A serves about 200–300 children and youth ages 5–19, offering activities after school and on weekends during the school year and in the summer. Located in a low-income community with many dual-earner working families and single working parents, the program primarily draws children and families from its immediate environs; local residents are primarily African American and Latino/a (many of whom are non-English-speaking), with some mix of other racial and ethnic groups. Many program staff live in the neighborhood and are highly invested in it. Both staff and parents report that although the neighborhood is not entirely safe, they do not view it as highly toxic or dangerous.

Primarily a youth organizing program, Program B is located within an adult membership agency with a long track record of activism in areas such as housing, education, environmental justice, and economic justice. Youth activities likewise encompass a range of campaigns and projects centered on their local schools and communities (for example, building a community center, creating small schools, school renovation projects). For two hours in the afternoon, the program provides academic tutoring; in the evening, however, all program activities focus on community action.

Smaller than Program A, Program B serves 150–200 youth ages 12–18 over the course of a year. According to staff members, it draws most heavily from neighborhoods "right at the center of our turf," but it also serves a wider catchment area of ten neighborhoods, with a number of youth commuting some distance to attend the program. These neighborhoods are low

income and very racially and ethnically diverse. Respondents describe the area around the program as crowded, pointing to large numbers of people on the street, crowded homes, and crowded, underresourced schools. A fair amount of violence is also visible—explained one staff member, "violence is far from gone in our communities"—and in general, the neighborhood lacks programs and resources for local youth. As one youth put it, "basically anything you could give, we need."

Perspectives on Place

Reflecting its strong roots in positive youth development frameworks, Program A approaches place primarily through the lens of its implications for youth development. Its twofold agenda focuses, on the one hand, on protecting youth from place and, on the other, on working with youth and their parents to create a community that provides positive supports for its children and youth. The program also makes significant efforts to expose youth participants (and their parents) to other environments, for example through field trips in the city and beyond; community performances involving poetry, acting, and dancing; and a variety of service learning activities that result in tangible neighborhood improvement.

For Program B, place is central. As one staff member noted, "everything [the youth] work on—everything they organize around—it directly affects something they gotta walk through every day." Program B also emphasizes developing youth leadership grounded in a sense of responsibility and commitment to their places. As one parent pointed out,

> These kids take ownership of the community. It's their community. They treat it differently. They see trash. It's not, "well you know, that's [X] community. No, this is my community. Something's got to be done about this." Because that's the way these kids . . . view this.

Summarizing the differences and similarities between the two programs, a youth participant in Program B put it this way: "Well I believe [Program B] works on more political things, and [Program A] works on more like keeping kids out of the streets, making sure they're . . . doing something positive with their lives." Noting that one is oriented more to community change and the other to community service, another Program B youth participant observed:

> We're trying to make changes in communities so that people could join us and do what we do, and they trying to make sure . . . all youth stay out of the streets. . . . We're trying to fix it up, to make sure that everyone doesn't get any type of negativeness in them . . . and they're trying to keep

> everyone out of it . . . out of the already negative energy. . . . So it's beneficial in both ways.

A Program B staff member concurred with this assessment, noting that "we have similar ends for the youth but a very different sort of means with the intersection."

Perspectives on Intergenerational Connections

Supportive relationships between youth and adults are a key element of effective community youth development programming.[43] As Ben Kirshner and others have pointed out, as novices in community change projects youth benefit from the mentoring of capable adults who can help them develop core competencies without needing to take center stage.[44] Bringing context into the picture, Greg Mannion argued for a sociospatial view of participation, recognizing both the power dynamics at play in youth-adult relationships and the influence of the settings in which participatory relationships are negotiated.[45]

In different forms, intergenerational relationships are central to both case study programs. In Program A, these relationships primarily involve supportive care and guidance of youth by committed adults. Relationships between youth participants and adults reflect the core elements of youth-adult mentoring identified in the research literature: genuine caring, understanding, support, honest feedback, and challenge.[46] As a Program A parent noted, the program "has good mentors that the kids look up to and see a positive image. . . . You gotta show them something that's positive where they look up and they say . . . I want to be like that." Youth, parents, and staff alike describe the program as "a haven, a place after school every day, they know there's going to be people that love them."

In Program B, relationships include but go beyond supportive connections between youth and adults (and the assumption that knowledge and help primarily flow one way, from adults to youth). Indeed, relationships within Program B make up a multigenerational matrix, where older youth and program alumni mentor younger youth, parents and community members support youth and staff, staff mentor and provide positive role models for youth, and youth take the lead in bringing adults along. Describing these relationships, both youth and adults use the language of family: "They do not want to go home cuz they got so attached to each other. They built a family among that group that is there."

These close ties serve several functions. Youth-to-youth relationships provide friendship, peer support, and tutoring assistance. Program alumni mentor younger participants in the program, giving back the benefits they received from the program by showing younger youth the ropes and

ensuring they have graduated opportunities to develop leadership skills. Staff members, some of whom are also program alumni, connect with youth individually as well as in groups, creating relationships that provide a base for working on educational goals and change activities:

> I think that [one-on-one] helps a lot.... It forms trust and it shows them that it's important to people who love them that they do well in school... so I think we're relating like personal care with academic achievement with, you know, with achievement as a community leader.

Youth in Program B also take a lead in activities with adults, taking pride in their capacities and contributions and noting with pleasure that sometimes they are more effective than their adult partners. For example, they described a situation in which adults were arguing over which politician to invite to a meeting and the young people present were able to focus on problem solving. As one youth remarked, "not to be like conceited or anything, but we have a way of going around things." Whereas "sometimes adults have to get caught up in the whole politically correct thing," youth are more pragmatic: "as long as they [the politicians] are like actually, like working with us, it doesn't matter what color they are or whatever."

Parents' accounts underscored youth's perspectives. For example, after a public meeting, a Program B parent reported having the following conversation with a school administrator:

> He [the school administrator] called me at home and said, "I can't believe these kids. These kids just blew me away. They came in focused. They chaired the meeting. They ran the meeting. They had their agenda, their demands," and he said, "they're better than their parents." And I said, "I'm telling you, these kids." And now, as parents, we try to get on the back of their agenda [laughing].

Looking across these dimensions, Program B provides a space for "community social learning" organized around a sense of collective responsibility (and capacity) for contributing to the well-being of their communities. A youth participant in Program B put it simply:

> I think what makes us like a family is that we constantly, constantly have to work together no matter what.... If you want to achieve anything, you gotta work together, and that's what develops our coziness, and everything. And that's why we're like a family.

These qualitative data on the sense of "familial place" created within Program B are consistent with aggregate program survey data pointing

to multigenerational relationships as a significant element of transformative programs. The survey data indicated that the places created within transformative youth programs serve multiple functions: as a "space apart" or refuge from oppression, marginality, and invisibility; a space for self and collective exploration and expression; a space for healing, meaning making, and spirituality; and a space for critical reflection. Transformative programs offer (and develop) supportive, mutually respectful, and reflexive relationships with peers and adult allies, generating a sense of connection and long-term investment. At the center of these relationships is recognition (demonstrated by inclusiveness), attention to sociocultural identity development, and a commitment to building relationships across differences.[47] As a parent in Program B summed it up, "we all call them 'our youth' because we all see them as, they're all our children."

Perspectives on Competence

For both programs, providing youth with the knowledge and skills to access opportunities and thrive in the larger world is an important goal. Nevertheless, how broadly or narrowly competency development is defined relates to the program's aims and philosophy. For example, many of Program A's activities provide educational enrichment (including homework support and tutoring) and art and community service activities, all offered within a safe after-school environment; Program B also has a clear commitment to addressing youth's basic developmental needs. One staff member pointed out,

> We saw a lot of kids that were like coming up with ideas on how schools could be restructured and more accountable, and they were still failing with their own academics, and so we needed to develop something that would better tie in with that. It's somewhat pointless to have all these incredibly smart kids in this program that are doing some incredible things and they're not going to graduate high school.

Recognizing that this lack of progress in school was untenable, Program B invested actively in offering educational supports to participating youth, including homework assistance and academic enrichment. Indeed, the program's commitment to educational success is unequivocal. Unless they are up-to-date in school, youth cannot participate in activism activities: "Education comes first, and then you take on the task."

Nonetheless, Program B defines competence more broadly, offering educational supports but also encouraging the critical competencies that are essential to effective activism and resistance to inequitable conditions. Youth's educational needs and struggles are viewed contextually, reflecting both a dimensional view of youth participants and recognition that the

need for educational supports reflects larger structural issues. Confronted with the paradox of apparently very capable young people who at the same time were experiencing serious academic struggles, one program staff member drew connections between youth experiences and the structural deficits of their urban school systems:

> They know how to articulate themselves verbally, orally so well, and how to facilitate meetings so well, and how to get their own voice out and also encourage . . . others. . . . They know how to public speak, they know how to run meetings, they know how to relate with each other, they have really good interpersonal skills, and then . . . a lot of them do very poorly in school. . . . It's . . . just like school is just like a root canal every day.

Building on this analysis, the program conceptualized its academic support system as augmenting the inadequate resources available in their overcrowded, underfunded schools, which make youth participants and their families feel disregarded and unimportant—a site of inequality that on other fronts these same youth were organizing to change.

Furthermore, where Program A's educational services are primarily provided by adults, Program B relies heavily on peer tutoring. Program alumni return to mentor younger youth; honor roll students also tutor students with academic challenges. By creating connections among youth that they would not ordinarily make for themselves, the program is "like a place in society they never would have experienced otherwise," either the honor roll or academically challenged students, noted a staff member.

Rather than seeing education and youth development as the predicate to later citizenship, Program B links youth development and youth leadership, conceptualizing them as mutually reinforcing activities. As a Program B staff member pointed out, "we put in that energy not just to them as leaders who are going to change society . . . but . . . making sure that they can take care of themselves and like compete in the you know like world and like become better citizens and become educated."

Perspectives on Community Change

Consistent with community youth development principles, both programs link youth and community development. Although Program A emphasizes the importance of protecting youth from toxic neighborhood conditions, it also requires that all youth participate in community service activities, such as community cleanups. As participating youth mature, they move beyond service learning to tackling more complex projects, such as working to have a dangerous building in the neighborhood demolished "instead of

just going and getting bags, and going out and cleaning [the neighborhood]." When the program put on a health fair and invited community members, youth not only researched health issues but decided to "get out there and inform the community."

Projects such as these, all of which the youth themselves select, provide young people with important developmental opportunities. As a Program A staff member noted, program youth were "in the streets. They were door knocking. They were speaking to community residents. . . . They were . . . petitioning. They were at community board meetings. They were just very instrumental." As a result, "they learned how to structure, learned how to organize, they learned how to incorporate this into their day-to-day lives." To support youth in taking on these issues, the program also provides them with training in key skills.

In Program A, youth perspectives on the value and importance of community engagement shift along with the nature of their participation. As one young woman said about her community service involvement, "at first it was just for the service hours. Now I enjoy the whole service thing because I like, um, the fact that you know, I've always complained, 'oh, this neighborhood needs to change or whatever,' and now I'm actually doing something to help it change." Program A parents underscore the value of this more active involvement in community. As one parent noted in an exchange with another parent:

Parent 1: I love the program, it's that they give them a lot of creative outlets. They do the tutoring. They put their shows together. But, I like the political involvement.
Parent 2: And that brings funding.
Parent 1: Right, and that helps them as they get, not only older, but to be, be *leaders*.

In Program A, the development of leadership capacities in participating youth occurs organically; staff members pointed out that over time the young people in their program progress from just showing up to taking leadership roles, and they spoke with pride of "seeing youth take that initiative, taking ownership of the neighborhood." When youth were advocating for more facilities in a neighborhood park and were challenged by adults in a public meeting to back up their claims, for example, "they were able to document, produce photographs, and just basically . . . argue the situation and just be vocal about it."

Where youth in Program A mature into active engagement in and leadership of community projects, in Program B, youth development and community development are viewed from the outset as linked, mutually

reinforcing program elements. From this perspective, youth develop as they develop their places:

> That those separate things are not separate and that they are inseparable. That, that you cannot, if you're going to engage . . . youth . . . in community action, you know, and activism work, you cannot expect to improve, you know, or you know in general change in them without having them improve their community without that affecting them. . . . I believe there just isn't a separation.

Through hands-on engagement, youth develop tangible, transferable skills, as well as leadership skills. As one Program B parent observed, "My daughter is 16, and they're doing incredible research—demographics, census, um, income, you name it, they're, they're covering it." Another parent elaborated:

> When you first walk in and all you see is chaos. But if you're stand there for a little while, you realize that these kids are all doing something. And if you listen to the conversations, there's politics . . . being debated. There's projects, ideas, how to institute them, research that needs to be done, steps that need to be followed. . . . If you stand there long enough, it's awesome.

To support this hands-on learning, Program B offers a variety of workshops and training experiences, including organizing, political education, public speaking, and youth-to-youth issue analysis, during which "they go through the specifics of all the campaigns that they've worked on and who the allies and targets are, and really explain the technical details of the campaigns to their peers as they are coming into the organization."

Central to these activities is critical reflection on the sociospatial issues underlying youth's individual experiences. In the words of a youth participant, "We provide lots of different like opportunities for the youth to have a good social awareness of themselves and the place they're living." Poetry also serves as an important vehicle for self-expression, critical analysis, and the development of youth voices: "It gives us sort of, as you can say, um, social awareness and a sense of direction." Or as another youth participant observed, "we sometimes write things that other people don't see and then they start seeing and they start becoming more active."

Supporting these observations, a Program B staff member noted,

> We don't really focus on trying to change the youth. We focus on helping the youth take action outside in the community in a political sphere to change things in their neighborhood, and we think that will change them. . . . What we do, I think, is try to get them together to become some

sort of political actors in the world, in their communities, in the city, in the state. And then we see that as transforming them.

Reflecting this investment in youth as key placemakers, much of the programming in Program B is youth directed; young people select, plan, and implement projects. Youth in Program B are very aware that they are not only providing leadership but are also building toward future leadership roles. In a conversation, youth explained, "We are tomorrow's like leaders, or what not . . . leaders of today, builders of tomorrow."

Youth as Critical Placemakers: "Leaders of Today, Builders of Tomorrow"

Leaders of today, builders of tomorrow.
Guiding each other through hardship and sorrow.
That is beating on my novelty, though we're part of the majority.
Working hard to make change through organizing.
And rearrange a stable environment focusing on empowerment.

—Youth program participant

In powerful and consequential ways, the lives of urban youth are shaped by the sociospatial landscapes of their neighborhoods, the assets and risks present in these local settings, and the messages that marginalized places convey to those growing up in them. Yet youth are by no means passive, inherently vulnerable recipients of toxic environmental and community influences. On the contrary, young people are sharp-eyed critics of their everyday worlds, with nuanced understandings of the social, structural, and economic contradictions that shape and constrain their lives and neighborhoods.[48] With encouragement and support, they are also energetic, capable architects of transformative community projects.

Ensuring an optimal mix of transformative practices is nonetheless a challenging task for many urban youth programs. By counterposing two effective but different programs, this chapter brings into sharper view issues central to developing and sustaining transformative practices with urban youth. In particular, it illuminates the central role of program philosophy in differentially shaping program activities and the opportunities that programs offer to youth, their families, and communities. As the case study demonstrates, transformative programs share many core elements with normative community youth development programs (a focus on developing youth competencies, for example), but they enact them differently.

Placing these two programs alongside each other also highlights the importance of sustained attention to critical placemaking as an integral element of all aspects of the program. In Program B, this commitment is evident in both the projects youth and adults tackle in their larger community and in the multigenerational family at the core of the program itself. As critical placemakers, transformative youth programs thus capitalize not only on the "power and interdependence between young people and communities" but on the power of collectivity and solidarity.[49]

In general, transformative community youth development offers a model for practice that "lead[s] with structural analyses of the sociopolitical context within which young people grow up, and consider[s] that youth engaged in such analyses develop competencies while helping to improve their own circumstances."[50] The elements of this model map directly onto what I have defined as critical placemaking. As Schneekloth and Shibley noted, relationships are central in placemaking practice;[51] it involves mutuality, support, shared goals, and action in solidarity to address shared issues, a process in which care for people translates into care for place. Critical placemaking also offers a dialogic space, providing opportunities for "groups of people [to] affirm, interrogate, and construct the knowledge they need to make and maintain their own places."[52] As youth and adults join together, call into question the inevitability of their common circumstances, and share knowledge and skills, they develop the critical and conceptual tools to act differently in the external world. Finally, critical placemaking is at its heart about collective action. As Sutton and colleagues pointed out, "program constituents must be able to shape approaches that reflect their communal, intergenerational, and generative way of working and responding to the toxic conditions in their communities."[53]

Gruenewald argued that the critical practice of placemaking necessarily encompasses both decolonization and reinhabitation.[54] Decolonization involves learning to recognize disruption and injury to place and to address the root causes of these injustices. Reinhabitation, decolonization's alter ego, involves learning to live well in places that have been disrupted and injured. "An empathetic connection to others, human and nonhuman," connects the two.[55] These insights apply also to critical placemaking with urban youth, which likewise links a critical politics of change with a politics of connection and a commitment to, and love for, place.

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Notes

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4. See for example Villaruel et al., *Community Youth Development*.
5. See for example Shawn Ginwright, Pedro Noguera, and Julio Cammarota, eds., *Beyond Resistance! Youth Activism and Community Change, New Democratic Possibilities for Practice and Policy for America's Youth* (New York: Routledge, 2006); also Shawn Ginwright and Taj James, "From Assets to Agents of Change: Social Justice Organizing and Youth Development," in *Youth Participation: Improving Institutions and Communities*, eds. Benjamin Kirshner, Jennifer L. O'Donaghue, and Milbrey W. McLaughlin (San Francisco, CA: New Directions for Youth Development, no. 96, 2002), 27–46.
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7. Ibid., ES-11.
8. See for example Caitlin Cahill, "The Personal Is Political: Developing New Subjectivities in a Participatory Action Research Process," *Gender, Place, and Culture* 14 no. 3 (2007): 267–292.
9. Sharon E. Sutton, Susan P. Kemp, Lorraine Gutiérrez, and Susan Saegert, *Urban Youth Programs in America: A Study of Youth, Community, and Social Justice Conducted for the Ford Foundation* (Seattle: University of Washington, 2006).
10. Ibid., 69.
11. Ibid., iv.
12. This chapter is based in data from "Constructing a Social Justice Framework for Youth and Community Service," a national study of urban youth

programs funded by the Ford Foundation with approval from the University of Washington Institutional Review Board. A comprehensive report on the quantitative findings of the study can be found in Sutton et al., *Urban Youth Programs in America*.

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29. Ibid.
30. Louise Chawla, "Cities for Human Development," in *Growing Up in an Urbanising World*, ed. Louise Chawla (London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan Publications), 15–34.
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32. Sutton et al., *Urban Youth Programs in America*; see also Sharon Egretta Sutton, "A Social Justice Perspective on Youth and Community Development: Theorizing the Processes and Outcomes of Participation," *Children, Youth, and Environments* 17 no. 2 (2007): 616–645, www.colorado.edu/journals/cye (accessed 16 June 2010).
33. To generate the purposive sample of programs included in the study, key informants with wide knowledge of this field identified a potential sample of 164 exemplary programs. Eighty-eight of these programs met criteria for and agreed to participate in the study. Participating programs were located in large metropolitan areas nationwide, primarily within grassroots organizations (79 programs).
34. Within these three broad areas, the research team created a typology with six main programmatic domains: connections between youth and adults; socialization (norms, structure, autonomy); creativity/play; contribution (community service, program leadership); competence (skill building); and the program's theory of change. The team then used this typology to assess the programs in the sample, as well as to explore (using quantitative analyses) the relationships among program philosophy and other aspects of the programs. For the full typology, which was developed by Kemp, see Sutton et al., *Urban Youth Programs in America*, appendix E, 107–110.
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36. Ibid., 45.
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Chapter Eight

Supporting Grassroots Resistance: Sustained Community-University Partnerships to Contest Chicago's HOPE VI Program

Roberta M. Feldman

The Plan for Transformation, Chicago's implementation of the federal government's HOPE VI (Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere) program, has had devastating effects on the availability of public housing: 22,000 of 36,000 units have been demolished, with only 7,600 replacement units planned in new mixed-income developments. Inadequate replacement housing combined with onerous occupancy requirements and limited Section 8 rental vouchers have resulted in thousands of dislocated residents.[1]

Public housing residents did not passively acquiesce. Resident activists organized their developments and created a citywide coalition to oppose the demolitions and demand the right to remain in their communities: "WE SHALL NOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED ANYMORE. WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED."[2] Public housing residents were not new to activism to protect the viability of the places they called "home." From the late 1970s, resident leadership had engaged in multiple strategies to save their developments from government disinvestment and to press for improved living conditions. One of their strategies was to build partnerships with local university programs.

I first met Chicago public housing resident leaders while preparing for the "Women and Public Housing: Hidden Strength, Unclaimed Power" conference held at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) in the spring of 1987. Resident leadership and housing activists organized the event to draw attention to entrenched problems with poor management, deteriorated physical conditions, and inadequate social services. One of the

coorganizers asked me to prepare a photo-documentary for the plenary to dispel the prevalent myth that public housing was dispensable. I met the resident leadership in more than half of Chicago's public housing developments while photographing residents in their homes. These initial contacts were the beginning of my sustained working partnerships with resident leaders, first as a faculty member at UIC and later, from 1995 on, as a founding director of UIC's City Design Center (CDC), a planning and design assistance program for communities in need.[3]

A Social Justice Framework for Partnering with Resident Activists

My partnerships with resident activists differed from the long tradition of outreach programs in institutions of higher education (IHE), which—like some of CDC's other partnerships with community organizations—the IHE typically initiates. For example, in 1994 my colleagues and I at the CDC, in collaboration with UIC's Neighborhood Initiative, received one of the first federal grants from the Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC) program.[4] This program sought to foster "university-community partnerships" that would "empower communities to help themselves" by bringing university resources to the revitalization of urban areas.[5] In COPC partnerships, the university was the lead institution, initiating the partnership, applying for the grant, and later administering it. The CDC and the Neighborhood Initiative approached several community corporations in neighborhoods adjacent to our campus, some of which we had partnered with in the past. We worked collaboratively to identify and plan the community projects that seemed appropriate for this program. The university faculty and staff wrote a successful proposal and were responsible for the grant's outcomes.

In contrast, the partnerships that public housing resident leaders sought with the CDC are better understood as "community-university partnerships"[6] because the community partners controlled the process. They sought assistance from the university, set the goals, and determined the projects. In most instances, the resident activists had no funds and instead relied upon the CDC to provide pro bono services.

My community-university partnerships have been guided by a social justice perspective, in particular, to support people's rights to have power over the places they call their homes and communities, or what my colleague Susan Stall and I have called "homeplaces."[7] In working with grassroots activists in low-income communities, I have found that struggles for survival not only occur in their homeplaces but often are about control over their homeplaces—over the spatial resources to sustain their households and communities. Homeplaces become sites of both resistance to

marginality and oppression and of expressing and developing power over the places that support their everyday lives.

Scholars and practitioners have widely used the notion of empowerment, especially in the context of grassroots activism, to understand the assets people bring to address their own problems, to identify outside resources to support their objectives, and to extend their capabilities for future action.[8] Although definitions of empowerment vary, scholars and practitioners agree that empowerment is not a fixed asset or resource but rather an accumulative, ongoing process that is built up through repetitive cycles of actions and reflections.[9] The process of empowerment builds assets and resources for positive change, such as gaining a sense of personal control or influence, knowledge and skills, social influence, economic resources, political power, and legal rights.

I have relied upon participatory design and research processes to foster empowerment objectives. Reflecting upon our past experiences using this methodology, Lynne Westphal, then my PhD student, and I used empowerment theory to develop a working model of participatory research and design to support empowerment objectives. In addition to helping produce useful and satisfying material and spatial resources, that model included exchanging knowledge, attracting other professional and technical knowledge, supporting and building political and economic resources, developing skills and organizational capacity, and supporting participants' sense of efficacy and critical consciousness.[10] Although the CDC uses participatory processes in virtually all of its projects, whether university or community initiated, I want to emphasize that neither I nor the CDC empowers people; rather, we engage in participatory processes in ways that provide opportunities for people to further their own empowerment.[11]

Supporting Empowerment through Community-University Partnerships

In this chapter, I examine empowerment objectives through case studies at two Chicago public housing developments: Wentworth Gardens and Cabrini-Green. Resident leaders at both these developments asked me to support their efforts to contest Chicago's Plan for Transformation, which was using funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) HOPE VI program to replace distressed public housing with privately developed and managed mixed-income projects. Chicago public housing residents had no meaningful participation in the development of this plan. As a Cabrini-Green activist noted, "We had nothin' to say about which projects were comin' down; how many new apartments there'd be for us. Now they tellin' us we just got to move out."

The Wentworth and Cabrini leadership used very different strategies to mitigate the effect of HOPE VI on their homeplaces. Wentworth activists sought resident management of their development to save it from demolition. Cabrini-Green activists, believing that demolition was inevitable, decided to take advantage of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) commissioner's offer to participate in producing a redevelopment plan. When other city interests railroaded this promise, the Cabrini leadership resorted to their last option, a lawsuit.[12]

Wentworth and Cabrini resident activists began their struggles to guarantee the viability of their future housing empowered by prior efforts to improve the deteriorated conditions of their public housing developments. As Susan Donald, a Wentworth activist, noted, "We talkin' about years of wisdom. We're not talkin' about just organizin' skills, but people skills." I was struck by the extraordinary creativity and resolve resident activists had been using since the late 1960s to fill the gap between unsafe places and inadequate social services and the community's everyday needs. With their own modest funds from governmental and institutional sources, Wentworth residents had claimed and transformed space for an on-site, volunteer-run day care center, Laundromat, convenience store, and spiritual development center. They also offered recreational and social service programs and development-wide events and celebrations. Residents of Cabrini's row houses and high-rise buildings had created four resident management corporations, which from the 1970s on offered social services, job training, business support, newsletters, and a community newspaper.

My relationships with resident activists at the two developments were somewhat different because of the funding structures. At Cabrini-Green, I was a paid consultant from the funds residents were awarded in their successful lawsuit to become codevelopers in Cabrini's HOPE VI redevelopment. At Wentworth, residents had no funds to pay for assistance and instead relied upon the pro bono services the CDC offers to communities of need. Despite these differing relationships, my and the CDC's partnerships with the leadership at both developments were sustained over long periods of time: five years at Cabrini-Green; more than 20 years to date at Wentworth Gardens, nine of which were spent on resident management.

Wentworth Gardens: Activists Becoming Resident Managers

Wentworth Gardens is a 422-unit low-rise development on Chicago's Southside built originally for black World War II workers; it is located in what had been one of Chicago's most stable African American neighborhoods, which recently was dispersed to make way for a new ballpark.

Figure 8.1 The CHA adopted the nation's mid-twentieth-century urban renewal approach, developing super blocks of high- and mid-rise public housing that became known for poverty, violence, and institutional neglect. Yet Chicago's public housing also became known for extraordinary tenant activism as occurred in Wentworth Gardens, a low-rise development built for black World War II workers just before the rise of super blocks. Photograph by Roberta M. Feldman.

In the late 1980s, Wentworth activists, like other Chicago public housing leaders, became aware of the federal government's plans to demolish distressed housing developments. They would not have sought HUD's resident management program if they did not believe their development was at risk, but they ultimately decided to take advantage of the program to save it from the wrecking ball. I recall attending a meeting during which activists were debating the merits of whether to apply. Lottie Weathersby's words captured the leadership's position: "This is our community. This is our home. . . . Ain't nobody puttin' me out." Later, Mrs. Hallie Amey, who became president of Wentworth's Resident Management Corporation (RMC), poignantly summed up the necessity of resident management: "You're only two cents away from homelessness. . . . It's the only way you will save your housing, your communities."[13]

Once Wentworth was approved for participation, HUD required residents to develop an RMC with a prescribed organizational structure, management and reporting systems, and advisory board. If successful, the RMC would assume responsibility for personnel and the operations, maintenance,

and repair of buildings on a budget fixed by CHA. Wentworth activists drew on long-standing relationships, and nurtured new ones, with professionals and academics including planners, community organizers, lawyers, and others they called on for assistance in satisfying these requirements.

When Wentworth was approved for the resident management program in 1989, it received $100,000 and technical training to achieve program requirements; neither was adequate to the task. I was one of the academics Wentworth activists asked for assistance. My CDC colleagues' and my involvement was not continuous over time or in intensity. Rather, we worked sporadically, responding to activists' specific requests over the nine years it took to achieve resident management status. I describe three projects as examples: a building and grounds' assessment, resident needs assessment survey, and fund-raising.

Community-University Partnership Activities

Mrs. Amey called me shortly after the RMC formed and I had joined its advisory board: "Roberta, there's this architecture report we need; CHA, they're no help." Mrs. Amy explained that HUD required the RMC to develop plans for building and site monitoring, maintenance, and modernization. CHA was not providing adequate information to tackle these tasks despite the RMC's repeated requests. I agreed to prepare a building and site assessment. I asked a colleague at UIC's School of Architecture, Michael Gellick, and a professional colleague, Jacques Chatain, a mechanical engineer, to assist pro bono.

Wentworth activists played a vital role in the assessment. Two of the RMC board members, Mrs. Amey along with Mrs. Bertha McKinney, accompanied us on our inspections, taking notes on Wentworth's building and site problems and on their questions. Our findings did not come as a surprise. As soon as Wentworth leaders received our report of costs to repair or replace out-of-date or failing systems, they attempted without success to pressure the CHA to address the most pressing problems. They were successful, however, in using our findings during negotiations for resident management status, when they obtained an agreement that CHA, rather than the RMC, would remain responsible for the most costly problem, the heating plant.

A year later, Mrs. Amey contacted me: "Roberta, I'm callin' for your help again." This time, Mrs. Amey requested a resident needs assessment survey. The activists wanted to engage all Wentworth residents in establishing priorities for modernization and also wanted to acquaint more residents with the RMC. Again without funds, I asked three PhD students—Erin Hayes, Bianca Wilson, and Khari Hunt—to work with me

as part of their course requirements in UIC's community psychology program. Three RMC members—Hallie Amey, Susan Donald, and Wateka Kleinpeter—worked with us on all of the required activities: developing the survey instrument, training residents to conduct it door-to-door, and interpreting and sharing the findings with the Wentworth community. Residents used these research skills to conduct other needs assessments when required for grant applications, for instance, an application for funds to develop a childcare center.

One of the most pressing issues—inadequate funding to meet HUD and CHA mandates—remained a challenge from the onset. I had attended some of the RMC-sponsored barbeques, bake sales, and talent nights, which attracted many Wentworth residents but raised little funding in comparison to the need. This time, it was Mrs. Marcella Carter, another RMC member, who called. I could have asked CDC staff to simply submit grants to local funders; instead, to support empowerment objectives, I cobbled funds from the CDC's budget to hire two PhD research assistants—first Lynne Moch, then Lynne Westphal—to assist the RMC in fund-raising and other tasks.

Working as interns, they introduced resident activists to the Donor's Forum, an information center about local funding opportunities and requirements. They worked side-by-side with the activists to write and submit proposals—and they were successful. Although the sources were very limited, the RMC garnered a total of $75,000 over the course of resident management development.

Saving Wentworth from Demolition

The projects described herein are but a few of the tasks Wentworth leaders engaged in over the nine years it took to gain full management responsibilities. Unlike most of CHA's family developments, Wentworth was not razed but rather was renovated. A CHA staff member who worked with the RMC, Gloria Seabrook, credited the resident activists with sparing their development from demolition: "CHA would rather tear this place [Wentworth] down, sell it to the White Sox for parking lots, and give you all Section 8." Equally important, the RMC fought for and won Wentworth residents' first right-of-return after the buildings and grounds were renovated, rather than CHA's general policy of offering a qualified resident an apartment in the next available unit citywide.[14]

Unfortunately, Wentworth's RMC did not guarantee its longevity and therefore residents' power over their homeplace. The CHA repeatedly attempted to dismantle Wentworth's RMC and install private management starting three months after signing the initial contract. With

legal assistance, Wentworth activists were able to keep private management at bay until 2009, when, even with legal counsel, CHA pressed the Wentworth RMC harder than ever. This time they held on but accepted a shared agreement with private managers.[15] Mrs. Amey said, "We're just tryin' to keep it alive. You know, they'd take it to the ground if they could."

Public Recognition of Wentworth Resident Activists' Efforts

Wentworth leaders' and other public housing resident activists' daily struggles to save their own and their neighbors' homeplaces from demolition are largely overlooked in the public media. Susan Stall, the chair of the RMC's Advisory Board, and I believed that public recognition of Wentworth activists' grassroots efforts would promote their social and political influence and provide inspiration to others engaged in similar actions. With Wentworth activists' agreement, we used various venues to share their efforts with targeted and general audiences, including lectures and articles in community organizing settings and academic conferences and publications;[16] an installation for an exhibit at Chicago's Peace Museum, which the residents later installed in their RMC conference room;[17] a video of one of the Wentworth activists and three other Chicago residents speaking about the meaning of home, prepared for an exhibit at the Chicago Field Museum; and presentations with Wentworth activists at forums and conferences held in Chicago and other U.S. cities.[18]

When Susan and I were invited to write a book about Wentworth for Cambridge University Press, we hesitated because of the time it would take from our activism and because of the potentially narrow audience. Sheila Radford-Hill, a key organizer who had worked with Wentworth activists for three decades, encouraged us to take on the project. She believed that an academic publication would give greater credibility to their activism than other forms of public recognition. Our book[19] did attract media coverage in the *Chicago Tribune*; further, the Wentworth leadership received an American Planning Association (APA) award.[20] I remember how excited Susan and I were when the Wentworth activists walked onto the stage at the APA's national convention to receive the award. The activists were as well. Mrs. Beatrice Harris, president of the Local Advisory Council (LAC) and member of the RMC board, remarked, "This is one proud day." Most recently, one of the chapters in our book inspired a play that was read at a writers' workshop in Chicago. Sitting in the audience, watching the expressions of the Wentworth activists watching actors play their parts, was one proud day for me.

Cabrini-Green: Resident Activists Becoming Codevelopers

Cabrini-Green's three developments—Cabrini Row Houses, Cabrini Extension North and South, and the Green Homes—were located on Chicago's Northside. This complex of 3,607 public housing units, built between 1942 and 1962 on 70 acres of abandoned industrial land, consisted primarily of mid- and high-rise buildings. Cabrini-Green, at the time of its demolition, was surrounded by two of Chicago's most affluent neighborhoods.

By the late 1980s, Cabrini's deplorable housing conditions, inadequate social services, and poor crime control were among the worst in CHA's developments; but it was the national media's coverage of the shooting of a Cabrini youth, Dantrell Davis, in 1992 that was credited with CHA's first serious approach to HUD about redeveloping Cabrini as a HOPE VI project.[21] Shortly thereafter, CHA's executive director approached the Cabrini LAC to participate in preparing Cabrini Extension North's application for HOPE VI redevelopment funds. The resident leadership, believing that redevelopment was inevitable, agreed.

The application never made it past the city's proposal screening committee. In its place, the Department of Planning issued an overriding comprehensive plan, the Near North Redevelopment Plan, encompassing 90 acres including Cabrini Extension North. This plan served as the basis for the city's HOPE VI application.[22] The effect on Cabrini-Green residents was considerable in comparison to the original agreement with CHA—a larger number of building demolitions and a significant loss of replacement units.

In response, in 1996 Cabrini residents filed a lawsuit in federal court claiming adverse effect on African American women and children, failure to meet CHA's original commitment, and denial of participation in the planning process, a HOPE VI requirement. The residents won the lawsuit. Replacement units were increased significantly, and the LAC gained two powerful assets: the legal right to be codevelopers for the HOPE VI project and CHA funds to pay for expert consultants.[23]

In 2002 Cabrini-Green's LAC and CHA issued a request for qualifications (RFQ) for consultation services in the development process and training workshops. The Nathalie P. Voorhees Center (VC), a UIC outreach program in the College of Urban Planning and Policy, invited me to join their team to respond to the RFQ. I was torn. I had been actively helping public housing leaders save public housing, not supporting its demolition and redevelopment. However, by that time, Chicago's public housing demolitions were a "done deal." I decided to switch gears and help the residents garner the best they could in the redevelopment process.

The VC and the CDC, the only university team to submit, were selected. Unlike my work with Wentworth activists, both centers would be paid for consultation services. The VC would provide training and advice about all housing development issues; the CDC would provide resident training and advice about site and building design.

Community-University Partnership Activities

My participation in this partnership included working with resident activists to select the developers, providing them with the training to negotiate with the developers, and also negotiating on their behalf to secure concessions on the distribution and design of the public housing units.

Selecting the Developers

Because the Cabrini-Green site was expansive, the CHA divided it into several parcels for HOPE VI redevelopment. Developers were selected one parcel at a time through Requests for Qualifications (RFQs). The first parcel to be developed under the court decree was 18 acres near the western boundary of the 70-acre site. I sat on an evaluation working group with the president of Cabrini-Green New Beginnings (CGNB), a newly formed, resident-controlled nonprofit development entity that would contract with the for-profit developers; other consultants; several CHA and Department of Planning representatives; and Habitat Company (the designated receiver for the CHA scattered-site program). The group reviewed applications and selected Kennard and Company as developer for the for-sale units, Holsten Real Estate as developer and manager for rental property, and Fitzgerald Associate Architects.

Providing Resident Training

My colleague from the VC, Yittayih Zelalem, and I began a training program upon receipt of the contract. Because the Cabrini resident leaders did not have the time to learn all of the technical details of housing design and development, we decided, in conversations with the leadership, to acquaint them the knowledge necessary to negotiate immediately and effectively with the CHA, Kennard, and Holsten. We made presentations and discussed HUD's and CHA's policies regarding density, site and building design, and unit size and distribution. I also presented HOPE VI projects in Chicago and other cities as examples of various approaches to satisfying federal design mandates. This information helped the residents bolster their objectives in meetings with the private developers, architects, and evaluation working group. I recall how the CGNB president would look

at a design with displeasure, questioning why another Chicago HOPE VI "did a lot better than what I am looking at."

Negotiating the Distribution of Public Housing Units

A key goal of the HOPE VI program is to end public housing residents' isolation in income-segregated developments by replacing them with mixed-income projects. CHA satisfies this mix requirement by specifying the percentage of units by income group across an entire development. Private developers have satisfied CHA's requirement even if public housing units are located in separate buildings or areas in the development. I have been publically critical of this strategy because housing segregation persists, albeit at a smaller geographic scale. The Cabrini leadership was indignant about this strategy as well: "HOPE VI says owners are supposed to be role models, but how we gonna' get to know them when they keep us apart." The Cabrini leadership demanded that public housing units be located in all the buildings and asked that I back them up. I analyzed the architects' initial schemes for spatial mix to note the degree of public housing residents' segregation. I argued that the only way to support the intended social interaction between income groups, citing environment and behavior research, was a fine-grained spatial mix of units targeted to different income groups.

The CGNB's position created a roadblock for the developers, who were using other Chicago HOPE VI projects as their template. Kennard's president was indignant: "We're being held to a higher standard." Finally, after many site plan iterations and an unwavering CGNB, Holsten agreed to the residents' demands and instructed the architects to change the site plan accordingly. Some members of the evaluation working group supported the mix as well. Kennard would not accept this agreement and withdrew from the project.

A new for-sale developer, Kimball Hills Homes, joined shortly thereafter. At the onset, this developer also sought to alter the site plan, in particular to replace public housing townhouses with clusters of low-rise multifamily buildings. The CGNB held firm, and Kimball Hills finally relented largely because the CGNB's agreement was necessary.

Income mix arose again in negotiating the distribution of public housing units on each floor of the multifamily buildings. The initial plans showed all these units on the lowest floors. The CGNB insisted that public housing units be distributed on all floors: "Roberta, you make sure we win this one too." I stubbornly backed up their position, even through late-night calls from the condo developer's representative. The CGNB's position held, again with the support of Holsten, the rental developer.

Negotiating the Design of Public Housing Units

The development of schematic designs for what was now called Parkside proved equally contentious and took considerable time to resolve. The private developers were guided by market demands and available CHA funding, which did not always coincide with the public housing residents' needs and preferences. Children's recreational facilities, the appearance of building exteriors, and apartment and townhouse layouts are cases in point. CHA's funding provided a set amount for the units, leaving the developers financially responsible for the cost of all on-site facilities. Not surprisingly, the developers focused on facilities that would attract private market buyers and renters: younger singles, small families, and empty nesters.

CGNB members and I sat around a large table reviewing the architectural drawings at their monthly meetings. They were particularly concerned about places for children to play. We talked about what was missing in the earliest site plans, which showed tot lots but no hard surfaces for youths to ride bicycles or jump rope and the like. They sent me to design meetings with the directive "tell 'em, it's not OK." The private developers were unyielding until I illustrated how the hard surfaces required for emergency vehicle access could accommodate youth activities as well. When the initial elevations of the townhouses were issued, CGNB members quickly picked up that the public housing townhouse elevations "look so plain." Again I was asked to "push them hard." This time I had the HOPE VI requirement backing up their demand: public housing units must be indistinguishable on the exterior from market-rate units. Even so, the developers said they already were spending a per-unit cost higher than CHA provided for public housing units. I coaxed the developers to agree to changes in the elevations by suggesting architectural details that would not incur significant additional costs.

The last drawings to be completed were the apartment and townhouse layouts. As with the site plan, private market considerations in unit design intruded on meeting the public housing residents' needs. The initial schematic design of their units were scaled-down versions of the market-rate apartments, but the public housing households were considerably larger than the anticipated market-rate dwellers. The private market three-bedroom and larger units were designed to house two to four people compared to five to ten in public housing units. Dining spaces in the latter units were so small that the largest table that would fit would not accommodate the family dining together, nor would the living room accommodate the family sitting together. When I explained these space shortages to CGNB members, I was told, "You don't give in." With the CGNB's backing, I worked insistently to overcome the developers' objections to redesign the public housing units, even offering sketches of alternative layouts, though

the increase in unit sizes would add additional costs and exceed the CHA's square-footage targets.

My input on site and building designs appeared to be particularly welcomed by the CGNB, as only a few members could read architectural drawings. I not only identified potential problems that were not readily apparent but had the professional skills to create design solutions that better met public housing residents' needs. A Holsten staff member who worked extensively on the project, in a private moment, noted that I gained more concessions from the private developers than the residents would have on their own. But I have no doubt that neither I nor the Cabrini activists would have gained these concessions if they did not have the power as codevelopers to hold up the project's progress, a strategy they used selectively and effectively.

Parkside's Progress

The first of two phases of Parkside has been built. As in Wentworth Gardens, the CGNB assured qualified Cabrini-Green residents first right-of-return. Market-rate sales and rentals were sound until the current financial crisis, which resulted in the for-sale developer going bankrupt and unsold units being marketed at heavily discounted prices. The CGNB was affected as well. Their financial stake in the development, a percent of which was to pay for public housing residents' programs and services, was reduced.

Achieving Ongoing Empowerment

Both Wentworth Gardens and Cabrini-Green resident leaders brought their histories of effective grassroots activism to challenge the CHA's implementation of HOPE VI. Wentworth activists applied for an RMC, empowered with organizational skills and competencies gained over decades of activism. Cabrini-Green activists showed political skill, persistence, and resiliency to ensure that they became active participants in redeveloping their homeplace, a particularly noteworthy feat because of the recurrent barriers to their meaningful inclusion. Both groups of resident activists, all older women, had experience in grassroots organizing, including the ability to work with those in power (for example, on-site management and CHA); experience in gaining resources to meet their needs; a shared, common purpose; and a broad support system that attracted technical and CHA staff assistance. Without these assets, empowerment would have been elusive.[24]

Although they used very different strategies, both Wentworth and Cabrini resident leaders did increase their actual power over their homeplaces. While CHA staff credited Wentworth's RMC members for saving their development from demolition, Cabrini-Green CGNB members

negotiated considerably improved terms for the redevelopment of their public housing site.

Although I did not conduct a systematic evaluation of my colleagues' and my role in supporting resident activists' ongoing empowerment, strong indicators exist of the significance of our sustained contributions. At both Wentworth and Cabrini, we *exchanged knowledge* by bringing technical information to the task and by building bonds of mutual trust and respect that improved our understanding of residents' needs and objectives. We *attracted other professionals* to assist Wentworth activists in meeting their objectives. We *supported the development of skills and organizational capacity* among Wentworth RMC members through a needs assessment that not only provided key technical information but also supported residents in assuming management responsibilities. Similarly, we *offered training* for Cabrini-Green CGNB members that helped them engage in more informed design decision making. We *assisted in garnering economic resources* for both Wentworth and Cabrini activists in the form of grants and in their negotiations with the private developers respectively. We *bolstered political legitimacy* among activists at Cabrini-Green, using our professional influence to improve their negotiations with the CHA and private developers. We *facilitated a sense of pride and efficacy* among activists at Wentworth by sharing achievements that otherwise would have remained invisible, which heightened their commitment to continue their work. And at Cabrini-Green, in particular, we *contributed to the design* of a more useful and satisfying new housing environment.

Empowerment is not solely a benefit for the community; at their very best, the relationships result in mutual empowerment.[25] In my partnerships with Wentworth and Cabrini leaders, I *gained new knowledge and skills* and *made new professional colleagues* that have improved my capacities to engage in future partnerships. Through this work, I have also *increased my political legitimacy* in the city because of the political connections I made while serving on the evaluation working group.[26] And I have no doubt that through my partnership with Wentworth Gardens' and Cabrini-Green's resident activists, I have *gained an increased sense of pride and efficacy*. I mentioned a particularly poignant example earlier: the overwhelming pride I felt during the play about Wentworth activists as I sat in the audience, watching the expressions of the activists watching actors play their parts.

Reflections on Transformative Partnerships with Communities

At both Wentworth and Cabrini-Green, homeplace was a site of transformation, or more accurately, a site of resistance to the negative transformation of their homeplaces.[27] Although the successes were limited, public

housing activists transformed themselves in the process. Wentworth and Cabrini activists' ability to access university support, including knowing whom to ask for technical information, is one crucial factor in their ongoing empowerment.

The Wentworth and Cabrini resident leaders sought UIC's technical expertise and authority to support informed decision making and negotiations with powerful government agencies and private developers. Equally important, they facilitated the effort to build sustained partnerships with the CDC, while my colleagues and I structured the work to be collaborative whenever possible—all characteristics of the most successful COPC-funded partnerships.[28]

Unlike most community-university partnerships, however, the public housing leaders structured our relationships to fulfill their objectives through partnerships that extended beyond specific programs or projects. At Wentworth, in particular, resident activists have called me at least once a year with requests for assistance with ongoing needs. At Cabrini-Green, the situation was more complicated because the leadership that prevailed in the last years of the CDC's consulting contract was more accepting of the developers' and CHA's demands. Carol Steele, however, who was the LAC president at the time the CDC first contracted with Cabrini-Green, contacted me recently to ask me to review the city's renovation plans for the Cabrini Row Houses, a project that was not part of the original contract.

It is important to note that these community-university partnerships were not rigidly controlled by the community. Public housing leaders were open to the CDC's suggestions if they deemed them appropriate and important to the community's overriding objectives. Particularly relevant are Susan Stall's and my work to make visible Wentworth leaders' frequently invisible efforts to save their homeplaces. When Susan and I interviewed resident leaders to obtain life histories for our book, they were particularly forthcoming with personal details. And when I have asked residents for their assistance, they have willingly agreed, for instance, to provide guidance to students in my housing design studio courses.

Irrespective of who initiates the relationship, its objectives, or its outcomes, university partnerships with low-income community groups are difficult to sustain economically. Except for the contracted work completed with Cabrini leaders, resident activists from Cabrini, Wentworth, and several other Chicago public housing developments—lacking funds to hire consultants—have relied instead on the CDC for pro bono services. The CDC relied, in turn, on the university's financial support, typically in the form of faculty teaching release or student credit-hours, and on pro bono assistance from professionals. Yet this assistance is unpredictable. Identifying individuals with appropriate expertise, gaining their buy-in to

partnership objectives, and guaranteeing the quality of their work is challenging. In addition, given that the few faculty and professionals who are willing to work pro bono are asked repeatedly, the burnout rate is high. Resident activists are well aware of the pitfalls of relying on volunteer assistance; they confront burnout as well.

Although it might appear that the Cabrini partnership was an exception because of the court-decreed consulting funds, that too relied on UIC's interim financial support. The CHA paid the CDC for our first two years of consulting but, despite the CGNB's renewal of our contract for three additional years, held up payment for nearly two years thereafter. Had UIC not covered our salaries, it would have proved quite difficult for us to support the partnership over this protracted time period. Moreover, as noted earlier, the Cabrini leadership's requests for assistance went beyond contracted services to include other pro bono consultations.

Putting economic constraints aside, I have found that in all of the CDC's community-university partnerships, organized groups and organizations with histories of effective grassroots activism, clear objectives, and determination necessary for long-term struggles experience the most successful outcomes. Though all of the Wentworth and Cabrini leadership's initiatives to sustain the viability of their homeplaces were not effective, they did have successes—some modest, others exceptional—while building skills and confidence for future struggles. I continue to work with these resident activists because of their persistence and capabilities, the trust and friendships we have built, and the positive outcomes that result. As Juanita Brown, a Wentworth activist, stated, "If peoples get together, baby, we can do something. We can move mountains."

Notes

1. Janet L. Smith, "The Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation," in *Where Are Poor People to Live?: Transforming Public Housing Communities*, eds. Larry Bennett, Janet L. Smith, and Patricia A. Wright (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2006), 93–124.
2. A banner leading a protest march organized by the Coalition to Protect Public Housing, 19 June 1997.
3. The CDC is a multidisciplinary community design program that provides design, architecture, and planning assistance for communities in Chicago's metro area that are underserved by these fields. It also provides service learning opportunities in the School of Architecture, the Urban Planning Program, and other outreach programs that advocate for quality design.
4. In 1992 the U.S. Congress enacted the Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC); in 1994 COPC was moved into HUD's newly established Office of University Partnerships (OUP) to build upon successful programs and encourage new partnerships.

5. University Partnerships Clearinghouse, *Colleges and Communities: Partners in Urban Revitalization* (HUD's OUP Annual Report, March 1998), 10.
6. See also Wim Wiewel, Frank Garrikin, and Michael Morrissey, "Community-University Partnerships for Affordable Housing," *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research* 5 no. 1 (2000): 27–45.
7. See Roberta M. Feldman and Susan Stall, *The Dignity of Resistance: Women Residents' Activism in Chicago Public Housing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
8. Charles H. Kieffer, "Citizen Empowerment: A Developmental Perspective," in *Studies in Empowerment: Steps Toward Understanding Action*, eds. Julian Rappaport, Carole F. Swift, and Robert Hess (New York: Haworth, 1984): 9–36; Julian Rappaport, "In Praise of Paradox: A Social Policy of Empowerment over Prevention," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 2 (1981): 1–26.
9. Kieffer, "Citizen Empowerment"; Rappaport, "In Praise of Paradox."
10. Roberta M. Feldman and Lynne L. Westphal, "Participation for Empowerment: The Greening of a Public Housing Development," *Places* 2 (1999): 34–37.
11. Feldman and Westphal, "Participation for Empowerment"; see also Judith Gruber and Edison J. Trickett, "Can We Empower Others? The Paradox of Empowerment in the Governing of an Alternative Public School," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 15 no. 3 (1987): 353–371.
12. The city's decision-making processes for HOPE VI applications have not been made public.
13. This comment was made at a CHA conference of RMC officers held 23 September 1996.
14. Wentworth residents, as were all residents who applied to live in CHA's HOPE VI developments, had to be qualified; that is, they had to meet CHA's work requirement of 30 hours a week or school attendance, be rent compliant, and meet private managers' requirements such as drug tests and home inspections.
15. CHA's Plan for Transformation included private management of all public housing.
16. Roberta M. Feldman and Susan Stall, "Modest Struggles: A Case Study of Women in Public Housing," *Neighborhood Works* 12 June 1989: 4–6; Roberta M. Feldman and Susan Stall, "Resident Activism in Public Housing: A Case Study of Women's Invisible Work of Building Community," in *Coming of Age*, eds. Robert I. Selby, Katherine H. Anthony, Jaepil Choi, and Brian Orland (Oklahoma City, OK: EDRA, 1990), 111–119; Roberta M. Feldman and Susan Stall, "The Politics of Space Appropriation: A Case Study of Women's Struggles for Homeplace in Chicago Public Housing," in *Women and the Environment*, eds. Irwin Altman and Arza Churchman (New York: Plenum, 1994), 167–199; Roberta M. Feldman, Susan Stall, and Patricia A. Wright, "The Community Needs to Be Built by Us," in *Community Activism and Feminist Politics: Organizing across Race, Class, and Gender*, ed. Nancy A. Naples (New York: Routledge, 1998), 257–274.
17. Roberta M. Feldman, Linda Hover-Montgomery, Jack Naughton, Susan Stall, and Jason Feldman designed the installation, "Community

Builders—Wentworth Gardens Resident Activists," using Diana Solice's photographs and quotes from Wentworth resident activists.

18. "Women and Housing Activists," Radical Scholars Conference, Chicago, IL, July 1988; "Getting to Know Our Neighbors—IIT and the Public Housing Community," Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, IL, December 1989; "When Housing is Not Enough: Chicago Public Housing Residents Become Community Developers," Community Development Forum, Cincinnati, OH, November 1994; "Resident Management at a Chicago Public Housing Development," International Environmental Design Research Association Conference, St. Louis, MO, March 1998.
19. Feldman and Stall, *The Dignity of Resistance*.
20. A network of women planners who had read *The Dignity of Resistance* contacted me and suggested that I nominate the Wentworth activists for the APA's Social Advocacy Award.
21. Patricia A. Wright with Richard M. Wheelock and Carol Steele, "The Case of Cabrini-Green," in *Where Are Poor People to Live?*, 168–184.
22. I have not been able to identify the "city interests" that negated the CHA's executive director's agreement with the Cabrini-Green LAC.
23. The consent decree required that the private developer(s) contract with the Cabrini-Green LAC to develop the project and share profits. The ownership percentage was determined in contract negotiations with the private developers.
24. Kieffer, "Citizen Empowerment"; Rappaport, "In Praise of Paradox"; Stephanie Riger, "Vehicles for Empowerment: The Case Study of Feminist Movement Organizations," *Prevention in Human Services* 3 (1993), 99–117.
25. Wim Wiewel and Mike Lieber, "Goal Achievement, Relationship Building, and Incrementalism: The Challenges of University-Community Partnerships," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 17 (1998), 291–301; Wiewel et al., "Community-University Partnerships."
26. For instance, the Chicago Department of Community Development asked me to sit on the Design Alliance, an advisory urban design review board.
27. See also Feldman and Stall, *The Dignity of Resistance*.
28. University Partnerships Clearinghouse, 1998; Wiewel and Lieber, "Goal Achievement"; Wiewel et al., "Community-University Partnerships"; Loomis Mayfield and Edgar Lucas, "Mutual Awareness, Mutual Respect: The Community and the University Interact," *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research* 5 no. 1 (2000): 173–184.

Chapter Nine

Mutual Learning in a Community-University Partnership: What Design-Build Projects Contribute to Placemaking and Placemakers

Steve Badanes

The Neighborhood Design/Build Studio (NDBS) at the University of Washington (UW) involves architecture, urban planning, and construction management students in designing and building small community projects for nonprofit groups in the city of Seattle. As NDBS director, my goal is to nudge students toward a different type of career in which social justice concerns figure prominently in their creative problem solving. I want them to have confidence as skilled designers and makers, but I also want them to have a sense that they can make a real difference in the lives of people who traditionally have not been able to afford design services. Working in groups to design a project for a low-income client and then building that project with their own hands helps students break away from the theory-driven virtual architecture of academia and harness their energy toward realizing a socially conscious design-build enterprise.

Over the years, my students have created several design-build projects in the Danny Woo International District Community Garden in the heart of Seattle's downtown. The garden provides low-income, elderly residents of the pan-Asian International District (ID)—many of whom live in tiny apartments or single-room-occupancy hotels—with a cherished opportunity to work the land. Established in 1975 by a local nonprofit organization, the Interim Community Development Association (ICDA),[1] the 1.5-acre site offers 101 garden plots, more than 40 fruit trees, and a variety of open space amenities.

With an average age of 65—including a half dozen in their 80s—75 percent of the gardeners earn less than 30 percent of Seattle's median income.

Most are immigrants from Asian countries (Korea, China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Vietnam, Japan, Laos), where farming was their way of life. The garden helps them continue familiar traditional activities by growing fruits, vegetables, and herbs from their homelands. It also provides them with entrepreneurial opportunities, a purposeful and enjoyable physical activity, and a social network that links them with the community at large. For the ID community, this green space—the largest in the neighborhood—not only affords a source of healthy food; it is a site where special festivities such as the summer pig roast and the fall cider press take place—a showcase of the community's caring, cohesiveness, and strength.[2]

In 1989 Leslie Morishita, a UW architecture student and ICDA volunteer, recruited me to teach a design-build studio at the Danny Woo garden. The first of many such studios, this ongoing community-university partnership has helped my students leave a lasting mark on the garden. For example:

- During the summers of 1989, 1990, and 1991, they designed and built infrastructure for the garden (tool shed, entry gateway, kiosks, seating, vegetable washing and drying areas, pig roast pit, barbeque areas).
- During spring quarter 1996, they improved accessibility by designing and building pathways, stairs, seating, railings, and accessible raised garden beds, all of which are sensitive to the needs of the elderly and embrace the unique character of the site.
- In 2003 they focused on creating a welcoming street presence, increasing visibility and safety with terraces, paths, stairs, retaining walls, and lighting.
- In 2007 they continued reinforcing the public nature of the garden by installing a gathering space adjacent to the gateway.

The experience of designing and building something useful for Danny Woo gardeners has given my students an opportunity to expand their potential as civically engaged practitioners. By working to meet the unique needs of their client, they have not only been able to acquire the knowledge and skills of their chosen profession; they have also been exposed to neighborhood concerns and experienced the pride that comes from contributing something valuable to a community in need. The NDBS projects have helped make the garden more beautiful, safer, and more accessible; and they have made the elderly gardeners feel more secure in their hold on a piece of land that is increasingly being squeezed by the pressures of downtown development. Hopefully these projects have also expanded the social vision of my students.

Figure 9.1 Built by local volunteers on land leased indefinitely to ICDA, the Danny Woo garden provides space where low-income, elderly residents can continue the agricultural heritage of their homelands. The garden, which has expanded over time, operates as a public-private partnership involving ICDA, landowners, the city, and other relationships (such as with UW) that yield volunteers.

Figure 9.2 Undergraduate and graduate students work as a team in the NDBS, collaborating with clients and public agencies to benefit an underserved community. Since 1989 they have maintained a presence in the Danny Woo garden, creating numerous structures that help make this steeply sloped land safe and accessible.

Figure 9.3 In schools of architecture, students typically present their work to other faculty and practitioners, using rarefied language to discuss such issues as aesthetics, tectonics, and form giving. In the NDBS, students learn to communicate in plain English about such issues as cost, functionality, and safety. Here undergraduate student Arnold Ramoso uses illustrations produced by his classmates to describe a design proposal to ID residents.

Figure 9.4 Sustained contributions by the NDBS have built a legacy of understanding, trust, and mutual respect between students and gardeners that gets handed down from project to project. While students are learning how to build something useful for the community, gardeners are learning how to be informed consumers of design.

Figure 9.5 The NDBS requires an unusual degree of interdisciplinary teamwork and cultural responsiveness. No one student's design gets built, but rather a consensus evolves among the students and between the students and their client. Here three students—from left to right, Greg Miller, Alison Waldsmith, and Kevin Armstrong—discuss how to incorporate the feedback they received from ID residents.

Figure 9.6 The projects NDBS students build establish a very real presence for the low-income Asian gardeners, each installation making their displacement by encroaching development more difficult. Here students hack through overgrown weeds on ground-breaking day in 2003.

Figure 9.7 Because the Danny Woo garden serves as a locale for many community rituals, it has become a concrete symbol of community pride and spirit. Here a gardener tells students about the importance of this site in the everyday life of the community at a dedication ceremony for their 2003 installation.

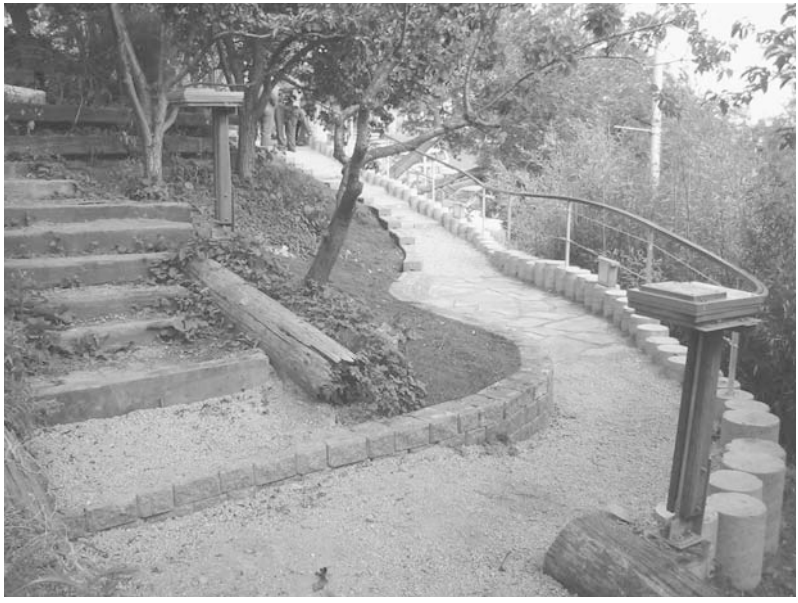

Figure 9.8 As a community-university partnership, the NDBS obtains funding from multiple sources—the university's Howard S. Wright Endowment, local businesses, foundations, and the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods. Because students supply design and construction services as part of their professional education, these funds are devoted solely to materials. Shown here is a newly installed path from the street that provides a legally accessible route into the garden. Photographs courtesy of the UW's Neighborhood Design/Build Studio.

Notes

1. Interim Community Development Association (ICDA) is a community-based nonprofit organization dedicated to the stabilization and revitalization of Seattle's ID neighborhood without displacement and gentrification. Since 1969, ICDA's work has focused on community development and advocacy on behalf of the neighborhood's elderly, low-income, and minority residents and on nurturing the ID as the cultural focus for the larger Asian-Pacific community.
2. For more information about the garden, see "Interim CDA: Danny Woo Garden," http://www.interimicda.org/index.php?/sustainable_communities/danny_woo_garden/ (accessed 26 May 2010).

Part III
New Tools, New Professional Roles

Chapter Ten

Transforming Communities through Mapping: Harnessing the Potential of New Technologies

Amy Hillier

Maps are models that selectively feature abstract spatial patterns or literal geographic features. They can take the form of a simple drawing on a paper napkin or a sophisticated three-dimensional computer animation, but the principle is the same: they use symbols to help people find their way and make sense of the world. They can also be instrumental in the process of placemaking and understanding places. Printed maps can convey greater authority than their narrative counterparts, more effectively masking their subjectivity amid a precise scale bar, north arrow, labels, and colorful patterns. But maps can also be interpreted as propositions, putting forward the mapmaker's view of the world—or a specific place—rather than an objective representation.[1] As social constructions, they may reveal as much about the values of the mapmaker as the topic being mapped. Deciding what to map—elevation along a journey, competing coffee shops within a market, or disparities in health insurance coverage—is the most important decision, but choices about the title, variable definitions and classifications, and use of symbols can also greatly influence how people interpret a map.

Who makes the maps, then, is as important as what gets mapped and how maps are used to understand and shape places. Recent advances in spatial technologies make it possible for a much wider range of people to make maps. Desktop geographic information systems (GIS) software, global positioning systems (GPS), and Internet mapping systems like Google Earth and Google Maps have made collecting, mapping, and analyzing spatial data accessible to people well beyond professional cartographers and academics. Opportunities for using maps as part of community-based

efforts to transform the places where people of color and low-income residents live are increasing as community advocates, social workers, urban planners, and students learn to use these new tools.

This chapter presents three case studies, drawn from my work as an activist academic, that highlight different digital mapping strategies researchers can use to help communities transform places locally and nationally. The first demonstrates the value of maps to make evident and challenge patterns of geographic disparities. The second also documents spatial inequality but emphasizes the potential of digital mapping to change the nature of research. Both these cases, which focused on improving health in low-income communities, attracted significant political attention, suggesting the power of GIS and GPS to effect policy changes. The third case study shows how digital mapping tools can give new life to historical places and engage youth as well as the public in understanding their contemporary meaning. Each of the cases is expanded with examples of how other researchers have worked in ways similar to my own. I conclude by looking across the three cases to summarize the lessons learned about using digital tools in activist research and by acknowledging the structural barriers to such research.

Using New Digital Technologies to Illustrate Patterns of Geographic Disparities

Supermarkets are a sign of health for communities because they provide access to fresh fruits and vegetables as well as jobs for local residents. They can anchor whole retail developments, indicating to other large and small businesses that investment in a community is worthwhile. A national study conducted in 1995 found that Philadelphia ranked second from the last among large U.S. cities in the number of supermarkets per capita, raising concerns at a local nonprofit, The Food Trust, that is dedicated to guaranteeing access to healthy foods for all people.[2] The Food Trust set about to document systematically the need for more supermarkets in Philadelphia and made maps a prominent part of its research and advocacy efforts. As a doctoral student in social welfare with what were then rare GIS skills, I had the opportunity to work with The Food Trust to map the data it had collected, which included the location and annual sales of existing supermarkets, rates of poverty, and rates of diet-related deaths including those resulting from heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and other related illnesses. The maps I made combined these three variables into a single map layer to highlight areas in Philadelphia with low supermarket sales, high rates of poverty, and high levels of diet-related deaths.[3] To identify the areas of greatest need for new supermarkets, I used a technique called

cartographic modeling, which employs GIS to integrate multiple geographic factors. The Food Trust used these maps as a key part of its advocacy campaign for state funding to support supermarkets in underserved areas.

The Food Trust's efforts led to passage of Pennsylvania's Fresh Food Finance Initiative (FFFI) in 2005. In its first five years, FFFI provided $57.9 million in funding for 74 supermarkets and food outlets in 27 Pennsylvania counties, including 18 in Philadelphia, creating or preserving almost 5,000 jobs. In addition to a number of new supermarkets, FFFI has provided support for smaller ethnic and neighborhood food stores. In order to help The Food Trust evaluate how effective the legislation was in helping underserved areas, I mapped the location of the 18 FFFI-funded Philadelphia stores onto my original map of areas in that city with the greatest need. Two of the new or renovated stores were located directly within the areas of greatest need and two-thirds of them fell within a half mile of areas of need, leading The Food Trust to conclude that the new stores were, in fact, providing healthy food access to the most underserved areas.

The Food Trust has also worked with advocates in several other states—New York, New Jersey, Colorado, Illinois, Louisiana—helping them create their own maps of areas underserved by supermarkets and campaign for their own legislative solutions. Upon entering office, President Obama showed immediate interest in this issue, dispatching several cabinet members to Philadelphia to visit one of the new FFFI-financed supermarkets and hold a panel discussion to learn more about Philadelphia's success.[4] With Philadelphia supermarket entrepreneur Jeff Brown seated beside the First Lady, President Obama called for an investment of $400 million in new and expanded supermarkets in his first State of the Union address. Obama's proposed National Healthy Food Financing Initiative would establish a public/private grant and loan program and $250 in Market Tax Credit allocations to spur private investment in underserved communities.[5] Michelle Obama also visited one of Philadelphia's new supermarkets, located in a predominantly African American and low-income neighborhood with a strong civil rights history, as she launched her Let's Move national initiative to improve nutrition and physical activity and lower rates of childhood obesity. "What Pennsylvania has shown us is, if we provide the right incentives, people will invest in these neighborhoods," she told a packed elementary school auditorium later that same day. "We want to replicate your success in Pennsylvania all over America."[6]

Although supermarkets alone are not enough to transform the devastation created by long-term disinvestment, for many, the creation of a new supermarket brings not only greater access to healthy foods but also hope for their neighborhood, particularly as they see neighbors working there in

new full-time jobs with benefits. Upon the opening of the store Michelle Obama visited, one customer declared that the site would soon be the "epicenter" for North Philadelphia.[7]

The maps I created with GIS software were ultimately a relatively small part of the successful campaign to finance more supermarkets in Philadelphia, but they were a critical way to make empirical scientific evidence of disparate access to healthy foods accessible to lawmakers. The messages communicated by patches of red in underserved areas resonated with local legislators who could identify these areas of need and often knew from personal experience about the lack of supermarket access in those communities. "I already knew that there was a problem," explained Pennsylvania state senator Dwight Evans (D-PA) in an interview with NPR. "The map just made it real. It put a face on it. It was like an exhibit in a courtroom."[8] With a combination of public and private financing, The Food Trust and its allies were then able to help reshape the food landscape in some of Pennsylvania's most needy areas.

Expanded Examples: Mapping Geographic Disparities

A number of other researchers have used GIS formats to emphasize spatial disparities. For example, Eric Cadora and Charles Swartz, cofounders of the Justice Mapping Center in Brooklyn, teamed up with South African–born architect Laura Kurgan and staff at Columbia University to develop a series of maps showing where prisoners in cities such as New York and New Orleans lived prior to their incarceration. They identified several "million dollar blocks" where multiple prisoners had previously lived that generate taxes of more than a million dollars per year to pay for their incarceration, money that otherwise could be invested in improving those communities and reducing violence and crime. This was one of several provocative maps on display at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and was also featured in the *New Yorker*.[9]

GIS software makes it possible to employ a much wider range of map formats than popular Web-based mapping systems, which are largely limited to displaying streets and aerial photographs. Cartograms offer an especially intriguing alternative to conventional reference and thematic maps by deliberately distorting the shape and area of geographic features in order to better communicate the magnitude of a particular variable. In other words, cartograms violate the fundamental rule that makes GIS work, namely, that geographic features have precise geographic locations and are drawn to scale so different map layers will line up. Although these conventional properties are essential to navigation, they may hide important spatial patterns because areas most heavily populated are often too small to be seen on a map.

Graduate demography student Sophia Chae took advantage of this methodology to map maternal mortality[10] by nation with a cartogram that emphasized stark disparities between the developed and developing worlds. A conventional GIS map shows high rates of maternal mortality in Africa, Afghanistan, and India, but a cartogram does so much more dramatically. A popular cartogram algorithm shrivels North America, Western Europe, and Australia—areas where maternal mortality is below 50 per 100,000 live births—and makes Africa swell to many times its original size. A fitting title for Chae's cartogram might be "The World Weeps for Africa" because of the drooping shape of countries and tear-like shape of some of the islands.[11]

Geographer Mei-Po Kwan offered another example of using three-dimensional GIS to map spatial disparities, in this case to document the effect of anti-Muslim hate on the emotional geographies of Muslim women post-9/11. Integrating geographic data with in-depth interviews, Qwan constructed a GIS-based visual narrative of the day-to-day journeys of a Muslim woman, Nada, in Columbus, Ohio. She represented Nada's space-time path, using vertical bars that also moved horizontally above areas perceived as unsafe, which were rendered as red 3D objects. The resulting map illustrated that Nada only felt safe at home or in her minivan but was fearful in public spaces such as the airport, several department stores, grocery stores, and other office buildings. With this technology, Qwan was able to model a "landscape of fear" that bears witness to the oppression of Muslim women.[12] Stephen Matthews and colleagues at Penn State University have used maps in a similar way, to represent daily challenges of low-income women, in what they call "geo-ethnography." Feminist geographers Meghan Cope and Sarah Elwood have pushed the concept of qualitative mapping even further with their edited collection of essays on qualitative GIS.[13]

These new forms of mapping hold promise for helping reconceptualize the effect of poverty and racism on daily lives. They can employ sophisticated techniques that make maps more engaging to a wide audience and challenge conventional ideas about how and where maps should be viewed.[14]

Using New Digital Technologies to Broaden Participation in Mapping

The second case study also involves mapping geographic disparities, but here I highlight the utility of mapmaking in engaging stakeholders in all aspects of the research from start to finish. This project began when the California Department of Public Health commissioned the UCLA School

of Public Health to collect and analyze data on the prevalence of outdoor advertising for unhealthy foods and products promoting a sedentary lifestyle in Los Angeles neighborhoods of different income and ethnic/racial composition. Only a limited amount of research has been conducted to assess systematically the relationship between advertising content and characteristics of places. Even less has sought to connect the patterns to health outcomes for vulnerable populations or challenge the ubiquitous nature of outdoor advertising for unhealthy products. I joined the research team to represent Philadelphia when the study expanded to include additional cities. A grant from the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities provided funding for the Philadelphia part of the study and allowed me to forge a partnership with geography professor Dr. Marilyn Guidry at Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, a historically black college, which was already involved in the center's activities.

I hired Dr. Guidry's students for the specific task of collecting data in Philadelphia that summer, which involved canvassing five ZIP-code areas using high-end GPS devices (to identify the location) and a digital camera (to capture an image of all outdoor advertising). The students identified approximately 700 different advertisements, nearly half of which were outside convenience stores and advertised cigarettes. One particularly disturbing advertisement for hard liquor included the message, "Don't just stand there. Get rich." What meaning do residents of a low-income neighborhood give to such an incongruous sign, posted on a vacant building or in a trash-strewn lot? I saw it as mocking the poverty around them, but for others, it could represent the promise of capitalism or encouragement to pursue lucrative illegal activities.

Analyses of the data the Cheyney students collected, along with the data students and research staff collected in Los Angeles, Fresno, Sacramento, Austin, and New York City, showed that African American and Latino neighborhoods had a disproportionate number of advertisements for unhealthy products.[15] Using GIS and statistical analysis, we were further able to show that alcohol, tobacco, sugary beverages, and fast food advertisements clustered around institutions that serve children, including schools, day cares, libraries, and recreation centers. Furthermore, areas in Philadelphia with higher proportions of African American residents were more likely to have clustering than those with lower proportions, just as areas in Los Angeles with higher proportions of Latino residents were more likely to have clustering. Comparisons of the number and type of advertisements for unhealthy products across the six cities revealed that Philadelphia had fewer billboards but far more small advertisements, particularly for cigarettes.[16]

Staff from SCRUB,[17] a Philadelphia nonprofit organization dedicated to serving as the "public voice for public space," helped me understand that Philadelphia's permissive local zoning regulations allow stores to place "incidental" advertisements on their buildings for products such as cigarettes, alcohol, and sugary beverages. These regulations account for much of the difference between the advertising landscape in Philadelphia and the other cities. When the Philadelphia City Council held public hearings on the causes and possible preventive measures for the growing obesity epidemic, the Department of Public Health invited me to testify about targeting children of color for junk food through outdoor advertisements. Whereas my colleagues talked about the complicated causes of the current obesity epidemic, I unrolled a poster-size printout of a popular Coca-Cola outdoor advertisement and explained how Philadelphia's lenient zoning regulations allowed such signage outside convenience stores all over the city. I noted that changing Philadelphia's zoning regulations would provide a fairly simple fix to the problem of advertising outside stores and reduce children's exposure on their way to and from school. A representative of the health department and one of the city council members expressed interest in taking action.

GPS and GIS were essential to this project. Because outdoor advertisements can be located anywhere—on the side of a building, in a vacant lot, attached to a utility pole—they do not have conventional street addresses. GPS units allowed the students to document location via geographic coordinates; they then mapped the coordinates with the GIS software, which was critical to analyzing the spatial pattern of outdoor advertisements, particularly their proximity to child-serving institutions. Specifically, my colleagues and I could calculate distances between the location of advertisements and institutions, draw buffers of a particular distance around the institutions, and determine the statistical significance of clustering with the aid of statistical software.

Despite our successes, a major limitation of the project was the Cheyney students' narrow role in the research. Although other researchers have integrated digital technologies into projects like this one to enable greater participation by community members,[18] I hired the students solely for data collection and basic mapping. In so doing, I provided them valuable (and paid) experience with GPS and GIS but without exposing them to the participative potential of these tools. That said, one exciting indirect outcome of the Cheyney student involvement is that, subsequent to the billboard study, one student, Latifah Griffin, followed her passion for public health research to a full-time research position at the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Tobacco Research. I eventually hired her full-time to work on

Figure 10.1 Latifah Griffin, then a GIS student at Cheyney State University, used a digital camera and GPS to record the content and location of outdoor advertisements like these outside a gas station in North Philadelphia. Photograph courtesy of Amy Hillier.

two research projects measuring and modeling food and physical activity landscapes. Latifah is a native of Chester, Pennsylvania, a city near Philadelphia characterized by high rates of poverty and lack of access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Together we hope to begin new research on health disparities in Chester that will give Latifah the opportunity to realize the potential of using mapping to engage residents in her hometown in a participatory research process, drawing attention to, and potentially changing, the inequitable conditions there.

Expanded Examples: Public Participation in Mapping

Although the billboard project did not incorporate grassroots participation, the public participation GIS (PPGIS) movement specifically aims to expand access to geospatial tools, including the use of GIS in public planning activities.[19] For example, Canadian researchers have developed spatial online analytical processing (SOLAP) tools to facilitate audience members' participation at public meetings exploring the spatial effects of different community-based interventions.[20] Similarly, the software firm Placeways offers tools and consulting services to help communities engage in GIS-based participatory planning, including the development of comprehensive plans, land use and transportation alternatives, and renewable energy projects.[21]

Greater participation in mapping also allows children to map their own neighborhoods and use geospatial tools to record their activities. Cognitive mapping projects, including those using only paper and pencil such as KIDSMAP in British Columbia, can help children communicate what spaces within their neighborhood are of greatest importance.[22] Other approaches, such as my Food and Exercise Diary for Urban Places (FED-UP) project, may take advantage of cell phone and online mapping technologies to allow children to record information about how they move about their neighborhood. Specifically, this application allows children to record the route they travel to and from school, the stops they make, and the foods they purchase, using cell phone text messaging, photographs, and GPS functionality to generate a personalized food and travel diary in their online account.[23] They could then share discoveries, such as fruit salads or a particularly fun place to skateboard, through Facebook-type social networking, which could influence how their peers experience familiar places. By integrating augmented reality (AR) features into FED-UP, children could also make virtual changes to their environment, such as adding a store or park, improving the quality of sidewalks and bike lanes, or redesigning vacant lots.[24]

Greater participation in mapmaking also brings a change in what gets mapped. Community asset-mapping involves a process of mobilizing communities to view their surroundings through a strengths perspective and

develop a shared vision to solve common problems. Popularized by John Kretzmann and John McKnight at Northwestern University's Institute for Policy Research, the process involves identifying existing assets, capabilities, and skills rather than conducting a traditional needs assessment.[25] Although mapping is often used in a general sense of surveying communities, GIS can "combine the strengths of asset-based community development with the traditional methodology of needs assessments,"[26] Examples of using maps to integrate bottom-up and top-down decision making include: the Heart of West Michigan United Way's GIS project,[27] the Community Asset Mapping Project (CAMP) in Vancouver,[28] and the Community Geography Project in Portland, Oregon.[29]

Using New Digital Technologies to Re-create Invisible Histories

Historical events and institutions can give shape and meaning to present-day places in a variety of subtle or not-so-subtle ways. Historical markers announce sites of official significance to passersby, telling their important stories in a few terse sentences, while more dramatic ways of recounting the history of a place, such as battle reenactments and high-tech light shows, often lure tourists. But many places are characterized by rich histories that are little recognized in the contemporary landscape. Philadelphia's Old Seventh Ward, immortalized by W.E.B. Du Bois's 1899 classic, *The Philadelphia Negro*, is one such place. At the dawn of the twentieth century, this neighborhood was the heart of black Philadelphia with the highest proportion of blacks in the city; Philadelphia, in turn, had the most black residents of any Northern city, making the Old Seventh Ward a center of black life in the North.

In 1896 the women running Philadelphia's College Settlement Association enlisted the aid of the University of Pennsylvania in commissioning a study of why blacks living in the Seventh Ward were faring so poorly relative to their immigrant neighbors. The university offered Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, just 28 years old at the time, a short-term position as an "assistant in sociology" to conduct the study. Trained as a historian and social scientist at Harvard University and in Europe, Du Bois conducted his research in the Old Seventh Ward with a high level of scientific rigor. He combined archival research, key informant interviews, ethnography, and survey methods, foreshadowing the day in which the social sciences would employ mixed methods and involve empirical data collection and analysis rather than just theorizing.

Du Bois used the results from his door-to-door survey of the area's 2,500 black households to create a detailed color-coded map showing

where every black household lived along with his assessment of their social class status. In addition to showing how blacks of all social classes were largely constrained to living on certain streets and back alleys, he put forward what was then a novel proposition: that Philadelphia's black community evidenced a social class structure. Taken one step further, Du Bois was arguing that blacks were like whites, which meant that they were fully human. This was a bold proposition in the late nineteenth century, when scholars focused on explaining perceived black inferiority by the shape of their skulls. Du Bois implored Philadelphia's white leaders to see the "Negro problem" he had been invited to study as one caused by racism, not race.

Now a predominantly wealthy white area of downtown Philadelphia, today's Seventh Ward bears little evidence of the people and institutions Du Bois immortalized in his research. A handful of historical markers carry sole responsibility for conveying the Ward's rich black history to residents and visitors. They include markers outside Mother Bethel AME Church, the first African Methodist Episcopal Church in the country, started by Richard Allen when he and his followers were no longer welcome at the white St. George's Episcopal Church; at Frederick Douglass Hospital, created by the black doctor Nathan Mossell so that black nurses would have a place to train; and near the spot where Octavius V. Catto, a celebrated black civil rights leader and educator, was murdered as he tried to help blacks get to the polls on election day in 1871. Most of the buildings from that era remain intact, but like the famed Institute for Colored Youth that is now condominiums, their current use often tells nothing of their historical significance.

The third case study, "Mapping the Du Bois Philadelphia Negro," shows how geospatial tools can re-create a now invisible historical landscape such as the one Du Bois captured in his study. The Web site I produced for this project features an interactive mapping application that integrates and aggregates individual-level data from the 1900 U.S. Census and other archival sources, allowing visitors to explore spatial patterns in race, nationality, homeownership, overcrowding, and employment. Visitors to the Web site can also use GIS to identify households that lived in particular properties. For example, in 1900 four different families with a total of 16 people—all black—lived together in a row house on Lombard Street, including a cook, dressmaker, and seven unrelated boarders. Students can also search for individuals meeting a particular profile, such as black male physicians.[30]

Du Bois's original map of social class also provided the inspiration for a board game, Surviving the Seventh Ward, which requires players to assume the identity of a real-life black person from 1900 Philadelphia. Players move through a map-based game board—answering questions,

drawing and acting out relevant concepts, and interpreting quotations from the book—in order to acquire enough points to move up in social status, a nearly impossible challenge. A third product, a 30-minute documentary, "W.E.B. Du Bois and the Forgotten Seventh Ward," tells the story of Du Bois's research in the Old Seventh Ward and describes the changes the area has experienced over the twentieth century. These changes include a proposed expressway across the neighborhood that was never built but likely scared black households into moving out and accelerated the racial and economic transformation of the area. Videotaped by two high school students, the documentary features interviews with Philadelphia's mayor, leading scholars, and a current white resident and the granddaughter of the black woman who lived in that resident's house 100 years ago.

The online GIS, board game, and documentary form the basis for a curriculum about Du Bois, African American history, social science research, and racial justice that has been used in part by numerous Philadelphia-area high schools. Together, these resources help re-create digitally a largely invisible historical landscape shaped by significant cultural, political, and educational institutions and leading black citizens as well as everyday residents struggling in the face of racial discrimination. Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program took a major step to make the historical landscape more visible by working with community residents, a professional artist, and members of my research team to create a mural honoring Du Bois and the Old Seventh Ward. The mural, called *Mapping Courage*, features Du Bois with his map of social class and several color-coded people meant to represent Seventh Ward residents of different classes as well as the firemen of the historically segregated fire station, Engine Company No. 11.

Two additional project ideas promise to expand participation in sharing and learning the stories of the Seventh Ward. I anticipate using online GIS to develop a feature that former Seventh Ward residents could use to link their photographs and personal stories about specific locations on the model of PhilaPlace, a neighborhood history and culture project developed by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP). A second long-term plan is to develop a personal digital assistant-based walking tour that would use GIS and GPS to connect to historical photographs and census data, similar to the Pocket Cultural Browser developed for PhillyHistory.org, an online archive of historical photographs maintained by Philadelphia's Department of Records.

Expanded Examples: Re-creating Invisible Histories

A growing number of Web-based historical mapping projects across the United States and the world use geospatial technologies to generate new

interest in historical communities. For example, PhilaPlace features mapping, audio and video clips, photographs, and text that connect stories of residents in two historically immigrant neighborhoods in Philadelphia. Through a Google Maps interface, visitors can read and hear stories collected by HSP staff or contributed by visitors against the backdrop of historical maps. To engage the public in meaningful ways, PhilaPlace also includes public programming, workshops for teachers, trolley tours, and exhibits.[31] Another example, Beyond Steel, a Pennsylvania-based historical mapping Web site, features the industrial and cultural history of the Lehigh Valley and the rise and fall of the region's dominant company, Bethlehem Steel. Through historical fire insurance maps, city directories, letters, photographs, oral histories, and essays, this public history project relates the stories of the captains of the steel industry as well as the average workers.[32]

Transforming historically marginalized places requires more than Web-based mapping projects, but by influencing how residents and visitors view and experience these neighborhoods today, both virtually and physically, such projects can transform the meaning people assign them. It can also kindle interest in the history of ethnic neighborhoods, introducing historical manuscript and aggregate census data—now available through Web sites such as Ancestry.com, Social Explorer, and the National Historical GIS.[33] Knowing who lived in a particular property and what brought people, be they white European immigrants or black Southern migrants, to a particular neighborhood can change the experience of living in that place. Appreciating the value of historical census data might also help residents appreciate the value of today's census data collection process. For example, staff at a branch library in a relatively low-income black neighborhood of Philadelphia made that connection and invited me to speak about the project at a Census 2010 rollout event.

Lessons Learned about Using Digital Tools in Activist Research

Technological innovations will continue to make available new and more convenient forms of digital mapping. Rather than relying upon professionally trained experts with access to expensive hardware and software to access GIS functionality, ordinary people will increasingly be able to collect, share, and analyze spatial data from their cell phones and other personal devices. The question is not whether geospatial technologies will become more integrated into daily living but whether these new technologies will be used as more than fun tools for finding a favorite brand of coffee—to critically examine and challenge place-based inequalities.

The PPGIS movement was launched in 1996 to increase the accessibility of GIS, GPS, satellite imagery, and other geospatial tools and to allow marginalized people to effect positive social change. Transformation will only take place when residents of marginalized communities are in a position to design and lead their own efforts. Although the PPGIS movement helped launch dozens of participatory GIS projects across the country, the barriers that gave rise to the movement largely still exist. The cost of training, software, and hardware for conducting analytical mapping—at least for the time being—is prohibitive, so most participatory GIS projects rely upon collaborations between community organizations and academic institutions that are difficult to sustain. Furthermore, by virtue of living in marginalized communities, residents may lack confidence in their own ability to use these tools in their efforts as change agents. As a result, many mapping projects that have succeeded initially on participation terms have not necessarily had much effect on transforming places. Introducing GIS software to young people in communities where public schools are failing and job prospects are poor may be as insulting as the "Don't Just Stand There. Get Rich" billboard my student researchers photographed in North Philadelphia. I can show the high school students how to compare historical and contemporary maps of the Seventh Ward, but knowing that a private swim club in a wealthy white neighborhood was formerly a segregated black school named for the martyred Octavius V. Catto does not, in itself, help them transform their community. Geospatial technologies are merely tools that depend upon broad-based, long-term efforts to confront structural inequalities and institutional racism.

The case studies presented in this chapter do provide hope that digital mapping can play a special role in transforming communities. Whether maps are used to highlight social class structure among African Americans in the 1890s, the need for more grocery stores in urban areas, or the unfair exposure of children of color to unhealthy outdoor advertisements, they provide undeniable visual evidence of complicated, long-standing social inequalities. They allow researchers to unite with community members to bear witness to the oppression caused by overt racial discrimination, private investment practices, and government zoning regulations, among other forces. At their best, digital maps can help sharpen the focus on society's tolerance of the unequal conditions under which too many people of color in low-income urban communities live and the unequal opportunities their children have for embracing their futures and assuming their power to transform their world. Du Bois prophetically declared in 1899 that the problem facing the African Americans living in Philadelphia's Seventh Ward was familiar to descendants of Africans around the world,

namely that their white neighbors were denying their full humanity. What other explanation could exist for the geographic disparities he witnessed and that are documented in the case studies of contemporary place-based discrimination included in this book? What choice is there other than to engage with the most promising new technologies in long-term efforts to redraw the circle and embrace our common humanity?[34]

Notes

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2. Ronald W. Cotterill and Andrew W. Franklin, *The Urban Grocery Store Gap*, Food Marketing Policy Issue Paper No. 8 (Storrs, CT: Food Marketing Policy Center, 1995).
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4. Vernon Clark, "Obama Officials Come to Applaud More Philadelphia Supermarkets," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (24 June 2009).
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6. Alfred Lubrano, "Michelle Obama Wows Students at Fairhill School," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (19 February 2010).
7. St. John Barned-Smith, "Fresh Grocer Well-received by North Philly Neighbors," *Philadelphia Daily News* (12 December 2009).
8. Dan Charles, "Group Maps City Access to Healthy Foods," National Public Radio, *Day to Day* (31 January 2007).
9. Lauren McIntyre, "Rap Map," *New Yorker* (8 January 2007).
10. "Maternal mortality" is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management but not from accidental or incidental causes.
11. For more discussion and examples of cartograms, visit http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mejn/cartograms/ and http://www.worldmapper.org/about.html (accessed 30 May 2010); for details about the cartogram algorithm, see Michael T. Gastner and M.E.J. Newman, "Diffusion-based Method for Producing Density-equalizing Maps," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 101 no. 20 (18 May 2004): 7499–7504.
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13. Sarah Elwood and Meghan Cope, eds., *Qualitative GIS: A Mixed-methods Approach* (London: Sage Publications, 2009).
14. For more examples of 3D and animated maps, visit http://cartography2.org/ (accessed 30 May 2010).
15. Antronette Yancey, Brian Cole, Jerome Williams, Amy Hillier, William McCarthy, Jamaal Akbar, Sonya Grier, and D. Backman, "A Cross-sectional Prevalence Study of Ethnically-targeted and General Audience Outdoor Weight-related Lifestyle Advertising," *Millbank Quarterly* 87 (2009): 155–184.
16. Amy Hillier, Brian Cole, Tony E. Smith, Antronette Yancey, Jerome Williams, Sonya Grier, and William McCarthy, "Concentration of Unhealthy Outdoor Advertisements Around Child-serving Institutions: A Three-city Comparison," *Health & Place* 15 (2009): 935–945.
17. SCRUB was originally an acronym for "Society Created to Reduce Urban Blight," but the organization moved away from that name to embrace being "the public voice for public space."
18. See for example a chapter in this volume by Matthew Kelley and another by Caitlin Cahill and Matt Bradley, which both describe the potential of digital technologies to promote participatory community-based research.
19. Renee E. Sieber, "Public Participation Geographical Information Systems: A Literature Review and Framework," *Annals of Association of American Geographers* 96 (2006): 491–507.
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28. Clyde Hertzman, Sidney A. McLean, Dafna E. Kohen, Jim Dunn, and Terry Evans, "Early Development in Vancouver: Report of the Community Asset Mapping Project (CAMP)" (August 2002), http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/products/ecd_van_e.pdf (accessed 30 May 2010).
29. Meg Merrick, "Reflections on PPGIS: A View from the Trenches," *Journal of the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association* 15 (2003): 33–39.
30. See www.mappingdubois.org (accessed 30 May 2010).

31. See www.philaplace.org (accessed 30 May 2010).
32. See http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/beyondsteel/ (accessed 30 May 2010).
33. See www.ancestry.com, www.socialexplorer.com, and www.nhgis.org (accessed 30 May 2010). Ancestry.com and Social Explorer both require subscriptions for full access, whereas the National Historical GIS provides all data for free.
34. Du Bois discusses the "vastest of the Negro problems" in "The Meaning of All This," the concluding chapter of W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1899), 385–387.

Chapter Eleven

On the Social Construction of Place: Using Participatory Methods and Digital Tools to Reconceive Distressed Urban Neighborhoods

Matthew Kelley

Referencing a community mapping project that I facilitated in West Philadelphia, in this chapter I suggest that conventional perceptions of distressed neighborhood spaces are constructed largely through the skewed narratives of data produced by nonlocal research agencies.[1] I argue that the policies and programs designed to alleviate local social problems rely on such narratives without regard for neighborhood residents' experiential knowledge.[2] As an alternative, I detail some of the ways that placemaking programs[3] might elicit experiential knowledge from residents by leveraging participatory geospatial technologies (GST).[4] Local knowledge that such programs produce can combine with conventional social and economic data sets to inform more effective and equitable[5] community improvement policies.

To support this proposition, I explore the role that participatory GST have played in collaborative placemaking programs during the past decade, and I draw on my experiences in West Philadelphia to outline possible outcomes from these programs. This topic has generated considerable interest among urban scholars following a period of intense technological development during the late 1990s that resulted in an array of easy-to-use GST.[6] Scholarly work that coincides with this development is illustrative of the benefits participatory GST can hold for placemaking organizations.[7] And investigations into the theoretical consequences of the use of participatory GST in urban placemaking programs have been ongoing—including, for the purposes of this chapter, a community-university partnership in West Philadelphia that led to a project designed to rethink the

ways that placemaking professionals might use participatory GST to better understand the nuanced social and economic conditions in distressed urban neighborhoods.

To this end, my central argument is that GST has streamlined the participatory process by enabling placemaking professionals to produce resident-generated neighborhood data that can be visualized, analyzed, and disseminated to planning and advocacy agencies quickly and efficiently. Woven into this chapter is a parallel proposition that the various layers of practical and theoretical outcomes from GST-enhanced placemaking programs can transform the ways that we perceive, experience, and work with distressed urban neighborhoods.[8]

The goals of this chapter are, therefore, to (a) examine critically the methodology employed in a case study that leveraged participatory GST and to (b) outline the theoretical and technological issues researchers need to consider prior to implementing such a program. After reviewing emerging technologies, I discuss the general tendency to rely on conventional data to profile distressed urban neighborhoods and outline the ways that participatory GST can provide an alternative to this practice. Throughout this discussion, I illustrate how participatory GST programs can provide placemaking professionals with a more comprehensive understanding of the social, cultural, and economic landscapes of neighborhoods by helping them codify neighborhood residents' experiential spatial knowledge. And finally, drawing on this exposition of the placemaking role that GST can play, I present the case study from West Philadelphia as illustrative of the effect these techniques can have on neighborhood improvement programs.

Tools, Techniques, and Theoretical Perspectives for GST-enhanced Placemaking Programs

In the following three sections, I investigate some of the tools, techniques, and theoretical perspectives that proved foundational for developing the case study described in this chapter. Beginning with an overview of the broad notion of participatory GST, I suggest that over the past ten years, digital tools have become increasingly accessible and user friendly in the United States. Moving from the general notion of participatory GST to a more specific discussion of public participation geographic information systems (PPGIS), I outline some of the ways that PPGIS have been introduced to placemaking projects and what outcomes might be expected in these scenarios. Finally, I transition from a discussion of the tools and techniques that can prove useful to placemaking programs to an asset-based theoretical framework that can inform GST-enhanced activities.

Participatory Geospatial Technologies

During the late 1990s, the notion of digital public participation in the placemaking process began to emerge both in practice and in the literature. Al-Kodmany's overview of participatory digital visualization techniques explored some of the options available in that era and revealed the benefits and drawbacks of integrating new technologies with a placemaking process that was comfortably analog.[9] Given the newness of digital technologies at that time, the most significant drawbacks were steep learning curves and the tendency for these technologies to be unstable (for example, prone to crashes or unexpected behavior). The contemporary sociotechnical climate in the United States has become decidedly more digital since the late 1990s, evidenced by such phenomena as the accessibility of broadband connections, the increased rate of computer ownership, and the ubiquity of the mobile phone. Coinciding with this digital social turn, the software and hardware at the core of contemporary technologies have become considerably more stable through a combination of innovative design and better materials. Thus, although a digital divide remains evident in many distressed urban communities, the use of participatory digital techniques has become significantly less troublesome and more ubiquitous during the last decade.

While participatory community-based research methods have been evolving since the 1970s, the benefits of integrating digital tools to produce a more effective collaborative research process have become increasingly apparent. Tools such as PPGIS, global positioning systems (GPS), and location-aware multimedia devices (for example, digital cameras that record geographic locations of the pictures residents take) have improved how placemaking professionals and neighborhood residents share their perceptions and visualizations of space.[10] This digital shift represents an empowering moment for residents of distressed neighborhoods, as professionals increasingly view them as partners in projects and incorporate their perspectives on how to improve the livability of their community.[11] Through this more collaborative process, placemaking professionals are better situated to arrive at experiential perceptions of urban space than occur with conventional data sources; they are, therefore, better equipped to assemble effective and equitable development plans and socioeconomic policies. The use of PPGIS is particularly effective in enabling participatory placemaking and is well documented in the recent literature, which I discuss in the following section.

Geographic Information Systems and Public Participation

Geographic information systems (GIS) are the most widespread and integrative of digital GST. Applications of GIS not only result in maps but also

enhance the collection, storage, analysis, and visualization of spatial data. Following the emergence of more accessible and intuitive GIS software during the 1990s, a wealth of literature emerged related to the concept of "public participation geographic information systems."[12] PPGIS are typically situated in response to traditional community mapping techniques that privilege the use of sanctioned data such as census demographics, municipal economic indicators, and generalized crime statistics. Emily Talen, an urban geographer, referred to PPGIS as "bottom-up GIS" in contrast to the "top-down GIS" that has characterized planning practice: "conventional use of GIS is largely top-down in the sense that GIS data is provided, manipulated, and presented by technical experts."[13] She suggested that "skepticism about the value of top-down GIS focuses on the issue that certain groups and certain types of experiential knowledge are marginalized by GIS-based decision-making processes."[14] Whereas conventional GIS might draw on data provided by public agencies, programs enhanced by PPGIS involve residents in the production of spatial data through the use of handheld GPS units, sketch mapping, focus groups, and various other qualitative techniques. Spatial data produced and visualized through PPGIS better reflect the experiential knowledge of the residents of the study neighborhoods. Proponents of PPGIS suggest that experiential knowledge is integral to the community mapping process and that this knowledge ought to form the basis of urban policy.[15]

Sarah Elwood, a geographer and expert on participatory applications of GIS, noted that experiential knowledge is generally granted less legitimacy than sanctioned spatial data.[16] She cited one community member from a project in Chicago who stated that "the City doesn't understand how things really are for people in our community."[17] By way of contrast, in a collaborative project, conventional assumptions about the needs and assets of distressed neighborhoods are engaged, and often reoriented, by residents. Nevertheless, PPGIS tools are just that—tools to use in the production of experiential data; the theoretical framework on which a given placemaking program draws has profound consequences in informing how such tools are applied in the field. In the next section, I overview two competing possibilities—needs-based and asset-based conceptions of urban space.

Needs-based versus Asset-based Conceptions of Urban Neighborhoods

A needs-based theoretical framework approaches the distressed neighborhood from the assumption that it is a problem space and that through an investigation of the various markers of social distress (for example, rates of poverty, crime, unemployment), planners can design an appropriate set

of solutions for that particular neighborhood. Social policies that consistently characterize distressed neighborhoods as "dangerous," "physically dilapidated," "crime-ridden," and "poverty stricken" are consumed by the public as authentic because powerful municipal and agenda-driven organizations tend to produce these characterizations.[18] Referring to these types of characterizations, urban geographer Timothy Hall suggested that

> in debates about the form and character of the postmodern city, the inner city is conventionally painted as the "sea of despair." It is portrayed as a zone abandoned by both formal economic mechanisms and conventional forms of social control and regulation.[19]

In contrast, an asset-based framework approaches distressed neighborhoods from the assumption that they contain assets (for example, informal social networks, locally owned businesses, unused open space) that can be harnessed by placemaking professionals to improve neighborhood livability. For instance, using the example of a vacant lot, Elwood suggested that it might be framed as, alternately, a magnet for crime and drug use (needs based) or a potential location for a community garden (asset based).[20] These frameworks are implicated both in the representation of urban space (maps, graphics, written reports) and in the structuring of questions researchers ask and the approaches planners take to build development programs. Depending on the values planners bring to the task, PPGIS can yield experiential data that confirm urban space as a sea of despair or that make visible its positive qualities.

Most typically, community assets include the individuals, associations, institutions, and landmarks that function as components of a neighborhood's everyday social and spatial resources. As Kretzmann and McKnight argued in the early 1990s, the key to effective and equitable community improvement is to focus energy not on devising strategies to alleviate deficiencies within a place but on creating programs that build on the strengths of the place.[21] An asset-based approach is, therefore, simultaneously a recognition of the inherent capacities of distressed neighborhoods and a rejection of the needs-based framework that pervades more traditional development programs. The needs-based framework is perhaps best emblematized by the empowerment zones/enterprise communities (EZ/EC) program that the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) legislated in 1993.[22] According to a HUD summary of the EZ/EC program,[23] only regions with "seemingly insurmountable problems" were eligible to participate in the program—which included tax incentives to existing businesses willing to relocate to distressed areas as well as to new businesses willing to start up in these areas. Using this model for community development, the

internal capacities and assets of neighborhoods are dismissed in order to access the resources available on the outside.

The case study I detail in the following section provides a counterpoint to conventional representations of distressed urban neighborhoods; it offers a methodology for reconceiving local space, informed by an asset-based theoretical framework and employing GST-enhanced documentation of residents' experiential spatial knowledge.

Mapping Assets in West Philadelphia: A Case Study in PPGIS

The following discussion centers on a participatory mapping project I conducted in West Philadelphia in partnership with a local community organization and several students from Penn State University. I draw on this project as an entrée into a more general discussion of the value that participatory GST can bring to placemaking programs and of the ways these programs might begin to think about leveraging GST in their own work. And, after outlining some of the hurdles my research team encountered in West Philadelphia, I address the issues that placemaking programs should consider prior to introducing participatory GST into their day-to-day toolkit.

Context and Goals of the Project within a Community-University Partnership Framework

Each year for the past decade, undergraduate students from Penn State University have traveled to West Philadelphia to participate in the Philadelphia Field Project, a summer service learning course. The students, most with suburban and rural backgrounds, live in the study neighborhoods for six weeks during the summer. This project is an outgrowth of a community-university partnership that has been forged between community leaders in West Philadelphia and members of the Penn State community. Students who participate in the field project typically spend their time volunteering with local organizations, meeting with residents, and conducting research projects with outcomes that benefit the community in some way. One summer, as a doctoral student in geography, I worked closely with the director of this project, Dr. Lakshman Yapa, to supervise 12 undergraduate students in their study of the Belmont, Mantua, and Mill Creek neighborhoods. We lived together in a small row house in a residential area of Belmont where the population of African descent was 95 percent, the poverty rate was 43 percent, and the unemployment rate was 18 percent. Our community partner for the summer was the Lancaster Avenue Community Development Corporation (LA CDC, a pseudonym),

a local organization that worked to support small business development, community beautification, after-school activities, and assorted other grassroots activities.

As a consequence of living in a neighborhood classified by the federal government as having "insurmountable problems," and meeting with organizations committed to the pursuit of conventional community and economic development projects (such as the need for mixed-income housing, an industrial park, and workforce training), students experienced the needs-based framework firsthand. For some students, the resonance of this framework was manifest in the ways they experienced daily life in the neighborhoods. Notably, students who worked closely with local community organizations were less likely to internalize the needs-based framework than students who partnered with organizations external to the neighborhood.

For example, Ted (also a pseudonym) had been working with a regional housing organization that managed a mixed-income residential project in West Philadelphia. As the summer progressed, Ted became increasingly critical of the motivation and capacity of residents to improve their quality of life in the study neighborhoods. During project roundtables, which we held daily over dinner, he consistently characterized the problems of these communities as consequences of deteriorating infrastructure and apathy among residents. The housing organization, in Ted's view, was helping the poor by providing them with the opportunity to live in a better situation. By internalizing the housing organization's needs-based framework, this student became fearful of living and working in the study neighborhoods and gradually became less involved in nonessential project activities, preferring instead to remain in the safety of our row house.

The majority of students who participated in the field project, however, partnered with small-scale community organizations managed by local residents. And, over the course of the project, students who worked directly with residents of the study neighborhoods became aware of the nontraditional assets that community residents value. For example, based on interactions with local children, one student developed an interest in the role homemade basketball hoops play in the lives of the youth in distressed neighborhoods. This student worked with local youth to begin cataloging the locations of hoops (which are often nothing more than buckets fastened to telephone poles) and brainstorm ways to construct informal basketball courts more safely. Two other students worked with several small urban gardening groups to consider ways to compost their waste more efficiently and increase the visibility of their work among neighborhood children. Although these students did not begin their projects using the terms assets or capacities, their contributions during our daily roundtable discussions

hinged on these concepts; frequently they discussed the potential small changes have to improve life for residents of distressed communities.

As the students' nascent interest in community assets evolved that summer, an idea emerged to produce a database of assets as defined by residents. This more focused project would result in a spatial data set that reflected the residents' experiential perspective on the social, cultural, and economic landscapes of the three study neighborhoods. In particular, the students and I felt that such a database would provide an insider perspective on these neighborhoods, which had previously been visible only through a census-based demographic lens, and that the resulting spatial data would offer the LA CDC an additional planning tool. Unfortunately for reasons that I discuss further on, the tool was never utilized as planned.

West Philadelphia Asset-mapping Project Design

After returning from the field project, I worked with Dr. Yapa to design an investigation of residents' perceptions of assets in the three neighborhoods. Drawing largely from our reflections on the students' summer fieldwork, we submitted a grant application to the Penn State Africana Research Center, which yielded funding to undertake an asset-mapping project.

The members of the asset-mapping team consisted of myself, Natalie Jolly (a doctoral student in sociology), and several undergraduates from the field project. We undertook the project the following winter, using existing partnerships with individuals and community organizations to arrange a series of visits to the Belmont, Mantua, and Mill Creek neighborhoods. We selected resident participants from these neighborhoods from contacts I had made during the field project. Then we conducted a street-level mapping survey by walking neighborhood streets with these residents, using a digital camera and handheld GPS unit to create spatial data sets of locally perceived assets. The design of this project shares techniques that are common to the field of qualitative PPGIS.[24] However, in addition to refining these techniques, we were also interested to explore the use of equipment (GPS units and digital cameras) that is inexpensive and relatively easy to use—which would make this project easily reproduced in any urban neighborhood.

Using as a starting point Kretzmann and McKnight's asset-based community development approach, the project's methodology combined a qualitative appreciation for the unique with a quantitative approach to classification and visualization. Because the outcome of the project would be a spatial database, we needed to design a taxonomy[25] of assets that would prove useful in the field but also functional in the database.[26] Building on Kretzmann and McKnight's work,[27] we approached the project with the

following broad categories of neighborhood assets: social institutions; recreation facilities; community associations; and educational, cultural, and economic institutions. Although we found it necessary to prefigure the taxonomy in order to design the survey instrument resident participants would use in the field, most of the asset categories proved too broad and had to be broken down into subgroups—a process that I describe in more detail later. The eventual outcome of the street-level survey was a database that included detailed spatial and descriptive data about community features that fell into many more asset categories than we initially planned.

West Philadelphia Asset-mapping Project Fieldwork

The asset-mapping team worked with resident participants to conduct fieldwork during four one-week site visits, spending a total of approximately 30 hours together. These visits consisted primarily of cataloging the locations of neighborhood assets during resident-led walking tours. This process involved the following: (a) identifying a community asset, (b) using a GPS unit to capture its geographic location, (c) classifying the asset using a companion paper survey, and (d) capturing an image of the asset using a digital camera.

During the first site visit, we discovered that our initial taxonomy was too general to provide us with a robust, well-structured database of neighborhood assets. So, working with residents, we revised the taxonomy to include a greater number of categories and subcategories that would enable a quick cataloging of assets during fieldwork while also providing a rich set of data for analysis and visualization after the mapping was completed. In revising the taxonomy, we sought to enhance the qualitative rigor of the data by increasing the level of detail that participants could include when classifying assets,[28] which helped us better understand why various features in the landscape might be considered assets.[29] Following data collection, the asset-mapping team spent approximately three months assembling the results into a database, analyzing the results, and preparing the database to share with the LA CDC. I present these outcomes in the following section.

Outcomes of the West Philadelphia Asset-mapping Project

The research team collected a total of 517 data points during these one-week visits (see figure 11.1). We downloaded spatial data from handheld GPS units to a spatial database and transcribed attribute data from handwritten surveys into a spreadsheet, which we then joined to a database of images tagged with identifiers so that each data point was linked both to a set of

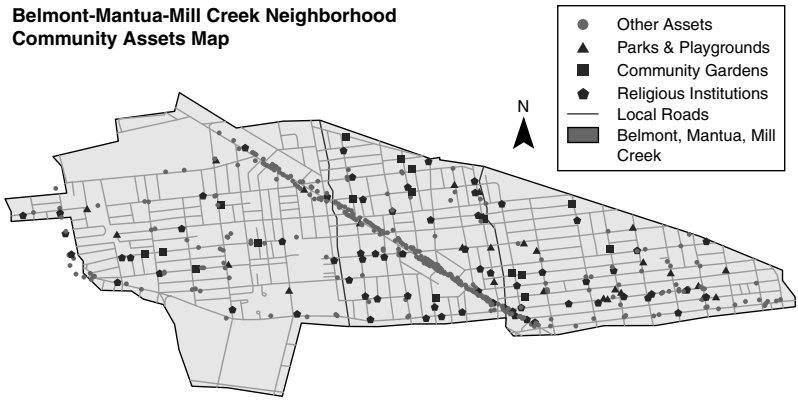

Figure 11.1 Map showing spatial distribution of the landmarks community members identified as assets in their neighborhood, among them a local minimarket, a historic church, and a tiny informal park. Map courtesy of Matthew J. Kelley, UW-Tacoma Urban Studies program.

attributes and an image. Herein, I outline residents' perceptions of local assets in the Belmont, Mantua, and Mill Creek neighborhoods—including the businesses, churches, and vacant space/parks/playgrounds—in essence, using an asset-based framework to analyze these neighborhoods.

The Social Functions of Neighborhood Businesses

Small businesses made up 48 percent of our data points and served a variety of social purposes. Most practically, as no large grocery, drug, or hardware stores existed in the area, local small businesses served as the primary locations for purchasing groceries and household supplies. Businesses in these neighborhoods were spatially distributed both along the primary business corridor and sporadically throughout the residential streets. Our research revealed small, locally oriented markets that were seamlessly integrated into the residential landscape. The data suggest that markets in these neighborhoods provided residents the dual functions of service and social connection by virtue of their size and location; these sites both facilitated retail trade and catalyzed social interaction. For example, we often found a group of local youth sitting on the street curb outside of a market, while groups of adults were spending time talking both inside and outside the market. For a neighborhood population that did not have public transportation to larger markets, with a lower-than-average rate of car ownership, local markets became hubs of activity in much the same

way that retail centers have become hubs of social interaction in wealthier suburban communities.

Churches as Neighborhood Institutions

Churches accounted for 13 percent of our data points. Significantly, when residents spoke about churches, they did not, necessarily, refer to them solely as places of worship. Rather, they perceived churches as social hubs in the neighborhood—they tended to serve local populations and have a variety of social functions that were not directly linked to their religious mission. In the study neighborhoods, the social and material infrastructure of the 68 established churches we documented represent the potential of relatively unseen community assets. We found that church-based social networks cut across many of the social and cultural divides that existed in the broader community. Similarly, we learned that, as material assets, churches supplied potential meeting space for community groups, after-school programs, technology centers, and other community-based programs. This information, which became apparent during conversations with residents, was incorporated into the asset taxonomy where we designated churches as freestanding or storefront. Of the 68 churches located in the three study neighborhoods, 36 were freestanding structures. These freestanding churches, in particular, tended to provide residents and community organizers with a *substantial space* for conducting neighborhood meetings, activities, and events—all of which either directly or indirectly affected the quality of life for residents of the community. The remaining 32 churches, primarily smaller storefront structures, could not offer a significant amount of meeting space to the community but still served as social hubs.

Appropriated Vacant and Open Space

Notable in the asset-mapping data was the wide range of formal and informal parks, playgrounds, and community gardens, which together accounted for 8.5 percent of our data points. During the Philadelphia Field Project, my students and I noticed that youth in the neighborhoods avoided certain parks while making use of others. We also noticed that local youth frequently improvised basketball courts and playfields by strapping buckets to light poles, removing garbage from vacant lots, or using scavenged orange traffic cones to close sections of residential streets. In the West Philadelphia Asset-mapping Project, the research team designed the asset survey so that it could capture not only the locations of parks, playgrounds, and vacant lots but also the opportunities they offered to youth (for example, whether they were safe and/or included such amenities as sports facilities or working drinking fountains). Our data revealed that 12

out of the 27 parks located in the study neighborhoods can accommodate specific youth activities with facilities that range from playground equipment and picnic areas to basketball courts, swimming pools, and baseball fields. We also documented many vacant and abandoned lots that had been informally converted to parks and public gathering spaces, with residents viewing these spaces with varying degrees of comfort. Additionally, we located 17 community gardens peppering the streets and alleys as aesthetic and functional features of the neighborhood landscape. Consistent with what happens in most major cities, we typically found these gardens in vacant and abandoned lots and ranging in size from a five-foot-by-ten-foot bed of herbs to a multifamily community garden that spanned nearly a third of an acre.

* * *

For various reasons, the LA CDC ceased to exist not long after we completed the project, so the outcomes of our work were not ultimately used in its placemaking activities. Lacking a practical application, we shifted our focus to critical reflection upon the techniques, technologies, and outcomes of asset mapping in relation to the project's initial goals, which I discuss in the next section. Based upon similar projects in the literature, I discuss how placemakers can use GST-enhanced, asset-based programs such as the one in this case study. I conclude with methodological and technical considerations.

Reflections on a GST-enhanced Placemaking Program

For placemaking professionals, the ability to see space through the eyes of the residents is exceedingly valuable, as decisions about how to develop, rehabilitate, or preserve space can quickly lead to conflict between neighborhood residents and placemakers if experiential information is not accessible.[30] In the asset-mapping project, we sought to use participatory GST as a way to produce an experiential data set that could inform standard planning and policy decisions (for example, which parks to invest in or which vacant lots to preserve for community use) and enable residents to redirect the placemaking conversation to topics that might not have otherwise emerged (for example, the importance of supporting small businesses and seeing churches as community centers).

The participatory design of the project in combination with the use of low-cost, easy-to-use digital tools enabled the production of a data set that was exceedingly useful in helping us rethink sociospatial narratives about three distressed neighborhoods. From a practical perspective, the benefits

of this type of project are best illustrated by the richness of the data that resulted from a participatory digital methodology. For instance, our West Philadelphia data reflected the experiential knowledge of the residents and were available for analysis and visualization in an accessible format.[31] By expanding the taxonomy that we used to classify assets the residents identified, we were able to elicit rich information about the various features in the landscape, and we stored much of this information as attributes in the spatial database.

The use of digitally enhanced participatory methods to conduct this project enabled us to understand the value of features such as vacant lots, corner markets, and neighborhood churches from the perspective of residents and, had the LA CDC remained operational, to incorporate that understanding into future placemaking decisions. From a theoretical perspective, the alternative community development strategies (ways to improve quality of life) the project generated brought into question the assumptions that planners and policy makers typically use in their interventions into distressed urban neighborhoods. The presence of insiders in a planning process—who, for example, find value in vacant lots that outsiders might otherwise classify as neglected spaces or who identify churches as institutions that can serve a purpose beyond Sunday morning services—can invalidate the conventional perceptions of distressed neighborhoods that pervade revitalization policies and programs.

Methodological and Technological Considerations for Placemaking Programs

In the West Philadelphia asset-mapping project, we began by reflecting on the various mechanisms that are available to identify, classify, and catalog assets in three deteriorated neighborhoods. Wanting to employ an asset-based framework, we worked closely with resident participants to gain an insider's experience of place, which led us to a methodology for capturing this information. We then integrated conventional ways of understanding neighborhoods (for example, income, employment, homeownership rates, and housing value) with the experiential information (for example, the information about what residents valued and why) to create an integrated approach to neighborhood improvement. Through such an approach, efforts to improve quality of life in urban neighborhoods can link inextricably to the ways that residents experience their neighborhoods and, in the process, residents can further their own ability to act as local agents of change. But the problem of how best to elicit and to codify experiential local knowledge is a key consideration for placemaking programs and was central to the case study described in this chapter.

In our project, we successfully used participatory GST within an asset-based framework to facilitate the production of experiential data. More generally, placemaking programs can use a multitude of geospatial technologies—from handheld GPS units to location-aware digital cameras and robust GIS. At a minimum, a successful GST-enhanced placemaking program should leverage the storage and visualization capacities that contemporary GIS provide, although handheld GPS units will prove nearly as indispensible as GIS to programs working in urban neighborhoods. In West Philadelphia, we experimented with different GPS units and arrived at the conclusion that lower-cost, consumer-oriented GPS units produce relatively accurate data while providing intuitive interfaces to resident participants. More expensive GPS units offer a superior set of features and produce more geographically precise data, but these are more difficult for residents to learn to use. From a technological standpoint, deciding which technology will best support a placemaking program is difficult; high-end, expensive equipment may be more precise, but it will not necessarily lead to the best results when resident participants are conducting the bulk of the data collection.

The other major consideration that must be made prior to implementing a GST-enhanced placemaking program is the structure of the spatial database that will support the program. In the asset-mapping project, we began with an overly simplistic database and were forced to expand the taxonomy of the database after residents became involved in data collection. To create a viable taxonomy, programs that use participatory GST should collaborate with residents in the early stages of the planning process. Most likely, residents will contribute to the process by increasing the level of detail researchers use to classify neighborhood information, and the nature of the detail will not be something the researchers can anticipate. From our experience, we found that the greater the level of detail in our database, the greater the level of detail our participants provided when collecting data—which significantly improved the analysis and visualization that emerged from the project.

Concluding Remarks

Participatory digital tools have the potential to enhance the outcomes of placemaking activities in marked ways, bringing to light the reality of the characteristics that residents value in their neighborhoods. Parks, playgrounds, religious institutions, and locally owned small businesses are, among other things, the resources that make such neighborhoods unique. These place-bound characteristics provide placemaking professionals with a foundation for building livable neighborhoods that are

responsive to local needs. In regards to typical placemaking activities, I suggest that an integration of GST and participatory methods into an asset-based theoretical framework will lead to more effective programs and equitable outcomes for neighborhood residents. Additionally, placemaking outcomes that are supported by participatory GST can emerge more quickly from the data collection process by virtue of the accessibility of well-structured spatial databases. As demonstrated by this case study, such databases can be easily incorporated into the analysis and visualization of urban neighborhoods.

An abundant store of experiential spatial knowledge resides with residents about their neighborhoods that, from afar, appear as distressed urban places. In West Philadelphia, we used an asset-based framework and participatory GST to access this knowledge and then rewrite the sociospatial narrative of three neighborhoods. The outcomes of this project were indicative of a general sense within these neighborhoods that livability could be improved by focusing outside efforts on enhancing selected assets (for example, rehabilitation of community centers in churches, public spaces around existing local markets, equipment at specific parks and playgrounds). And although participatory techniques do not represent a new addition to the placemaker's toolkit, the addition of GST has become increasingly effective in facilitating placemaking programs.

At the outset of this chapter, I sought to detail participatory and digitally enhanced ways to provide a counterpoint to the narratives that result from sanctioned forms of spatial data. Easily accessible data largely drive the social construction of urban places as distressed while generating narratives of poverty, crime, unemployment, and general socioeconomic distress. Although these characteristics are not inaccurate, the West Philadelphia case study demonstrates that they are not necessarily reflective of the ways residents perceive and experience their neighborhoods. Local insight will invariably diverge from data produced by nonlocal agencies, and for programs designed to improve neighborhoods, the most effective activities are likely to be those that are informed by local experience. Placemakers can use participatory GST to enable the elicitation of this information from local residents and, in doing so, to inform an alternative set of assumptions on which to build innovative improvement programs.

Acknowledgments

This project could not have been possible without the efforts of Dr. Lakshman Yapa, Dr. Natalie Jolly, and student participants in the 2002 Philadelphia Field Project.

Notes

1. Conventional data sources commonly include the Census Bureau, state- and municipal-level planning and development agencies, and federal statistical agencies.
2. Social problems broadly encompass such phenomena as poverty, unemployment, crime, and deteriorating infrastructure. And the notion of local nuance encompasses experiential spatial knowledge, culture, neighborhood history, and nontraditional uses of space. Examples of the policies and programs I refer to are abundant, from the New Urbanist call for top-down residential and commercial revitalization to federal antipoverty policies such as the Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC) program, which is designed to encourage economic growth in targeted regions.
3. I use the term "placemaking programs" throughout this chapter to refer to grassroots activities such as community and economic development, neighborhood revitalization, neighborhood rehabilitation, and other private and municipally sponsored place-based improvement programs.
4. Geospatial technologies (GST) are a diverse set of hardware and software that are used to collect, store, analyze, and visualize geographic (spatial) information.
5. Equitable outcomes are possible because residents are involved in the placemaking process and are thereby able to affect the direction its outcomes take.
6. Early geospatial technologies (i.e., prior to the late 1990s) were designed and developed primarily for the scientific community. Although early GST were effective, technological limitations precluded the development of easy-to-use tools. With the advancement of computer technology in the late 1990s, GST design and development became more consumer oriented—leading to devices such as in-car navigation systems.
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8. Admittedly, many imperfect terms are commonly used to characterize urban places that struggle with high rates of poverty, unemployment, and crime. In this chapter, I use the term "distressed" as a way to distinguish neighborhoods that are marked by severe social and economic distress.
9. Kheir Al-Kodmany, "Using Visualization Techniques for Enhancing Public Participation in Planning and Design: Process, Implementation, and Evaluation," *Landscape and Urban Planning* 45 (1999): 37–45.
10. Dennis, "Prospects for Qualitative GIS."
11. Al-Kodmany, "Using Visualization Techniques."
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13. Talen, "Bottom-up GIS," 280.
14. Ibid., 280.
15. Dennis, "Prospects for Qualitative GIS"; Rina Ghose, "Politics of Scale and Networks of Association in Public Participation GIS," *Environment and Planning A* 39 no. 8 (2007): 1961–1980; Elwood and Leitner, "GIS and Spatial Knowledge Production."
16. Sarah Elwood, "Beyond Cooptation or Resistance: Urban Spatial Politics, Community Organizations, and GIS-based Spatial Narratives," *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 96 (2006): 323–341.
17. Sarah Elwood, "Negotiating Knowledge Production: The Everyday Inclusions, Exclusions, and Contradictions of Participatory GIS Research," *The Professional Geographer* 58 (2006): 202.
18. Jenny Cameron and Katherine Gibson, "Participatory Action Research in a Poststructuralist Vein," *Geoforum* 36 (2005): 315–331.
19. Timothy Hall, *Urban Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 116.
20. Sarah Elwood, "Negotiating Knowledge Production: The Everyday Inclusions, Exclusions, and Contradictions of Participatory GIS Research," *Professional Geographer* 58 (2006): 197–208.
21. John Kretzmann and John McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out* (Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications, 1993).
22. Gwenelle O'Neal and Rondald O'Neal, "Community Development in the USA: An Empowerment Zone Example," *Community Development Journal* 38 (2003): 120–129.
23. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Welcome to the Community Renewal Initiative," http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/rc/index.cfm (accessed 5 June 2010).
24. Mei-Po Kwan, "Affecting Geospatial Technologies: Toward a Feminist Politics of Emotion," *Professional Geographer* 59 no. 1 (2007): 22–34; Dennis, "Prospects for Qualitative GIS"; Rachel Pain, Robert MacFarlane, Keith Turner, and Sally Gill, "When, Where, If, and But?: Qualifying GIS and the Effect of Streetlighting on Crime and Fear," *Environment and Planning A* 38 no. 11 (2006): 2055–2074.
25. A taxonomy is a system of classification that can be used, for instance, to organize information in a database.
26. The asset taxonomy had to (a) enable project participants (residents and students) to quickly place assets into categories as they conducted walking surveys of the neighborhoods and (b) provide a structure to the project database that would enable analysis and visualization of the data.
27. Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities*.

28. We used 12 different primary asset categories for classification: businesses, financial institutions, educational institutions, libraries, medical facilities, religious institutions, public services, community organizations, gardens, parks, murals, and vacant space. As we conducted the fieldwork, each entry was classified first with one of the primary asset categories. All assets were then classified according to 37 different secondary categories (which are subsets of the primary categories). For instance, churches were classified as either stand-alone structures or storefront locations, businesses were classified by business type, and schools were classified by level (preschool, K-12, college-university) and public-private status. Finally, we recorded a brief description and title (if applicable) for each asset data point and any additional relevant attribute tags. We used attribute tags to reference the presence of features such as pay telephones and ATMs in markets or playground equipment and picnic facilities at parks.
29. For instance, when classifying churches, we became interested not just in the physical structure but also in the potential community meeting space available in a freestanding church versus space available in a storefront church.
30. Greg Hampton, "Narrative Policy Analysis and the Integration of Public Involvement in Decision Making," *Policy Sciences* 42 no. 3 (2009): 227–242; Sirianni, "Neighborhood Planning"; Maria Manta Conroy and Jennifer Evans-Cowley, "E-participation in Planning: An Analysis of Cities Adopting On-line Participation Tools," *Environment and Planning C:Government and Policy* 24 no. 3 (2006): 371–384.
31. Data accessibility, in this regard, implies that the spatial database we produced was not proprietary and was usable by standard suites of spreadsheet software, statistical software, and GIS software. Ultimately, however, only our partner organization and the research team used the data that resulted from this project.

Chapter Twelve

Documenting (In)Justice: Community-based Participatory Research and Video

Caitlin Cahill and Matt Bradley

> *Racism is a big part of daily life in school. We decided to make our documentary on stereotyping and racism in school because we all experienced it in school. That is a huge part of our life and it's a huge problem in schools and it's really hard to deal with sometimes. As I look back on when we were in the documentary process, the things that stood out more to me was knowing that teenagers that are my age are going through the same things in school as me. They all want what we want: to let people see that racism has not stopped—it is still here—and also let the adults know how it's affecting us, changes how we perform in school, and even makes us not want to go any more. Another thing that stands out was hearing from the people we interviewed their personal stories, because I could relate to it and say "hey, I am not the only one going through this!!"*
>
> —Kanesha Winston, *Red Flags* high school researcher

White students in Utah are three times more likely to attend college than students of color—the widest gap in the nation.[1] Why is this? Concerned that many of their friends and classmates were leaving high school early, either dropping out or being pushed out, Kanesha Winston and other members of our research team decided to investigate the underbelly of Utah's so-called "achievement gap"[2] through a video documentary entitled *Red Flags: Stereotypes and Racism in the Schools*. The project developed in response to Utah's skyrocketing racial and ethnic minority population, so dramatic that the state is number one in the country in terms of population growth for students of color.[3] In particular, it evolved from a larger investigation of young people's experiences growing up in Salt Lake City and their critical reflection upon these experiences. Our investigation revealed young people of color's perceptions of uneven geographies of

educational access, with stereotyping and racism emerging as one of their most critical issues. These findings led our research team to use video as a means of communicating the effects of stereotyping and racism to a broad audience.

In this chapter, we describe *Red Flags*, a participatory video documentary that engaged young people as agents and instigators of community change. Wedding theory and practice, we discuss community-based participatory action research as a critical methodological intervention to investigate and represent issues of concern for young people in Salt Lake City, Utah. Reflecting upon our process, we discuss the transformative potential of participatory documentary as a vehicle for social change. Questions we raise include: What new possibilities do emerging video technologies and participatory research approaches provide for reframing and re-representing community concerns? How might documentary filmmaking serve as a praxis of inclusion? As we were concerned with how our research might lead to action, we also consider how documentary research can help us frame a critique of an educational system that is not meeting the needs of students of color. Specifically, we hoped the video might help us present our work so that multiple audiences and stakeholders (young people, school staff, parents) could receive and act upon it. Our discussion addresses the critical challenges and epiphanies of our participatory documentary research process to contribute to place-based social change. Our work is motivated by what Gruenewald[4] identified as a "critical pedagogy of place" as it strives to "address the specificities of the experiences, problems, languages, and histories that communities rely upon to construct a narrative of collective identity and possible transformation."[5]

We (the authors) write this chapter using an inclusive "we" to refer to the members of our research team, which included ourselves (university faculty), six high school students, four university students, and a city administrator. We do this to emphasize the shared standpoint that developed as the team worked together toward social change. This inclusiveness is not to erase the messiness of process, which was rich with dissent and negotiation, but instead to highlight the group's political solidarity. By writing inclusively, we want to emphasize our understanding that all knowledge is collectively produced, whether acknowledged or not.[6]

Growing Up in Salt Lake City: An International Youth Action Research Initiative

As faculty members at the University of Utah, we coordinated the *Red Flags* video documentary as part of *Growing Up in Salt Lake City*, a university-community partnership that involved high school students,

university students, the Salt Lake City mayor's YouthCity program, and the University Neighborhood Partners. *Growing Up in Salt Lake City* is part of an international collaboration with UNESCO's Growing Up in Cities project, a widely recognized international initiative that actively engages young people in community evaluation, action, and change in low-income communities in over 50 sites worldwide.[7]

Although the UNESCO project has taken different shapes in various contexts, its applications adhere to core principles that promote young people's participation, action, and inclusion in community-based partnerships. *Growing Up in Salt Lake City* consciously situates young people's perceptions of their own lives and communities at the center of an action research agenda. Shaping our inquiry into youth as action researchers were the following questions: What do we learn when we rethink our community from the perspectives of young people? What issues are of particular concern? And how are these issues spatialized?

The high school researchers were recruited from two schools and several community centers on Salt Lake City's West Side; ages 14–18, they reflected the ethnic, religious, and racial diversity of our community: African American, Latino, Caucasian, African, Catholic, Muslim, and Mormon. The high school researchers, who received a stipend for their participation, met after school twice weekly throughout the school year; they continued the next summer, convening in the basement of a West Side community organization.

Salt Lake City is an especially interesting place to research young people's experiences of the urban environment because it is on the cusp of major development and dramatic demographic changes. Although Utah is still "a big white state" (as we identify it in our *Red Flags* video documentary), with almost 90 percent of the state's population Caucasian, the dominant white majority is being challenged. Economist Perlich argued that Utah is "in the midst of an unprecedented economic, demographic, and cultural transformation . . . and will continue to become much more diverse."[8] From 2000 till 2004, a full 41 percent of Utah's population growth consisted of people of color, predominantly of Latino background. During the same time period, 75 percent of the enrollment increase in Utah's public school system consisted of students of color, resulting in a school-aged population that is one-third racial and ethnic minorities.[9] Many of Utah's schools already have a majority population of minority students—a trend that will most certainly accelerate in the next decade—and that is already true on Salt Lake City's West Side. The *Growing Up* project focused on this area, the most diverse ZIP code in the state, in which almost 40 percent of the residents are ethnic minorities, the majority of whom are Latino/a. Because this increase in racial and ethnic diversity represents a generational shift,

we wanted to know what these statistics mean for young people of color who are on the front lines of demographic change.

In this sense, the West Side represents the future of Utah (in terms of demographic projections),[10] its uneven geography of segregation and marginalization raising "red flags" about the challenges ahead. The West Side is literally on the wrong side of the tracks, divided by highways and trains from the rest of the city. Home to working-class and immigrant communities, the neighborhood has endured inequitable planning exclusions, including redlining, disinvestment, and environmental injustices. These inequities are compounded, and justified, by historic and contemporary constructions of the West Side as a dangerous area with an at-risk population, today identified with Spanish speakers who are perceived as not willing to learn English and maligned as criminal or illegal immigrants.[11]

Very little research focuses upon young people growing up either in Salt Lake City or on the West Side in particular, and even less focuses upon young people's own concerns.[12] One of our goals with the *Growing Up* project was to address this lack of information by involving young people as agents of change in researching their own community. We hoped not only to learn more about young people's concerns about their cultural and spatial context but also to improve urban conditions for young people by influencing municipal policy. Our participatory action research (PAR) process started with the concerns and questions of the high school youth researchers. As experts in your everyday life experience, what matters to you? What are your concerns? Engaging in a place-based critical pedagogical process, we focused our attention upon the cultural and spatial context that informs what Freire identified as the "situationality" of our sociospatial conditions.[13] Reflecting upon the contradictions of our everyday lives, participatory action research created new ways of seeing—an opening of our eyes—coupled with a newfound critical perspective on the taken-for-granted and seemingly mundane aspects of our community.

In a community-based PAR process, young people are repositioned as co-researchers as they identify priority issues affecting their lives and develop proposals for change. Subjects of concern we identified early in our research included police-community relations, access to education for teen moms, the quality of schools, gang violence, and interfaith and racial relations. Collectively, our *Growing Up* research team decided that education was the most pressing urban problem our community faced as it was connected to many other issues affecting young people and because it also reflected the place-based confluence of structural poverty and barriers to opportunities for our community as a whole. A case in point: less then 4 percent of West Side residents attend the University of Utah, the state's flagship institution of higher education, literally an ivory tower on

the hill, visible from across the city but inaccessible to young people living in that community. Our research speaks to the production of differential geographies of access to educational opportunities for West Side students. Critical education scholars Buendía and Ares have traced historically how the very term "west side" has become a shorthand that indexes and produces racialized, deficit-based understandings of students that implicitly and explicitly inform educational expectations and access, as our research revealed.[14]

In the next section, we describe in detail how using video documentary as part of the *Growing Up* project helped us achieve our goal of creating a research process with young people that would instigate action. By integrating video, we gained a new lens, both literally and figuratively, and the space and distance to engage in an analysis of our everyday lives.

Engaging Video in the *Growing Up in Salt Lake City* Action Research Project

PAR theories and practice are particularly relevant to the study of young people's urban experiences. Building upon long-standing traditions of asset-based development and grassroots activism,[15] PAR reflects an ethical commitment to building young people's capacity to make change and do research that will be useful to the community. The epistemological framework of PAR projects engages a bottom-up analysis, involving those most affected by the research and challenging social inequalities as they are understood by those who experience those inequalities. Thus, PAR offers a promising framework for researchers committed to social change, as indigenous scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith suggested:

> Research, like schooling, once the tool for colonization and oppression is very gradually coming to be seen as a potential means to reclaim languages, histories, and knowledge, to find solutions to the negative impacts of colonialism, and to give voice to an alternative way of knowing and of being.[16]

PAR also raises new questions about the purposes and audiences of research. In the *Growing Up* project, we collectively grappled with the questions of why we were doing this research and what we wanted our research to accomplish. To whom did we want to speak? Was the goal of our research to educate? To provoke? How could we achieve our goals? Addressing these questions informed our decision to create the *Red Flags* video documentary as a way to reach a public audience beyond those who might read a journal article,[17] to share our findings with other young people in particular, and to create a platform for young people's voices to be heard.

The project was informed by the work being done in the field of youth media, which like PAR places emphasis upon building young people's capacity to participate in social change movements.[18] Meghan McDermott of the critical media literacy organization Global Action Project (GAP) explained,

> We want to make young adults aware of their own agency in the world. When youth discover the power of their voices through making media, they find themselves, as Maxine Greene says, "able to 'name' and imagine how they might change their worlds." Critical literacy emerges as young people inquire into their lives and environment, produce a story that explores that life, reflect on the social and historical context of their experiences to understand root causes of inequities, and then become agents of positive change.[19]

Steve Goodman of New York City's Educational Video Center specifically identified video documentary production as critical pedagogy. He argued that, by regularly taking a video camera into the community, youth develop a critical lens through which to "defamiliarize the familiar taken-for-granted conditions of life. . . . This approach to critical literacy," he contended, "links media analysis to production; learning about the world is directly linked to the possibility of changing it [as youth] document and publicly voice their ideas and concerns regarding the most important issues in their lives."[20] Given that the heart of our *Growing Up* project consisted of investigating the issues of greatest concern for West Side youth, the video format—applied within a critical pedagogy of place—allowed us to examine their situationality and place-based experiences. Engaging in video research provided a much-needed critical distance from our everyday experiences, in order that our team might reflect, question, and reframe our understandings of everyday racism in our community and schools.

Video production tools have become increasingly accessible in the last ten years with the advent of digital cameras, desktop editing software, and the affordability of the Internet and DVD distribution processes. Many schools now offer video production courses, which benefited our project. One of our team members, Joel Organista, had acquired both editing and music production skills at his high school, which he put to use in our project. Combined with traditional qualitative research methods such as interviewing or participant observation, video can be a powerful tool through which to present personal narratives, as we sought to do in the *Red Flags* video documentary, which speaks to the ways power works through and in particular places.

The decision to create a video documentary had important ramifications for our research process and significantly extended our timeframe as it involved learning technical skills (for example, how to use the camera, lighting, and editing equipment).[21] Above all, our research design became

enmeshed with the processes of video production, which changed the nature of our research. First, because data collection occurred on camera, we had to consider carefully how we asked questions and also to establish trusting relationships with the students we interviewed. This involved talking with people before we interviewed them on camera because most of the youth were not comfortable talking about race, and doing so on camera was even more difficult. Describing personal experiences of racism was sometimes quite emotional; feelings were expressed both on and off camera. This meant that, as a team, we often needed to process our sense of collective outrage after hearing about these experiences. We also had to discuss the intended audiences and purposes of the video with the interviewees and give them the option to edit their stories so as not to render themselves vulnerable.[22] Our data analysis process was integrated throughout our research process. Accordingly, after each interview, we talked through and started to analyze our findings as part of a collective reflective process that was critical to our development of grounded theory.[23] Later we engaged in a more formal analysis in which we reviewed all the interviews and then coded them for themes and patterns, which in turn fed into how we structured our final editing of the footage.

More than an epistemological shift, doing participatory video research brings commitments to action that push researchers in new and sometimes unfamiliar ways. For us, it involved garnering different resources and developing new proficiencies in collaboration, facilitation, and technical methods. In addition, because participatory research means doing research *with* rather than *on* participants, building a community of researchers was critical to our success. We took seriously the processes of collaboration and community building, which involved developing research skills among all the participants that, in turn, created space for the high school researchers to take ownership over the process.[24]

Accordingly, we developed an integrative youth-centered approach to training our team that built upon the high school researchers' existing knowledge as we began investigating what they shared: their neighborhood. Through the process we "learned through doing," collectively developing research knowledge and skills as we investigated the community hands-on through mapping, interviews, surveys, photography, and video. As part of this collective endeavor, Matt Bradley (a documentary filmmaker and researcher) trained the other members of the team in video production skills, including camera work, lighting, sound, and editing. Having the same skills leveled the playing field so that, although some of us were more comfortable than others on different tasks, we could all participate equally and make collective decisions about the project. This preparatory training, in turn, informed the development of our research questions related to

stereotyping and racism. In sum, the entire team was involved in each step of the research process, from problem identification through data collection (interviewing on camera), data analysis (thematic development and editing), and the presentation of findings (the *Red Flags* video documentary). Our process was complicated, cyclical, and layered, with each turn pushing us to ask new questions and rethink our interpretations.[25]

Our process embodied what Chavez and Soep identified as a "pedagogy of collegiality . . . a context in which young people and adults mutually depend on one another's skills, perspectives, and collaborative efforts to generate original, multitextual, professional quality work for outside audiences."[26] It involved all the members of the team working closely together to frame questions, collaborate on editorial decisions, and strategize how to represent our concerns most effectively to diverse audiences. Exchange and collective negotiation characterized our team process. On the one hand, the high school researchers led our inquiry, offering their insiders' understanding of young people's everyday lives. On the other hand, as adult facilitators, we (the authors) not only provided resources and training in research and video production skills but also critical perspectives on the documentary itself. As Chavez and Soep recommended, we all had a stake in the integrity of our research, in the production of knowledge, in the personal and political implications of representing our findings, and in the potential outcomes.[27]

"Performing" Racism in the Schools

We the People . . .

> *We the people of the Westside.*
>
> *We from Your so called "shadow" lands, . . . My home, . . . My pride Land. . . . Come one, . . . Come all. Welcome Home, homes! . . .*
>
> *We have abandoned the shadow to proudly speak our minds to challenge the "commonsense" that claims we are apathetic and careless. . . .*
>
> *We are rejecting the crumbs we have been given and demand that we be given a piece of the pie—a piece with which we will nourish our communities and counteract the hunger we have been plagued with.*
>
> —Spoken word piece by West Side youth[28]

With the *Red Flags* video documentary, we hoped to jumpstart a conversation about the proverbial pink elephant in the middle of our community that no one was really addressing despite high dropout rates by students of color and pervasive perceptions of racial tensions in our schools.[29] Although we realized that provoking such a conversation would not be easy and that there would undoubtedly be resistance to acknowledging the realities

of institutional racism, we hoped that by documenting the experiences of students of color, we would illuminate new understandings of Utah's achievement gap and the structural failures of its public school system to adequately serve *all* students. Given that the majority of ethnic minority students live on the West Side, we hoped our research would demonstrate how the stigma and segregation of this area gets reproduced in the white racialized place of the high school classroom, creating profound educational disparities between students of color and white students.

Given the increase in the number of students of color, our school system would need to change dramatically to eliminate such disparities. As Alemán and Rorrer suggested

> If the state is to benefit from a well-educated workforce and fully active citizenry, political and educational leadership will have to overcome its deficit notions of those that are different and, instead, commit to changing current educational practices and policies.[30]

Our research findings speak loudly to this need from the perspective of students of color who feel silenced by a school system that avoids addressing race at all.

To answer our questions about the effects of racism on students, we spoke to over 20 students about their experiences of discrimination. Finding people who were willing to share their personal stories on camera was challenging. Another challenge was figuring out how to establish a trusting and safe environment for our research participants to feel comfortable enough to talk about racism. While our research addressed the realities that students of color confront every day, it asked participants to dig deeper into sensitive areas. Witnessing student after student share their stories of discrimination and their struggles just to get through high school in one piece was difficult, and often demoralizing, for our team.

The process of doing this research was personally transformative; it changed the way we understood our own experiences and helped us find new frames for,[31] and ways of making sense of, our everyday experiences of discrimination. Doing the research forced us to come to terms with how stereotypes and racism had affected each of us, individually and collectively, in our own everyday lives. For example, we learned about institutional racism through an interview with a university student who described her feelings of tokenism in high school when asked to perform a dance ceremony of her native country (India). In other examples, we heard from a black student who described how a teacher asked her to share her "black experience" to a white classroom and from white and Latino/a students who told us about being tracked in school. As Joel explained, "Now that I know the difference, I can see it in my daily life and understand,

then explain to others." Or in Kanesha's words: "Hey, I am not the only one going through this!!" It moved us from personal experience to social theorizing—that is, from an initial emotional response to a given situation to understanding its cultural, spatial, and sociopolitical context.

Institutional racism was one of the primary themes that emerged from our research findings and one about which our team hoped to educate other teenagers of color through the video documentary. Our challenge was how to present such a sensitive topic. Then came a breakthrough in our research. After filming a focus group with young women of color describing their experiences of institutional racism, Kanesha decided she also wanted to be interviewed, although it would really be difficult. Kanesha made this courageous decision not only because she wanted to share her experiences of discrimination but also because she wanted to counter the dominant narrative that stereotypes young people of color as dropouts.[32] Taking a personal risk with the hopes of emboldening others to speak out, Kanesha told her story, which helped her come to terms with her pain, or at least express it in a supportive space. She felt empowered to reinterpret her private experience of being stereotyped by a teacher as not smart enough to succeed and to speak back in a public forum and name the teacher's comments as institutional racism.

Kanesha's brave decision inspired the whole research team and became a turning point in our process, clarifying how close to home our research hit for all of us on an everyday basis. How, we wondered, could we reach a larger audience with these personal narratives of racism? We had chosen to use video to present our research because we wanted to reach audiences not typically engaged by traditional research. Would listening to these stories inspire or threaten our audience? In particular, we wondered how other students of color would react, although we also hoped to educate teachers and administrators. To this end, we began editing the video documentary, paying careful attention to the interrelated questions of subject (stereotyping and racism), audience (students of color), purpose (to raise awareness of racism and challenge stereotypes), and voice or point of view (our own!). See figure 12.1 for a diagram of the editing process.

Ultimately, team members decided that our primary audience—other young people of color—would be more powerfully engaged if we were to *show* rather than just *tell* what we found out through our research. Using video, we would perform our own experiences of racism, thus bringing our research to life. Each of the high school researchers chose a particular personal story to dramatize, which we used as a narrative structural device to frame our research findings. In our final edit, these dramatic reenactments were spliced with clips from the many students we had interviewed. For

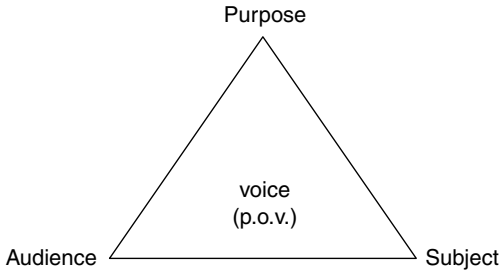

Figure 12.1 This diagram illustrates how we position ourselves during the editing process, specifically positioning our voice, or point of view, in relation to our subject, purpose, and audience. © 2010 Matt Bradley.

example, Kanesha acted out her experience of having the principal accuse her of bringing a knife to school, being aggressively interrogated, and being asked to empty her pockets. Joel dramatized his experience of having administrators make him take the ESL test every year just because his family speaks Spanish, even though he speaks fluent English and is in an Advanced Placement English class. Naima staged her experience of having students laugh at her in the school hallway because she wears a hijab. These reenactments of private painful stories of discrimination, which the high school researchers had hardly shared with anyone else before, framed our research with other students of color. We hoped that in witnessing these intimate humiliations, our audiences would empathize and be pushed out of their comfort zones. One of our goals in including the performances of our experiences of racism was to inspire others to be brave enough to reflect upon their own experiences of racism and stereotyping, to start a conversation about these threatening subjects, and hopefully to find the courage to speak back in public.

Communicating with Diverse Audiences

Because we were attempting to communicate with both insiders and outsiders, the issue of presenting our documentary was critical. Creating the film was the first step for us to develop critical understandings of how race played out in educational settings, but the next step was to screen the film for others—to take our message beyond our research team and those we had interviewed. As we began presenting our video documentary locally at conferences, at schools, and in local screenings, we started to raise such questions as: How might *Red Flags* be viewed in a predominantly white classroom? What conversations might it engender? At one event, white

audience members asked our research team members to share more of their personal experiences of racism and identify solutions for institutional racism. Although this question did not create an uncomfortable situation for our research team, as of course we had many ideas about addressing racism, it made us realize that our documentary could potentially increase the vulnerability of other students of color, which was the opposite of what we had hoped to achieve. As such, we collectively decided to address this issue directly in our video documentary and added a closing section in which the high school researchers speak to the camera one at a time:

> Dear audience, thank you for taking the time to watch our film. We ask that after watching the film you not ask the students of color to interpret their experience. Instead, we ask that you all reflect upon your own responsibilities to address racism in your everyday lives. Thank you.

In this gesture we hoped to raise consciousness about the vulnerabilities of students of color and also shift the question of accountability to the viewers. Yet the issue of responsibility can be a huge challenge, especially in schools in which teachers and administrators who are not prepared for, or comfortable with, talking about race themselves actively avoid this subject. School policy makers who resisted taking our research seriously also demonstrated this reluctance. For example, we distributed copies of the DVD to many community members, including a Latino family who sat on the parent council for a West Side high school. The family wanted the council, school board, and school administrators to see the film and arranged a screening. After viewing it, the principal suggested that our research was unfounded and that "we" (the authors) had made the students see racism where none existed. Witnessing her outright denial was frustrating in the wake of watching one student after the next share their stories of racism.

Despite the resistance of the principal and other school administrators, the video format proved particularly powerful in opening up a dialogue about race and racism in the school because it allowed us to present our research findings in a direct, unmediated way. As a result of the screening, the Latino family had an opening to bring up many of its concerns with the rest of the parent council (who were all white, although the school was majority minority). Other parents and some teachers did understand and receive the message. In these instances, a good conversation followed in which teachers were able to share some of their frustrations with policies that maintained institutional forms of racial segregation and discrimination. Social change is slow and happens in small steps. We did not expect that, with a single screening of our video documentary, suddenly teachers

and administrators would understand the frustrations of youth of color. But with the ongoing work of our research team, which we envision others will build upon, we hope we can slowly begin to change an educational culture that often treats young people, and specifically young people of color, as problems rather than assets. Through the video documentary, we hope to challenge problematic assumptions that all youth have the equal opportunities our schools purport to offer.

Since completing *Red Flags*, the research team has presented it and distributed it upon request to teachers and youth organizers, finding a more receptive audience nationally. Significantly, we provided a copy of the film to Youth in Focus, an activist after-school youth program in Oakland, California, that uses photography to engage youth in documenting inequities in their lives. Project coordinator Aaron Nakai, who routinely shows the video documentary to youth he works with, described how he uses it and how youth respond to it:

> I thought the video was an important example for my young folks about speaking truth to power around painful experiences with racism, bigotry, and stereotyping in their schools. . . . I believe it shows youth that it's okay to tell these stories that are too often swept under the rug and not dealt with. I think the thorough storytelling (strong set-up, beginning, middle, and ending) of the piece was demonstrative for my students. . . . My general idea around using your video was that steel sharpens steel, and young folks are pushed further and hold themselves to higher standards when they see the strong work of other youth around the country and world.

Promoting Social Change and Justice through Participatory Video

How can research function as a site for "counter work . . . where what could be, is sought; where what has been, is critiqued; and where what is, is troubled"?[33] Engaging young people fully in a participatory research process offers a starting point for a more inclusive research agenda, one that recognizes young people as social actors and creates an opening for their concerns to influence new knowledge production. The *Red Flags* video documentary demonstrates the possibilities of research as a vehicle for social change, as its goal was not just to describe reality but to change it.[34] As critical geographers Staeheli and Mitchell suggested, research may involve "intervening so as to change intellectual and political debates, to contributing to those debates, to contesting them."[35] Critical in this regard is how best to present research findings so that they can be received by multiple audiences. Participatory documentary filmmaking offers a democratic approach to research that pushes scholarship in new directions,

blowing open production of knowledge by adopting an action-oriented pedagogy of collegiality where young people and adults can collaboratively generate[36] sustainable change in our communities.

Increasingly accessible, video is being used by young people to communicate and share their vision of sustainable change through Web-based and cell phone technologies. In this way, documentary filmmaking technologies have the potential to create new possibilities for very local place-based stories to have a broader appeal. They can trace what Cindi Katz identified as a "grounded but translocal politics," highlighting the contours of differently situated experiences in a topography of political engagement.[37]

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Notes

1. Utah System of Higher Education, *Data Book 2004–07*, http://www.utahsbr.edu/finance/databook.htm (accessed 1 April 2010).
2. We agree with the youth researchers who worked with Michelle Fine and María Elena Torre, who renamed the "achievement gap" as the race, class, and opportunity gap to place responsibility on the institutionalized contexts which set youth of color up to fail in schools that do not serve them. See Michelle Fine, Rosemarie A. Roberts, María Elena Torre, Janice Bloom, April Burns, Lori

Chajet, Monique Guishard, and Yasser Payne, *Echoes: Youth Documenting and Performing the Legacy of Brown versus Board of Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004).

3. Public Education Data Book, *Student Growth Brings Increased Socioeconomic Diversity*, http://www.le.utah.gov/lfa/reports/peddatasld (accessed 3 April 2010), 16–20.
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Chapter Thirteen

Socially Conscious Design in the Information Age: The Practice of an Architecture for Humanity

David S. Smolker and Caroline Lanza

Socially conscious design emerged in the 1960s as newly empowered citizens posited criticisms of elitist attitudes among design professionals and sought greater influence in shaping the designed environment. In response, activist design professionals emerged to heighten the field's social purpose, responding to client needs in ways their mainstream colleagues had not. For example, designers began involving residents in decision-making processes regarding low-income housing, providing technical assistance to community-based development corporations, and considering the types of employment opportunities their design solutions offered to low-skilled workers. Design became an opportunity not only to solve apparent problems but to identify overlooked ones. Over time, socially conscious designers have maintained a presence in the field, however marginal, waxing and waning in relation to the prevailing sociopolitical mood and changing focus in relation to shifting environmental concerns: energy (in the 1970s), urban revitalization (in the 1980s and 1990s), and disaster response (in the first decade of the twenty-first century).[1] In recent years, as the Web has taken shape, socially conscious design has taken a decidedly new turn.

In this chapter, we survey the state of socially conscious design in the information age. Specifically, we chronicle the development of Architecture for Humanity (AFH), a nonprofit organization based in San Francisco that uses Web-based participatory media to coalesce a global network of design and construction professionals who provide services to people and places historically left at the margins.[2] The work of AFH draws on the ethical commitments and technical abilities of this network, as well as amateur contributors who are at the service of imperiled and impoverished

communities, countering the common perception that well-designed environments are a privilege of wealth and power. We believe AFH's work illustrates how participatory digital media can further the potential of designers to serve "all people, wherever they are, and whatever their ability to pay"[3] and contend this organization's approach offers a model for other socially transformative enterprises.

Our analysis of AFH consists of two parts. First, we discuss AFH's use of Web-based tools to connect professional expertise with community need, and we explore the role of participatory media in the proliferation of AFH-affiliated chapters through the Open Architecture Network (OAN). Then we discuss AFH's ongoing collaborations to make design technologies accessible to a greater number of people. We assess the benefits of spurring socially conscious design through technologically sophisticated means and the limitations inherent within, particularly as pertains to this question: Whom should the design professions serve and what is the best means of providing this service? Although this question is not new, it takes on new importance given vast disparities in wealth and living conditions.[4]

We next move to discuss AFH's on-the-ground efforts to overcome these limitations and build capacities in imperiled communities. We suggest that although Web-based participatory media technologies may seem rather far-flung from local community development, AFH is proving effective in encouraging socially conscious design initiatives in cities throughout the world—local people leading projects in their own communities, abiding in the AFH mantra to "design like you give a damn."[5] In concluding, we look to the future, assessing AFH alongside other similar mission-driven enterprises and assessing the potential for socially conscious design to become a larger part of mainstream professional practice.

We anticipate several audiences for this chapter. First are design and construction professionals, a group loosely defined as the architects and landscape architects, urban planners and designers, contractors, and engineers integral to the creation of the designed environment. Second, because we contend that designing environments should always be a process of community building, we expect applicability for those who study or practice community development—activists, public officials, and citizens alike—especially those interested in working on a global scale. Finally, we expect interest among practitioners in disaster response and reconstruction, in which AFH has proven particularly effective. Ultimately we believe this chapter is relevant for all those who engage in efforts to develop communities and improve living conditions either in their own localities or internationally.

Because we present AFH as a case study in socially conscious design, our analysis begins with a definition of that term, expanding a tradition of

design practice called "social architecture" to encompass a form of global practice with humanitarian and social entrepreneurial aims.[6]

Socially Conscious Design's Global Turn

To a considerable degree, socially conscious design is the progeny of what a number of activist architects have called "social architecture," in which the practice of architecture emerges "as an instrument for progressive social change [and] a chance to create community."[7] Social architecture exists in the "moral imperative to increase human dignity and end human suffering" and opposes theories of architecture that promote design as high art (subjectivism), as science (objectivism), or as an enterprise governed solely by economics.[8] The high art paradigm, in which the pinnacle of professional success is seen in the erection of buildings that serve as status symbols of the global elite, is dominant in depictions of contemporary professional practice and reflects—despite instances of resistance—the rise to power of neoliberal and postmodern ideologies in political and cultural spheres. According to architecture educator Anthony Ward, these ideologies are quite literally determining the shape of the landscape and are indications of the ethical divestment of design professionals from the work they do. This divestment diminishes the relevance of these professions in the political and cultural processes that create the designed environment, trending toward a more technocratic, service-oriented form of practice.

Ward pointed to practitioners in social architecture, like affordable housing expert Michael Pyatok, as exceptions who defy this trend by producing socially responsible, civic-minded work.[9] And whereas Ward's view seems constrained to practitioners of an urban, Western design tradition, we would add others: Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy, who designed structures in poor desert communities that fit community needs and favored local building materials; Iranian-born architect Nader Khalili, who worked with traditional Bedouin desert communities; and Samuel Mockbee's *Rural Studio* at Auburn University, which involves architecture students in designing and building housing for poor communities in the Hale County environs of rural Mississippi. Each of these examples can be taken as an ethical and methodological forebear to the AFH approach, facilitating access to design in places, and for people, left at the margins of mainstream professional practice.

AFH's Embrace of Participatory Media: A Three-part Approach

At its core, AFH represents social entrepreneurship[10] for the design and construction industry, an organization that from humble origins has

mobilized professional time, energy, and expertise in service of communities in need, sometimes by funding projects but often simply through a clearly articulated mission and an appeal to the ethical commitments of practicing professionals. Throughout the growth of the organization, participatory media has spurred its rapid spread of influence and carrying capacity.

From its inception, AFH has aptly applied current trends in Web development, including the rise of social networking sites and the ethos of open source, to advance a socially conscious design agenda. AFH has used the Web to host design competitions, connect socially conscious professionals with likeminded peers, and develop partnerships with other nonprofit service providers, local and global humanitarian organizations, social entrepreneurs, and, most importantly, a global client base of communities in need. Its work is guided by an ethos of sharing—"the Architecture for Humanity way"—and as a result, design information and innovation are becoming more available for public consumption, running counter to a strong proprietary tradition in the design and construction industries that restricts the distribution and flow of information.[11]

Our assessment of AFH highlights its use of three Web developments, each of which invites more democratic access to, and broad-based participation in, design and construction processes. The first is its use of social networking media to launch a semiautonomous network of AFH chapters. The second is its development of the OAN into a digital design commons. The third is its advancement of digital design and analytic technologies, in particular a recent collaboration with Autodesk that spawned the online Freewheel platform, increasing access to the visual technologies essential to contemporary design professions.

Social Networking Sites and the Development of the AFH Chapter Network

AFH launched in 1999 when cofounders Cameron Sinclair, an architect, and partner Kate Stohr, a journalist, hosted a design competition calling for online entries related to viable transitional housing for refugees of ethnic conflict in Kosovo. Vanguards in employing the Web 2.0 strategies that have characterized much of AFH's development, Sinclair and Stohr broadcast online an open call for solutions, essentially "crowdsourcing" for responses long before the term was coined in 2006.[12] The competition yielded 220 entrants from 30 countries and a good deal of publicity, yet the bureaucratic and logistic hurdles of building overseas prevented Sinclair and Stohr from realizing their true intent: implementing the competition designs on the ground.[13] Nonetheless, they spotted opportunity.

The response to the Kosovo competition made evident an interest among design professionals all over the world in working for humanitarian causes and suggested to Sinclair and Stohr that the Web could provide an effective means to mobilize a global design community. This insight in hand, Sinclair and Stohr filed for nonprofit status and launched another design competition: OUTREACH: Design Ideas for Mobile Health Clinics to Combat HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa.[14] OUTREACH generated twice as many entries as the Kosovo competition but was fraught with similar impediments: a lack of funding and a lack of clarity regarding AFH's role in humanitarian development.[15] Though it did not yield the completion of an on-the-ground project, the competition marked significant gains in exposure and influence for the organization as inquiries began to arrive from organizations active in community and humanitarian aid. And unexpectedly, as the work of AFH progressed, a culture of voluntarism grew alongside it: people seeking opportunities to provide design leadership within their own communities, who identified with the AFH mantra to "design like you give a damn" and who were looking to take part in the growth of the organization. The question for AFH became how best do we tap this impulse?

The answer came in the development of AFH chapters—local groups of designers and community members that assembled to identify and address pressing local concerns, often spearheading participation in AFH design competitions. A number of chapters developed through the social networking site Meetup.com, a portal where people of common interest connect and where AFH directed its volunteers if they could not provide them with work or so they could find work in their own communities. Soon AFH was receiving phone calls and e-mails from representatives of newly formed AFH chapters. Many of these chapters developed Web sites and networked further through Facebook, adopting the AFH title as a means of clearly aligning their missions with that of the parent organization while pursuing projects within their own communities, often without formal support or funding from AFH.

A 2009 internal AFH report documented the power of its use of social networking sites: chapters had spread internationally to Adelaide, Australia; Amman, Jordan; Athens, Greece; Boise, Idaho; Istanbul, Turkey; San Juan, Puerto Rico; and Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Early 2010 marked the launch of the AFH Chapter Network, an initiative "to better support [the] vast network of chapter members . . . enabling them to post their events and ongoing projects as well as to communicate and share design ideas between one another."[16]

The emergence of the chapter network is worth mentioning for two reasons. First, it formalizes the local activities of chapters, making them clearly presentable to a global audience of peers, encouraging discussion and an exchange of design and community development strategies among

chapters, and providing a platform for chapters to present their work. Second, it attempts to standardize the work of the chapters—or perhaps more precisely, to provide consistency in how this work is presented. By enabling public access to chapter work, the network promotes understanding of project constituents, identifying characteristics of local communities and the purpose of projects within those communities. Finally, the chapter network feeds the development of the Open Architecture Network—the next Web development we profile—enlisting and archiving projects in a public design commons.

Creative Commons Licensing and the Spread of the OAN

The Open Architecture Network represents AFH's attempt to change the prevailing norms in the design and construction industries related to the use of proprietary information. It initially emerged as a way to overcome communication barriers between AFH and the "design fellows" who work on AFH-funded projects while living in distant communities.[17] The OAN was conceived as a Web portal through which AFH could track the work of design fellows via project updates, site images, meeting notes, and construction schedules, thus ensuring the viability of its investment and providing staff with the information to resolve any political or financial impediments to projects. From these beginnings, the OAN has expanded as a public repository for this same kind of information, documenting potential and actual projects throughout the world. Having received $100,000 from the TED Foundation[18] to reach a global audience, the OAN is no longer merely a communication tool between AFH and its fellows but rather a means to disseminate design and construction resources to a global public.

The OAN represents a collaboration between AFH and Creative Commons, a nonprofit organization that supports "some rights reserved" licensing, mechanisms common in the sharing of information on other "open source" participatory media sites such as Wikipedia.[19] Together, AFH and Creative Commons developed eight copyright licenses addressing legal issues distinct to the design and construction contexts in which AFH is active, including a number related to work in impoverished or imperiled communities. These licenses give design and construction professionals the opportunity to share their work while permitting the adaptation of solutions to local context, thus also eliminating a tendency within these professions to "reinvent wheels." In this way, the OAN invites "a genealogy of innovation . . . three or four generations of designs spun off from the original" while offering professionals intellectual property protection from uses not covered under Creative Commons licensing.[20]

The concept of a global design commons is gaining recognition as the raíson d'être of the open design movement, advancing "the development of physical products, machines, and systems through use of publicly shared design information."[21] This access to information—to the processes and products of the designed environment particular to international development contexts—is valuable currency, as it gives comparative insight into planning projects in impoverished or imperiled communities.

Freewheel: Technology to Seed the Development of the OAN

The drive to open up the design professions also includes efforts to make the visual tools of design and construction more available. Complementing the development of the OAN is Freewheel, a Web-based service that allows users to share two- and three-dimensional drawings without having to purchase or even download additional software. Freewheel resulted from the collaborative efforts of AFH and Autodesk, the standard-bearer for many of the digital design technologies essential to contemporary design practice. It acts as a means for sharing drawings but lacks the design capabilities of Google Sketchup—a platform available in limited functionality for free download. Nonetheless, it allows users to view drawing files in digital or print form, embed files in their Web sites, and develop Web pages that combine drawing files with other applications like Google Maps. As such, Freewheel marks a significant shift by Autodesk toward increasing access to essential design tools, a shift AFH helped facilitate. When considered alongside the OAN, Freewheel holds particular promise in the developing world, in which the high cost of technology can prove prohibitive and in which access to qualified design professionals is often lacking. Without having to purchase expensive technology or infringe on copyrights, users in poor countries can search the OAN for plans and drawings relevant to a particular need and then print files without charge.

* * *

Thus, AFH's participatory media approach consists of the (a) heightened multiplication of the AFH chapters through social media, (b) expanded access to design resources and discourse through the OAN and Creative Commons licensing, and (c) increased availability of digital design tools for public use through Freewheel. This approach has brought socially conscious design conspicuously into the information age, creating a global reach seemingly unimaginable prior to contemporary trends in Web development. However, despite the promise held within these tools, such an approach also has limitations.

Limitations to AFH's Web-based Approach

Here we balance our description of Web-based, participatory media's potential to promote socially conscious design by measuring some of the shortcomings of the AFH approach, particularly as it relates to the question of universal, global access to these tools. AFH has encountered two obstacles in bringing projects from design to fruition, namely language and bandwidth. Without question, the primacy of English as the language of the OAN poses a major obstacle to overcome. If the OAN is to be considered a resource of global relevance, it must have the capacity to support other languages or else risk marginalizing non-English-speaking communities from the global design commons.[22]

But perhaps the most pertinent question in evaluating the effect of the AFH model is the question of access. Whereas the expansion of the AFH chapters in the United States and Western Europe indicates a pool of design professionals fluent in social networking and capable of furthering socially conscious design initiatives under the AFH mantra with minimal assistance, the same cannot be said for the majority of the developing world. Asia has but a handful of chapters, South America and the Caribbean a lone representative, and the entire continent of Africa is without a single AFH chapter.[23] If the AFH model relies heavily on Web-based technologies to connect designers with clients, distribute and share design information, and provide the platforms and expertise to put this information to use, then how does AFH serve communities for which Web access is uncommon or limited by bandwidth constraints? Clearly, socially conscious design still faces barriers in becoming truly global in scope.

The reach of AFH's technological approach seems greatly limited to areas of relative wealth and advanced development. Thus, the populations that might benefit most from the potential of participatory media may be benefiting very little, if at all. If we are to accept local chapters as semiautonomous drivers of a global movement for socially conscious design, their absence in these regions suggests that local capacities—and ultimately the reach of the AFH model—is limited by access to the Web. Although the presence of an AFH chapter is certainly not a full proof indicator of socially conscious design's reach into a region, it does suggest where design and construction expertise and resources are available and, alternatively, where services such as those offered by AFH might prove beneficial.

Overcoming Limitations by Building Capacities in Imperiled Communities

A redeeming feature of AFH technological limitations is the organization's role as a facilitator of local capacity building. We look to two examples to

establish this point: first, a youth technology and media center currently under construction in Nairobi, Kenya; and second, the homes built in Biloxi, Mississippi, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Building for Bandwidth: Web Access to Empower Youth in Nairobi

If participatory media show promise in linking design professionals with communities in need of design services, it nonetheless misses communities where access is limited, where environmental problems are often most acute, and where little capital exists to support neighborhood improvements and community capacity building. A design challenge AFH offered in 2008 helped provide the capital to increase access and build local capacity. This challenge, dubbed the "Africa challenge," asked participants to create a technology hub to support the work of Slums Information Development and Research Centers (SIDAREC), a community-based organization that introduces youth to technology by providing access to such media as the radio and the Web. SIDAREC, which had lost its previous hub in an electrical fire, required a library with a computer lab, a computer training center, an Internet café, a day care center, a broadcasting studio for the local radio station, and administrative space—all to be built on a half-acre site for a construction budget of $250,000. The jury included SIDAREC executives, architects and critics, high school students, performing artists, and executives from a foundation affiliated with the project's backer, a microprocessor developer that aims to make Internet access and computing capacity affordable to half the world's population by 2015. Here, as in other competitions, AFH played the role of facilitator, administering and advertising the competition and providing a design fellow to work on the ground with the local community, while documenting the steps in the process on the OAN and making it available for public use under a Developing Nations Creative Commons license.

The Global Studio in Seattle won the Africa challenge. This group, whose mantra is "inspiring sustainable design for all,"[24] offers a sterling example of the collaborative and social entrepreneurial spirit that seems to be emerging among contemporary design and construction professionals. Currently under construction, a technology hub is already a site of global collaboration: Kenyan professionals provide engineering and construction work while an AFH design fellow interacts with the client, community, and project backers in administering the day-to-day progress of the hub. Melding modern architectural methods with local resources and technologies, the building features a photovoltaic array, storm water collection and filtration system, composting toilets, and "restrained masonry construction," which uses a stabilized cement earth block made of material excavated directly from the site.

The hub underscores the extent to which access to technology can contribute to capacity building and community empowerment in the developing world. It also suggests the extent to which AFH has grown as an organization capable of facilitating the construction of projects on the ground, a significant step since its founding and a validation of the group's work as a formidable player in socially conscious design. Furthermore, it highlights a development approach that coalesces global resources to effect change at the local scale, an approach that also characterizes AFH's efforts to help Gulf Coast residents rebuild in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

Humanitarian Design: Global Strategies for Local Rebuilding along the Gulf Coast

Hurricane Katrina wreaked extensive damage along the Gulf Coast, destroying housing and exposing critical failures in infrastructure. The low-income community of East Biloxi, Mississippi, was particularly hard hit, with an estimated 90 percent of its housing stock damaged or destroyed by high winds and flooding. Subsequent changes in Biloxi's building codes called for elevating houses above flood levels, a prohibitively expensive proposition for many residents. According to community leader Bill Stallworth, the problem they faced was twofold: first they needed to rebuild their homes in keeping with regulatory standards, and second they needed to rebuild their homes affordably.[25]

Drawing from experience in development projects in other impoverished regions of the world, AFH defined a redevelopment approach that could result in the sustained development of the East Biloxi community. And while AFH was instrumental in securing design services from local architects to assist families in rebuilding six unique homes, more importantly, they set about building capacity for the long-term redevelopment of the Gulf Coast by standardizing the processes, methods, and partnership strategies effective in redeveloping poor communities there. AFH worked with partner organizations like the Hope Community Coordination Center (a community organization started to support local recovery) and the Gulf Coast Community Design Center (a design laboratory at Mississippi State University) to coordinate efforts to map the extent of damage and identify existing neighborhood capacities and groups capable of aiding recovery. Volunteers cleared storm debris and made block-by-block assessments of damaged areas, collecting information that showed the occupancy of each parcel of land before the storm and the options that were available to the property owner.

To benefit property owners, AFH teamed with a community development corporation to enact a program of "recoverable grants," a financial

instrument to address shortfalls in funding that AFH had encountered in the developing world.[26] Financed by $3 million in seed money from Oprah's Angel Network, these grants provided no-interest, no-payment funding to cover the complete cost of rebuilding, resulting in liens that did not preempt families from applying for other forms of financial assistance. If a family elected to sell its rebuilt house, the loan would be covered by the cost of the house, but for each year a family elected to stay in the house, a portion of the loan would be forgiven, with the entire loan being waived in ten years. Loan monies would then be pooled in a fund to support other community recovery efforts.

With funding secured, the six families participating in the Model Home project attended an "architectural flea market" to select designers for the rebuilding of their homes. The designers were to develop a unique model that fit each site and family, that reflected the unique community context of East Biloxi, that was safe and affordable, and that used the newest construction technologies and materials. Designers were to consider the need for affordable housing, the large population of elderly residents, the relative lack of local skilled labor, and the opportunities the construction process would create for economic development. The resulting homes represent

Figure 13.1 The Parker Residence, designed by Brett Zamore Architects to house a family of six, cost $130,000 to build in 2007. AFH's Biloxi Model Home Program facilitated its funding, design, and construction. Photograph by Alan Richardson, provided by Architecture for Humanity under Creative Commons licensing.

singular design methodologies, most melding a modern penchant for new materials with the vernacular styling of the region.

AFH's on-the-ground work demonstrates that although Web-based technologies can assist in the global spread of socially conscious design, they are supplements—tools to be used—and do not replace more conventional approaches to recovery and development—a critical element of the AFH approach to design and construction services. Following its initial success, the Biloxi Model Home program was adapted to another 70 home rehabilitations while recoverable grant programs and community loan funds have reached new local contexts throughout the Gulf Coast. In this way, AFH's portfolio of work—one part Web innovation for a global audience, the other part projects facilitated at the local level—reinvigorates the old wisdom of thinking globally and acting locally.

Using the Web to Advance Socially Conscious Design Globally and Locally

Recent news coverage, both on the Web and in print, suggests that AFH is garnering attention as a significant player in design and construction, particularly in the increasingly visible area of humanitarian aid and disaster relief. When an earthquake occurred in Haiti early in 2010, AFH founders Sinclair and Stohr could be found giving opinions in the *New York Times* and other media outlets as the organization sprang into action, coordinating fund-raising initiatives through its Web site and pulling together relief efforts through the nearest AFH chapter to Haiti in the Dominican Republic as it prepared for the recovery work ahead.

Sinclair is also a frequent contributor to the *Huffington Post*, giving perspectives on design and construction challenges worldwide and championing the work and mission of AFH. When this media exposure is considered alongside the numerous accomplishments of the organization in the ten years since its founding—the Lewis Mumford Award for Peace in 2005, the WIRED Rave Award for Architecture and the TED prize in 2006, and the Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt National Design Award in 2008, along with 60 AFH chapters in 25 countries, 35,000 newsletter subscribers, 500 professional affiliates, a seemingly inexhaustible pool of volunteers, and finally a book now in its eighth edition—AFH would seem to have arrived as the world's most widely recognized and influential proponent and practitioner of socially conscious design. But does this exposure get closer to having design serve "all people, wherever they are, whatever their ability to pay?"[27] Might AFH allow us to refer, as design educator Tom Fisher does, to a professional design practice centered on the public interest?

For Fisher, the development of a public interest architecture is a seeming inevitability that might coincide with the growth of the public health professions or with the movement for affordable housing, with designers acting as public defenders of the notion that housing is a fundamental human right.[28] Or a public interest architecture might become more self-critical, as AFH has recently in turning its focus toward an oft-overlooked population affected by the design and construction industries: the laborers who turn design ideas into buildings. At a 2010 TED event, Sinclair called attention to this issue, exposing the irony of workers who build resort hotels and condominiums while receiving substandard wages, living in cramped quarters, and even having their passports confiscated, as professionals reap bountiful financial rewards and design accolades. That attention to this issue is coming from an organization within the industry suggests that the industry is beginning to hold itself accountable to a more robust set of professional ethics and practices.

San Francisco's Public Architecture serves as further testament to the advance of socially conscious design. Public Architecture, a group that "puts the resources of architecture in the service of the public interest," is similar to AFH in that it has the financial backing of a network of donors and fund-raisers. Through its pro bono design program, Public Architecture campaigns for design firms to commit one percent of their billable hours to bring design services to communities that lack financial wherewithal. This approach is akin to AFH's chapter networking and entails an extensive Web outreach campaign. Public Architecture similarly employs Creative Commons licensing to share its work in civic projects throughout the San Francisco Bay area. Also concerned about the exploitation of labor within the construction industry, Public Architecture has campaigned for a day laborer station that would provide workers with dignified places to gather while bringing to light issues related to informal economic activity. In this respect, Public Architecture promotes design and construction professionals as *problem identifiers* and not just *problem solvers*.[29]

Whereas financial stability is paramount for design firms, what AFH and Public Architecture demonstrate are viable social enterprises that have managed to succeed through a nonprofit model. Their breakthrough has been to forward an ethical imperative for design professionals to be active in improving living conditions for those who are most in need and to begin their efforts by taking stake of what they can accomplish in their own backyards. Participatory media have proven effective tools in pushing this agenda, providing a platform to frame development of the designed environment as an issue of social justice and, in so doing, to expand the influence of the design professions. With this platform, these groups have

discovered, comes the opportunity for new enterprise. Assuming this ethical development continues to grow in global influence and scope, aided by the increased access to participatory media, the goal of improving living conditions for all people and in all places becomes less remote, making the promise of an architecture for humanity achievable.

Concluding Thoughts on Socially Conscious Design

Although Ward and others have argued that the socially conscious design tradition has been largely marginalized—or "silenced"—from mainstream history and practice,[30] our exploration of AFH's work makes us quite optimistic about a socially conscious turn for the design professions. In this chapter, we have demonstrated how participatory media—Web-based tools that Ward's critique predates—provide opportunities for making design services more accessible in communities previously considered outside the market for these services. We have demonstrated how this emerging platform has benefited practices in socially conscious design through the greater visibility it lends to broad-based, democratic participation in design processes. We have further demonstrated how the AFH approach proffers a global turn for socially conscious design, advancing the reach of design services to the poor and imperiled worldwide, reaching places where spatial needs are enormous yet where only a nascent local capacity exists to fill them. Finally, we demonstrated that the AFH approach includes both the deployment of a global network of professional expertise *and* the cultivation of local capacities.

Although Ward and others have spoken of socially conscious design as a "silenced" tradition, we have shown that socially conscious design can speak loudly and from a prominent platform alongside other contemporary forms of practice. The work of AFH invites a shift in design practice, in which work directed to a concept of equal access and social justice is no longer considered subordinate in merit and recognition to more conventional forms of practice. By finding solutions to the financial and political impediments that commonly prevent designers from working with the people and in the places that stand to benefit most, but that can least afford professional services, we hope that we have revealed a novel form of design practice that can develop new markets and uncover client bases previously not served and, in so doing, become economically viable.

AFH's participatory media approach—when combined with its substantial work on the ground in impoverished places—has allowed this organization to emerge as a prominent voice in humanitarian aid. With this recognition, the organization has led the way in altering public perceptions of elitism in the design field while also influencing both

active and aspiring generations of designers to serve all people, regardless of their ability to pay. Accomplishment in the design professions has typically been measured in terms of technical proficiency, aesthetic excellence, exclusivity of client base, prominence of project sites, and economic achievement. However, we believe digital technologies can assist professionals in completing projects that might otherwise be considered a practical and financial impossibility. With the assistance of these technologies, we envision that success in the design professions will one day be measured by the level of contribution to communities in need or by the community capacities cultivated throughout the design and construction process.

Notes

1. Based on a conversation with Sharon E. Sutton, whose career in architecture was profoundly shaped by the social revolution of the 1960s and has since remained grounded in the principles of socially conscious design.
2. According to Wikipedia, "participatory media are social media whose value and power derives from the active participation of many people. . . . Participatory media include but are not limited to blogs, wikis, rss, tagging and social bookmarking, music-photo-video sharing, mashups, podcasts, participatory video projects, and video blogs." See "Participatory Media," Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Participatory_media&oldid=364262499 (accessed 4 June 2010).
3. Thomas Fisher, "Foreword," in *Expanding Architecture: Design as Activism*, eds. Bryan Bell and Katie Wakeford (New York: Metropolis Books, 2009), 10.
4. The Renaissance architect Leon Batista Alberti wrote that architects must in their careers choose between serving fortune or virtue, a distinction that even today frames in the most general of terms two courses of practice within the contemporary design professions, which we explore in this chapter.
5. This mantra is the title of a book by Architecture for Humanity, *Design Like You Give A Damn: Architectural Responses to Humanitarian Crisis* (New York: Metropolis Books, 2006).
6. See for example C. Richard Hatch, *The Scope of Social Architecture* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1984).
7. Anthony Ward, "The Suppression of the Social in Design: Architecture as War," in *Reconstructing Architecture: Critical Discourses and Social Practices*, eds. Thomas A. Dutton and Lian Hurst Mann (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 27.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Wikipedia defines social entrepreneur as "someone who recognizes a social problem and uses entrepreneurial principles to organize, create, and manage a venture to make social change. Whereas a business entrepreneur typically measures performance in profit and return, a social entrepreneur focuses

on creating social capital. Thus, the main aim of social entrepreneurship is to further social and environmental goals. However, whilst social entrepreneurs are most commonly associated with the voluntary and not-for-profit sectors, this need not necessarily be incompatible with making a profit." For more information, see "Social Entrepreneurship," Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Social_entrepreneurship&oldid=365189553 (accessed 2 June 2010).

11. Kate Stohr, from an interview by David Smolker in the AFH office, San Francisco, CA (24 November 2009).
12. Web-based crowdsourcing involves outsourcing a problem online to a large group of people (a crowd) and engaging them in submitting solutions. See "Crowdsourcing," Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crowdsourcing (accessed 8 June 2010).
13. Architecture for Humanity, *Design Like You Give A Damn*.
14. Architecture for Humanity, "OUTREACH: Mobile Health Clinics to Combat HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa," *The Open Architecture Network*, http://openarchitecturenetwork.org/competition/outreach (accessed 11 June 2010).
15. Architecture for Humanity, *Design Like You Give A Damn*.
16. Architecture for Humanity, *Architecture for Humanity Year in Review*, "2009 Building Change Across the Globe," http://www.architectureforhumanity.org/about/yearinreview/2009 (accessed 11 June 2010).
17. Stohr, interview.
18. The TED Foundation began as a conference that brought together people from the fields of technology, entertainment, and design, thus the name. However, the organization is known solely by its acronym.
19. "Open source" is both a philosophy and method of promoting public access to found and created materials. Open-source participants can modify, or appropriate, works entitled to copyright protection and redistribute them. See "Open Source," Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_source (accessed 8 June 2010).
20. Alice Rawsthorn, "Humanitarian Goals, Tech Savvy Solutions," *New York Times* (11 March 2007), http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/03/11/features/]design12.php (accessed 11 June 2010).
21. Stohr, interview; also see "Open Design," Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_design (accessed 5 June 2010).
22. Stohr, interview.
23. Architecture for Humanity, "Local Chapters," http://www.architectureforhumanity.org/chapters (accessed 11 June 2010).
24. The Global Studio, http://theglobalstudio.blogspot.com/ (accessed 5 June 2010).
25. Architecture for Humanity, *Rebuilding After Disaster: The Biloxi Model Home Program* (Biloxi, MS: Architecture for Humanity, 2009), 4.
26. Fisher, "Foreword," 12–13.
27. A description of Public Architecture's work echoes this point, describing an approach that consists in identifying and solving "practical problems of human interaction in the built environment and act[ing] as a catalyst through

education, advocacy and the design of public spaces and amenities." See Public Architecture, http://www.publicarchitecture.org (accessed 4 June 2010).

28. Fisher, "Foreword," 12–13.
29. Public Architecture, http://www.publicarchitecture.org.
30. Ward, "The Suppression of the Social."

Conclusions: Standing Shoulder-to-Shoulder in a Place-conscious Society

Sharon E. Sutton and Susan P. Kemp

The overarching claim in this book is that while the material world of low-income communities reflects and reinforces social class inequities, it also provides a context for envisioning the future—one that preserves place as a site of collective action and imagined possibilities even in the face of increasing globalization, economic stratification, and environmental degradation. We began with the premise that historical patterns of domination—of people and nature—have increased to an untenable point as a global elite buys up, and sucks profits out of, more and more of the world's ecosystems and as those ecosystems head toward their full carrying capacity. The march of global capitalism combined with global warming leave local disenfranchised communities of color without access to those land-based resources that poor people have traditionally relied upon for survival. Believing that "the subjugation of people . . . is further linked in the global economy to the subjugation of lands, resources, and ecosystems,"[1] we set out in the first part of the book to understand the hegemonic spatial policies and practices that disenfranchise poor and minority communities while reinforcing negative stereotypes of class and race. Through four case studies, we offered evidence of the intersecting social constructions of race, place, and power that stifle opportunity and maintain social inequality. In the second and third parts of the book, we turned these constructions on their head, presenting seven case studies that testify loudly to the extraordinary determination of poor and minority communities to resist and struggle for long-term transformation.

The Intersection of Race, Place, and Power

The case studies in this book revealed seven overarching themes related to race, place, and power. To summarize, we documented how (a) *the racialization of people* occurs when policy makers and the public demonize residents of subsidized housing as incapable of choosing lifestyles that would remedy their poverty and when teachers label high school students of color as lazy underachievers while also singling them out to represent their ethnic minority experiences to their white peers. We offered evidence of (b) *the racialization of place*, showing how the presence of wealthy white residents gives spaces that are actually public a private white identity, restricting their use and teaching youth, poor and privileged alike, about their proper place in the city; how planners rely upon quantitative data to render poor communities as "bad" places that lack any redeeming qualities; and alternatively, how these stigmatized places come to be associated with the young people who grow up there, limiting their opportunities for full participation in democratic society. Yet we also demonstrated the Catch-22 occurring in income-mixing schemes that single out a controlled percentage of low-income families to live in redeveloped communities with the expectation that these families will adopt the middle-class lifestyles of their neighbors—those same consumptive lifestyles that are straining the ecosystem.

We pointed to (c) *the imposing of hegemonic norms* by policy makers and the public, who consistently devalue the lived experiences of residents in poor communities, relying instead upon conventional data that render as deviant these communities—and their occupants. We offered evidence of (d) *the practices of division*, in particular the use of binary constructions that divide people into one-dimensional groups: white/black, rich/poor, middle class/working class. And we demonstrated that such divisive constructions only reinforce commonly held stereotypes of youth and adults of color.

We revealed multiple instances of (e) *the practices of exclusion*, showing the overwhelming tendency of architects and designers to invest themselves in creating status symbols for the global elite while overlooking the survival needs of the global poor; the community development activities that render the historic residents of gentrifying low-income neighborhoods as outsiders in their own communities; the income-mixing schemes that often result in even more segregation of poor families of color than existed in the housing projects they replaced; and the private market practices that leave poor neighborhoods without essential conveniences while preying on the residents of those neighborhoods with in-your-face marketing of foods and products that promote unhealthy lifestyles. In sum,

we demonstrated the extraordinary power that practitioners and policy makers have—and use—to distribute place-based resources along the lines of race and class.

Such power makes even more poignant the loss of power on the ground through (f) *the practices of disempowerment* that occur, for example, as poor residents are forcibly displaced from their homes and, in the process, from a legacy of collective agency. Or through (g) *the transmission of inequity* from one generation to the next as youth internalize normative values by participating in, or not participating in, white racialized enterprises, especially through physical experiences such as rowing or skiing that make these exclusionary enterprises seem normal. Excess power from above, disempowerment on the ground, and the subjugation of young imaginations—combined with the globalization of local economies—subject poor people to a fatal combination of intrusion, isolation, and permanent unemployment. "Deindustrialization is transforming African American city dwellers [and other populations of color] into an expendable surplus population of little or no use to the larger economy—a population ruthlessly condemned by white patriarchal culture because it does not generate wealth."[2]

Perhaps these issues of race, place, and power will soon dissipate. With the election of the first black U.S. president confirming a decade-old belief among most white Americans "that African Americans have achieved, or will soon achieve, racial equality in the United States,"[3] perhaps our claims have lost relevance. We think not. Evidence in this book and elsewhere suggests that the subjugation of people of color in and through place persists. For example, we described the city blocks that generate taxes of more than a million dollars annually while prisons fill up with the mostly minority residents who previously lived there; the "minority-majority" schools in which parent councils are overwhelmingly white and students of color are singled out for questioning; the prevailing stereotypes of poor communities of color as dangerous, crime-ridden areas with unskilled, incapable residents; and the financial and cultural inaccessibility of certain elitist sports to students of color, who conclude that they are "white, mostly." These and the numerous other examples of place-based racism in this book will not likely disappear anytime soon. "Given the historical depth and institutionalized longevity of racism in the United States, it is logical to assume that new mechanisms of racial subordination will be invented as others are eliminated."[4]

The racialization of place—the process by which racial groups, white and nonwhite, are stereotyped and associated with certain places—will take other forms as new systems of marginalization replace old ones.[5] This

reality leaves us with the task of identifying placemaking practices "to develop counterpublic spheres of resistance and social transformation"[6]—spaces where poor people of color can reclaim their way of life in the face of crushing domination—while inventing new visions of survival for a rapidly multiplying global population.

Placemaking to Create Counterpublic Spheres of Resistance and Transformation

Can grassroots and policy-level placemaking strategies help create public spaces of resistance, especially given the plethora of new digital technologies? The case studies in this book revealed six distinct ways that marginalized groups, in partnership with their advocates, do exactly that. To summarize, we offered evidence of (a) *the collective agency of marginalized populations* to engage in placemaking. Noting collective struggle and action as a prerequisite for social change, we described multiyear efforts by low-income youth and adults who lobbied politicians to secure the financial resources for adequate schools and recreational space, became resident managers to save their housing from demolition, and sued a housing authority to win the legal right to shape the redevelopment of their community. Recognizing the power of place-based marginalization, we painted a picture of poor people working in solidarity to assert their rights to inclusion.

Further, we established the importance of (b) *the conscientization of young people*, poor and privileged, who can on their own terms refuse to transmit inequity to the next generation. We described community-based programs that create a context for secondary school students to engage in service and activism and offered proof that university students can assist marginalized communities in backing down the forces of gentrification while also expanding their own social vision. Importantly, we noted that such enterprises counter the norms of person-centered education, helping young people envision alternative careers and learn the power of collectivity. To eclipse the disempowering, exclusionary practices that displace and isolate poor people of color, we described (c) *the inclusionary practices in marginalized communities*. We told of documenting residents' qualitative spatial knowledge, creating teams of mutually respectful youth and adults to engage in a praxis of change, offering programs that open access to privileged public spaces, and involving a full spectrum of stakeholders in community development processes.

We illustrated (d) *the localized practices in marginalized communities* that support the traditions of resident problem solving, affirming place as a milieu for imbuing everyday spaces with personal meaning and for developing the determination and skills for long-term activism. We also

acknowledged place as a context for capacity building—within communities and within universities—through mutually beneficial, long-term partnerships, suggesting that communities take leadership in initiating these relationships. We pointed to (e) *the visualization of marginalized communities* as an effective strategy for revealing spatial disparities, helping young people communicate their worldview, and provoking change. Foremost in enabling such visualization, we offered (f) *the technological practices in marginalized communities* that make possible digital mapping, social networking, and video and photography. These techniques narrate the lived experiences of youth and adults, provide access to global problem-solving resources, and offer Web-based alternatives to place-based organizing.

In sum, although we confirmed place as a source of persistent race- and class-based inequities, we refuted that reality with the resourceful placemaking strategies youth and adults have drawn upon to resist and transform those inequities. Looking to the future and speculating about a placemaking model that can staunch the relentless march of global capitalism on a shrinking planet, we offer some concluding thoughts.

Standing Shoulder-to-Shoulder in a Place-conscious Society

> *Transnational corporations and the media are trying to erase place-consciousness from our minds altogether because they sense that it can seed a movement against global capitalism. That is why deepening our consciousness of place and organizing around place have become so important to movement-building in this period. Place-consciousness . . . encourages us to come together around common, local experiences and organize around our hopes for the future.*[7]

In 1996 one of us (Sutton) proposed a *tapestry of resistance* whose warp would be made of nonhierarchical relationships, participatory pedagogies that engage place, and an inner strength and will to conceive new ways of inhabiting the earth.[8] Much has changed in the intervening years, and now a spectrum of voices—including advocates of environmental justice, just sustainability, and place-based pedagogy—has joined in support of this tapestry of resistance. These voices point to the need for understanding the link between dominating nature and dominating people and for revitalizing indigenous traditions of living at one with the earth by "recovering and renewing traditional, non-commodified cultural patterns and relationships."[9] They emphasize spatial interdependence, noting that unlike the civil and human rights activism of an earlier era, place-conscious activism reveals "the multiple ways that [people] relate to one another . . . as neighbors, housewives, working parents, parents of schoolchildren, elders, children, sufferers from asthma and other disabilities, consumers, pedestrians, commuters, bus riders, citizens."[10]

However, the current march of global capitalism calls for going beyond weaving a tapestry of resistance to envisioning one of transformation. As the world's population continues to multiply on a planet with a fixed (or probably decreasing) land mass, placemakers must envision new patterns of inhabitation. We encounter many forward thinking activists who are positioning themselves on the front lines of articulating such patterns—in academia and in the community. Like futurist R. Buckminster Fuller who led the way with out-of-the-box thinking and action half a century ago, these twenty-first century visionaries blend inspiration with technical knowledge and a deep commitment "to sustain *all* of humanity without destroying the environment or putting anyone at a disadvantage."[11] Food security looms large in their imaginations. They worry about the danger of losing access to locally grown crops and having to eat the unhealthy products of agribusinesses that use chemical fertilizers and mechanization to reduce labor and increase profitability.[12] Instead they seek sustainable labor-intensive forms of agriculture ranging from pea patches to collective farming to creating high-rise buildings dedicated to vertically stacked farms.

Rejecting conventional approaches to historic preservation and adaptive reuse that convert precious old buildings into high-end residences or trendy shops, these visionaries are breaking new ground with a down-to-earth perspective on conserving architectural and cultural resources. They envision capturing the embodied energy contained in everyday old buildings while still increasing their scale to maintain affordability *and* accommodate the higher density of an exploding urban population.[13] They recognize the destruction heaped upon cities and towns over the last half century as highways sliced through communities and the landscape to enable high-speed car and truck travel. Instead our idealists foresee traveling at three or five miles per hour, the pace of walking or bicycling,[14] because

> it's a very different thing when you have to walk and carry resources. . . . Sacredness is nothing more than spending an incredible amount of time with anything. . . . The automobile doesn't allow you to be with any moment anymore. The lifestyle doesn't allow you sacredness in the world because you can't dwell and find any moment beautiful anymore.[15]

We believe that together such pragmatic visionaries can disrupt the march of global capitalism and create a truly resilient tapestry of transformation. Together we can find locally sustainable, labor-valuing ways of carrying out the chores of everyday life; we can capture the embodied energy of everyday buildings; and we can slow down to find the sacredness of dwelling in the world. Instead of auto-dominated urban spaces, together

we can envision pedestrian-oriented ones where children and adults can walk shoulder-to-shoulder with one another, unprotected by the steel of private cars. By recognizing and amplifying the connections that exist among people—through place—across scales, issues, and interests, we can learn "to live well in the age of globalization."[16]

Notes

1. David A. Gruenewald, "The Best of Both Worlds: A Critical Pedagogy of Place," *Educational Researcher* 32 no. 4 (2003): 6.
2. Peter McLaren and Henry A. Giroux, "Series Editors' Introduction," in *Race, Culture, and the City*, Stephen Nathan Haymes (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), xi.
3. Michael C. Dawson and Lawrence D. Bobo, "Editorial Introduction: One Year Later and the Myth of a Post-Racial Society," *Du Bois Review* 6 no. 2 (2009): 247.
4. Douglas S. Massey, "Racial Discrimination in Housing: A Moving Target," *Social Problems* 52 no. 2 (May 2005): 149.
5. For example, Massey relied upon Stanley Lieberson's classic book examining research methods to argue that "as old forms of discrimination are curtailed, new mechanisms will be invented," asserting that the struggle for civil rights is "a long, drawn-out affair." Ibid., 150, referring to Stanley Lieberson, *Making It Count: The Improvement of Social Research and Theory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).
6. McLaren and Giroux, "Series Editors' Introduction," xiii.
7. Grace Lee Boggs, "School Violence: A Question of Place," *Monthly Review* 52 no. 2 (June 2002): np.
8. Sharon E. Sutton, *Weaving a Tapestry of Resistance: The Places, Power, and Poetry of a Sustainable Society* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1996).
9. Gruenewald, "The Best of Both Worlds," 9, referring to C.A. Bowers, *Educating for Eco-justice and Community* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001).
10. Boggs, "School Violence."
11. This commitment was the driving force of Bucky Fuller's work as described in Sharon E. Sutton, "Engaging the Public, Seeking Common Ground," In *Architecture: Celebrating the Past, Designing the Future,* ed. Nancy B. Solomon (New York: Visual Reference Inc.; Washington, DC: The American Institute of Architects), 69.
12. Aron Johnson, *Seattle's Food Insecurity: Reinvigorating King County's Historic Agricultural Landscapes with a 21st Century Paradigm* (master's thesis, University of Washington, 2009).
13. Ideas from a UW master of architecture thesis proposal by Stephanie Weeks.
14. Ideas from a UW master of architecture thesis proposal by Merritt Ertel.
15. Rina Swentzel, "From the Pueblo Perspective: A Native American View of the Natural and Built Environment," *Designer/Builder* (November 1995): 10.
16. Gruenewald, "The Best of Both Worlds," 9.

Contributors

Steve Badanes is a professor of architecture and the Howard S. Wright Endowed Chair at the University of Washington. As endowed chair, he leads the Neighborhood Design/Build Studio, which engages students in designing and building projects for local communities. Nationally, Badanes has involved students in similar hands-on activities at the Universities of California in San Diego, Oregon, Miami, Michigan, and Wisconsin and also at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, Ball State University, Florida A&M University, North Dakota State University, Pacific Northwest College of the Arts, and the Yestermorrow Design/Build School in Vermont. Internationally, he has led design-build workshops at McGill University, Miami University (Ghana Program), and the University of Technology in Helsinki. Badanes is a cofounder of Jersey Devil Design/Build, an architectural firm perpetuating the tradition of medieval craftsmen; the firm's work is critically reviewed in *Jersey Devil Design/Build Book* (Peregrine Smith Books, 1985) and *Devil's Workshop: 25 Years of Jersey Devil Architecture* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1997).

Matt Bradley is a codirector of the Mestizo Arts and Activism program and the Mestizo Institute of Culture and Arts in Salt Lake City. He has worked with youth in varied settings (Centro Civico Mexicano, West High Family Literacy Center, Central City Community Center, Spy Hop Productions), recently focusing upon youth and media expression. In addition to serving as a manager at the Sundance Film Festival's Young Filmmakers program, Bradley has taught at Indiana University, Utah State University, and the University of Utah and has volunteered in the Salt Lake County Jail. He received a merit award from the Utah Humanities Council for a collaboration between Spy Hop and the University of Utah. Bradley holds a bachelor's degree in the humanities and English, a master's degree in folklore, a master's degree in education, and a PhD in folklore, all earned at Indiana University.

Caitlin Cahill is a community-based urban studies and youth studies scholar and an assistant professor of Urban Studies at the City University

of New York. Her research interests include young people's well-being, globalization, community development, critical race and feminist theory, participatory action research and theory, and social justice. Cahill codirects the Mestizo Arts and Activism Collective, a social justice think tank that engages young people as catalysts of change through leadership, active civic engagement, and participatory action research. The author of numerous journal articles, she is an affiliate editor for the journal *Children, Youth, and Environments* and serves on the editorial boards of *Children's Geographies, Community Development*, and the *Journal of the Community Development Society*. Cahill received a PhD in environmental psychology with a concentration in public policy and urban studies from the City University of New York.

Roberta M. Feldman is an architectural activist, researcher, and educator committed to democratic design. Her work is grounded in the conviction that high-quality design is a meaningful and necessary component of an equitable and sustainable society. Feldman's current research and practice have focused upon affordable and public housing design, including serving in the following roles: book author, with Susan Stall, of *The Dignity of Resistance: Women Residents Activism in Chicago Public Housing* (Cambridge University Press, 2004); editor of the pioneering Internet catalog *Design Matters: Best Practices in Affordable Housing*; curator of the exhibit Out of the Box: Design Innovations in Affordable Housing at Chicago's Field Museum; consultant to the Cabrini-Green LAC in the HOPE VI redevelopment of their community; coeditor of *The Chicago Greystone in Historic North Lawndale* (Feldman and Wheaton: UIC City Design Center, 2006); and founding member of the American Collegiate Schools of Architecture's Affordable Housing Design Initiative. She is a professor of architecture and founding director of the City Design Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago's College of Architecture and the Arts.

Amy Hillier is an assistant professor in the Department of City and Regional Planning of the University of Pennsylvania School of Design and has a secondary faculty appointment in the School of Social Policy and Practice. She teaches GIS and research methods classes for graduate city planning, social work, and public health students and undergraduate urban studies students. Hillier's research focuses upon geographic disparities in urban history and public health. Her most recent publications include articles in the *Journal of Planning History* about the role of GIS in both urban and planning history and in *Health and Place* about clustering of outdoor advertisements around places where children spend time.

Linda Hurley Ishem is an assistant professor of urban studies at the University of Washington–Tacoma. Previously she served as director of the Pierce County, Washington, Department of Community Services, where she administered arts and cultural services and community economic development programs. After a career in public administration, Ishem returned to school to pursue her dream of teaching at the university level. Her current research examines alternative community development approaches to alleviate the causes and consequences of urban neighborhood decline. Ishem holds a PhD in social welfare from the University of Washington, a master's degree in business administration from Northwestern University, and a bachelor's degree in psychology and black studies from Wellesley College.

Matthew Kelley is an assistant professor of urban studies at the University of Washington–Tacoma. He teaches courses in the application of geospatial technologies and geographic information systems to urban social and environmental problems. Kelley's research is similarly focused upon the role that emerging technologies can play in urban community development processes. He has worked extensively with community organizations in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Tacoma, helping them think creatively about utilizing digital tools in their day-to-day operations—both to improve the effectiveness of their outcomes and to amplify the voices and knowledge of local residents. Kelley earned a PhD in geography from Pennsylvania State University, a master's degree in geography from California University at Los Angeles, and a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Susan P. Kemp is the Charles O. Cressey Endowed Associate Professor at the University of Washington School of Social Work. Her work is informed by a commitment to enhancing person-place relationships, place-based interventions, and spatial perspectives in social work practice. In particular, Kemp specializes in environmental and community-based interventions, low-income children and families, public child welfare, and social work history and theory. In addition to this coedited volume and a range of chapters and articles, her publications include coauthoring *Person-Environment Practice: The Social Ecology of Interpersonal Helping* (Kemp, Whittaker, and Tracy: Aldine de Gruyter, 1997) and coediting *Communities, Neighborhoods, and Health: Expanding the Boundaries of Place* (Burton, Kemp, Leung, Matthews, and Takeuchi: Springer, forthcoming). Kemp received a PhD with distinction from Columbia University.

Caroline Lanza is a doctoral student in social welfare at the University of Washington School of Social Work, where her work explores digital

contexts for social work practice and participatory arts and media production within the context of critical pedagogy, participatory action research methods, and community-based practice. Several current projects include piloting a media education program for urban native youth with the Indigenous Wellness Research Institute and the Seattle Fandango Project which is devoted to embodied, decolonizing practices, community building, and social action through participatory music and dance. Lanza holds a certificate in independent filmmaking from University of Washington, a master of social work degree in community organizing from the University of Michigan and a bachelor's degree in cultural anthropology from Ohio University. She lives with her two sons in Seattle.

Lynne C. Manzo is an associate professor in the University of Washington's College of Built Environments. She received a doctorate in environmental psychology from the City University of New York, and specializes in the study of place meaning, place attachments and identity, and the politics of place. Manzo has conducted housing research for 20 years, and this work includes studies of the transformation of New York City's landlord-abandoned buildings into low-income cooperatives, the culturally specific housing needs of Latino/a farm workers in Washington's Yakima Valley, and the effects of public housing redevelopment in the Pacific Northwest. She has cultivated research expertise in both in-depth qualitative and large-scale survey work, particularly with low-income, diverse, and marginalized groups. Manzo's research has been published in the *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *Journal of Planning Literature*, *Journal of Architecture and Planning Research Housing Policy Debate*, and *Urban Studies*.

David S. Smolker is a freelance writer and aspiring landscape architect. He earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy at Haverford College in Pennsylvania, where he developed his interest in the ethical implications of technology and patterns of geographic and political change at local and global scales. Smolker has worked as an architecture and planning consultant in San Francisco and also as a laborer on his family's farm in Myakka City, Florida, for the Worldwide Organization of Organic Farms, and at various locations in Spain. He lives in Oakland, California, where he designs and builds landscapes and is active with a number of community-based organizations.

Sharon E. Sutton is a professor of architecture and urban design and director of Center for Environment Education and Design Studies (CEEDS) at the University of Washington. A frequent lecturer at colleges and universities internationally and author of numerous scholarly and popular

publications, including *Weaving a Tapestry of Resistance* (Bergin & Garvey, 1996), Sutton uses her interdisciplinary background to improve the quality of life in disenfranchised communities. Formerly a Kellogg National Fellow, Sutton has degrees in music, architecture, psychology, and philosophy and has keynoted professional conferences in art, architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, planning, and psychology. She is a fellow in the American Institute of Architects, a distinguished professor of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, and an inductee in the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. Her fine art has been exhibited in and collected by galleries and museums, business enterprises, colleges and universities, and the Library of Congress. Sutton previously practiced architecture in New York City and, as a musician, performed for the Bolshoi and other ballet companies and in several Broadway hits.

Anne Taufen Wessells is an assistant professor in the Urban Studies program at the University of Washington–Tacoma. Her research focuses upon the urban governance challenges of waterfront planning and sustainable development, specifically the production and use of political power, and its relationship to the social and ecological health of urban space. Wessells earned a PhD in social ecology (University of California, Irvine) with an emphasis in planning, policy, and design; a master's degree in government administration (University of Pennsylvania); and a bachelor's degree in English and French literature (University of Virginia). An interdisciplinary scholar, she publishes and presents in the fields of urban affairs, planning, and public policy. Wessells has rowed competitively for almost 20 years and currently serves on the Oversight Committee for Rainier Valley Rowing, the subject of her chapter in this volume.

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