AGORA

The Urban Planning & Design Journal of the University of Michigan

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The Urban Planning & Design Journal of the University of Michigan

A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture + Urban Planning

Letter from the Editor

Much like young merchants who must feel some uncertainty in their first days at the agora–or open marketplace–our staff has been anxious to see how *Agora: The Urban Planning & Design Journal of the University of Michigan* would fare upon entering the marketplace of ideas for a second time. The excitement of producing our first edition in 2007 has faded somewhat, but like any good entrepreneur, we challenged ourselves to enhance the Journal and the end result stands as a reflection of those efforts.

Our primary goal–to reach and surpass the quality of the pioneering efforts of last year's staff– was somewhat daunting given the high standards they established. In the end, we feel we have managed to build on the success of last year's Journal in several areas. First, we have increased representation from Master's of Urban Design students and augmented the title of the Journal to reflect what we hope will be a long-term collaboration between the programs. Next, we sought to enhance *Agora* by including numerous images to improve the Journal's quality and appeal. Finally, we are thrilled that one of our recent alumni, Christian Kroll, responded to the call for entries, and hope that this can become an ongoing element in future issues.

As with last year's edition, the *Agora* staff set no specific agenda for this volume had an open call for original work. We received a diverse, excellent pool of submissions, and as the staff made its final selections through a double-blind review, a common thread emerged: growth management. The articles in this volume address this topic of growth management from multiple perspectives and in various settings.

Our first two articles consider growth management policies and redevelopment issues in a domestic context. In our opening article, Lisa Morris offers a thoughtful discussion of the Community Reinvestment Act and its role in spurring growth in communities underserved by the banking industry. Kelly Koss then offers a variety of concepts for downtown Youngstown, Ohio, which is in great need of vibrant public spaces to serve as gathering places for families.

In our next two pieces, we take a brief respite from on-the-ground growth management to consider two case studies that are set in a more theoretical context. Catherine Gaines Sanders compares the work of two key urban theorists, Paolo Soleri and Ebenezer Howard, who each challenged in unique ways our notions about how cities should grow—Soleri with Arcosanti and Howard with his Garden Cities. Christian Kroll then explores Brasilia's planned modernist attempts at egalitarian urban organization. In doing so, he examines the broader idea of theory as a way of understanding and informing the tension between forward-looking planning and the

Construction crane in Goult, France. Photo: Sarah Elizabeth Ross

status quo. The international theme continues with Istanbul, where Heather Smirl prompts us to consider how growth and recent changes in housing policy impact the City's communities and citizens.

Turning our sights to sustainability topics in growth management, Jon VanDerZee considers the promise of using wind as a renewable energy resource and includes case studies from Michigan and New York. The environmental theme continues with Josh Anderson's exploration of three remarkable grassroots efforts in Chicago.

Lastly, we head to Cambodia, where John Scott-Railton invites us to once again explore the key role of participation in a unique planning context.

As any good journey experiences its unexpected twists and turns, one of this year's submissions sparked an exciting development for this year's Journal. Kimiko Doherty's evocative description of the street life in Sensenti, Honduras was not an academic work in the traditional sense. However, her lyrical street ballet, composed in the spirit of Jane Jacobs, prompted us to approach Professor Robert Fishman (who regularly asks his students to compose such street ballets from their own experiences) about the possibility of including a series of these ballets for this year's Journal. Essays by Carolyn Pivorotto, Stephanie Etkin, Sarah Elizabeth Ross, James McMurray, and Tobias Wacker are among those recommended by Professor Fishman.

This collection of ballets, interspersed among the academic articles, presents a unique depiction of urban life in all its variety and emotion. In the end, this celebration of cities and the role they play in shaping our experiences serves as a powerful reminder of the ultimate purpose of our efforts as urban practitioners: to improve the quality of people's lives.

This year's edition of *Agora* would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of the *Agora* Board, those who provided their written work, and the generous funding from our supporters. The *Agora* Board would like to give special thanks to Dr. Jonathan Levine and the Urban and Regional Planning Program; Dean Douglas Kelbaugh, Mary Ann Drew, Janice Harvey, Sandy Patton, and the Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning; and the Swansons for the Saarinen-Swanson Endowment Fund. Additional thanks as well to Ken Arbogast-Wilson for his insights on aspects relating to the Journal's physical production and the many faculty members whose encouragement to students resulted in the publication of several articles that may have otherwise remained unpublished.

We hope you will enjoy the collection we have assembled for this year's edition of *Agora* and that it will provide added inspiration in your own efforts to improve the cities and communities in which we all live.

Sincerely,

James McMurray
Managing Editor

Contributors

Joshua D. Anderson received a BLA from Ball State University and is currently pursuing a Master of Urban Design at the University of Michigan. He has previously practiced as a professional landscape architect in both Chicago and Indianapolis, working primarily on multi-modal transportation planning and improvements as well as park and playground design.

Kimiko Doherty is a second year Master of Urban Planning Student, originally from the Washington, DC area. Her current interests include community development and urban design in cities both big and small.

Stephanie Etkin holds a bachelor's degree in History and is currently working towards a Master of Urban Planning. She is interested in real estate development and plans to remain in Michigan following graduation, working to improve the built environment of the Detroit metro area.

Catherine Gaines Sanders was born and raised near Denver, Colorado. She received her Bachelor of Arts from Louisiana State University and is currently attending the University of Michigan for her Master of Urban Planning.

Kelly Koss is a dual-degree Master of Urban Planning and Design student. She is interested in issues of social equity, housing, and urban design.

Christian Kroll earned a bachelor's degree in Architecture from Universidad Francisco Marroquin (Guatemala) and is finishing his Master of Urban Planning at the University of Michigan. He is currently a PhD student at the Department of Romance Languages and Literature at the University of Michigan, working on the relationship between the urban, the cultural, and the political in Latin America with spatial, cultural, and political segregation.

James B. McMurray is originally from Orem, Utah and is working towards a Master of Urban Planning with a Certificate in Real Estate Development. James hopes to eventually work as a progressive real estate developer, improving the built environment and lives of those who use it.

Lisa Morris is a native of Allentown, Pennsylvania. She received a BA in Sociology from Oberlin College in 2005. Currently, she is working on a Master of Urban Planning, focusing on issues affecting post-industrial cities, including brownfield redevelopment, affordable housing, and open space preservation.

Carolyn Pivirotto holds a bachelor's degree in General Business and Dance from Central Michigan University and has professional experience in project management and group dynamic analysis. She is currently working towards a Master of Urban Planning with a Certificate in Real Estate Development and hopes to influence development in disinvested urban areas in the future.

Sarah Elizabeth Ross grew up outside Washington, DC in Fairfax, Virginia and received her BA from Bryn Mawr College in 2005. She is currently completing her Master of Urban Planning at the University of Michigan with a concentration in physical planning and urban design, and is interested in transit design.

John Scott-Railton is a graduate student in the Departments of Architecture and Urban Planning. His work focuses on housing rights, land rights, and participatory mapping and advocacy. He conducts ongoing fieldwork in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Heather Smirl is now completing her Master of Urban Design at the University of Michigan. Her undergraduate work was done at Cal Poly Pomona in Architecture. Prior to returning to school, she worked for three years at an architectural housing firm specializing in multi-family housing.

Jon VanDerZee is from Hilton Head, South Carolina. He studied at the University of Georgia and earned a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science in 2004. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in Urban Planning, focusing on sustainability in relation to global climate change.

Tobias Wacker received his BA from the University of California, Los Angeles, where he majored in Anthropology and International Development Studies. Before he entered the University of Michigan to pursue a Master of Urban Planning, he worked for the United Nations Development Program to assist the City of Da Nang, Vietnam in adapting its land use patterns to accommodate its rapid growth.

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New York City fruit stand. Photo: Sarah Elizabeth Ross

The Ballet of 24th Street

Stephanie Etkin

The ballet of 24th Street does not start and end. At least not on my 24th Street, starting at Sixth Avenue, crossing Madison Square Park, and making its way across to Park Avenue. The dance for me begins at six in the morning, when I am rudely awoken by the sound of a jackhammer helping one of the surrounding construction projects to reach its way to the sky. If the sun is not too bright, I can fall back asleep, but only to be re-awoken by the sound of the building's maintenance staff lugging the thirty floors worth of garbage out onto the curb to be picked up before the day is over. From the 17th floor the noise is faint, just barely loud enough to be heard over the din of the traffic on 6th Avenue.

I leave my tiny cocoon to face the day, locking the door behind me and waiting for the elevator to take me to the street. I rarely see the residents I share the 17th floor with. Jon the Harvard Grad is an investment banker who leaves before the jackhammers start. I often hear the couple next door, known to me only as the people with the obnoxious dog, but see them only occasionally in the hall. The crazy artist down the hall gives me fliers for his shows, but soon there is yellow police tape across his door, and he is never heard from again. Of the other eight apartments, I only know that two have mezuzahs, three get the Wall Street Journal, and four get the New York Times. In the elevator I almost always nod hello to a woman in heels checking her Blackberry, but it is a different woman every day. The same goes for the generic man in a suit.

On the way out the door, I bid good day to Eric at the front desk and spiral though the rotating doors out onto the street. If I leave at 9:00, I almost always see the Japanese man walking his girlfriend's two Sheba Inus. If it is 9:15, then it is instead the old bull dog with his suited owner rushing him to do his business before the owner must leave for work. Walking east down the sidewalk towards work, I pass the owner of New York's "best" deli and convenience store, who stares blankly at the brick wall across the street and rarely acknowledges the passers-by. From there I pass the orange-vested construction workers, who wish me good morning in Spanish and then watch me from behind as I walk away. Only once or twice have I seen a woman brave enough to challenge their bold stares. If my timing is right, I catch the walk signal across Broadway and Fifth, which come together at my corner. There is inevitably a tourist blocking the intersection for both cars and pedestrians, his tri-pod set up trying to take the perfect picture of the Flatiron building. I hold my tongue, tempted to point him towards the souvenir shop across the street, where he can buy an already framed version of that perfect picture for only $9.99.

Once across the street, I get a brief respite from the busy sidewalk as I cross into Madison Square Park. For several months last year there was an aural art exhibition, and I could hear the sounds of birds singing in the middle of winter and the tolling of a bell years silent. If I am lucky, and I read this as a good omen for the day, I see the man walking his cat on a leash. The cat slinks along, ashamed it would seem, to be treated so similarly to a canine. Taking a deep breath of fresh air before emerging on the other side of the park, I step back out of the green and cross Madison to my favorite coffee vendor. Every day the man sets up his cart on the corner to serve the caffeine-starved Manhattanites on their way to work. Here I either cut through the line, like a scab breaking through the picket line, and continue on to work, or I move to the back and wait my turn for a steaming or iced cup, depending on the weather. I encounter another vendor at the other end of the block, but he is not as friendly and often runs out of iced coffee on hot days. By the time I reach Park and 24th, I start to see familiar faces again, as my office is just up the street at Park and 25th. Sliding into conversation with a co-worker, I cross the street and leave 24th to continue its dance without me until I emerge again at days' end.

On nice days I will return to the park for lunch, joining the picnickers on the lawn or the patient diners waiting in the hour-long shake shack line, temporarily playing a role in the street ballet of Madison Square. After the work day—at 6 on good days, 10 on bad days, or anywhere in between—I cross back through the park. I find the chairs empty and the benches occupied by the homeless men and women, who are setting up camp for the night. On the northwest side of the park, a group of Jamaican men sit, laughing and talking to each other and whoever passes by. The woman closest to the 5th Avenue gate just stares at me with empty eyes as I walk by and never returns my smile. Back on my block of

24th street, I see the old homeless couple who huddle under blankets every night in the back doorway of Cipriani's, and if I have leftovers, I offer them the box. The man reaches out to take it and grunts in gratitude. Further up the street the outside patio of Sapa is filling up with posh thirtysomethings, drinking $15 dollar martinis and eating miniscule appetizers off creatively shaped plates.

I duck into my building and stop to ask Rosa, who has taken over the desk from Eric, how her one-year-old daughter is doing and if there are any packages for me. I check the mail and ride the now empty elevator back to my haven on the 17th floor. On the nights that I go back out, I always feel safe on 24th because the bouncers from the three nightclubs keep everything under control like a private police force. Every night of the week a different group of people line up outside of the clubs, waiting far too long behind the red rope for their chance to see and be seen. Even in winter the girls wear clothing that barely cover well, anything, in hopes that the bouncers will notice and escort them around the long line into the special red VIP door. Most of the time these girls end up shivering in line as I walk past feeling smug in my long pants and warm winter jacket. The noise from the clubs goes on until two or three in the morning, when the bouncers finally round up all the squealing girls into cabs and send them on to their next destination, leaving the street to the hot dog and pretzel vendors.

I've only heard, and never seen, the battle of the street vendors. Very early in the morning, before the rest of us should be awake, the vendors meet to load up their carts for the day ahead. I'm not sure of the cause, but often there is screaming and yelling and once the sound of a gunshot. The police tell me that 24th and 6th is actually a very dangerous place to live, if you plan to be on the street at four in the morning. I do not, and thus I lay back on my pillow, leaving the street to the ruffians until I wake again several hours later to the sound of the jackhammers.

The Community Reinvestment Act: Past, Present and Future

Lisa Morris

The Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) was passed in 1977 to combat the effects of discriminatory lending practices and disinvestment in low- and moderate income communities. It focuses on improving access for underserved communities, rather than underserved individuals. This spatial focus has drawn criticism since its passage, and changes in the lending industry and urban real estate markets call into question its relevance today. This paper will discuss the mechanics of the CRA, its effectiveness, and its relationship with two timely urban issues: gentrification and predatory lending.

The US Congress passed the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) in 1977 to encourage investment in low- and moderate-income (LMI) neighborhoods where redlining, white flight and suburban migration had weakened the commercial and housing markets. The CRA was meant to act in concert with the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA) to combat racial discrimination within the lending industry and expand access to credit for targeted areas. Since its passage, a debate has raged about its effectiveness, appropriateness, and cost-benefit ratio. Criticism comes from both sides, with community groups charging that the Act is too lenient and that CRA scores are artificially inflated, while members of the banking industry point to its costs and allege that community groups use the CRA for unfair "rent-seeking" (Barr 2005). This criticism, combined with recent changes in the lending industry and urban real estate markets, warrants a reevaluation of the efficacy and relevance of the CRA.

The banking industry has undergone many changes in the past two decades with deregulation, the exponential growth of technology, and the globalization of many banking services. These changes have inevitably had a major impact on the effectiveness of the CRA, which was designed in a very different banking era. Moreover, the changing market conditions of inner-city neighborhoods raise concerns about the wisdom of a spatially-focused strategy to improve credit access to LMI borrowers. The CRA may reward banks for lending to gentrifiers while still denying good credit to LMI applicants. Subprime, or even predatory credit, may be all that is available to LMI borrowers in CRA-designated areas. Because of regulatory gaps, banks may actually receive CRA credit for engaging in predatory loans that harm borrowers and fuel blight and abandonment. These changes beg the question of whether the CRA now contributes to precisely the detrimental effects it was originally designed to address.

This paper will outline the major features of the CRA and its enforcement, evaluate its effectiveness, both historically and contemporaneously, and conclude by examining its relationship with two timely concerns: gentrification and predatory lending.

CRA Evaluation and Enforcement

The CRA was passed in 1977 as a proactive measure to undo the harm caused by years of redlining and disinvestment in urban, LMI, largely minority neighborhoods. The law is based on the idea that federally-insured banks have an obligation to meet the needs of all members of the communities in which they are located. Since banks receive special privileges from the government and raise capital in those areas, they owe this service both to the larger public and to their specific communities. The law targets community needs in three areas: access to credit, investment, and access to depository and other banking services—all critical pieces of improving the quality of life in LMI neighborhoods (Engel and McCoy 2002).

To counter the effects of geographic discrimination, the CRA focuses on the community rather than the individual. As Johnson, Kemp, and Nguyen (2002) write, "Geographic discriminatory policies are rooted in the lender's opinion that collateral in certain communities are likely to lose value, resulting in a loss to the lender. As a consequence, lending decisions are made without paying attention to the credentials of the particular applicant or the applicant's specific collateral" (91). Lenders make

assumptions about applicants and their property based on location alone, failing to consider the credit-worthiness of the individual. Regulatory agencies, therefore, measure how well institutions comply with the *community's* needs, not the needs of individual applicants. Clearly, a community is made up of individuals, but the law focuses on neighborhood-level effects. Ideologically, this focus is admirable and refreshing in a society that focuses so much on the individual. In practical terms, however, potential problems exist, especially in relation to the increasing phenomena of gentrification and predatory lending.

Three tests are used to measure a bank's performance in three areas: providing credit, investing, and serving an area's deposit needs. First, the lending test, which counts for half of the CRA score, evaluates whether an institution provides equitable and adequate credit within its CRA area (Barr 2005). The five performance criteria are lending activity, geographic distribution, borrower characteristics, community development lending, and the degree to which the bank's lending practices are innovative and flexible (Johnson, Kemp, and Nguyen 2002). Second, the investment test determines the extent to which the institution has invested in the community, whether it fills gaps left by the market, and how well it responds to community needs (Barr 2005). Last, the service test, which accounts for one quarter of the overall score (Stegman, Cochran, and Faris 2002), focuses on whether the institution adequately meets the community's deposit and service needs (Barr 2005). The service test is the broadest and least emphasized of the three. Its weakness has drawn criticism from those who argue that access to depository services is critical to financial health (Stegman, Cochran, and Faris 2002). Individuals unable to open a bank account may resort to check-cashing services that charge significant premiums and payday loans that can quickly destroy a borrower's credit.

Based on these three tests, the regulatory agency assigns a numerical score that falls into one of four ranges: outstanding, satisfactory, needs improvement, and substantial noncompliance. The agency also issues a report explaining the reasoning behind the score (Marisco 2003). In 1990, the law was changed to make these reports publicly available (Litan et al 2000, 11). If unfavorable, they can create a public relations debacle for the financial institution.


Heidelberg Neigborhood, Detroit Michigan. Photo: Heather Smirl.

One innovative feature of the CRA is its diffuse allocation of enforcement capacity. When a bank applies for a merger or acquisition or wants to open or close a bank branch, community groups, competitors, and supervisory agencies have the opportunity to protest the application on the grounds that the bank has failed to meet CRA requirements (Johnson and Sarkar 1996). Putting power in the hands of community groups meets the ideological challenge of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society: a more equitable distribution of both *wealth* and *power*. Through the protest process, the CRA forces major financial institutions to stop and take notice of community demands.

Protests, however, can interfere with the efficiency of the banking industry, eating into its profits and creating incentives to pass costs on to consumers. Critics argue that the CRA actually hurts consumers, including the LMI group that it is designed to benefit, by raising operational costs. The more time banks spend embroiled in the regulatory process, the more overhead costs accumulate. While this may be true to some

degree, these critics fail to note that many of the LMI customers that the CRA "harms" in this manner, would not be customers in the first place without the Act.

Most protests do not result in action by supervisory authorities. From 1977 to 1990, the Federal Reserve rejected only one of 182 protested applications (Johnson and Sarkar 1996, 786). The threat of protest and its attendant costs, however, make banks more open to both formal and informal agreements with community groups unhappy with their performance (Bostic and Robinson 2004). CRA agreements benefit both parties: the financial institution lowers the cost of CRA compliance by reducing the risk of protest, and the community group receives concessions without too great a fight (Johnson and Sarkar 1996).

The cost and effectiveness of the CRA may vary depending on the size and scope of the bank. Researchers Bostic and Robinson (2004) hypothesize that larger banks have a greater incentive to comply with CRA regulations than smaller banks because the opportunity for protest occurs when an institution attempts to acquire or merge with another bank, an endeavor that small community banks are less likely to undergo. On the other hand, larger banks depend less on their local reputation: their brands are national, even global, and can sustain the ire of one community. Small banks rely more heavily on their relationship with the community in which they are located and would have a difficult time weathering the criticism of local community groups.

Redlining and Past Disinvestment

Policy-makers designed the CRA to address the discrimination of the past and complement laws aimed at eradicating current discriminatory lending. Until the 1970s, redlining entire neighborhoods and choking off the flow of credit and investment to these areas was common. Institutions justified this practice by citing the perceived risk associated with these areas: they could not be expected to make unsound investments.

Johnson and Sarkar (1996) identify two types of redlining—rational and irrational. Rational redlining occurs when a bank refuses to lend in an area based on justifiable differences in risk and profitability. Some of these extra costs include the lack of information about the creditworthiness of customers, low financial literacy that requires extra time and attention by loan agents, and poor credit histories that make lending a riskier prospect. Irrational redlining occurs when a bank refuses to lend despite the potential for profit. This type of redlining might occur as a result of outright discrimination or simply habit.

The CRA focuses on addressing the latter form of redlining, and, in doing so, could be a boon to both the banking industry and the population the law targets. Some argue that the CRA opened markets previously neglected because of years of systematic, irrational redlining. In a 1996 survey, 98 percent of large residential mortgage lenders found CRA loans profitable, and 24 percent found them *at least as* profitable as other loans (Federal Reserve Board 1999, 4). A bank pioneering alone through previously unexplored markets faces potential risks because of a lack of information about borrowers in these areas, but when all banks are required to provide credit to consumers, the risk is diffused across all lenders and the information needed to make good lending choices to residents of these areas grows. Thus access to credit has a snowballing effect: once a bank enters a market and gathers information, the community becomes a more favorable environment for other investors as the market becomes more liquid (Barr 2001).

Effectiveness

The value of the CRA hinges on one question: does the act improve access to credit and other banking services for LMI communities? Most research has found positive results. Reports indicate that the CRA attacks market failures by encouraging banks to meet the credit needs of their communities (Barr 2005). Because the CRA awards points based on the innovativeness of the lending products and strategies employed by an institution, it has spurred a variety of creative solutions to the difficulties of entering new markets and lending in LMI communities. For instance, banks have banded together to form Community Development Corporations (CDCs), invested in credit counseling programs and created specialized branches within their institutions to administer the CRA process (Barr 2006). These trends are all positive.

Unfortunately, there is no control case. It is possible, as some in the banking industry assert, that these trends would occur even without the CRA, as the lending markets for middle- and upper-income populations become saturated and institutions seek out new markets. However, one study that sought to isolate the effects of the CRA compared each bank's CRA-eligible lending to the non-CRA-eligible lending. It found that between 1993 and 1998, CRA-eligible mortgages increased by 39 percent, whereas non-CRA-eligible mortgages increased by only 17 percent (Barr 2006). Given these positive signs and the history of past disinvestment, upholding a strong CRA continues to be justified.

Changes in the Lending Industry

At one time, lending was primarily a local activity. Changes in the banking industry have made capital largely aspatial, no longer fixed to a local community but diffused around the globe and online. Have these changes made the CRA irrelevant and ineffective? For instance, how should an institution's CRA assessment area be defined when its capital is spread across nations?

These changes undermine one of the primary justifications for the CRA: the idea that a lending institution owes something to the community from whom its capital is raised. But when capital is raised everywhere and nowhere, how much does a bank owe to the community in which it is located only in the strictest, bricks-and-mortar fashion? Another justification for the CRA, however, still holds true: banks receive special privileges and charters from the government. Therefore, the government can expect banks to offer these services.

Technological innovations may create further imbalances in access to credit and other financial services. As more lenders move their services online, credit opportunities wither for those without regular computer access. The "digital divide" could erase some of the progress made in the past quarter-century by the CRA and other fair lending laws. Online banking presents an ideal solution to financial institutions looking to circumvent not only the CRA itself but the whole spirit of the law. As Johnson, Kemp, and Nguyen (2002) write, "What could be a more attractive customer base, since those persons who can afford a computer and Internet service are essentially the well-to-do?" (102)

Lombardy Street, San Fransisco. Photo: Scott Curry

While some worry that the Internet will become "a more efficient avenue for discriminatory lending practices" (101), the main concern is that these services are not currently regulated by the CRA. Extending CRA coverage to these services would come up against two roadblocks. First, these institutions accept deposits well beyond the scope of their physical community (Johnson, Kemp and Nguyen 2002). Defining the CRA assessment area, therefore, would present significant challenges and might be attacked by critics as arbitrary and outdated. Second, because of its controversial nature, any expansion to the CRA will meet significant political opposition. These challenges stand in the way of maintaining the effectiveness of the CRA.

The CRA and Gentrification

Ironically, the lack of access to credit in LMI communities may be what keeps them affordable. Redlining starved access to credit for *all* residents of an area, failing to distinguish between those deemed creditworthy and those deemed uncreditworthy. Today's system, which mandates fair lending across all communities, combined with sophisticated systems to determine the risk of lending to a particular applicant, may actually increase the vulnerability of LMI households in neighborhoods that lie in the path of gentrification. As Wyly et al (2001) write, "When affluent professionals begin to search for relatively affordable homes in the inner city, LMI residents are threatened with rising housing costs and city-wide reductions in the supply of low-cost housing" (89).

The CRA may fuel gentrification since outsiders looking to purchase cheap real estate may have their loans approved, while current residents may still be unable to access credit. In the era of gentrification, "the traditional dichotomy of urban investment (loan approved or denied) has been complicated by much greater stratification among those who do receive credit" (Wyly and Hammel 2004, 8). Meanwhile, greater market demand for real estate in inner-city neighborhoods increases values along with costs, potentially forcing displacement of current residents. Wyly and Hammel (2004) write, "Working-class and racially marginalized people and places fare poorly in this process—facing either exploitive credit terms nurtured by predatory brokers and loan officers backed by Wall Street investors and global capital, or outright exclusion as displacement and housing market inflation remake cities for the elite professional classes" (3).

In this new era, the CRA may be counterproductive since "[s]patially-defined policy goals often provide CRA credits to banks for making loans to upper-middle class gentrifiers in the inner city" (8). It depends on how one defines success. If one focuses on neighborhood-level change, then the CRA has done its job: real estate values in the neighborhood have gone up, most likely along with maintenance of the properties and general upkeep of the area. However, if one looks to the individual level, the LMI households living in the neighborhood may have had to relocate to another depressed neighborhood because of increased costs. LMI renters, of course, would benefit the least because they would be forced to move with no attendant increase in wealth. LMI homeowners, on the other hand, may be forced to move but will at least benefit from increased values when they sell their homes.

The CRA and Predatory Lending

No consensus exists about the connection between the CRA and predatory lending. The prevalence of predatory lenders in LMI communities may demonstrate the failure of the CRA to encourage sufficient lending. Predatory lenders may fill the gap created by the absence of traditional lending institutions. If the CRA were working as its designers intended, there would be no lending vacuum for predatory lenders to exploit. Perhaps it is too soon to fully assess the law's effectiveness. Only 30 years have elapsed since the passage of the CRA, and much evidence exists that lending has moved in the right direction. If nothing else, the CRA encouraged banks to take a second look at previously excluded communities and understand that there are profitable ways to lend within them.

Some of this lending takes the form of subprime loans, a complicated and controversial topic. Not all subprime loans are exploitive; some are simply the best credit that borrowers can access because of low credit scores. When it comes to counting subprime loans toward a bank's CRA credit, however, regulators should be cautious. As Richard Marisco writes, "A bank that is engaged in subprime lending, which by definition is more costly to the borrower than prime lending, may be failing to 'meet' the credit needs of the community; while it may be originating a large number of loans, these loans may not be on the best terms for and affordable to the borrower" (Marisco 2003, 742). Predatory loans comprise a subset of the subprime market; they are the loans that have exploitive and detrimental terms. These loans cause more harm than good by trapping borrowers in a cycle of debt from which they might never extricate themselves.

Recently, great attention has been paid to the effects of subprime loans on mortgage foreclosures. These foreclosures have had a disproportionate impact on LMI, largely minority areas where mortgage originations increased by 40 percent from 1993 to 1997, compared to a nationwide increase of only 20 percent (Wyly et al 2004, 8). The effects of widespread foreclosure have been especially

pronounced in LMI neighborhoods, not only because residents are less likely to have access to low-cost credit but also because LMI borrowers will find it harder to weather fluctuations in the economy given their precarious financial position. Since many LMI communities have suffered decades of disinvestment, the effect of a single foreclosure is much greater than in a neighborhood that is stronger economically. As Immergluck and Smith (2005) observe, "in middle- and upper-income areas…foreclosures are less likely to lead to abandoned buildings and neighborhood blight" (368). In these areas, the stronger real estate market restricts foreclosure to the level of a personal tragedy: someone has lost her home, but it will simply pass on to a new owner.

Most parties agree that predatory loans should not earn banks CRA credit. If they are considered at all, they should detract from the institution's overall CRA score. In a note issued by federal banking agencies in 2001, questions were raised about the extent to which predatory lending is monitored. The note stated, "Some are concerned that the regulations generally seem to provide consideration of loans without regard to whether the lending activities are appropriate" (CRA Regulations, quoted in Marisco 2003, 743). It went on to suggest that, "a CRA examination also should include consideration of whether certain loans contain harmful or abusive terms and, therefore, do not help meet community credit needs" (CRA Regulations, quoted in Marisco 2003, 743). It then asks, "Does the lending test effectively assess an institution's record of helping to meet the credit needs of its entire community? If so, why? If not, how should the regulations be revised?" (CRA Regulations, quoted in Marisco 2003, 743). If this exchange is any indication, it would seem that no system is in place for evaluating predatory loans within the CRA regulatory system. Predatory loans can be counted along with legitimate subprime and prime loans to help a bank earn an "outstanding" or "satisfactory" rating. Engel and McCoy (2002) assert that "both origination and brokerage activities may qualify for CRA credit even when they involve predatory loans" (1575). Predatory loans do not add value to a community; they drain that value away, strip equity from homes, and leave borrowers in desperate circumstances. An influx of predatory loans will leave a community in worse straits than if it had no access to credit at all. As Engel and McCoy (2002) write, "If the CRA is creating incentives for banks to engage in predatory lending, the CRA is actually defeating one of its stated goals" (1577-78).

Banks can be involved with predatory loans indirectly by purchasing loans on the secondary market or financing subprime lenders. Engel and McCoy (2002) write, "These bank activities raise CRA implications because some of the activities receive explicit federal guarantees while others may benefit more generally from federal subsidies" (1585).

Another way that CRA-regulated banks can benefit from the subprime and predatory lending industries is by acquiring non-bank affiliates that are not regulated by the CRA. "Large national prime banks have established specialized subsidiaries focused on particular types of loans, marketed to targeted groups and/or neighborhoods, to reap lucrative profits without tarnishing brand-name reputations" (Wyly and Hammel 2004, 8-9). In 2000, non-bank entities owned by bank holding companies accounted for eight of the ten largest subprime lenders. These non-bank affiliates are exempt from CRA scrutiny unless they volunteer for it, and since there are no incentives to do so, they remain unregulated and free to engage in detrimental lending practices (Engel and McCoy 2002).

Engel and McCoy (2002) argue that "if non-bank affiliates and subsidiaries benefit from federal subsidies, we need to consider whether banks should be penalized for using

Vancouver, Canada Waterfront. Photo: Scott Curry

subsidies to finance predatory lending" (1588). The profits from these abusive lending practices still indirectly accrue to CRA-regulated agencies so that defining banks' operations too narrowly can allow them to delegate their abusive (and profitable) lending practices to affiliates outside the scope of the CRA, thereby rendering the law less effective.

Conclusion

The CRA made significant progress in accomplishing what Congress intended. Lending and investment in LMI neighborhoods has increased in the years since its passage. Though it is still relevant and effective, significant challenges to the CRA have emerged in the past two decades. Regulatory agencies must step in to monitor the effects of predatory lending and online banking to ensure that the CRA remains effective in this new lending era. The effects of gentrification are beyond the scope of current CRA regulations, but Congress could consider adding a provision that takes the income of borrowers into account on an institution's CRA evaluation and excludes those above a certain range. This adjustment would target those most in need of access to credit and not give CRA credit to banks for fueling the gentrification of inner-city neighborhoods. Moreover, predatory lending seems to be a loophole in the CRA that the federal government should work aggressively to close. Under no circumstances should CRA-regulated lending institutions receive credit for making loans that have abusive terms and that will undermine the credit health of individuals and the integrity of communities.

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The Ballet of Camden Town

Sarah Elizabeth Ross

It's morning in Camden Town, London, and I leave the dorm and run across the middle of the street to the bus stop. The house gate is directly across from the stop and I dodge traffic, reaching out my hand to hail the bus towards school. I don't often take the bus; it's usually crowded and won't always stop. More often, I walk down Camden Road to the Underground station or walk the full two miles to class. Depending on my mood, I can alter my route to accommodate the sights I want to take in. The liveliest path takes me across the canal, and down past the tube station and up the High Street.

At the bus stops, the morning commuters wait impatiently, chatting on their mobile phones or reading the newspaper. Students strain under the weight of their bags, headphones jammed in their ears and clutching either cigarettes or coffee. In the morning rain, many must also manage their umbrellas, lifting and tilting them politely to let others pass. A steady stream of workers and students pass in and out of the Camden Town Underground entrances on their way to somewhere else. The crowds flow through the building with its oxblood faience façade, down the escalators deep into the ground, and disperse to destinations throughout the city. Before nine, hundreds will have passed through the weary but elegant building.

Across the street from the tube, the newspaper vendor is set up for the day, selling papers and cigarettes and trading in general gossip. Along the High Street, shopkeepers are starting to roll up the protective gates, although only the cafés are doing brisk business at this time of the day; everyone needs that first hit of caffeine. As I continue on my way, just another face in the daily crowd, I nod at the old man and his street side produce stall. In this chaos, he has become a familiar face.

By mid day, the streets have calmed, the rain has stopped, and the mothers have begun to venture out with young children to walk or do the daily shopping. The Sainsbury's on Camden Road is particularly large and attracts more people than the average storefront grocery shop. Throughout the day, the Route 29 bus will deposit shoppers in front of the store and collect passengers with shopping bags and granny carts stuffed with groceries. On my way home from class, I pass a number of tempting sandwich shops and eateries, but I always end up at Twins. The café is small, with few seats and little standing room to order. The paninis are delicious though, made fresh. The taller brother, one of the owners, is often the one to take my order and by the end of the year, he has come to know me and my sandwich selection as a regular. We do not know each others' names, and for the most part, I am another anonymous student in this large city.

As the work day ends, the evening rush sets in. I escape from the dorm and homework by running errands, often paying a visit to the flower vendor whose stall is next to the newspaper stand. I take in the colors and scents of the bouquets as I find something to brighten my dorm room. At this hour, Sainsbury's takes on a frenzied pace. I am jostled by workers and mothers with toddlers in tow, all trying to get the last ingredients for an evening meal. The cashier and I exchange knowing glances as a child lets out an ear-splitting wail the next aisle over. On nights when I cannot brave the dinner prepared by the dorm kitchen, I escape to Bento, a tiny Japanese restaurant tucked next to a hobby shop and the organic grocery store. Bento has become a ritual, whether for eating in with friends or picking up a take away meal to eat while studying. Walking in the waning light to my destination, I watch the cars whiz by and idle impatiently at stoplights.

Because it is spring, the days are longer and after-dinner strolls through Regent's Park become common. Lovers hold hands and watch the setting sun from blankets spread across the grass while groups of Indian men try to complete a cricket game before the light dies. Families push carriages back towards the row houses lining the outskirts of the park, ready to tuck their children in to bed. Leaving the park, the locals are emerging from houses to spend the evening at their favourite pubs. Students relax at tables outside the university watering hole, casually smoking and flirting. I find my friends and we unwind after another long day.

Down the street, Camden Town becomes slightly unsavoury. The occasional prostitute propositions passers-by near the Underground station, while the homeless set up camp on the steps of the building, talking among themselves with their dogs curled up beside them. Inebriated revellers weave their way to bus stations or nearby homes. As the bars close and people start heading home, the döner kabob shop does steady business until late in the night, doing its part to provide late night snacks. Further up the road, the street is quieter, more residential. Students make their way across the road to the 24-7 Tesco, where the night clerks know us well. Whether we have been out in the city or merely at the uni, this is the end to our evening: Cadbury bars, kettle crisps, and hysterical laughter.

Via Verde, Sesto Florentino, Italy. Photo: Nicole Eisenmann

Youngstown: A Place for Families

Kelly Koss

In the summer of 2007, the University of Michigan Master of Urban Design students were invited by Youngstown State University (YSU) and The Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) to help re-imagine downtown Youngstown, Ohio in the 21st century. The Introductory Studio project was completed in a period of four weeks.

Location Map courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Background

Youngstown, Ohio, a former steel-manufacturing powerhouse, suffered dramatic population loss and economic and physical deterioration over the past 30 years as the U.S. economic structure shifted from an industrial manufacturing base to a knowledge based economy. Recently, the government of Youngstown and its constituents created a new plan to guide the city's redevelopment called Youngstown 2010. City plans from the 1950s anticipated that Youngstown's population would grow to 200,000 to 250,000 people; however, due to post-industrial decline, the city's population is now expected to stabilize at 80,000 people (Youngstown 2010 website). The innovative Youngstown 2010 plan acknowledges and embraces Youngstown's status as a "shrinking city," and outlines how the city will work toward becoming a successful and vibrant shrinking city.

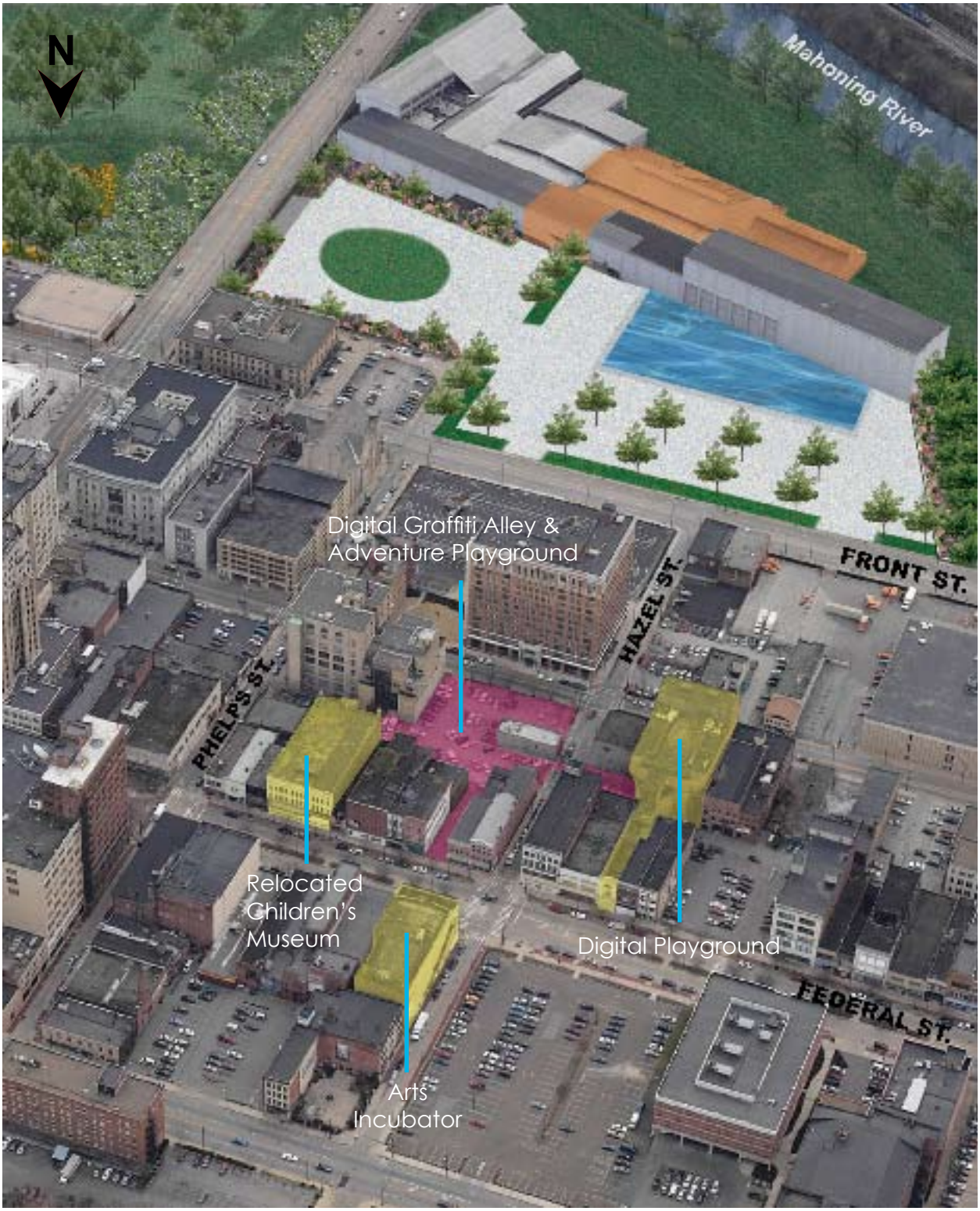
Overall Concept

While visiting Youngstown for three days in July, it was obvious that downtown Youngstown suffers from high rates of abandonment and needs conceptual solutions to help re-energize itself. Initially, we were asked to explore how we could help bring students from Youngstown State University down the hill and into downtown to re-invigorate the streets. We were introduced to many local residents and business owners and learned a lot about downtown Youngstown's past, its present status, and its hopes and expectations for the downtown's future.

People repeatedly said that "Youngstown is a place for families" which continued to resonate in my head when we returned to Ann Arbor to begin designing. The idea of Youngstown as a place for families drives the concept for this proposal. This concept re-uses some of the buildings already owned by the Community Improvement Corporation, and publicly owned park land as tools to spark downtown's redevelopment. I recommend that the city invests money in creating public spaces that could be enjoyed by children and twentysomethings alike to make downtown a vibrant destination for residents and visitors.

The area in green is the YSU Campus and the area in purple shows downtown Youngstown. The blue represents the Mahoning River. The CIC wants to increase connectivity between YSU and Downtown.

Overall Concept Plan



The overarching concept for this plan focuses on clustering "kid-friendly" spaces by redeveloping properties adjacent to Federal Street, Youngstown's "Main Street." Additionally, this proposal seeks to better integrate the Mahoning River into the city by establishing a large public plaza and riverfront park on the edge of downtown.

Key Components of the Concept

Establish an Arts Incubator on Federal Street in the old Paramount Theater building that will help reinforce this area's strength as a cultural district in downtown Youngstown. Creating work space and gallery space in the building would provide a place for YSU students and community members to mingle. The Arts Incubator can also double as a small movie theater showing independent films in the evenings.

Vacant Paramount Theater in July 2007.
Photo Courtesy of Tyson Stevens

Relocate The Children's Museum of the Valley from its current location on Boardman to the Kress Building on Federal Street. Relocating the Children's Museum will be catalytic in clustering 'kid friendly' activity spots together to reinvigorate Federal Street.

Abandoned Kress Building in July 2007.
Photo Courtesy of Heather Smirl

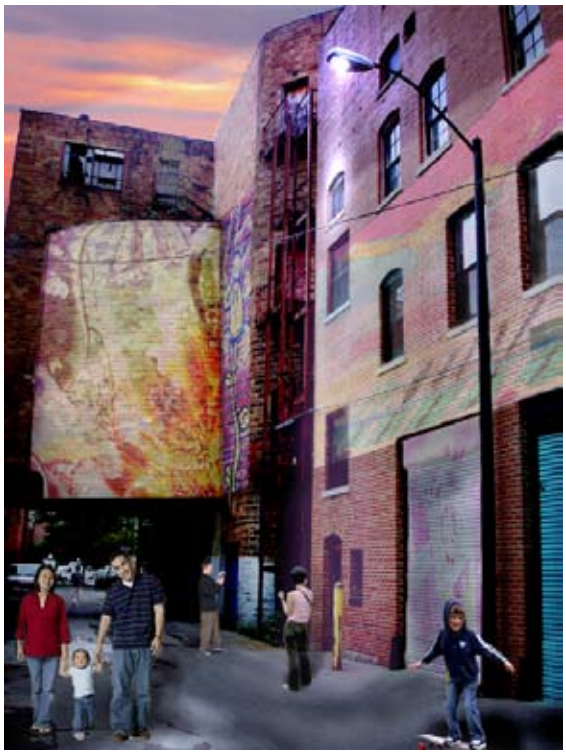
Image of South Street Seaport Playground in Lower Manhattan, NY.
Designed by: David Rockwell
Source: http://nymag.com/intel/2007/01/fancy_new_seaport_playground_n_1.html

Change the police station parking lot into an Adventure Playground located near the Arts Incubator, Digital Playground, Digital Graffiti Alley, and Children's Museum. Adventure Playgrounds are popular in Europe. They consist of elements that children can manipulate and encourage imaginative play. It is a flexible playspace allowing children to engage in developmentally appropriate activities.

Construct a Digital Playground on Federal Street at the old State Theater location. Elements of the Digital Playground include: a movie studio, international communications and networking hub, 3D design lab, sound lab, projected games, digital design center, a technology classroom, and virtual reality gaming. The creation of this space will capitalize on the city's strength as a place for technological innovation and serve as a regional destination.

Youngstown's nationally renowned business/technology incubator can use the Digital Playground as a place to showcase its latest inventions in the community. During the day this spot can serve as an exciting educational environment for children and by night it become a social hub for twentysomethings.

Create a Digital Graffiti Alley where children's drawings are projected onto the walls of buildings in the alley. This alley would help link these kid-friendly spaces together.



View of proposed Digital Graffiti Alley

View of proposed Digital Playground

Creating a lively public plaza between the edge of downtown and the Ohio Alloy Building will help draw people towards the riverfront and create an impromptu kids' space and gathering place for people of all ages (similar to Jamison Square in Portland, Oregon).

Establish Mahoning Riverfront Park to connect downtown Youngstown to the Mahoning River by creating a large park and integrating it into the larger regional green network. Mahoning Riverfront Park will provide for a variety of both passive and programmed recreational and educational activities in a natural environment.

Paolo Soleri: Another Urban Utopian

Catherine Gaines Sanders

This paper is a comparative analysis of two urban theorists, Paolo Soleri and Ebenezer Howard, with a focus on Soleri. It briefly introduces Soleri's projects and theories. The paper then gives a history of Howard, especially focusing upon his Garden Cities, followed by a more detailed history of Soleri, which touches on his life before, during, and after the construction of his famous urban experiment, Arcosanti. The paper then compares the two theorists, highlighting their similarities and differences. The paper concludes with an author's reflection upon the success and failure of Arcosanti as an urban experiment and as a model of a sustainable habitat.

Introduction

For over three decades, Paolo Soleri has been challenging designers with his drawings, writings, and innovative architecture. Soleri, highly critical of contemporary movements in the built environment, has sought, over the course of his life, to promote *arcology*. "Arcology" is a neologism he coined himself, a blending of the words "architecture" and "ecology." Soleri sees ecological systems as the model of how architecture should be built, and he has spent his life drawing and designing arcologies in many environments. The project that he is most well-

Sedona Desert. Photo: Allison Craddock

known for—the city of Acrosanti, Arizona—is a futurist vision of a city; however, it is also a contemporary model of an arcology.

His ideas are not futuristic in the way that most people understand the term. For Soleri, humankind overshot the "future" in its hell-bent dash towards progress. His vision is retrospective, considerate of natural processes, and innovative in a way that seems archaic. At Arcosanti, the residents and visitors are themselves actors in the city's strange evolution—they build, maintain, administrate, guide, and teach. This kind of community is resonant of the self-sustaining towns of the pre-industrial era. It is a return, then, to a lifestyle that has been lost and which Soleri asks his adherents to find again. However, Soleri is not satisfied to naively return to a pre-industrial-like state; rather, he challenges the status quo to use its nearly endless resources to be thoughtfully progressive. Soleri places learning and cultural institutions in every arcology, promoting learning, discussion, revelation, and innovation, and in this way he assures that these cites can be *truly* self-sustaining.

While Soleri's challenge is pertinent, it goes too far, and the worthiness of his drive has been lost in a cultural clash of worldviews. Soleri, rather than being collaborative, has been combative, refusing to cooperate or to compromise. Soleri envisions a solution to the world's problems; however, he ignores the many steps required to get there.

It is for this reason that he can be so easily compared to the other famous utopian designers of the 20th century, especially Ebenezer Howard. By comparing Paolo Soleri's successes and failures to Howard's, and contrasting their differences, it is easy to see how progressive urban theory has changed in the 20th century. This essay will briefly establish Howard's history and theories in order to compare them with Soleri's own ideas. Howard's and Soleri's relative successes and failures will be explored, and, finally, Soleri's work will be critically analyzed for its impact on "outsiders." In this way, it will be easy to discover how Soleri fits within an established group of urban utopians.

A Brief History of Ebenezer Howard and his Work

Ebenezer Howard's career as an urban theorist spanned the turn of the last century, and was very fruitful. Born in London, England in 1850, Howard saw first-hand the effects of industrialization on the urban landscape (Howard, 2007). At that time in London overcrowding was rampant, and its effects, combined with sanitation and water supply problems, were devastating. It is not difficult to see how urban density could be seen as such a horror—as an *agent*, rather than a *symptom*, of social ills. Similarly, it is not difficult to see how Howard's proposal seemed the perfect "solution" to these ills.

Howard, in his publication, "Garden Cities of To-morrow," proposed Garden Cities—decentralized satellite cities. For Howard, the problem was *redistribution*, and the fact that this redistribution of the population had to be self-selected only intensified the problem. People were "drawn" to the Town for the benefits it offered: jobs, wages, and excitement. In order to "draw people out," attractions outside the city had to be created that were more potent than attractions in the city. Howard used magnets as a metaphor for this process, initially opposing the Town and the Country "magnets", and allowing them to use their respective "draws" to direct the population. However, he saw that many of these draws were antithetical, and rather than wasting their "energies" in an oppositional way, he proposed a compromise: the Town-Country magnet, which would improve upon the attractions of both the city and the countryside (Howard, 2007). The Garden City was the result of this idea. It was built to be low-density, and filled with commercial/industrial areas where residents would work, retail stores where they would shop, and residential areas where they would live. Howard intended for these cities to be self-sufficient, but with easy access to a wider network of other Garden Cities throughout the region. The first Garden City built to reflect these ideas was Letchworth. Howard himself did not design the city; rather, he hired designers to realize his dream. Howard was not afraid of allowing others to have control of his project—he compromised, and let others interpret his ideas, giving them a friendly business environment.

Howard's ideas were highly resonant in their time, and they have, perhaps, affected the built environment more than his other fellow utopians. One cannot write off the validity of many of his arguments—that urban crowding creates social ills and disharmony, and that a mix of "town & country" presents a good solution. However, it is difficult to deny the possible intellectual-cultural child of his Garden City idea: urban sprawl. Although Howard explicitly limited the outgrowth of his cities with a greenbelt of agricultural land, the idea of dispersion was legitimized by his writings. Such dispersion has become the progenitor of suburban sprawl, which has effectively created habitats that are inaccessible except by car, inefficient in terms of trips, especially to work, and culturally diluted. It is unfair to directly link Howard to these developments; however, when exploring Howard's intellectual legacy, it is imperative to discuss both the good and the bad repercussions.

Paolo Soleri's History, Arcology, and his Urban Experiment, Arcosanti

Soleri was born in Torino, Italy, on the summer solstice, 1919; his name, Soleri, means, "You are the sun" (Soleri, 2001). Just as the sun is radiant, shining light against darkness, Soleri has influenced many minds with his ideas and designs. His life has been active, filled with many accidents, all of which have led him to his theories of arcology. These theories began when he became an architect. At the age of 27, Soleri obtained his PhD in Architecture at the *Torino Politecnico*, and after his graduation, he came to America to visit and learn from Frank Lloyd Wright (Soleri, 2001).

His time at Taliesin West was his first introduction to Arizona. Soleri spent little time at Taliesin; after a falling-out, Soleri left, but stayed in the Phoenix area. His next project—his last in the Arizona area until the early 1950s—introduced him to his future wife, and after their marriage, the Soleris moved back to Italy. Soleri stayed in Italy long enough to learn about ceramics, and to complete another project—a ceramics factory. However, Italy was not economically stable at the time, so the Soleris returned to the US, this time settling in Santa Fe (Soleri, 2001).

Soleri had learned ceramics well enough while in Italy to start a business making pots. After a while, Soleri was approached by a local vendor, who asked Soleri to make Korean wind bells. However, Sante Fe was not the appropriate climate for making ceramics, so Soleri returned to Phoenix. Soleri soon became a master at ceramics casting. He had developed a technique of casting ceramic bells in the soil, and he began to do the same thing with concrete—casting larger and larger structures, which soon became suitable as architectural elements. He would later use this technique to create structures at Arcosanti.

At around the same time, Soleri also contacted a foundry man, who taught him about bronze cast work. Soleri and his group learned to cast bells of bronze, which have become, since that day, a distinctive element of Soleri's specialties. One of Arcosanti's main income sources, even today, comes from the sales of these bells (Soleri, 2001).
It seems that from such small and intricate work, it is a difficult leap to city design. However, Soleri had never stopped drawing and designing—he was an architect at heart. In Soleri's words:

> In the late 1950s, I began doodling with urban questions…one day one of the salesmen who sold bells for us…came by on one of his regular trips and I showed him some of the doodling. Toward the end of our conversation he said, "Why don't you design a city?" And I thought, "Why not do it?"… That was the trigger. (Soleri, 2001. 34.)

This "trigger" led Soleri to design "Mesa City:" a city, as the name suggests, built upon a mesa. Soleri was, even at this early stage, concerned with preserving agricultural land, and he thought that rich agricultural land should not be eliminated by built habitats. He believed that cities and their accessory uses should be built on land that was unsuitable for agricultural pursuits. However, Soleri soon felt that he had missed something.
The problem was scale. He says, "Mesa City, as it turned out, was too big" (Soleri, 2001. 34). Soleri explored systems, especially ecological systems, and observed that in nearly all cases complexity and miniaturization were present. Soleri describes it in the following way:

> Take one human brain, for example. If it were two-dimensional it might cover an area of twenty or so square miles. There's so much going on within it that you would need thousands of miles of connectors for it to function. But the human brain, as it has evolved, is an example of enormous *complexity* which comes about because of its folding over, three-dimensionally, back upon itself, and the notion of *miniaturization* is intrinsic to this process.
>
> So what I had been doing by spreading Mesa City across the landscape—and what we've been doing, in a way, in cities like Phoenix and Los Angeles, and most other place—is like taking the brain and saying, "Well, we want this brain to be more in touch with nature," and unfolding it across the land. By doing that, we destroy the brain and destroy nature—we destroy the city and destroy nature—automatically. (Soleri, 2001. 35) *Italicization by author.*

This was Soleri's criticism of modern city building practices. For Soleri, these practices did not learn from the ecological systems around them, and as a result were highly abusive of nature. For him, nature is filled with models of proper habitat formation. This is how the idea of arcology was born. An arcology is a practice in complexity, miniaturization, and duration. Soleri envisioned a holistic building, filled with a network of social interrelationships. This single structure would house a dense population of residents. It would also be site-specific, relating to the environmental conditions of each place, capitalizing upon climatic patterns and natural resources, and using passive solar. Soleri says: "In an arcology, the built and the living interact as organs would in a highly evolved being. This means many systems work together, with efficient circulation of people and resources, multi-use buildings,

and solar orientation for lighting, heating and cooling" ("Arcosanti Project History." 2003). Soleri worked tirelessly to put a book together that explained these ideas—*Arcology: The City in the Image of Man*. By the time the book was completed, a plan for Arcosanti was in full force.
The site for Arcosanti is 70 miles from Soleri's home in Phoenix, in the desert, near a canyon. The climate is extremely dry, which means that fluctuations in humidity do not affect the casting of ceramics or cement—which are crucial to the ongoing activities at Arcosanti. The low humidity also makes it an ideal location for such an urban experiment, because passive solar and evaporative cooling can be easily used as low-tech substitutes for air-conditioning.

Soleri wanted his project to be entirely under his intellectual control, which meant building it himself. This was very limiting, and prevented Soleri from creating the single structure that he originally envisioned. The structures that have been built on the site are mostly silt-cast concrete, and most utilize passive solar.
Arcosanti has always been highly supportive of educational, artistic, and cultural pursuits. From its inception, it has invited artists, performers, musicians, students, and international visitors to share their knowledge and experience, and in this way, the idea of arcology has been spread around the world (Soleri, 2001). This aspect of Arcosanti has been highly successful. Arcology is not only about the built environment—to be truly effective, it depends especially on changing the way that people think about habitation. However, Soleri's arcologies fundamentally challenge most people's worldviews, and until Soleri's worldview and ours can be reconciled, his ideas will be impractical to implement, except on an experimental level.

Arcosanti, like many experiments in sustainable living, has been successful; however, it is not a city. Arcosanti, even now, is only three percent complete; of the 5,000 residents it is designed to eventually hold, it rarely has even 2% of that number at any point in time (Cosanti Foundation, 2003). These numbers do not constitute the "urban effect". As an urban experiment, Arcosanti is a failure.

Comparative Analysis

Paolo Soleri and Ebenezer Howard have many striking similarities. Both men visited America early in their careers, and were changed by the experience. Both men reinforced their theories with published works and active building. Both lived to see at least a part of their ideas realized. Also, some of their theories substantially align, especially the way that they saw the city and its hinterland as co-dependant—essential to the physical and psychological well-being of humanity.

However, Howard would be highly critical of Soleri's "complexity and miniaturization," which would call for an urban density of 200 people per acre ("Arcosanti Project History." 2003). Similarly, Soleri is denunciatory of Howard's intellectual legacy—the suburban trends that have become deadly in the later half of the twentieth century. Although Howard did not advocate such extreme sprawl—his cities were designed for 30 people per acre (Howard, 2007. 318), which is hardly conducive to large rural estates—Soleri would indicate that he is hardly to be congratulated. Soleri would cite the waste of such low densities—the waste of good agricultural land, the waste of production, of commutes and trips, and especially the waste of hyper-consumption, which, for him, sprawl reinforces. For Soleri, we are at the nexus of doomsday; cities are the only solution, and only if they are practices in complexity, miniaturization, and durability.

Again, this is what Soleri has tried to demonstrate at Arcosanti. Had he learned from Howard's example, he might have brought serious attention—not to mention financial investment—to his project. However, it has been over thirty years, and neither Soleri nor Arcosanti have made much progress along that line. Without financial assistance to change the rate of completion, it will take almost a millennium to complete the project ("Recycling Arcosanti." 2004). In the end, Soleri's words are lost in energy that has been spent combatively, which should have been spent collaboratively.

If the works of both men could be synthesized, a surprising middle ground might be discovered. If Soleri's concerns for the limited resources of this planet could be combined with Howard's more gradual method of change, perhaps our culture would be more accepting. It is impossible to know for sure, at least until outsiders are allowed to take what each man has respectively learned through his works, and apply it to habitat design and construction. Perhaps the respective benefits of each man's vision, contrasted starkly with the deficiencies, will then be easier to understand, and to capitalize upon.

Reflections by the Author

I cannot deny that Paolo Soleri is an intriguing subject. Much of what he has said, and still makes an effort to say, is incredibly valuable. Paolo Soleri, to me, represents a member of the Old (Utopian) Guard because his ideas are so top-down. He has tried to implement his ideas in an urban experiment in the middle of the desert rather than integrating them into functional systems; he has imposed his way upon the design, and it is too radical. Utopian solutions are what they are because they won't "play nice" with existing systems. They are necessary, and highly valid,

because they are an opportunity to criticize the status quo, and spur interest in alternative solutions, but they are impractical as ends in and of themselves.

It was easy to compare Soleri with Howard because their histories and accomplishments run in the "same vein," even though their views are so strikingly different. For me, the differences in their views represent the changes that the world has undergone in the past century. Through trial and error in the built environment, we have discovered how to build well, even at very high densities; however, we have also discovered how unsustainable our current building methods are—methods that are now being exported around the globe—and we are now caught in a race to stop practices that started snowballing sixty years ago.

Soleri, in his theories and practice, sees the danger that Howard could not see, and he has consequently called for radical changes. As he and his followers have built Arcosanti, they have designed it to work with its natural surroundings, designing buildings to use passive solar heating in the winter, and using evaporative cooling in the summer. He has made the sparse structures walkable, even if residents need to hop into a car for amenities 70 miles away in Phoenix.

However, many buildings, and even communities, are now implementing the same efforts towards sustainability; many have even gone farther, especially with LEED Ratings as an incentive. Arcosanti may have been a radical experiment in sustainable city-building 40 years ago, but in a world where green building practices are becoming popular and mainstream, it is neither experimental nor radical anymore.

This theme seems to fit Arcosanti very well—"it isn't anymore." It is no longer the "future" in city design; it is no longer a cutting-edge experiment. The city, and its residents, seems to cling to a vision in the way that many people do once they have decided that they are past their prime. They have acquiesced. Arcosanti could be called a "learning community," or an "experimental community," or an "arts and crafts guild." It can't be called "the city of the future" anymore.

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Brasilia or the Limits of Theory

Christian Kroll

Modernist planning theory assumed that planning, architecture, and urban design by themselves could transform society and create new forms of collective association and personal habits. Using James Holston's The Modernist City, an Anthropological Critique of Brasilia as my starting point, I argue in this paper that Brasilia clearly exemplifies the limits of planning theory itself. Even if it provided Brasilia's planners with a specific and explicit set of guidelines, concepts, and principles, these ended up creating a "formalistic shell for living" that did not transform the status quo but made it even more explicit. As such, Brasilia reminds us that the development of cities is mostly the consequence of personal decisions and choices that cannot be determined a priori. Therefore, planning theory can only help planners, architects, urban designers and politicians (to name a few) "create conditions that might set in motion processes" (Abu-Lughod 1993:32), but it can nonetheless never provide us with totalizing solutions that always objectify and consider people passive recipients of planning and thus fail to include the unintended, the unexpected, the subversive, the political.

We consistently use theoretical frameworks to inform our understanding of cities and urban processes. However, it is always people who make decisions and thereby define the nature and development of cities. Yet, people have biases, identities, and particular interests that are part of both the way they experience cities and the vision they have of what the city ought to be. Therefore, cities are contested spaces and urban processes the result of amorphous, tacit, and ongoing negotiations. Nevertheless, access to the "negotiation table" (the city itself), where the "fate" of the city is decided, is not equally distributed among city dwellers. Inevitably, it seems, some residents have a greater ability or, perhaps most importantly, better possibilities to influence decisions because of their social status, economic or political power, or the amount of resources they command. It indeed seems, as George Orwell put it not so long ago, that all people are equal but that some are more equal than others.

Modernist planning theory tried to change this. It assumed that planning, architecture, and urban design by themselves could transform society and create new forms of collective association and personal habits. Furthermore, modernist planning theory assumed that if the correct set of ideas (a theory) was implemented, people could get rid of their biases and particular interests in favor of a collective, classless and egalitarian society and "a new order of urban life" (Holston 1998, 41). As Holston (1989) shows in his book *The Modernist City, an Anthropological Critique of Brasilia,* this theory was implemented to its furthest extent in Brasilia—the new Brazilian capital planned, designed, and built in the 1950s.

Holston's book is a study of Brasilia from multiple but intertwined perspectives. In the first part of the book, *The Myth of the Concrete*, Holston traces the origin of Brasilia—the reasons, both overt and hidden, behind the decision to build a new capital. Moreover, he explains the planning and architectural modernist principles used in the layout and design of the city, and the way the Brazilian government justified its construction.

In the second part of the book, *The City Defamiliarized*, Holston analyzes how Brasilia, and modernist planning in general, tries to make the city "strange" in order to achieve the transformation of society. Moreover, by neglecting the street and blurring the distinction between public and private space, modernist planning attempts to impose a new urban order and negate the usual expectations about urban life. Finally, in the third part of the book, *The Recovery of History*, Holston traces the process by which Brasilia ended up contradicting its own premises, those of a new, classless and egalitarian society, by granting specific rights within the city to particular social groups and thereby neglecting to grant the same rights to others. Furthermore, he describes how Brasilienses, as the people from Brasilia are called, have, to a certain degree, "Brazilianized" Brasilia, thus neglecting the proposed new urban life and the restructuring of Brazilian society. Holston concludes that modernist theory, as carried out in Brasilia, not only failed to solve or avoid the problems it intended to solve but even made them more explicit and acute.

Brasilia and Modernist Theory

The chosen site for Brasilia did not, as location theory could suggest, respond to economic reasons and was thus not located in the middle of Brazil in order to minimize costs of production or transportation. Instead, Brasilia was built

in the middle of Brazil, mostly for symbolic reasons, as the symbol of a new and modern Brazil that, supposedly, would include all Brazilians. Additionally, its design and construction were intended as the means to create a new era of national development and economic growth. As Holston (1989) states, "Brasilia was to be the cause, not the result, of economic development" (83).

Brasilia embodies many of the premises of modernist architecture, especially those of the International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM by its French acronym) and its most vociferous and known advocate, the Swiss/French architect Le Corbusier. Le Corbusier was extremely influenced by the mechanical and technological revolution of the assembly line. Fordism, taylorism, scientific management, and the link between technology and social change were essential to his view of social regeneration expressed in his architecture and urban projects (McLeod 1983). Moreover, he believed that the city, if it was to survive, had to become the "ultimate machine," *i.e.* an efficient, mechanized and standardized city with a central authority "capable of coordinating all the phases of design and production" (Fishman 1977, 189).

In his 1933 proposal, *La Ville Radieuse* (the Radiant City), Le Corbusier organized the city along two main transportation axes or superhighways designed especially for the automobile, separated functions into mutually exclusive sectors, and included egalitarian high-rise apartments set in vast, green, open spaces—s*uperblocks or superquadras*, as they are called in Brasilia—where workers were to live according to their needs and not to their social position. These principles, Le Corbusier believed, would make possible a new social structure: abolish the separation between (decayed) peripheries and (prosperous) central cities, incorporate all classes, and distribute urban benefits among all residents (Fishman 1977, Le Corbusier 1987).

Lucio Costa adopted this Le Corbusian model in his winning Master Plan for Brasilia. Costa organized the Plano Piloto, as the city itself is usually called, along two transportation axes or superhighways devoted to motorized transportation. Likewise, he separated diverse functions into mutually exclusive sectors: government buildings, offices, recreational services, and main commercial areas along the Monumental Axe; and apartment blocks and some commercial areas along the Residential Axe. Moreover, the government gave all future Brasilia inhabitants, regardless of social status or class, an apartment in the superquadras.

In sum, Brasilia was planned according to a defined and explicit set of ideas set forth by modernist planning theory, and its Master Plan aimed to create the foundations of an egalitarian urban organization. The plan, however, failed miserably.

From Collective Use-values to Privatized Exchange-values

The modernist planning theory that inspired Brasilia's design attributed the urban and social crisis to both the dominance of private interests in the development of cities and the accumulation of wealth. As Logan and Molotch (1987) argue, the city is in great part a result of the conflict between the interests of rentiers, landowners and other place entrepreneurs (the "growth machine") seeking to maximize exchange values, and that of residents seeking to increase use values. Brasilia's planner and the Brazilian government aimed to avoid this conflict by retaining ownership of all land and most of the buildings, including the apartments. Furthermore, they tried to enhance use values through the state-sponsored provision of several services and amenities: childcare, resource centers, space for communal activities, and vast amounts of open green space. However, the characteristics Logan and Molotch (1987) identify as the basis of residents' use values were not present in Brasilia. Its "neighborhoods," the *superquadra*, did not become the place where daily needs were satisfied nor were they the source of informal networks. Moreover, since all apartments and *superquadras* were strikingly similar, the Brasilian neighborhood did not become a source of identity. Instead of forging collective associations, Brasilia's *superquadras* isolated and standardized residents.

By the end on the 1960s, the Brazilian state, under the pressure of the city's elite, finally sold the apartments, and a real estate market developed. In a matter of years, market forces marginalized lower-income and poor residents who were not able to pay free-market rents. This process quickly consolidated the center for the upper strata and relegated those in the lower strata to the periphery. Moreover, it represents the rejection of the collectivity of the *superquadra* in favor of the free-market and the failure of one of modernist theory basic principles: the creation of a classless society.

From Egalitarian Utopia to Segregated Reality

Brasilia segregates in different ways. As was mentioned above, the city was planned along two highways designed especially for the automobile, which for Le Corbusier was the symbol of the machine age, progress, speed and efficiency. However, access to a car implies a certain amount of economic resources most poor and low-income people do not have. Just as the spatial mismatch in American cities makes it difficult for inner-city poor to access better jobs and opportunities in the suburbs (Goldsmith and Blakely 1992, Abrahamson 1996), the mostly poor or low-income inhabitants of Brasilia's satellite towns, which developed

despite being prohibited, do not have easy access to the Plano Piloto. This, as Holston (1989) argues, "places the poor at a distinct disadvantage both in finding and in keeping a job" (160) and also leads to a stratified use of the city according to class lines.

Brasilia also denies the possibility of articulating different visions of the city through public life. Even if Brasilia has plenty of accessible open space, few people use it because Brasilienses "no longer see themselves as participating in an outdoor public domain of social life" (Holston 1989, 311). By designing a city for the automobile, Brasilia eliminated the spontaneity, openness, and democratic feeling of Jane Jacobs' streets (Berman 1988, 318). The street, what Lewis Mumford called "the theater of social activity" and interaction, is not in Brasilia the place for unexpected encounters, street games, or the little shop around the corner; the casual conversation, the night walk, or the spontaneous interaction of different people from different backgrounds. Likewise, there are no "eyes upon the street" (Jacobs 1961, 35) in Brasilia, and the street is no longer, as Jacobs' streets are, the heart of the city. As a result, social life is confined to private spaces, accessible only to those considered equals, and stratified according to social class or economic well-being. Much in the same way as the divide between American suburbs and inner cities, Brasilia's public life is confined to interior spaces that do not reproduce the outdoor, unrestricted public life of the street, where noncommercial activities such as discussion, protest, or celebration occurs between and within different social groups. Brasilia's shopping malls, private clubs, and exclusive residential enclaves, like American suburban malls, neighborhood associations, and gated communities, exclude those who do not belong and create a social divide among those who have and those who have not. Moreover, the possibility of mediation and interaction between classes and social groups is limited and those in a less favorable position, as Abrahamson (1996), Goldsmith and Blakely (1992), and Wacquant (1997) show, become marginalized and confined to an inferior quality of life and lesser opportunities. Moreover, in Brasilia, as Dreir et al (2001) persuasively argued for American cities, place also matters. Brasilienses' possibilities of success seem to be inversely related to the distance between place of residence and the Plano Piloto. In sum, truly public spaces, where social life occurs, diverse interests are negotiated, and the city is experienced, that is, where "substantive citizenship" (Holston 1998) is internalized and expressed, are absent in Brasilia: space in Brasilia has been privatized.

In this sense, Brasilia reproduces, and even maximizes, the distinction between privileged center (the Plano Piloto), and underprivileged periphery (satellite towns) that is so common in other Brazilian and Latin American cities, and inversely so in the United States. As Holston (1989) shows, the percentage of people living in Brasilia's periphery is greater than in other Brazilian cities. Likewise, Brasilia completely separates elite and middle-class residential quarters (the Plano Piloto) from lower class neighborhood and slums (satellite towns), whereas in other cities they are intertwined at least to a certain degree. Moreover, this separation is spatially unequivocal. Brasilia's Plano Piloto is surrounded by a "green belt" (a provision set in the Master Plan) and the closest satellite town is 12 miles away from the city center. Finally, Brasilia's income differences between center and periphery are far greater than in other Brazilian cities. All these facts contradict the plans' egalitarian intentions.

Conclusions

Brasilia clearly demonstrates the role of government in promoting inequality, as Fishman (1999), Goldsmith and Blakely (1992), and Dreir et al (2001) show for America. Brasilia's plan created a city *for* an elite bureaucracy, "a minority population with privileged access to a public domain of resources which excluded the vast majority" (Holston 1989, 205). Moreover, Brasilia's reality completely contradicts both the planners' and government's intentions, which aimed to transform society and create a new social structure. Instead, the segregation and inequality that Brasilia created exceeds that of other Brazilian cities, which seems to support the argument of Dreir et al (2001) that treating unequals equally reinforces inequality.

Brasilia is a clear example of the limitations of theory itself. Modernist planning did provide Brasilia's planners with a specific and explicit set of guidelines, concepts, and principles. However, it created a "formalistic shell for living" that did not transform the *status quo* but made it even more explicit. The development of Brasilia demonstrates that cities are the consequence of personal decisions and choices; moreover, that they are not products but processes. Even if the process is determined *a priori*, the product cannot be because people, actual, real people, are unpredictable. Holston (1998, 46) argues that modernist planning theory failed to consider the unintended and the unexpected as part of the model. It should be noted that in fact *all* social theory would never be able to plan for the unexpected; cities and humans are way too complex for that. The planner, the architect, the politician, the social scientist, can only try "to create conditions that *might* set in motion processes" (Abu-Lughod 1993, 32; emphasis added).

At the end of his book, Holston (1989) states that, "We need not attempt to resolve the paradoxes of planning… Instead, as social critics, we need to retain the kind of

commitment to planning, to alternative features, which acknowledges and even emphasizes the necessary dilemma of being caught between the utopian contradictions of imagining a better world and the unacceptability of reproducing the status quo" (317). It is for understanding the dilemma and for informing the process, not for providing totalizing solutions, that we need theory.

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Istanbul Urban Fabric. Photo: Ross Davidson

Hagia Sofia. Photo: Ross Davidson

The Rise and Spread of Istanbul's Suburbs

Heather Smirl

In October 2007, the Master of Urban Design studio was asked to design a project to the north of Istanbul, along the Black Sea. We travelled to Istanbul, Turkey for ten days to gather research and analysis on both our site and Turkish culture. While traveling to and from our site and Istanbul, we passed housing developments either under construction or recently completed, covering the hillside and valleys, inland from the Bosphorus Strait. During our travels, I took an interest in Istanbul's current housing situation, in particular the mid-rise towers that create no sense of place in the continuously sprawling landscape. The following paper will look at the reasons behind building the mid-rise towers and why the units are immediately occupied, how these new communities are affecting traffic congestion, and finally why these new housing towers are poor examples of street life and a vital community.

The Karakoy community in Istanbul sets the scene for a picturesque town on the edge of the Bosphorus Strait. Karakoy's multi-use urban fabric is reminiscent of the lively streets of Florence, Italy (Photo 1). The locals greet each other on the streets, while people watch from the third and fourth floors of mixed-use apartment houses, which often share a common wall and face the bustle of people moving up and down the street. In contrast, inland from the Bosphorus and away from the human scale streets, Istanbul is building mid-rise housing developments that have lost the traditional street life found near the water-front.

Photo 1: The narrow, urban streets of Karakoy

These new housing types spreading across Istanbul's inland territory are products of mass housing developments planned for residents who can no longer afford the high rents near the Bosphorus. This paper will address three central questions: (1) Why are these mid-rise housing developments being implemented instead of the traditional housing model, and why are the housing towers immediately occupied as they are built? (2) How are the new housing towers affecting transportation in Istanbul? (3) Why are these new housing models poor examples of street life and a vital community? Istanbul's suburbs, though visually different from America, are faced with many of the same problems. First, I will briefly illustrate the history of the American post-war housing policy for a better understanding of the reasoning behind the housing shift.

In the United States, the suburbs were promoted as a means of enhancing national security by decentralizing cities. Large corporations were moved from central business districts to the outskirts of cities where they could expand on land that was much cheaper per square foot than their city counterparts. As these corporations spread out from cities, expansion was on the forefront of the agenda. Large industries developed manufacturing warehouses as the assembly line was invented in the 1920s. According to Masotti, "The need for land to expand is a primary factor that drives corporate offices, manufacturing and assembly plants, and even athletic teams, out of cities" (1974, 87). As the movement of business continued outward from the city, the image of the single family home became an integral part of the American Dream.

In the United States from the 1920s to the present, the American Dream has been, in part, to own a single-family home. At the end of World War II, the housing needed

for returning military families heightened the urgency for home construction in the homeland. In *The Bulldozer in the Countryside*, Adam Rome states:

> The demobilization of 14 million men and women in the armed forces led to a record demand for housing. Everywhere newly married and recently reunited couples keenly desired the space to start families. Yet, because of the turmoil of the Depression and the war, almost a generation had passed with little homebuilding. According to Government estimates, the nation needed 5 million new homes and apartments to satisfy the demand (2001, 18).

In the years to follow, the baby boomer generation continued to seek residence outside cities to fulfill the dream of a house with a yard to come home to after work. In the late 1940s, developer William Levitt produced Levittown near Long Island, which, at the time, was a revolutionary method of homebuilding. Levittown was conceived as a mass-produced housing tract to absorb the post-war shortage. Rome states that, "like Henry Ford, Levitt had found a way to offer 'the great multitude' a piece of the good life once reserved for the well-to-do, and the achievement promised to transform the country" (Rome 2001, 19). To entice prospective home buyers the federal government implemented a system to ensure the development of these communities. Thus, the National Housing Act was born in 1934. Adam Rome states, "[T]he most important provision of this act created a mortgage-insurance program that revolutionized the nation's home finance system. If lenders and builders met a number of conditions, the newly created Federal Housing Administration would guarantee 20-year loans for up to 80 percent of the value of the home" (Rome 2001, 28). Manageable mortgage loans enabled families previously unable to afford property to purchase their first home. The creation of this housing strategy in America in the mid-19th century is similar to what Istanbul is experiencing today.

In Istanbul, the National Housing Authority is offering families affordable mortgage loans where the residents would not pay for 15 years. This mortgage loan system passed last May for affordable, mid- and high-scale housing developments. This new housing subsidy coupled with lower land costs on the Anatolian side of Istanbul—the side east of Istanbul—has been the driving reason for eastward expansion of these suburban developments. Like the United States, Istanbul's rent is extremely high within the city proper. Families are enticed by the low mortgage loans and the idea of owning a larger home or condo away from the Bosphorus, instead of renting a significantly smaller unit in the city. The traditional housing model, which makes up the dense fabric near the Bosphorus is no longer affordable for residents entering the housing market. Instead, the mid-rise housing towers far from the Bosphorus, which are becoming popular, add longer commute times to jobs, which remain near the waterfront. Both America and Istanbul suffer from high traffic volumes due to automobile dependency.

In America, the suburbs were built with automobiles assumed as the main mode of travel. Without adequate public transportation networks, there is more than one car per household, which Masotti claims stems from the "suburban mentality of not just one car in every garage, but a car in every garage for each family member older than 16" (Masotti 1974, 192). The automobile inhibits street life and neighborhood interaction. In *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jane Jacobs states: "[T]raffic arteries, along with parking lots, gas stations and drive-ins, are powerful and insistent instruments of city destruction. To accommodate them, city streets are broken down into loose sprawls, incoherent and vacuous for anyone afoot" (Jacobs 1961, 338). Automobile use leads to a never-ending need for more roads and highways. Jane Jacobs refers to Victor Gruen's disdain for cars, when she writes "the more space that is provided cars in cities, the greater becomes the need for use of cars, and hence for still more space for them" (Jacobs 1961, 351). Vehicular circulation reduces the space for a walkable sidewalk life where a social hierarchy can take place. America's traffic problems to and from the suburbs can be compared to Istanbul's traffic congestion also directly related to an automobile dependent culture.

In Istanbul, these Turkish mid-rise suburbs are springing up around the perimeter of the traditional urban fabric with automobile circulation as their current planning strategy (Photo 2). According to the transportation section of the Istanbul Greater Municipality Metropolitan Planning & Urban Design Center (IMP):

> In today's present climate, transportation and traffic congestion are of major concern for Istanbul. Transportation in Istanbul is insufficient due to a lack of investments, incorrect implementations and uncoordinated decisions. Since all activities in the city are related directly and indirectly to the transportation system, the status and the capacity of the system is mirrored throughout the city as a whole (2006).

Most road widths are too wide to promote pedestrian activity, and most streets running adjacent to the towers are too busy to cross. Many of the residential towers encourage car use by providing underground parking for their residents with a standard of two cars per dwelling unit. A vanpool stops in front of many of the towers and buses people to and from the European side for work, but the vans are

Photo 2: The mid-rise housing towers inland from the Bosphorus.

limited and most people still enter the devastating traffic flow, which bottle-necks each morning at the two bridges spanning the Bosphorus Strait. A transportation plan is an important part of the planning process. According to the IMP, new developments concerning strategic land use plans and thereby considering the interaction of "land use and transportation" should be included in the preliminary planning stages of planning (IMP 2006). Istanbul not only needs a strong transportation plan in the beginning phase of land development, it also needs an extensive strategy to reduce the use of private vehicles. IMP states that:

> To develop an appropriate city transportation system, well balanced land use planning, improvement of public transportation and the discouraging of private car usage should be taken into consideration as a whole. However, the development of reliable public transportation has the utmost priority. The reason for this priority is that it is impossible to reduce private car usage without providing efficient public transportation (2006).

In Istanbul, the lack of public transportation options for residents who live in suburban areas forces the residents to use personal vehicles. The use of cars makes Istanbul's suburbs a poor example of street life and a vital community.

Istanbul's street culture along the promenade at the edge of the Bosphorus has an urban feel. With that in mind, why are the majority of people moving out of the city to live in these mid-rise towers, which have lost this sense of vitality? In Montgomery's 1998 article, "Making a City," he writes:

> Vitality is what distinguishes successful urban areas from the others. It refers to the numbers of people in and around the street (pedestrian flows) across different times of the day and night, the uptake of facilities, the number of cultural events and celebrations over the year, the presence of an active street life, and generally the extent to which a place feels alive or lively (5).

Past Turkish generations populated either the dense urban fabric near the Bosphorus, or lived on farms in the countryside. Why has a borderland been formed between these two housing extremes, and why doesn't it work as a lively neighborhood culture? In America, a large portion of the baby boomer generation, who grew up in suburbia have chosen to remain in suburbia, because of its aspect of familiarity. Joongsub Kim, in Linda Groat's 2000 article "Civic Meaning: The Role of Place, Typology and Design Values in Urbanism," writes that the suburbanites have, "an appreciation for familiar visual qualities that remind them of favorite childhood environments" (23). Nostalgia for the proverbial American suburb stems from the connection between the Baby Boomers and their parents. In contrast, the mass exodus to the suburbs in Istanbul is a new phenomenon due to high rent prices near the Bosphorus and the idea of owning larger dwelling units outside the city. The issue with Istanbul's new development is the lack of place and personal interaction.

The problem with most suburbs is their lack of place. Hou states, "in treating the public realm as both a physical space and a set of social relationships, it is important to examine the multiple processes embedded in place making" (2003, 3). In addition, Canter's Model of Place breaks a successful place into three sections: the physical environment, actions, and meaning (1977). Istanbul's mid-rise housing developments do not sufficiently fulfill any of Canter's three place-making criteria. The physical environment lacks intimacy and a human scale. The action of pedestrians bustling along the sidewalks and plazas is non-existent because there is no ground floor retail or commercial establishments to instill 24-hour surveillance. And lastly, the meaning of social interaction does not occur in Istanbul's mid-rise suburbs because they lack density and diversity. These three criteria are examined further below.

First, Istanbul's housing towers are not designed to exist within an urban environment. Their physical characteristics lack intimacy and human scale both on sidewalks and in nearby open spaces. Jacobs states that, "scale is a combination of the ratio of building height to street width,

relative distance, permeability and the sense of grandeur or intimacy of space" (Jacobs 1994). In Istanbul, these buildings do not maximize the floor area ratio of the land. Therefore, the buildings are spaced far from one another and completely disengaged from the street. If the area between towers was utilized for public space, rather than on-grade parking lots, the neighborhood would start to become a vital place. In addition to the need for public space, a park or plaza between the housing towers should be surrounded by ground floor retail and commercial establishments to create a safe environment caused by high levels of pedestrian activity.

Second, active pedestrians on sidewalks and in plazas establish a 24-hour security system. Istanbul's new housing towers are often set back from the street, with a fence between the residence and the sidewalk where a guard waits at the entrance. This security surveillance system instills a sense of fear about the street, discouraging residents from leaving the neighborhood without the safety of their cars. Actually, a lively, pedestrian-friendly sidewalk culture is security in itself. Jane Jacobs says the public peace "is kept primarily by an intricate, almost unconscious, network of voluntary controls and standards among the people themselves, and enforced by the people themselves" (1961, 31). The traditional houses closer to the Bosphorus with their close proximity to the sidewalk, and the diversity of uses on the ground floor of each building exude street security. In the suburbs, people tend to use their cars to buy food or other amenities, which are often not within walking distance from their homes. Constant pedestrian movement throughout a space, 24-hours a day constitutes a lively and safe street environment. Pedestrian activity not only creates safe streets, but generates urban environments. Montgomery (1998) states "without activity, there can be no urbanity" (5). If Istanbul implemented these mixed-use principles during the initial stages of the planning process, street activity, and security would increase. Street activity is also achieved through density of residents.

Lastly, the lack of residential density and diversity of ground floor land use in Istanbul's mid-rise suburbs limits social interaction. The suburbs of Istanbul have no corner markets, or small, family-owned coffee shops. The towers do not have the density or diversity in land use needed to compete with the traditional housing model found closer to the Bosphorus. "The key to sustaining diversity lies in there being, within easy travelling distance, relatively large numbers of people with different tastes and proclivities. In other words, a relatively high population density" (Montgomery 1998, 7). Businesses selling a variety of amenities throughout different times of the day would create social interaction. If Istanbul applied Canter's Model of Place to the new housing developments away from the Bosphorus, the streets would become a vital place.

Istanbul's mid-rise suburbs, though different in housing stock and density per square foot compared to those in America, suffer from the same mistakes and shortcomings. By encouraging transit and mixed-use development in the early stages of the Turkish planning process, a lively and safe pedestrian-friendly neighborhood away from the Bosphorus may emerge. This paper has pointed out three main things. First, mid-rise housing developments are implemented instead of the traditional housing model and are immediately occupied because low-mortgage loans offered to potential home buyers are a major incentive for Istanbul residents to move to the suburbs. Second, these new housing towers affect transportation in Istanbul, causing traffic congestion, which otherwise would be alleviated by mass transportation. Third, Istanbul's suburbs, which offer a poor example of street life and a vital community, would benefit from an integration of uses to create a 24-hour environment. By developing guidelines modeled after urban neighborhoods like Karakoy, communities inland from the Bosphorus can preserve Istanbul's dense, urban nature.

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Ann Arbor: A Suburban Ballet

Carolyn Pivirotto

Ann Arbor's southwest side contains a neighborhood, Lansdown, that is entirely suburban in nature. This neighborhood contains long blocks, serves solely a residential function, and has buildings that were all built in a relatively short time frame. Yet it has a vitality and sense of community that have existed for several decades. The fact that a street life exists at all gives Lansdown a unique, attractive quality not found in many suburbs.

The street life in Lansdown starts every morning with the dogs. They are a vital element to this neighborhood and it can be argued that without the dogs, the community may not be nearly as tight. Daylight is not required for their daily walks, which happen long before anyone heads to work. The majority of residents are responsible and conscientious pet owners who find pleasure in the early morning activity. While taking my dog Casey on strolls to burn off energy, we cannot help but meet Champ, Spot, or Ruby. And while Casey greets his buddies and exchanges canine news, it is impossible to ignore the pet owner at the end of each leash. Although it is never a requirement that we all become close friends, our morning greetings are a remarkably efficient way to learn who belongs in the neighborhood.

Once the canines are returned to their homes, Lansdown comes alive with the morning rush, a well coordinated effort between commuters and school children. Although it can never be described as chaotic, rush hour certainly contains the greatest number of neighborhood players and the most condensed activity. Commuters are apparent throughout this stage. Some work in Ann Arbor relatively close to their homes, while others commute into Detroit or its suburbs. Most travel by car, but some walk to nearby bus stops. This neighborhood buzz grows as cars are warmed up, newspapers are picked up, and residents get started on their way.

Mixed with the commuters are school children, who start their day at various times depending on their grade level. High school students are the first to be seen, followed by the middle school students about 30 to 45 minutes later. Finally, the elementary students walk to the school at the neighborhood's center. The neighborhood was designed with sidewalks located between houses directing students into the schoolyard, and as those students living outside the neighborhood join the walkers via bus and car the school grounds become a mass of activity. The parents who accompany their children experience another opportunity to socialize.

As the school bell rings, the neighborhood again quiets down. Parents return home, many in groups of two or three, bringing with them the children who are too young to attend school. Others extend the walk they have started, taking their daily route through the neighborhood, many still with a dog in tow. The remaining parents leave Lansdown as they finally start their commute to work.

Once past the early morning rush, the activity level lessens but never ceases. Dogs continue to get walked. The exercisers come out walking, jogging, running, or perhaps biking. All are taking advantage of the peace and the cooler morning temperatures. Soon, homeowners can be observed taking care of yard work or gardens. Most often, this activity occurs in the front yards rather than in the back. It is remarkably easy to stop and chat with any neighbor. One commonly sees returning shoppers stop in front of a friend's house, get out of the car and socialize. As the morning becomes afternoon, the youngest children gather into playgroups. Like many of the neighborhood rhythms, this activity ebbs and flows, but never quite stops.

The pace of life picks up a bit when the school children return. First, the high schoolers arrive by bus or car. Many of them burn off pent up energy by shooting hoops or joining their friends to socialize. Middle schoolers and elementary students soon follow, playing basketball, riding bikes, or rollerblading. Physical activity seems to be highly valued in the neighborhood overall, so it is common to find children gathered in groups outside after school. A few can be observed tending to a job such as pet sitting or pet walking. Of course, many will be shuttled to other activities, but this neighborhood has managed to retain elements from a previous time when kids went outside to play.

Curiously, this neighborhood has the classic suburban quarter-acre lots with ample backyards that are often outfitted with nice play structures for the kids to enjoy, but the children do not play in the backyards. The kids prefer to be out front, the older siblings looking after the younger ones with parents never too far away, all acting as eyes on the street. As evening arrives, it brings with it the quietest period of the day. Commuters return and tend to wind down and relax indoors. Families gather to prepare and eat dinner, and help children with homework. Once these activities are finished, Lansdown sidewalk life returns, not as intense as in the morning but always constant. Physical activity returns as children gather and play outside again. Some commuters again can be seen walking and running, perhaps simply checking to see how a neighbor's home improvement is coming along. Other residents are outside attending to chores and yard work or gardening, sharing with neighbors the garden plants that need to be thinned out. A few leave to run errands or shop, returning in their cars and often acknowledging friends and neighbors. At times, a bustle of activity will be centered at the elementary school with evening activities bringing students, parents, and siblings back to the neighborhood center. School activities provide yet another way to become familiar with the neighbors, and an opportunity to catch up with those who do not live quite as close. The day's news and gossip is passed along.

As evening ends, the sidewalk and street activity quiets quickly. Residents retreat back indoors. Children take baths and get ready for bed, so this requires most parents to stay in and take care of family matters. However, the activity only quiets briefly. Adults start to filter outside again to enjoy the evening before retiring. And last but not least, the canines get walked again.

Managing Growth in Wind Energy Production

Jon VanDerZee

The Energy Information Agency predicts that in the next 25 years, wind energy capacity in the U.S. will grow by 300%. This paper will address some of the main issues affecting the growth in wind energy production in the U.S. and Michigan including regulatory issues, environmental concerns, and technological barriers. In keeping with a local environmental planning context, most of the focus will be on environmental concerns, including concerns over public safety and welfare, with many references to local policies and regulations. A discussion of wind energy production is certainly apropos as policy-makers are recognizing the problems associated with current methods of energy production.

Worldwide patterns of energy consumption are leading towards an ecological catastrophe in the form of global climate change. According to the International Energy Agency, in the year 2000 79.4 percent of total worldwide primary energy supply came from fossil fuels that emit greenhouse gases (GHG) (International Energy Agency 2002). In contrast, only 13.8 percent of total primary energy came from renewable sources (the remaining 6.8 percent came from nuclear power), and of that the vast majority was from hydropower, combustible renewables, and wastes in periphery and semi-periphery nations. Only 0.065 percent came from solar and wind. In the U.S. the percentage of energy from renewable sources was just 6 percent as of 2004, with only 0.18 percent of total energy coming from solar and wind (Energy Information Administration 2003). The greatest challenge in the coming decades will be reducing our overall energy consumption and shifting to an energy source, such as wind, that does not emit GHGs.

Modern California windmills. Photo: Krista Trout-Edwards

The Energy Information Agency predicts that in the next 25 years, wind energy capacity in the U.S. will grow threefold, bringing it to about 12,000 megawatts (MW) (Johnson 2003). This paper will address some of the main issues affecting the growth in wind energy production in the U.S. and Michigan including regulatory issues, environmental concerns, and technological barriers. It will look at strategies for eliminating barriers to wind production across these issues at all levels of government, and will analyze case studies of successful wind energy production in the U.S. In keeping with a local environmental planning context, most of the focus will be on environmental concerns, including concerns over public safety and welfare, with many references to local policies and regulations. A key resource specific to Michigan concerning local ordinances is the "Wind Siting Guidelines for Wind Energy Systems Draft Report" developed by the Michigan Energy Office in the Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG). According to the report, these guidelines are meant "to help local officials strike a balance between the need for clean, renewable energy resources and a local government's responsibility to protect the public health, safety and welfare" (Klepinger 2007).

The paper will also address the trade-offs associated with onshore and offshore wind development in relation to the aforementioned issues. A discussion of off-shore wind production is especially pertinent to Michigan, which boasts the potential for 44,000 MW of offshore wind generating capacity according to the National Renewable

Energy Laboratory. As a comparison, current power generation capacity from all sources in Michigan is 29,000 MW (Energy Information Administration 2003). The paper will begin with a short overview of wind energy technology and its limitations, then analyze environmental problems and benefits related to wind production, and offer suggestions for regulatory solutions at all levels of government. It will conclude with a presentation of pertinent case studies.

Technological Barriers to Wind Production

The basic operation of wind turbine generators (WTG) is simple – wind spins the blades, which spin a shaft, which connects to a generator that produces electricity. At this point in time, power production from wind is limited in relation to fossil or nuclear fuels since a single nuclear power plant can still generate more power than the world's four largest wind farms combined (Johnson 2003). The key technological difficulties related to wind energy production include scattered resource availability, difficulty in energy storage, turbine production, and electricity transmission.

Windmill in the French Provenal region. Photo: Sarah Elizabeth Ross

Scattered resource availability is a problem since energy production from wind is dependent on when the wind is blowing, and this does not necessarily coincide with energy demand. Currently, there are no reliable or efficient ways of storing large amounts of energy for later use, so electricity coming from wind needs to be consumed concurrent with generation. Due to this, many argue that wind is not a reliable baseload power source like coal or nuclear power. As such, increases in wind production will tend to offset lower-emissions intermediate fuel sources such as natural gas and petroleum unless wind energy can be complemented by other renewable sources such as solar and more constant sources such as geothermal heat or cellulosic biomass.

One way of solving the storage problem is by using the energy generated from wind to pump water to higher elevations, like a dam reservoir, in effect creating potential energy that can be used later when the water is released. Another method targeted at increasing financial potential regardless of resource availability is through "net metering," a scheme used by on-site producers of wind energy whereby, according to the American Wind Energy Association, "excess electricity produced by the wind turbine will spin the existing home or business electricity meter backwards, effectively banking the electricity until it is needed by the customer" (2007).

Another technological problem associated with wind energy production is turbine manufacturing and electricity transmission from these turbines. Power production from wind is directly dependent on the size of the turbine, which can cause conflicts with surrounding land uses. This conflict can be partly overcome by moving wind farms offshore and increasing turbine size, since offshore turbines have lower material transportation costs, allowing for larger construction projects. This movement offshore will also help overcome the problem of high transmission costs, which are inherent with any renewable energy technology based on immobile fuel sources. Offshore production can alleviate transmission problems since many population centers are located along the coast and serve as easy grid connection points. For instance, consider that about 26 million people live in coastal counties bordering the Great Lakes (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 2007). However, there are still problems with onshore transmission since wind resources are often abundant in rural areas, which lack adequate transmission infrastructure. Federal energy corridors can help overcome transmission problems in some of these areas by siting the corridors along areas with high wind resources, and allowing WTGs access to the grid.

Environmental Concerns for Wind Energy Production

In addition to technical issues, some are concerned that energy production from wind will have negative impacts on the local environment. While issues such as dead birds, noise, marine impact, and aesthetic issues in regards to panorama disruption all contribute to the environmental impacts associated with wind energy production, many of

these impacts can be mitigated through the use of proper local zoning and planning techniques based on project size and location.

Opponents of wind energy production commonly refer to bird fatalities from spinning turbines, which are mainly caused by collision with rotating blades and electrocution from transmission lines. In addition, WTGs have the potential to alter migration routes, reduce habitat, and disturb breeding, nesting, and foraging (Hohmeyer, Wetzig, and Mora 2004). The issue came to the forefront during the Altamont Pass wind farm project in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when 6,000 turbines were installed on 70 square miles of rolling hills east of San Francisco. During four years of operation, radio-tagged golden eagles, red-tailed hawks and kestrels were killed by wind turbines either due to collision with blades or electrocution from power lines (Johnson 2003). One should note for purposes of comparison that in 2005, an estimated 75 to 100 million birds were killed by house cats, 10 to 60 million by vehicle collisions, and 100 to 500 million by collisions with buildings and structures. By contrast, only 20 to 30 thousand birds were killed by interaction with wind power developments and this number is expected to increase to only 80 to 120 thousand by 2020 (Klepinger 2007).

A major concern of groups like the Audubon Society is the placement of large wind farms along bird migratory paths. While it will not be possible to avoid 100 percent of bird fatalities by wind turbines, Kerns and Kerlinger suggest that "proposals for new wind farms that consider bird migration routes, bird abundance and turbine height will help to minimize fatalities" (Kerns and Kerlinger 2004, 24). In addition, fatalities can be reduced by avoiding specific microhabitats, using appropriate tower design (tubular or lattice), using slower-moving blades, illuminating blade tips, and routing electrical lines underground, as well as by creating local regulations that require an avian impact analysis for any proposal (Hohmeyer, Wetzig, and Mora 2004).

Although caution in siting wind farms can avoid many problems with avian wildlife, development of off-shore wind production may result in impact to the surrounding aquatic community. Specific impacts to marine life include the effects of electromagnetic fields generated by turbines and underwater cables, noise from installation and electricity generation, and habitat degradation or fragmentation. "[Marine biologists are concerned that electromagnetic fields near the generators and cables might disrupt navigation of some fish and mammalian species that use the earth's magnetic field for navigation." (Pryor, Shahinian, and Stout 2005, 17). This is of special concern where navigation to breeding grounds is involved. Besides electromagnetic disruption, noise could disrupt or displace marine life sensitive to low-frequency sounds produced during power generation. Another concern is the impact on traveling or feeding fish and marine habitat from foundations of very large wind farms, which could act as an obstacle, as well as how transmission cables are laid or buried (Pryor, Shahinian, and Stout 2005, 18).

A recent report released in Denmark assessed the environmental impacts of offshore wind farms and found that waterbird collision is rare, abundance and biomass of benthic communities increased at the wind farm sites, and effects of electromagnetic fields varied by fish—some were attracted to the fields, while others avoided them. In an article about the Denmark study, Jack Coleman notes that one site experienced a slight decrease in porpoise activity, which slowly began to increase after initial construction (2006). Overall, the report suggested that offshore wind development creates little harm to the marine community, especially past the construction phase. Currently, the environmental effects of offshore wind production are not well understood, but may decrease as the farm moves further from shore, where aquatic life is less dense.

In addition, the further the wind farm is placed offshore, the less visual impact it will have. Visual impact is another potential barrier for constructing wind turbines, and one that may be opposed by nearby residents of a proposed wind farm. According to a report issued by the European Wind Energy Association, "visual impact (from WTGs) has a direct effect on…a landscape. A landscape attracts different perceptions since aesthetic values such as beauty and diversity are subjective, while its value will also be influenced by use (e.g. national park, wildlife habitat, agricultural land)." (Hohmeyer, Wetzig, and Mora 2004, 179). As such, citizen participation and public buy-in will be important in alleviating concerns over visual impact. Dan Albano of Global Winds Harvest Inc. says that "concern about visual impact is the biggest hurdle to using wind power in some locations and that resistance has hardened in places where people have summer homes." (Homsy 2007, 48). A prime example of this resistance is embodied in the "Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound," a citizen group in Cape Cod that is opposed to the development of an offshore wind farm in Nantucket Sound based on aesthetic issues and reduction of visual amenity.

Author Paul Gipe suggests the following aesthetic guidelines for wind farms to reduce visual impact and increase public acceptance: ensure visual uniformity (direction of rotation, type of turbine, and tower height); avoid fencing; minimize or eliminate roads; bury intraproject power lines; limit or remove ancillary structures from the site; remove inoperative turbines; avoid steep slopes; control erosion

and promptly revegetate; remove litter and scrap; and clean dirty turbines and towers (Gipe 1995). One possibility of reducing aesthetic problems is the reuse of industrial sites, pending availability of wind resource. Again, local zoning regulations concerning siting of WTGs will be an important part in alleviating concern over visual impact. These ordinances should require a visual impact statement, including a visual simulation of the proposed development.

Another component of aesthetic impact is shadow flicker, which occurs when rotating blades interfere with the sun's rays and cause a flickering effect due to the shadows of rotating blades. This is of particular concern as it affects sun shining directly into nearby residences. The only regulation to date concerning shadow flicker was enacted in Germany, where a court ruled that the maximum allowable flicker would be 30 hours per year (Klepinger 2007). A technical strategy for alleviating shadow flicker involves installing programs that cause turbines to shut down when conditions make shadow flicker likely.

In addition to concerns over visual impact, noise from wind turbines comes from the spinning blades, the generator, the gearbox, and the hydraulic system (however, with advances in technology the hydraulic system is now virtually silent) (Klepinger 2007). The impact this noise has on the surrounding community depends on adjacent land uses, ambient conditions, and urban/rural characteristics. Noise from large wind turbines (greater than 1 MW) can approach moderate levels (less than 50 dBA) at 200 to 300 meters from the source depending on surrounding ambient conditions and turbine type. As a comparison a quiet room is 40dBA and a normal conversation 3 feet away is 60dBA (Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety 2007). Importantly, adding another turbine of the same power level only increases sound pressure by roughly three dBA, so clustering of turbines will have advantages in concentrating noise level (Hohmeyer, Wetzig, and Mora 2004).

Distance from noise plays an important role in perceived sound level, and as such siting guidelines suggest noise level from WTGs should not exceed 55 dBA at the property line unless the ambient sound pressure level exceeds 55 dBA, in which case the guideline should be the ambient level plus 5 dBA (Department of Labor and Economic Growth 2007). The guidelines suggest that for Utility Grid systems, this sound pressure level cannot be exceeded for more than 3 minutes in any hour of the day, and the applicant should provide modeling of the system prior to installation to confirm that the system will not exceed maximum sound pressure levels. These are only guidelines for localities, based on EPA and World Health Organization reports of noise effects on public health, so communities should modify these levels depending on individual circumstance.

Regulatory Issues

While concerns over aesthetic and environmental impact can primarily be addressed at the local level, federal and state governments play key roles in encouraging wind energy production. One of the most effective federal policies to encourage wind energy production would be a national renewable portfolio standard, which would mandate that a certain portion of energy production come from renewable sources. For example, the house version of the recently proposed energy bill would require 25 percent of the nation's electricity to come from renewable sources by 2025 (Lacey 2007). In addition, federal tax credits to producers of renewable energy would help make renewable energy production more competitive. Ultimately, power generated from fossil fuel sources is drastically under-priced, with current costs failing to reflect the impact these fuels have on climate change and human health. Thus, any regulation that sends price signals based on true social cost (such as a cap-and-trade system or carbon tax) would place renewable energy on an equal playing field with fossil fuels, resulting in increased financial feasibility.

States are currently taking the lead in promoting clean energy. Indeed, one school of thought is that federal mandates are unnecessary – if states lead the way, the federal government will follow. At this point, 20 states and Washington D.C. have enacted state-wide renewable portfolio standards. Michigan has yet to follow, but according to a recent article by Eric Morath, Governor Jennifer Granholm recently called for a mandate that 25 percent of power come from renewable sources by 2025 (2007). States can also play a key role in financing energy initiatives, with the bulk of grants and financial assistance coming from state government.

While often overlooked by an industry that is spatially ubiquitous and seldom associated with concerted local effort, local governments do have a strong role to play in promoting renewable energy. Many localities have set their own renewable portfolio standards. For example, Ann Arbor recently implemented an "energy challenge," which calls for municipal operations to use 30 percent renewable energy by 2010, and this "extends to the entire city" by 2015. As part of Ann Arbor's energy plan, the city is looking into purchasing "locally-grown" electricity from wind. According to the City's website, they are "partnering with Washtenaw County and others on the Washtenaw Wind Project, an effort to evaluate and encourage wind development in the county." (City of Ann Arbor 2007).

In addition to passing ordinances encouraging renewable energy production, localities will also need to ensure land use compatibility. The installation of WTGs may conflict with surrounding land uses depending on the rural character of the installation site. Since only 1 percent to 3 percent of total area required for wind production is dedicated to the turbine—the remaining land being required for proper turbine spacing—wind farms are typically well-situated to rural areas and farmland (Hohmeyer, Wetzig, and Mora 2004). Farmers can still use 99 percent of the land for growing crops, and the space occupied by the turbines will likely be the most profitable land on the farm. One way that local governments can alleviate concerns over land use conflict is through the use of adequate setback requirements, which address issues of safety such as equipment failure (collapse) and ice throw from turbine blades. As such, the DLEG guidelines suggest mandating a setback at least equal to the vertical height of the tower in case of tower collapse or ice fall from non-spinning blades. While few Michigan communities currently have wind siting laws, the DLEG suggests that those that "proactively plan for wind turbines and carefully develop regulations for their installation will avoid a measure of uncertainty and the unfortunate public discord that sometimes comes along with new land use proposals" (Department of Labor and Economic Growth 2007).

Case Studies

The paper will now describe two examples of successful developments in wind energy production. In Mackinaw City, Michigan, one of the few examples from the state, the village converted an unused industrial area to a center for renewable energy production. Madison County, New York, serves as an example for local governments in responding to the concerns of surrounding residents and highlights the compatibility of wind turbines with agricultural land uses.

Mackinaw City, MI

Mackinaw City is a village in Northern Michigan at the southern end of the Mackinaw Bridge. In 2006, the population was 856 people. The urban area is 3.36 square miles with a population density of 256 people per square mile. In 2000, the city was trying to figure out what to do with unused sewer spray fields in an industrial area near the city center. Mackinaw City has high wind resources due to strong currents coming off Lake Huron and the Mackinaw Straits, so the city studied the feasibility of installing wind turbines on the former spray fields.

In 2001, the city worked with Bay Windpower to work out a lease and power purchase agreement (a long-term agreement to buy power from a company that produces electricity). These agreements would provide all municipally-owned buildings with power at a set rate and provide the Village with income from a lease arrangement for the land. The company built two 900 kilowatt turbines, which power about 600 homes per year. According to the City's website, "in their first 4 days of operation [the turbines] produced enough energy to power 9 homes for a year. As of the fall of 2003 they had produced over 4,000 MWh of energy" (Village of Mackinaw City 2007).

Citizen support for the project has been very strong. According to the city website, the project "has received many positive comments from residents and visitors alike. The residents voice their pride in being part of such a project that brings renewable energy to the region and the visitors are impressed with the way [the turbines] look. Some go so far as to call them kinetic sculptures." (Village of Mackinaw City 2007). This public support was crucial, as citizen concern can often stymie a project.

The city enacted a zoning provision to expressly allow wind power generation and the erection of wind turbine generators. The ordinance places WTGs in a special use category due to the fact that the structures are large, the technology is new, and uncertainty exists about project success. Section 23-132 of the city zoning ordinance specifically permits WTG usage in the Sewer Plant District, but does not leave room for future turbine installation elsewhere. Site setbacks must equal half the height of the vertical tower and blade, which is less than the amount recommended by the DLEG's guidelines. The sound pressure level cannot exceed 60 dBA at the property line, and the applicant must provide certification of meeting this requirement before and after construction. However, the ordinance does not make any concession when ambient sound pressure exceeds 60 dBA. The minimum required site area is 20 acres, but each WTG must have at least 5 acres of site area (Village of Mackinaw City 2007).

Madison County, NY

Madison County in upstate New York is 656 square miles and has a population of 70,200 people. In November 2001, Atlantic Renewable Energy built a 30 MW project on 12 acres of private rural farmland near the small town of Fenner, 26 miles east of Syracuse. The project comprises twenty 1.5 MW turbines, all rising 213 feet above the ground.

The project developer leased private land from local landowners to construct the turbines, which use only 1.5 percent of the leased land so farmers can still use the land for livestock grazing and agricultural cultivation all the way up to the base of the turbine. The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, a statewide

program, originally issued a request for proposals to build a wind energy facility in the area, and Atlantic Renewable Energy was awarded a $5 million contract for the project. The RFP was in part motivated by a statewide renewable portfolio standard.

A key aspect of the project's success was the developer's work with the local community throughout the permitting process. The developer adhered to a full-disclosure policy and performed community outreach and education. Specifically, the developer described how wind energy facilities work, demonstrated what the site would look like (e.g., by using simulated pictures), and generally addressed local community concerns and questions. Currently, the level of community acceptance is high.

The environmental assessment also helped to alleviate citizen concern as well as demonstrate the project's low environmental impact. The assessment included an avian impact study, an analysis of agricultural protection measures, a cultural resources assessment, a noise simulation, and a visual impact assessment. As part of the visual impact assessment, the developer placed large weather balloons that approximated tower location and superimposed images of the turbines on photographs of the site. As demonstrated by case study interviews, many respondents noted that they much preferred the turbines to cell phone towers. Unfortunately, at this time issues of shadow flicker are unresolved.

Authorities used a wind overlay district to overcome the town's height restrictions, and settled on accepting payment in lieu of taxes. The original proposal was to develop the project in two phases, with half the turbines being constructed first, followed later by the remaining half. However, the two phases eventually became one as other landowners not originally consulted became interested in leasing their land. As such, the developer spread turbines around to more properties than originally expected. The County and Town expressed concern over road conditions as a nearby wind farm reportedly had negative impacts on the surrounding roads and the developer offered to repair and replace roads as necessary (National Wind Coordinating Committee 2005).

Conclusions

It should be clear that investment and growth in the U.S. renewable energy sector are essential to long-term ecological and economic stability. Specifically, Michigan has huge potential for onshore and offshore wind energy development, which can help to strengthen the state economy while providing clean energy. Positive developments are currently taking place around the country, so it will be the responsibility of developers and policymakers at all levels of government to support this growth. Investment costs for wind energy production are expected to continue to decrease as improvements in technological efficiency take place. Indeed, investment costs per swept rotor area have declined by around three percent per annum in the last twelve years for an overall reduction of around 30 percent (Poul and Chandler 2004). As these investment costs decrease, proposals for wind energy production will increase, and thus local policymakers should act now to ensure that this growth is well-planned and minimizes the impact on the surrounding environment.

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Ballet of a Good City Sidewalk: Sensenti

Kimiko Doherty

The following requires a slight stretch of the imagination since it takes place in what most Americans probably would not consider a city: there are no sidewalks here and the roads remain unpaved. Regardless, Hondurans consider Sensenti a city because it is the geographic and political center of the county. Located at the foot of a mountain and at the intersection of three main roads leading to the rest of the region, Sensenti has a population of close to 1,000. This rural farming community was my home for almost 3 years when I served as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer.

It's 6:30 AM and I can hear the bus coming. Don Findo wakes Sensenti every morning (except Sunday) with the horn of the old school bus. By the time this bus makes its way to my house, it is almost full with students going to high school in the neighboring municipality and workers and shoppers heading to Santa Rosa, the bus's ultimate destination. Over time I am deaf to the horn and do not hear it at all.

It's the sound of gravel, sand, and cement being mixed by my neighbor across the street and the dance music he likes to listen to while making concrete blocks that wakes me. Other mornings, it is the sound of him actually making the blocks – that pounding sound I never can get used to.

I open the back door to let natural light fill my kitchen, and I see the high school from my back porch. The students congregate outside the gate – there's a pair working on their homework, a group of girls flirting with a group of boys, and a few playing soccer. I finish washing a few items of clothes and sweep the floor, and then I make my way out the door.

Now it's the children going to school, and I walk with them part of the way. No parent accompanies them; even the kids who live furthest from the school walk unaccompanied. "Apúrense!," a mother yells, shuffling her children out the door. Hurry up!, she yells it as if she is telling all the kids within earshot that they are going to be late. Almost every child greets me, "Buenas días, Kimi!" We chitchat about what they are learning in school and whether or not they did their homework. After 4 blocks of this, I turn the corner while the children continue towards school.

On this other road, it is the women who greet me. They don't know my name, and I don't know theirs: we are public acquaintances. They are on their way to the house I just passed that has an electric mill to grind corn they will use to make the day's tortillas. Through the fenced yards, I can see and hear other women washing clothes. I pass one of the many general goods stores. The bread man makes his delivery at one store as another vendor drives past me towards his next destination. He drives in the middle of the road to avoid potholes and people.

One of the most unusual days on this street occurred when a handful of men did not go to their fields one morning. Instead, they filled their wheelbarrows with sand, shovels in hand, to fix the potholes on this dirt road. One of the women's groups organized this event and helped with the labor. The mayor said they did not have the money to fix the roads so the women decided to fix them themselves. They stopped each car, truck, delivery vehicle, and bus that passed and asked for contributions to cover the costs of the repair. It took them two days to repair the roads. By the second day, vehicles avoided the unofficial toll and took a side road to their destination.

On a typical day, I pass through this area to get to my destination on the edge of Sensenti and sit on a rock to wait for a ride up the mountain. The old lady whose house I wait in front of comes out, pats my arm heartily as she does every time, and asks me where I'm going. It's the same answer every time, "Voy para Cones otra vez, abuelita." I'm going up to Cones, grandmother. I can never remember her name so I just call her grandmother. She's one of those "eyes on the street" and tells me if I miss my ride or if it's safe to catch a ride with the next truck that passes by. We are no longer public acquaintances after sharing this morning ritual a few times a week. When I first arrived here, a complete stranger

from a faraway and mystical land, no one talked to me. My awkward Spanish greetings were answered with blank stares or strange looks. It took multiple cups of coffee in people's homes for me not to be a stranger anymore. Abuelita and I talk about the bad conditions of the roads during the rainy season, the price of eggs, and if I miss my family back in the United States. Eventually a pick-up truck heads our way, and she tells me it's ok to get a ride with them.

When I return in the afternoon, I follow the same sequence from the morning except it's in reverse. I hop out of the bed of a pick-up truck and abuelita greets me again. She tells one of her grandchildren to bring me a cup of coffee as I briefly tell her about my day and she tells me about hers. While on my way home this afternoon, the milk truck makes its rounds as does the Pepsi-Cola delivery. At the same intersection where I left the children this morning, I rejoin them in the afternoon on their way home. "Qué aprendieron en escuela hoy?" I ask them. They tell me what they learned in school. The bus from this morning usually comes back from Santa Rosa at this time. Again Don Findo's hand is on the horn, but this time it's to announce their arrival. There are no designated stops in the afternoons. He simply stops where people live.

I get to my house, and usually one of the kids opens the gate for me with anticipation to be invited in. "Fijese que," I tell them, "estuve en Cones todo el día. Quizzás otro día." Not today, I've had a long day. Maybe tomorrow. Shortly thereafter, a stream of different deliveries fills the streets. Mothers who made bread, cheese, or butter earlier in the day send their kids out to sell them in the afternoon. Similarly, men return from the fields early and sell their extra vegetables the same way. Unlike the earlier vendors, this batch of vendors fills my street with a daily, yet unpredictable mix of seasonal fruits and vegetables.

Inevitably kids play an impromptu game of soccer on a side street in the evenings, while the young men play in the stadium and the young women use the other field next to the cemetery. Even on the basketball court, a group plays soccer. I've never seen anyone play basketball there. All of the men are home from the fields by now and they gather in front of a store to grab a cigarette and watch the occasional car, mini-bus, or truck go by.

I go to the store two doors down from my house to buy eggs for dinner. My neighbor, the shopkeeper, tells me that they ran out of eggs earlier in the day. "Ya no tenemos huevos – lo viene mañana si Dios quiere." We ran out of eggs earlier today. The truck with eggs will come tomorrow, if God wills it. She tells me to try across the street at her brother, the barber's. I go there and I ask for eggs. He puts down his scissors, goes to the back of his house, and returns with a few eggs for me. I tell him that I'll pay him once I get money from the bank later this week in Santa Rosa. I leave the shop, and I know what the two men are going to talk about now. "Quién es ella?" Who is she? He asks the other man when he thinks I can't hear him. I, the stranger who's lived in Sensenti for quite some time now, am still talked about as if I just arrived the other day. Whereas the other stranger, who has had his hair trimmed here once a month since he was a teenager, talks as if he knows all the neighbors by now.

By nightfall the streets are dark, and my neighbors close the doors and windows to their homes and shops. Cars and trucks pass and an occasional horse gallops by too. Later, one hears the voices of men walking home from the billiards hall, or a group of women giggling as they walk home from a church meeting.

Fixing the Road. Photo: Kimiko Doherty

Green Grassroots Efforts in Chicago:

A Necessary Companion to Much Heralded Mayor Daley

Joshua D. Anderson

It is widely recognized that Mayor Daley of Chicago has been an important advocate for sustainable and green projects in the urban environment. However, the role of the grassroots advocate in championing these ideas has been critical to their initiation and establishing broad support for them locally and regionally. That role has been largely ignored. To shed light on the important role of green grassroots efforts in Chicago the failure of the Blue Bag Program is compared to the case studies of The Southeast Environmental Task Force, Eden Place Nature Center, and the unique case of Chicago Wilderness. In doing so, the importance of grassroots advocates in the environmental progress of Chicago is established.

Chicago is becoming a greener place than it was during the 20th century. It is somehow fitting that the city which environmental commissioner Sadhu Johnston claims will become "the most environmentally friendly city in the U.S" (Ferkenhoff 2006) is the same city notably celebrated by Carl Sandburg for its gritty, industrial nature in his famous poem, Chicago:

> *Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action … shoveling, wrecking, planning, building, breaking, rebuilding, under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth, under the terrible burden of destiny … laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of youth, half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.*

Sandburg captured the spirit of Chicago and gave voice to the pride of a city full of energy and determination. Today the grime of Chicago's mighty industrial past is slowing being cleared from the center of the city to the near and extended suburbs as she charges ahead into the age of the green metropolis. Mayor Daley has been given almost complete credit for this shift. While he has been a key and vocal supporter of environmental policies, it is important to recognize the leadership provided by many local grassroots activists.

Background: The Urban Environment and the Role of the Mayor

As American cities swelled due to the growth of industry and the railroads in the 19th Century, their rapid expansion and pollution produced reactions among activists and the public. People yearned for a cleaner and more orderly environment, as evidenced by the popularity of the White City and parks movement. Fredrick Law Olmstead supported the adoption of urban green space to offer relief from the ills of the city that people could not escape, where "every breath was fouled with smoke from burning coal …" (Lewis 1996, 29). This reaction did not dampen the pride people held for the city or its accomplishments, however, as Sandburg so eloquently captures. The duality of pride in former industrial glory and hope for future environmental remediation is true of many modern cities even now, but Chicago is the symbolic head of the movement. Chicago is evolving into a more beautiful, livable, and environmentally conscious place. In twenty years when people fly over the city they are likely to observe a transformed image. What was once gray will be green due to the wide-scale incorporation of green roofs and green infrastructure. The mood has also changed. Parks were provided so people could escape the city. With better environmental regulation and the removal of many heavy industries from urban centers, the city has become a more fulfilling environment. City and park are now both acting as environmental agents.

It is increasingly true that cities are no longer seen as a villain fomenting the wreckage of our planet. Their density offers a chance for this generation and those that follow to use resources in a more concentrated and measured way. Large cities are actually resource conservative when compared to suburban and rural settlement. As people concentrate into urban areas, they produce less carbon and have less environmental impact per capita on the land they inhabit. This also means that more space is left available for environmental conservation. Cities also now compete on a global scale as places that offer a good quality of life and a clean environment to attract and retain a highly-educated workforce. A part of this competition is the greening of the city.

Mayor Daley has aggressively promoted environmental improvement. He has sought to reinvent the city as an

Chicago Green Roof. Photo: Larissa Larsen

attractive place. Sadhu Johnston puts it best when he says "the mayor realizes that greening strategies are about quality of life and about making cities competitive because they're great places to live…. In Portland or Seattle you expect it. But you look at Chicago and its industrial past, and it provides a unique model for how big cities can go green" (Ferkenhoff 2006). The cleaning of the lakefront, the planting of over half a million trees, the greening of boulevards, and promotion of green roofs are positive steps to clean the city and lead to decreased energy consumption. However, Mayor Daley did not create environmental awareness. Many of the city's efforts, though ahead of the curve, are still reactions to broader movements in society. The activists and grassroots players at the forefront of these movements have often been overlooked.

The Importance of Grassroots Activism and the Failure of the Blue Bag Program

The accomplishments of the grassroots community in sustainable and ecologically remedial projects in the central Chicago region have been overshadowed due to the high-profile nature of the city's efforts and the Mayor's celebrity status (Spirou 2006). Most analysis of Chicago's green movement ignores grassroots efforts to galvanize the local community towards environmental awareness. Chicago has a history of spirited citizens mobilizing various movements that have made a dramatic cultural impact, from the labor unions to Jane Addams' work with Hull House. Local efforts are often vitally important in establishing broad support for environmental initiatives. Many exciting grassroots projects are being undertaken that engage local communities without the benefit of media promotion that comes with political power.

It is important for the city to support these existing efforts. The city has not always engaged the grassroots community in its environmental programs, often to its own detriment. The story of the Blue Bag Program—an idea aimed at diverting garbage away from landfills—stands as a testament to this. Despite being wildly popular among the environmental community, the program became an issue of public outcry in Chicago. Weinberg, Pellow, and Schnaiburg (2000) offer both a history and critique, noting alternative devices from community-based efforts:

> Modern recycling first emerged in the late 1960s. The original programs grew from environmental movements at the time, which created small, local operations. They recycled waste as a vehicle for addressing equity and environmental concerns …. From the 1960s through the early 1980s, most post-consumer waste recycling took place within these community-based recycling centers (12-13).

During the 1980s, a time when recycling was growing as a public concern, evidence was uncovered by archeologist William Rathje that garbage in landfills was not biodegrading. Hotdogs and newspapers were unearthed largely intact. This, along with the risk of health problems, led to an anti-landfill stance among environmentalists and the public. This only fueled the sentiment that recycling was necessary to divert waste away from landfills and back into the resource stream.

In Chicago, "recycling appeared … to be one of those win-win policies for the city. It would solve the landfill problem and please the environmental community. It might even provide jobs in some of the city's depressed areas" (Weinberg, Pellow, and Schnaiburg 2000, 55). Community-based recyclers already existed in Chicago, but they were small scale. Both the Resource Center and Uptown Recycling, Inc., offered recycling services in 1990 when the city put out an RFP for a city-wide recycling proposal. The existing small players were only equipped to handle the areas they served and were unable to meet the city's demand that they service the larger Chicago region. Waste Management was ultimately awarded the contract and the Blue Bag program was put in place. Because the company contributes heavily to Mayor Daley's campaigns, some citizens complained of cronyism. The real issue for them, however, was the lack of effectiveness of the city's strategy to accomplish a goal. By creating a city-wide recycling program, the local government seemed to provide a needed service. In reality, they were merely responding to

a movement that had already been started—and executed more effectively—by small but active grassroots players.

From the beginning, the city proved ineffective. A series of Chicago Tribune articles culminated in late 2006 with a report by Mihalopoulos and Washburn that the Blue Bag program would be cancelled, and revealed that "[m]ore than half of what the city counted as recycled material was a mix of yard waste and fragments of garbage-including pens, action figures and glass shards." The point of describing the Blue Bag Program is not to deride the city's efforts at recycling but rather to offer an example of an early environmental effort which started as a grassroots movement, was taken over by city government, and largely failed as local citizens and grassroots players were ignored and uninvolved in the process. The eventual changing of the failed policy can also be attributed to grassroots pressure to change course for the better.

The importance of community participation is generally accepted and documented in environmental circles. For example, Weber's Grassroots Ecosystem Management (GREM), is described as an "ongoing, collaborative governance arrangement in which inclusive coalitions of the unalike come together in a deliberative format to resolve policy problems affecting the environment, economy, and community (or communities) of a particular place" (Weber 2003, 3). In describing the Willapa Alliance, a diverse group of business persons and conservationists who seek to ensure the environmental quality of a bay in Washington, Weber (2003) notes an important observation from the group: "A sustainable community needs to be developed by the people who make up the community. It cannot be designed by a consultant. It cannot be implemented by experts hired specifically for the project. It needs to be implemented every day by the people who live and work in the community" (194). Though originating in a study of large, rural ecosystems in the West, the notion that environment, economy, and community can be addressed by a broad group of decentralized and collaborative actors for a holistic purpose is central to grassroots action in urban Chicago. In the following section, two case studies illustrate this idea.

Case Studies of Successful Grassroots Environmental Actions

The Southeast Environmental Task Force (SETF) is a coalition made up of multiple organizations and citizens devoted to conserving prairie areas in the Calumet region. It began under the name Committee to Protect the Prairie as an effort to stop the Chicago Transit Authority from building a bus garage on the northern half of Van Vlissingen prairie, under the name Committee to Protect the Prairie. It was spearheaded by local advocate Marian Byrnes.

The SETF has been instrumental in several efforts to protect the grasslands and identity of Calumet, defeating efforts to build a dump, a garbage incinerator, and even the city's third major airport. "Eventually area residents forced the city to stop thinking of Calumet as a dumping ground" (Wiland, Belle, and D'Agnese 2006, 55-56). They have also worked to create Calumet Ecological Park from a former industrial wasteland (Engel 1998, 26). The success of SETF has led to increased legitimacy and funding from the city, state, and national governments. In 1998, the National Park Service designated Calumet a National Heritage Area. In 2000, Chicago and the State of Illinois both allotted funds to the area for conservation purposes. Three thousand acres of the most pristine land were to be saved as a nature preserve while another 3,000 acres were to be set aside for appropriate industrial use which would not harm the balance of the preserve area. The preserve acreage has since grown to 4,800 acres. Local residents have been amiable to the inclusion of industry in the heritage area, given the history of industry in forming the area, as long as it is done sensitively.

Marian Byrnes, a local citizen, had the initial motivation to save a prairie from a bus terminal, and this led her to help form larger group efforts with SETF to preserve prairie space in the Calumet area. As a proactive resident, she inspired others around her to take a role in preserving parts of their own environment and it was this activity that led to the establishment of local and state funds to provide

Chicago Green Roof. Photo: Larissa Larsen

for the heritage area and a general consensus that new industry to be sensitive to its purposes. It is one example of a grassroots efforts creating broader support for a vitally important and large-scale environmental effort that the entire city can now enjoy as a preserve space.

Another success story is that of Fuller Park neighborhood's Eden Place Nature Center. Fuller Park is located on the south side of Chicago. It is a largely poor, predominantly African-American neighborhood, with a history of drug activity and crime at rates higher than in most Chicago neighborhoods. Eden Place Nature Center is an environmental educational institution for local residents and it is a testament to the ability of an individual local advocate to create broad support for environmental initiatives.

That advocate, Michael Howard, moved with his family to Fuller Park in 1992 and immediately began work to bring about positive change in the neighborhood. He describes his initial work as an uphill battle. In a radio interview with Chicago Public Radio, Howard told the story of local gangs planting a bomb, which luckily was defunct, at his home in response to his efforts to engage youths involved in drug activity in education and training workshops (Eden Place Nature Center 2005). Howard established the South Point Academy, which aimed at teaching working skills to local residents. Eighty percent of his trainees could not read, and ninety-five percent were college drop-outs. It is out of this effort that Howard began to pay attention to reports of high incidents of lead contamination in Fuller Park, since high levels of lead can hinder the development of critical thinking skills. Realizing that lead was a potential contributor to the poor educational standard of his students, he and a group of enlisted volunteers decided to take action.

Howard had the water tested in at several neighborhood sites and the source of the problem was identified as lead water pipes. Some dated back to the time of the great fire in 1871. He led a fund-raising effort and was able to pay for water filters for area residents. He also had a nearby debris-covered abandoned lot tested and the EPA confirmed it was littered with lead and asbestos. "They began to transform this land from a toxic dumpsite into what it is today" (Eden Place Nature Center 2005). The site has slowly evolved into a center with multiple educational functions for area residents and a preserve that is seeing the return of wildlife; as the EPA says, "a doorway for the Southside residents of Chicago to the world of nature."

Turning a once-toxic dump site into a wildlife habitat is a remarkable change. In a description of the impact the project has had on children, Howard noted "When I can share nature, when I can share all of the science, the beauty, the art, even the reading that you can find in nature with children, I really see a light go on and there's a connection. And for our community I think it's a great healer." (Wiland, Belle, and D'Agnese 2006, 61). Perhaps most significantly, the project helped galvanize support for environmental issues from a previously unconcerned community that felt such issues were mainly a concern of affluent whites.

Like Calumet's Prairie Preservation, Eden Place Nature Center in Fuller Park was spearheaded by a grassroots advocate determined to make a difference. Both efforts brought together a community by encouraging and relying on broad support for environmental preservation. They are not alone. Many small patches of prairie grasses exist in Chicago from various backyards to embankments along rail lines because of similar initiatives. The Chicago River is being cleaned thanks in part to grassroots advocacy by The Friends of the Chicago River. These local missions are rarely publicized in the general media. Nevertheless, their cumulative effect creates an atmosphere of environmental awareness and stewardship that then fosters support for city-wide and regional sustainability initiatives.

The Prairie and the Unique Case of Chicago Wilderness

Both case studies above involved the creation of an environment that preserves the natural heritage of Chicago, the prairie. The prairie is an important part of Chicago's history and its ability to house wildlife in an urban setting. In light of this heritage, Chicago Wilderness was founded in 1996 numerous governmental and nongovernmental organizations to "protect, restore, and manage natural resources" (Seeger and O'Hara, 2003). Essentially, they are working to create "the world's first urban bioreserve" (Greenberg 2002, 466). According to a 2001 article, "at least 150 projects initiated by Chicago Wilderness are complete or under way. They include 18 projects related to ecological restoration, eight concerning planning and policy, 11 information management projects, 21 having to do with ecological inventories and monitoring, and 33 public participation and outreach projects" (Knack 2001, 7).

Their size and impact on conditions in the Chicago region are large, but they are still a grassroots coalition. Though they do not have governmental power or economic motivations, they do include over 200 members of governmental organizations, local business, and community activists. This network of diverse players has been successful at turning grassroots motivation into a powerful movement that effects change at a scale on par with efforts of national environmental groups and city government. Their sheer size and impact have also given

them public exposure that, while it does not rival that of the mayor, sets them apart from other local grassroots entities such as SETF or Eden Place.

While the organization does have widespread support, it has sometimes ignored the role of smaller participants. Just as the city experienced backlash by ignoring the public, so did Chicago Wilderness. In an article giving voice to some of these criticisms, Gobster illuminates many of the tensions that arose from Chicago Wilderness' power granted by the city to their efforts to manage prairie. Interestingly, he notes that "there was a good deal of common ground between those who have been labeled 'opponents' and those who have been labeled 'proponents' of restoration" (Gobster 1997, 32). He found that opponents of restoration efforts were largely critical because an outside entity was imposing something on them with which they did not necessarily agree. This perception of residents that they had no say in their own affairs, and the resulting public outcry, hearkens to the situation faced by the Blue Bag program.

Despite early pitfalls, Chicago Wilderness today maintains broader city-wide support for and has been able to obtain funding for multiple projects conserving the region's remaining prairie lands for the public. They have done a better job at public outreach and education, involving locals in their efforts to a greater degree. Together with SETF and Eden Place, the Chicago Wilderness story shows the benefits of environmental efforts that arise from and involve the community. SETF worked to create a regional conservation network. Eden Place developed a once toxic site into an environmental learning laboratory. Chicago Wilderness has created and manages a large system of prairie reserves in the greater Chicago region, and now does so with essential public support.

By involving other locals and introducing members of the community to environmental issues, all three organizations help to create more widespread support for environmental improvement. This in turn creates a better atmosphere for city-wide and larger-scale efforts to enact environmental programs. As various new actors come into the fold and help conserve new prairie grassland areas or create other green initiatives, the city and other regional groups are likely to involve them in important programs, as they continue to realize the importance of inclusive coalitions and collaborative governance. They mayor's accomplishments and international recognition do well for Chicago, but to be effective they must be tied to a local, environmentally-aware network. City leaders are likely to build these bridges well into the future as the spirit of the grassroots environmental movement grows. As Sandburg described, Chicago citizens had a "can do" attitude during their industrial heyday, and they have that same spirit now as they move into the greener pastures of the 21st century.

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The Beach Ballet

James B. McMurray

Amid the suburban bustle known as Orange County, California, exist a handful of places of great urban character. This may come as some surprise to those who think of Orange County only as a monotonous sea of subdivisions and strip malls, but it is home to some of our Country's most renowned beachfronts—Huntington, Newport, and Laguna—which also happen to be places with a vibrant, urban atmosphere. While I have visited many of California's beaches, I enjoyed a number of vacations to Newport Beach with my family, usually in the fall months when the crowds and summer heat were mostly gone. Of course, by "beach" I do not only mean the sandy strip along of the Pacific Ocean (that would be The Beach); I also include Newport's boardwalk, pier, plaza, beach houses, and shops that all seem to celebrate The Beach's irresistible attraction.

Life at the beach is simply slower and more measured than in most places, and this I think is a major part of its appeal. That's not to say there isn't activity, because there is. By sunrise, people are already passing through the main plaza. Many of these are the locals on their way to catch some decent surfing before the day's demands beckon and the novices show up and get in the way. In addition to the waves being caught, the fresh fish market is already bustling with its own catch, preparing and processing the fish for local restaurants. Perhaps the most visible group in the early morning is the local fitness fanatics getting in their morning run. They are easy to spot because of their high tech outfits (since when could a t-shirt be high tech?) and their sophisticated sensory enhancing/altering headphones and sunglasses. These boardwalk warriors navigate seemingly without effort or obstacle, at least until some tourist wandering back from the donut shop unwittingly interrupts the fantasy.

As the grey morning gradually gives way to "another day in paradise," the earnestness of the locals gives way to the carefree ramblings of the visitors. Surfboards become sand pails and umbrellas, running shoes are replaced by tandem bikes and rollerblades (or no shoes at all), and The Beach takes center stage. Kids of all ages scramble along the boardwalk, on the sand, and in the water. Inevitably, most who tempt the tide end up wetter than they'd hoped—only bare feet and pant cuffs were offered to the licking surf, but the sudden and disorienting rush predictably results in more than a few soggy backsides. Those fortunate enough to have close access to a bathroom and change of clothes avoid the punishment reserved for the unprepared, who will enjoy becoming the proud owners of a wet and sandy car. While the Beach becomes the primary focus of the day's activities, the storefronts beckon the less adventurous. Most storefronts cater strictly to out-of-towners, but somehow the area has resisted becoming an entirely kitschy "tourists only" sort of place.

Eventually, the day winds down, the sand castles and surfers have come and gone and the rhythmic surf of the beach's silhouette is all that remains. Without artificial lights to make the beach accessible, the action returns inland to the city, though a few contemplative types can be seen strolling on the sand. Predictably, a second wave of health nuts takes to the boardwalk, but the shops stay open, and some new faces appear as well. The 21 Ocean Restaurant, prominently situated at the boardwalk and plaza, springs to life with a steady stream of patrons. A street performer, artist, or even preacher goes to work on the plaza, giving those passing by an excuse to linger and watch.

But above all, the night belongs to the pier fishermen. Perhaps the only thing this group shares in common besides their fishing poles is that few (if any) of them claim English as their first language. They sometimes fish alone, but more often than not this group of mostly Latinos and Southeast Asians bring their friends, siblings, or even children. I have sometimes wondered if dinner for these fishermen literally rests on their ability to catch it that night (in stark contrast to the restaurant goers just across the boardwalk). But perhaps it's simply a form of recreation, just as with the early morning surfers.

Regardless, it is fascinating to watch as the fishermen (and fisherwomen) seem to follow some unspoken code of conduct as they make room for one another, prepare their lines, and clean their catch on the spot. The most mesmerizing moments, however, come at the instant the lines are cast. To compensate for the darkness, glow-sticks are attached to the fishing lines, and as the lines launch into the air and sail into the water the effect is reminiscent of fireworks. The sticks bob gently and eerily in the water, as hopeful onlookers watch the fishermen reel the line back in—sometimes, something tugs back.

It is from the end of the pier that the observer can look from the edge of humanity into the deep vastness of the ocean. Behind, the lights and vitality of Southern California stretch for miles. The eventual return to the plaza brings with it the realization that at this point there exists an intersection between many worlds—land and sea, man and nature, privilege and poverty. Who said a California beach vacation had to be superficial after all?

Empowering or Entangling?

Challenges of participation in development

John Scott-Railton

Is participation empowering? As participation becomes an increasingly popular concept in development, a debate is growing over the reality and potential participatory strategies in development. This paper engages several enduring questions from development in practice, and suggests a new way of thinking about the unanticipated opportunities participatory projects might give the dis-empowered to co-opt development on their terms.

Compromise is a common feature of development projects, and it can be one of the most basic mechanisms for producing legitimacy. Through this process, a community or political unit can accord some measure of *assent* to the actions of the aid institution. However, aid recipients, whether individuals, communities, or countries, often cannot equitably negotiate the price of their consent to participate. Typically, they have inflexible economic, political, physical, or health needs that greatly restrict their ability to bargain. In short, they may not be able to walk away from an offer of aid, even if they find it disagreeable or damaging to their dignity. The ensuing translation of the aid institution's political power into local development currency and political influence clearly results in complex shifts in power, authority, and dependency.[1]

Participatory development promises to reverse, or at least mitigate, this inequality of assent by providing participants with structures that offer opportunities for exactly the kind of empowered choices that they have customarily lacked when compromising.[2] Yet participatory approaches by definition require more of people than merely accepting material benefits. This increased involvement may not enable them to improve their situation, however, if there are not reasonable alternatives available to them, such as other ways of obtaining capital or achieving much needed outcomes.[3] The choice of joining a participatory project requires specific compromises that may not always be welcome.

Participatory projects are often framed as *people having a greater say* in a relationship with an NGO, suggesting that participation is better than other alternatives. Yet participatory approaches are often resource-intensive, and they require that people accept, if only in certain contexts and over specific periods of time, that imported patterns of interaction will define the way they are expected to engage, not only with the aid institution *but with each other*. Indeed, not only are participants usually expected to accept novel structures of authority and consensus process, they are often expected to actively donate their time and labor. These aspects of the participatory process may result in *less* autonomy for aid recipients than one might have hoped.

Let me introduce two guiding questions. First, *to what extent might participatory processes constitute a mechanism to give consenting participants some form of substantive choice*? Second, *when are participatory projects likely to improve opportunities for equitable and dignified choices in developing countries?* I will not conclusively answer these questions, for I believe that there are as many answers as there are development projects. I will use these questions to frame the discussion of a number of criticisms relevant to participatory development before proposing some tentative structures for thinking about how participation might be integrated into other approaches to provide opportunities for societal change. Following the conclusion, I will provide a short case example that illustrates some of these questions.

Participation is (re)born

Starting in the 1970s, the optimistic outlook of international development projects began to fade. So much had been done (or at least spent), so many authors commented, yet with so few truly significant changes of scale to show for it. What is more troubling, many of the changes that could be discerned suggested the perverse effects of large volumes of foreign aid on poverty, culture, and society. The strategies, it turned out, may have been counterproductive, compounding the problems and dependencies of many developing countries (e.g. Chenery, Ahluvalia, Bell and Duloy 1974, Black 1991, and Escobar 1995). Even in cases in which development efforts resulted in economic growth, this sometimes appeared to create dramatically unequal asset redistribution (e.g. Adleman 1978), and at times clearly fostered greater unemployment and inequality (Little 2003).

On a local scale, the familiar formulas for development projects could be criticized for their imported models with a strong technical bent, and their often self-conscious

agnosticism about questions beyond water pumps and sewers (Fisher 1997). Yet, it was clear that the situation of potential recipients, in their shantytowns or squatter settlements, arose from causes beyond water and culverts. Increasingly, these larger questions came to seem relevant to some of development's most daunting constituencies of need.

Many drew the lesson that fine-grained approaches with mechanisms for feedback from target communities was the only reasonable way to address these problems (e.g. Chambers 1994a, b), and making development more participatory seemed a necessary first step. Muraleedharan (2006) and others have written that the transformative moment for the "alternative" development agenda happened at a conference held at Cocoyoc, Mexico in 1974. At the conference, representatives of the UNEP, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, FAO[4] and other organizations joined to write the *Cocoyoc Declaration* (Cocoyoc Declaration 1975) stating that the then dominant development paradigm, couched in macroeconomic understandings of poverty and development, was insufficient to address growing poverty and that new considerations, such as "self-realization" and freedom of expression, belonged in the development agenda.[5] Participatory development was not born at Cocoyoc, but reborn. A few experiments in participatory development had been tried, but abandoned, in the 1950s and 1960s. The critique of traditional development led to a reawakening of interest in such models, and to their rechristening with an updated language of empowerment (Platteau 2003).

Participation has since spread rapidly as a development discourse and practice, and it is uncontroversially the "new orthodoxy" (Henkel and Stirrat 2001) of development. Indeed, even the World Bank, historically a lagging indicator of development trends, has incorporated the rhetoric of participation into its own projects. In this paper I will discuss the forms of participation that are often included as part of Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) and Community Based Organization (CBO) projects and initiatives: often these projects are referred to as Community Based Development (CBD) or Community Driven Development (CDD). Common features include empowering aid recipients, fostering community awareness, strengthening local communities or building new communities, creating social capital, and encouraging shared decision-making. I concentrate on "mainstream" models of participatory development and therefore will not discuss some of the most ambitious models of participatory development that lie outside the mainstream.

Participatory processes are not entirely static, and their evolution suggests an almost artisanal process: practices are tried out and abandoned based on a growing wisdom about what kinds of things work (Abbot 1999). It is likely that, as participation continues to be used, the ways of encouraging participation, acceptance, and consensus will continue to grow, filling the toolbox of development workers.[6]

Although the academic and practical definitions of CDD / CBD model of participation differ, a quote from the 1995 World Bank Participation Learning Group provides some common language:

> [participation is]…a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them. (World Bank Participation Learning Group 1995)

Variants on this language have become nearly ubiquitous in the language of development projects, yet concerns are emerging among development practitioners and scholars that the hopes for participatory techniques greatly outstrip actual success to date. Recently, development scholarship has sought to come to terms with an increasingly common critique of participation: *it lacks sufficient engagement with the actual political processes in the countries and communities where it is practiced.*

The criticism might be mitigated if participatory development could be shown to be dramatically more effective than alternatives, yet there are surprisingly few empirical studies evaluating the success of participatory development projects. Indeed, in these few studies, participatory projects seem to be effective at encouraging greater community participation than traditional projects, and they do seem to help projects "integrate" into communities (*for review, see*: Mansuri and Rao 2003). Yet the studies also show that participation can detract from the technical quality of projects, and in some comparative analyses, it has been shown to make little difference to projects' overall success. Such studies are specific to local projects and contexts and are of limited generalizability, but their findings make the obvious clear: the rhetoric and current best practices of participation have not experienced unambiguous successes, even in terms of effectiveness at delivering resources.

Compromises are inherent to the development imperative by which agencies seek effective mechanisms to get resources to communities, and, if possible, make sustainable positive changes in their ways of living. For development institutions, participation might be best understood as a technique to avoid actively disempowering individuals, while, in some contexts, promoting the growth of some form beyond the technical, and some opportunities for creative co-participation in the development process. Yet,

the many limits to these processes suggest that, if we have high hopes for what participation might accomplish, it will be necessary to engage more intensely with culture and context. The real challenge may be to incorporate efforts, participatory or otherwise, into broader processes for social and political change.

Participation and Social Change

Some aid organizations clearly prefer to use participatory strategies primarily for practical purposes, to gather information or elicit community interest and compliance, while others apply participatory frameworks with the belief that participatory development is essential to democratizing decision-making processes (e.g. Bhatnagar and Williams 1992, Bergdall 1993). Unfortunately, the rhetoric that surrounds participatory approaches often conflates these two issues (Cleaver 1999), substituting discussions of efficacy, as measured in quantifiable outcomes, for questions of transformation and politics.

Moreover, the rhetoric of participation often seems tailored to suit different audiences, who receive different justifications, which further obscures what role organizations see for participation. Indeed, the receptive audience for participatory discourse is surprisingly diverse. Not only does participation have strong support from liberal democrats, it also has advocates among market liberals (e.g. the growth of "social entrepreneurship" programs at US Business Schools),[7] multilateral donor agencies, and even the occasional authoritarian regime (Hirschman, 1984).[8] Since these groups often have deeply different goals and mandates, the current consensus about the virtues of participatory development is perplexing.

Perhaps part of the answer is that each group sees in participatory development something of *what they expect will happen when the poor are integrated into society.*[9] Even authoritarians are aware of the positive effects of better integration–less crime, better workers–, and participatory development may be one way to achieve these outcomes. Nevertheless, participatory discourse can be ambiguous about some of the global-level social and political goals of the enterprise. While models of participation are often highly specific about the processes of participation at a project level, there is much less clarity about the nature and tangibility of the empowerment expected to take place, and whether it is to be genuinely political. Some of this lack of clarity is probably of uncomplicated origin: competition between organizations for institutional legitimacy and donor funding may lead some organizations to avoid articulating radical agendas in their projects.

More broadly, participatory development may be acceptable precisely because much of its discourse relies on an apparent parallel between participatory development and political democracy, and because of the supposed synergy between democratic means and longer-term developmental ends. This raises an important question: do participatory processes in development encourage the growth of democratic politics, or are these processes themselves supposed to embody a scalable version of more inclusive representation?

Criticizing Participation: Rhetoric and Realities

Criticisms made of participatory approaches have tended to contrast the failures and qualified successes of participatory projects with the high rhetoric favored by its most visible proponents (e.g. Kapoor 2002). Many are damning. Yet, it is important to move beyond the contrast between rhetoric and reality to address the question of whether specific problems in participation disqualify it, or simply require that it be used with greater care and attention to its potential weaknesses. In this section I will introduce several criticisms made of participatory development practice including: (i) lack of politicization, (ii) cueing and local coercion, (iii) superficial or artificial community identity, and (iv) lack of transferable social knowledge.

(i) The new participatory development: antiradicalism?

The origins of participatory development are radical, as Cleaver points out (Cleaver 1999), linked to the work of Paulo Freire and others who attempted to reorganize the process of development. Freire and others saw development as potentially both transformative and anti-colonial because of its potential to break down the teacher-student / development worker-beneficiary dichotomies. Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire 2000) and later works articulate a vision for an adult literacy education in which there is no textbook. Instead, communities are encouraged to choose the words they would like to learn as part of a process intended to give them the language and concepts necessary to developing an actionable class-consciousness. Participatory approaches borrow much from this model, substituting an empowerment discourse for traditional Marxist categories: when people are enabled and encouraged to choose among options, to select *for themselves*, they are said to experience *empowerment*. Similarly, this may represent an interesting modification of Marxist notions of *ownership* as a means of achieving control of production to include the idea of "stakeholders" as having a mechanism to engage in democratic social control.

One can appreciate the radical potential of participatory development when one realizes that participation looks a lot like decentralized democracy. Despite a rhetoric imported from Freirian notions of shifting the balance of power, it is unclear whether anyone in the aid community/

political community really expects or even wants to see the loss of power this would entail in a large institution-managed project. Participation has been criticized on these grounds: it is too institution-driven and too bounded by expectations, unstated inequalities, and power dynamics (e.g. Mohan and Stokke 2000). Today, institution-driven participatory development rarely seems to have a radically egalitarian edge, and it is unlikely that World Bank projects have ever radicalized communities with their nominally participatory community contact. Certain participatory strategies, such as Robert Chambers' Participatory Rural Appraisal (Chambers 1994a, b) have been strongly criticized for being too focused on practical questions, while avoiding difficult questions of gender, politics, and legitimacy (Kapoor 2002). Critics, often citing Freire's ideas, question whether participatory development's frame of reference is too local and project-defined, making it difficult to engage or make sense of possibilities for wider political change (Mohan and Stokke 2000).

Nevertheless, by working at the day-to-day level and enabling women to occupy roles of importance, or peasants to participate in basic decisions about how the work is to be done, participatory development may be having a very direct effect on the social and political consciousness of people—more so than a larger, more abstract governance structure where they do not have hands-on experience running things. Yet, in the context of hopes for structural change, "think globally, act locally" makes sense only if there is room for thinking globally (e.g., about governance or gender roles) *as well as* acting locally—but the projects rarely offer mechanisms for this second kind of engaged political citizenship.

While a project may elicit participatory input through workshops organized around Community Action Planning or other strategies, the ticking clock of donor funding and the organizational objectives that the NGO brings to the table may deeply constrain the selection of how much participatory feedback is turned into projects. These constraints may be inexplicit and may involve the subtle cueing by NGOs to focus on certain kinds of "uncontroversial" needs like water or sanitation, or to make requests that fit the NGOs' own resources and mandates. The process of participation may involve multiple levels of interaction, with the community well aware of the aid organization's expectations and favored rhetoric, and aware too of what the community will and will not be able to ask for. These expectations predetermine a great deal of the actual content of participation. Here are some reports, chosen at random from a list of reports on communities organized by an NGO in Phnom Penh, submitted following participatory community consultations:

> People decided to solve the problem of sanitation, communal toilets as a priority and they hope that they can save some money for their children go to school, have better health, less skin disease, and good sanitation.
>
> People decided to solve the problem of walkway in priority and they hope that they can spend less money, good health, and good sanitation, easily access in/out community.
>
> People decided to solve the problem of sanitation, garbage management, in priority and they hope they can spend less money, good health, and good sanitation.
>
> People decided to solve the problem of a laterite road as a priority. They hope that they can then save some money for their children to go to school; improve their health (less skin disease) and sanitation; have easier access out/in community, and better clothes. (URC 2003a, b, c)

While not necessarily representative, the stock phrasing, summarizing the outputs of participatory processes, describes what people have "decided" after a participatory process. However, underlying issues of poverty are apparent: health, inability to afford schooling, inability to afford clothing, and physical marginalization of the community, among others. Clearly these issues contribute to the structural context of the problem, yet the outcomes of the participatory process are requests for very specific things that the NGO is prepared to offer.

(ii) Projects and resources

The project model of community intervention has a specific timescale and, in practice, can provide only a limited set of resources to communities. A program may, for example, be able to offer specific services such as the improvement of basic infrastructure or certain kinds of savings and credit loan schemes. When such organizations undertake participatory workshops to encourage communities to state needs, the list is unlikely to yield broader requests like fair taxation, government transparency, or equal representation. A development planner may well want to ask: *to what extent, in countries lacking participatory political processes, does providing a community with an experience of participation restricted to the choice of, say, water taps vs. toilets, actually advance their social capital?*

Part of the difficulty in answering this question is that, without certain formal structures of legitimacy, representation, and voice, it is nearly impossible to evaluate just how participatory a process is. It is important to recognize the reality that the ongoing legitimacy of the NGO is not really affected by whether the communities in

which it works accord it some sort of mandate. Moreover, we need to ask what measures NGOs use to ensure that they are accountable to important community needs. Sometimes limits are alluded to, but just as often they may be dismissed.

> *It is not clear whether the strong leadership meant that some families were "left out" of discussions and meetings but in general it seems that there were opportunities for people to take part in meetings and voice concerns.*
>
> -Quote from URC report on participatory process for community relocation, Phnom Penh (URC, 1999).

This quote illustrates the problem: the "participatory" interactions that the NGO will have with the community are themselves often limited to public meetings and focus groups where people take turns speaking (I am unaware of any participatory projects that incorporate the secret ballot). The mere fact that people are talking or "voicing" concerns, does not guarantee equal civic participation or political influence on decisions. This problem is aggravated by the fact that there often is great pressure for decisions to take the form of a consensus.

As Cleaver and Kaare (1998) note in reference to a rural Zimbabwean water project, complex local norms determined the actual processes of decision making, yet these subtle norms are often not discussed in development literature. Furthermore, many of the features of participatory approaches cited as contributing to their effectiveness, such as community pressure to participate during public forums, are not likely to elicit full and fair individual participation.

(iii) When the "community" speaks, what voice is heard?

Another approach to explaining the value of participatory development in NGO-sponsored projects might be that it provides mechanisms through which communities can exercise a kind of power and that, by providing a participatory project, communities are given voice and a chance to operate *as units*. A common criticism of this way of thinking takes issue with the apparently common assumption among NGOs that the community actors they are dealing with constitute and represent the "community." This often ignores pervasive power dynamics internal to communities, barriers to vocal participation, the multiple identities of community actors, and individuals' complex motivations (e.g. Cleaver 1999 and Parfitt 2004). While this community-level empowerment is interesting, community itself has proven to be an elusive concept.

NGOs have sometimes rejected the tactic of getting resources to people via formal government channels on principle, citing the corruption or lack of democracy. Similarly, they may reject such dealings on the grounds of efficiency alone: corruption and lack of democracy may introduce greater inefficiencies in transmitting donor money to communities. Both are either sound bases to attempt to work around or reasons to avoid governments in developing countries. Yet even as they have learned to be cautious about working through undemocratic or corrupt *governments*, NGOs have often failed to submit their community leadership structures to similar scrutiny. It is in fact an open question whether the community structures that organizations choose to deal with in participatory approaches represent more essentially democratic alternatives.

In the course of developing the Boeung Kak Pilot Project, a large-scale participatory mapping and land rights program in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, I was invited to a dinner hosted by a local community leader. In Cambodia, community leaders are nominated by the lowest level of elected officials, Village Chiefs, often on the basis of party affiliation and patronage networks linked to the dominant Cambodian People's Party. Her house was the nicest in the community and was one of few raised high enough to avoid floods. As it turned out, she was among the wealthiest in the community and was a landlord of many other shacks. The position of such an obvious stakeholder, with economic interests that may not align with those of other community members, made it unclear whether she accurately represented the community's interests. Thus, while the obvious corruption of government officials may make it easy to declare them lacking in democratic mandate and un-representative of their constituency, evoking a more participatory approach does not obviate the need to be sensitive to the specific power structure and interests that motivate "community leaders" and other partners in participatory development (Bryant and White 1982).

Problems of informal coercion and lack of representativeness are difficult to assess in the political realm as well. The political class is usually a privileged or relatively wealthy group. While this does not mean that politicians are *de facto* unanswerable to the needs of a disadvantaged constituency, their relationships with traditionally vulnerable or excluded groups and individuals are likely to be less rule-governed and transparent than the politician-citizen relationship in an institutionalized democratic process. For this reason, even apparently open community forums may contain elements of informal coercion that are more difficult to evaluate and contend with (Mohan and Stokke 2000), especially if the participatory project is organized by a foreign NGO that lacks knowledge of local power structures.

The issue may be represented as a question of political identity and influence. The NGO, and perhaps the

community as well, may inadvertently have endowed roles that do not correspond to community interests or structures. In this way community participation may formalize the roles of certain stakeholders without appreciation for their multiple identities and motivations. It would be interesting to explore such relationships with a view to understanding whether they have certain structural similarities to forms of patron-client relationship politics.

More broadly, there is a question about the definition of community. According to Midgley et al (1988), a community can be defined in terms of shared needs, situation, or geographic locale. Others have defined communities in terms of collective action and autonomy (Edwards and Jones 1980). These definitions are useful to aid organizations because they tend to create a single community out of a shared need for some uncontroversial improvement, like water or sanitation, despite the apparent artificiality and transience of such approaches.

More recent approaches[10] have tended to avoid one-dimensional models, suggesting that communities not only are strongly stratified but also have shifting historical and political identities (e.g. Mosse 1995a, b). As Cleaver and Kaare (1998) point out, the "solidarity" model of unified community, common to development projects, may be desirable because of its simplicity, but nonetheless it is largely inadequate.

Cleaver (1999) has explained the problem as reflecting a kind of expediency, a blindness to multiple identities that might be convenient for both community members and NGOs. Community members, discovering the access to power, prestige, and money that come from contact with NGOs, may be sophisticated enough to represent themselves as having whatever roles the NGOs steer them towards. In the meantime, working with these "community leaders" allows NGOs to state that they are involving the community, and hence are engaging in a "participatory process" without the burdens and risks associated with full-scale community organizing. Nevertheless, there are certainly many examples of organizations for which this is not the case, and in which large-scale community organizing and political change have grown through participatory projects. The work of the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights in Bangkok, Thailand, may be one example (e.g. Boonyabancha 2005).[11]

There is, however, a broader question: whether community identity itself is a construct or something with indigenous meaning. In the case of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, for example, the term "community" was at least partly introduced by NGOs, including member NGOs of the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (such as the Urban Sector Group and the Solidarity for the Urban Poor Federation) and UN-Habitat[12] in the early 1990s. It may be the case that these communities function as identities deployed by or coexisting between the NGO and the community and, as such, are unorthodox and difficult to evaluate sites of negotiation for resources, voice, and identity. Here we find a potentially important possibility: that the interest-based communities *constituted* by the NGOs' projects can become a new political force in their own right—a site not only where the NGO provides resources, teaching, and empowerment, but where more enduring community cohesion and capacity for collective action can be built. At present, we know little about this, and more research is needed into whether, and when, this occurs.

(iv) Participation: taking it with you.

What, then, is the value of participation in such projects? Perhaps the very process of participation can itself be a source of value. Through the development process, community members might be able to exercise some influence, though this structure may be transient and constrained by the budget, project, and timeline of the participating organization. Aside from the idea of the value in an *empowering arena*, Putnam's popularization of the concept of *social capital* is often used to describe what communities will derive from the development encounter (Alkire et al 2001). In this model, networks of social relations themselves possess a kind of value in fostering productive activity, vesting participating individuals with social capital, which they can subsequently deploy by calling upon such networks (Putnam 1993, 1995). Consider, for example, this description of a participatory development project in Indonesia originally organized around Community Based Natural Resource management:

> …*human capital* was clearly enhanced. People's leadership skills increased, their technical knowledge and skills were enhanced, communication ability improved, negotiation abilities advanced, and individual motivations to act on problems were triggered. We noticed also that stakeholders with different social status developed the confidence to improve relationships with each other.

Changes in *social capital* were, however, even more noticeable. Trust was established among different stakeholders which, in turn, improved relationships and balanced power differences. (Kusumanto et al. 2005)

Here, the concept of social capital is used to assert that social competence learning (beyond, for example, technical learning) took place. While something will always be learned in an encounter, it may be asked whether this learning actually provides knowledge and political awareness that translates into social capital in interactions with other

social and political institutions. Community members might indeed learn the virtues and skills of political and social negotiation in a consensus-based process, but how well do these equip them with techniques and strategies for the many other interactions that form their political and social identities? Such a question is especially pertinent when the participatory development project is taking place in a highly authoritarian society.

The use of the concept of increased social capital, or versions of Amartya Sen's notion of augmented *capacities* (Sen 1997) to justify participatory development, has been criticized as a deep oversimplification of power dynamics, change, and political knowledge (Mohan and Stokke 2000, Mansuri and Rao 2003). Those who advocate strategies to increase social capital assume that its acquisition will decrease certain *relative* inequalities (e.g. inequalities of influence on shared activities, though perhaps not wealth inequalities as such). Yet providing social capital to individuals embedded in preexisting structures of power and influence may not decrease relative inequality, as different classes and genders, may have quite different capacities to leverage gains quite differently (Mansuri and Rao [2003], citing sociologist Pierre Bordieu, note that the elite have access to more powerful and influential social networks in the first place). Arun Agrawal's recent quantitative work demonstrating that level participation (i.e. time, voice) in community based projects is positively correlated with economic status may also suggest another avenue for exploring the issue of differential learning and benefit in CBD contexts (Agrawal and Gupta 2005).

Conclusions: A Tentative Framework for Thinking about Qualified Successes

A likely rejoinder to the problems identified above is: despite the many problems of participatory development, some of which can probably be fixed over time, *it is much better that projects be participatory than not*. Who would disagree?

Let me begin to answer with reference to a concept found in market economics: the problem of the second best (Lipsey and Lancaster 1957, Blackorby, 1990). In a market system that has some uncorrected market externality or market imperfection like imperfect information, the system may produce an output very different from a Pareto-optimal equilibrium (in other words, a situation in which doing any more good for one actor would cause loss to another). Even if we accept the premise that, in a perfectly functioning market, a Pareto-optimal outcome would be obtained, it does not follow that *improving* an existing imperfect market condition (e.g. by providing more information or increasing competition) will produce a *nearer to* optimal outcome. Giving consumers more accurate information about nutrition in packaged food, for example, may not lead to better consumer choices, since they may be scared away from packaged food and consume more unlabeled prepared food that is worse for them. Incrementalism, therefore, is not guaranteed to yield improvement. Thus, a piecemeal solution to a problem in a second-best situation cannot be expected to have the same effect as it would under perfect market conditions. A key implication of second-best problems is that no universal rule for solving them exists, because there is no guarantee of how an imperfect market will behave.

The second-best problem indicates that piecemeal approaches to improvement, say, in markets or welfare, may not result in improvements in system-level equilibrium. Do piecemeal changes in potential political influence and choice, such as inclusion in a participatory project, in the absence of wide-scale participatory political processes, guarantee that the net effect will be an improvement in individual or community equity? The answer is probably mixed. The concerns articulated in this paper suggest that there is reason to believe that a little bit of participation will not result in more equitable dynamics of power or resource distribution, even between individuals in a face-to-face encounter. Equity gains and losses for individuals may be diverse, reflecting inherent community dynamics, as well as dynamics of the interaction between NGO, government, and community. The situation of the urban poor is clearly multiply determined, so that a "start somewhere" participatory intervention may fail to produce net benefit.[13] What if it creates continued dependencies between the NGO and the community for legitimacy (e.g. Desai 1999), or if it results in increasingly conflicted relationships, such as the polarization of relations between the community and the state (e.g. Sanya and Mukjija 2001)? Moreover, what if it strengthens the situation of informal community leaders at the expense of ordinary community members? Or exposes individuals to greater political risk? These questions suggest interesting possibilities for future research.

What if development projects took as their goal not just addressing the causes of poverty, but also the causes of the poor? That is, what if development projects took on board the idea of helping to create novel social and political structures for those ordinarily marginalized in society and politics? In such a setting, some of the limitations imposed upon participatory development by extant power structures could be addressed directly. One key limitation to participation mentioned here and elsewhere is the difficulty of quantifying its effectiveness on equality and transformation. Yet this criticism may contain the kernel of an answer: in the context of extant power structures,

participation alone is unlikely to provide an alternate power structure in which societal problems are resolved. Yet *if participation is complemented or paired with novel social and political structures,* such as coalitions, social movements, or political parties, the significance of an education in social and political competency becomes clearer. One example is the case of Community Based Federations that operate on principles of grassroots decision-making and strategizing, often with the assistance of Community Based Organizations (Satterthwate 2001, 2006), and another might be the work of the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights in Thailand.

Such thinking is not always likely to be attractive to NGOs and other international development agencies. Not only could supporting such coalition-building seem like political interference, but *causes of the poor* are not the same thing as the *cause of alleviating poverty*. NGOs will need to evaluate what their real priorities are.

The inequality of assent in the original compromise of some participatory development projects will likely be mitigated by what undoubtedly ensues: negotiated manipulation of the participatory process, partly on individuals' terms, and definitely to their own ends. Does the way projects inadvertently make resources susceptible to *extra-procedural manipulation,* especially by the non-elite, constitute part of their value? What if participatory projects aren't just proto-democratic learning experiences, or empowerment as defined in development discourse, but opportunities for resource-taking and strategizing by non-elites that go beyond inequality of the original compromise. Participatory projects might offer rare opportunities for disadvantaged individuals to strategize within a proto-civic sphere. Participatory approaches often attempt to ensure participation by disadvantaged actors, and it would be intriguing to explore whether this creates new opportunities for disadvantaged actors to benefit, more on their own terms than through credulous adherence to the discourse of empowerment.

Participatory approaches may (sometimes inadvertently) create the conditions for disadvantaged actors to advance their interests in ways unanticipated by the aid institutions, through their strategic manipulation of the very process of participation. The NGOs might get more participation, empowerment, and ultimately development than they bargained for, but on the community's own terms rather than in terms of expectations of imported models. Thus, perhaps the original question of participation should be re-framed: not, will this process enable communities to live up to *our* expectations, but *will this process give communities access to resources so that they can set their own agendas for meeting their needs*?

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Endnotes

1 I thank Janan Delgado, American University in Cairo, personal communication, for suggesting the concept of political power vs. political influence as a way to conceive of the power relations between NGOs and communities in developing countries.

2 It is unfortunate that participatory development projects often highlight the value of community mechanisms (i.e. social pressure and coercion) as a technique for eliciting high participation rates without enquiring whether this has the effect making it more difficult for individuals to resist agreements that are disagreeable to them.

3 This may be especially likely in societies in which government is weak or has reached agreement with NGOs / CBOs that they will exclusively provide certain services.

4 United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Children's Fund, World Health Organization, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

5 Renewed interest in participation also paralleled a new emphasis on decentralization of services and governance on the part of theorists and international aid agencies (*for reviews and discussion, see:* Bardhan 2002 and Muraleedharan 2006). For an example of a decentralizing project, see Miranda and Hordijk's (1998) discussion of Agenda 21 in Peru.

6 *Participatory Learning and Action Notes*, a journal, is an example of this sharing and refining of participatory techniques: http://www.iied.org/NR/agbioliv/pla_notes/current.html

7 Some of an ever-growing list of Social Entrepreneurship programs at US and international Business Schools: Harvard, Duke, Michigan, Stanford, New York University, Columbia among others.

8 Albert Hirschman (1984, pp. 98-99) notes the case of Brazil in which *Communidades Ecclesiasticas de Base*, a Catholic grassroots, grew in the context of Brazil's strong authoritarian regime. A more recent example may be the growth of the Baan Mankong program lead by the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights in Thailand, which received strong support from the Thai Government under Former Prime Minister Thaksin.

9 Thus, supporters of decentralization might expect the emergence of market societies, while liberal democrats would project a greater chorus of voices supporting specifically poor issues. Even in 'democratic' and developed countries, there is a remarkable agreement, and a shared and often heroic discourse about the process even as the vision of the expected structural outcomes for society may be highly disputed.

10 Recently, others have tackled the question of community from the framework of Community Based Natural Resources Management, Arun Agrawal and Clark Gibson provide a useful introduction to current thinking about the problems of community definition (Agrawal and Gibson 2001).

11 The Baan Mankong program in Bangkok, Thailandis a large scale community-managed infrastructure subsidy program directed through the Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI). *For discussion, see*: Boonyabancha (2005).

12 Jack Jin Gary Lee, formerly of the University of Chicago, Personal Communication discussing ongoing unpublished research.

13 If individuals participate in consensus decision-making, the best choice may be unavailable; instead, communities may be pressured to agree to a second-best option. Yet in certain cases, such as housing rights, the best available choice (vs. possible) might result in outcomes that actually create system-level losses in power. A hypothetical example might be useful: a squatter community vulnerable to eviction accepts the help of an NGO concerned with housing reform. The community's first choice would be to receive land tenure from the government, but that is not offered. Instead, given the sorts of resources the NGO can make available, the community is led to accept a seeming second-best: upgrading infrastructure, with the possible effect of making residents harder to evict. But upgrading may have little deterrent effect on the government, and the extensive community time and labor it involves will be entirely lost if the community is evicted. In such a setting, members of the community might better have spent the time and labor consumed by the participatory project trying to improve their economic situation, so that they would be better positioned to cope with eviction. Examples of this problem may be found in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. In one case a large community infrastructure improvement project (the "Monivong A B" Community) sponsored by the UNDP in central Phnom Penh was completely destroyed during a forced eviction in 2006, despite being cited for several years as a model for securing tenure through participatory infrastructure development.

The Urban Ballet of Broadway

Tobias Wacker

Broadway in Downtown Los Angeles was once the western equivalent to Broadway in New York. Instead of theaters, the street was lined with the world's most lavish movie houses and elegant department stores. As downtown lost its importance and demographics shifted, the street started to lose its glamour. Over time, movie theaters closed, department stores moved into malls, and the street became somewhat of a dead zone. But life returned with Mexican immigrants in the 1980s, and today Broadway is fully engulfed in the Downtown renaissance. This is the street where I walked to work every day this summer.

As the Southern California sun slowly rises over Downtown Los Angeles, the streets slowly wake with life. A crew of city workers in purple polo shirts cleans sidewalks, empties trashcans, and waters planters. At the same time, shop owners arrive at their stores. Most of the actual owners are Korean, but all employees are Hispanic and the only language spoken in this part of town in Spanish. And the variety of stores! Meat markets, sneaker stores, bridal and Quinceañera dresses, everything for 99 cents, jewelry, cash advance parlors, toy stores, and cell phone providers that offer pay-as-you-go with no social security or identification card required. If a woman finds the perfect wedding dress, and has the perfect man at her side, she can walk down a nearby block to get married underneath the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

By nine in the morning, things start to get louder. The shopkeepers are now installing elaborate displays of the merchandise on the sidewalks to lure customers into taking a closer look at their stores. Because merchandise alone might not be enough to stand out among the hundreds of shops, stores are in a never ending fight for the loudest and flashiest signage one can imagine. Visual overload is your constant companion on Broadway.

In the meantime, buses roar down the street to unload tens of thousands of workers and customers that will flood the sidewalks throughout the day and evening. However, not too many people are here to shop yet. Most hurry by on their way to work, stopping in small stores to get coffee or sweet Mexican baked goods for breakfast. But then there is one species that instantly stands out – tourists. By noon they are swallowed by the masses on the sidewalk. But right now, they are out in the wide open, walking in their shorts and with their cameras ready, wearing a constant look of confusion on their faces. Somehow, their travel guide recommended Broadway as a special urban adventure and here they are. After a day on Rodeo Drive and in Hollywood, they find themselves in this strange hybrid of bombed out Detroit buildings and Mexico City hyperactivity. And now things are slowly picking up. Because even loud signage might not be enough, each store comes with an additional feature – sound systems that can match those of any club. Some stores don't get that sophisticated and simply put an enormous speaker on the sidewalk. But the end result is the same: the ruthless bass of reggaeton beats hits your stomach every step you take. In addition, all stores have touts on the street who use their voices to get the attention of bypassers: "Senor! SENOR!!!"

By noon, the streets are bustling with lunchtime activity and one needs all his attention not to run into other shoppers. The smell of fresh tortillas and fried carnitas is in the air. People are packed tightly into little taco stands, no more than holes in the wall, selling every Mexican dish imaginable. Just ask on the street, and everyone can tell you which stand is most famous for which dish. Walking by, the eye catches huge piles of meat next to towers of corn tortillas. Each stand has its own burly boss who yells orders while teenagers (most likely just arrived from some rural Mexican state) are chopping up onions, limes, and cilantro. This might seem like a shady food option to most Middle Americans, but it is still the most proper lunch option in this part of town.

Nothing is more cherished by Angelenos than these street vendors and the push carts that sell bacon-wrapped hot dogs, fresh-cut fruit, and ice cream. There is only one problem: the carts are illegal. If the police get you, the cart is impounded and most vendors will lose their livelihood. To prevent this from happening, everyone works together; as soon as a cop comes close, a warning is passed on by everyone on the sidewalk, and the carts are pushed as fast as possible out of sight into the nearest alley way.

And then there are all the characters who are not vendors but have their own special spot on the sidewalk. The old Vietnam Veteran in his wheelchair playing John Lennon songs on his cassette player, the guy with his shuffleboard hustling bypassers for a game, the old lady reading your palms. They are outcasts of society, but on Broadway they are protected. Everyone knows them; no one would ever dare to harm them in any way. This is the magic of this street. Most people live just above the poverty line and many are illegal. As an outsider, this frantic part of the city seems hostile. But everyone here is in it together. They all take the bus, they all buy their $2 jeans, and they all eat $1 tacos. And they all live with the constant fear of deportation. Yet on this street, only a few blocks from the financial district, they respect each other and keep each other safe.

Changes have come with the recent arrival of expansive lofts in old rehabbed buildings. On the bad side, some of the small stores are replaced with national chains and trendy restaurants. On the good side, Broadway is gaining nightlife. Until recently, the street pretty much shut down once the stores closed. These days, young professionals take their dogs for late night walks, enjoying their status as urban explorers. Some of the old theaters are being meticulously restored, attracting audiences late at night, and side street cafés or pubs are busy until the wee hours.

Some are concerned that these new arrivals will ultimately take over Broadway's Hispanic character. But for now, this is still one of the most unique streets in the world. The other day I was walking from my office to the subway station at Pershing Square when suddenly I heard a whistle. "Ahhh… Senor… fresh tacos for you!" A head peaked out of the entrance to a dilapidated apartment building. Inside the hallway was a little stand with four containers of meat, tortillas and a cooler with soft drinks. Next to it were plastic chairs and a table. While eating my illegal $1 tacos, I started chatting with the cook. "See, this is not Taco Bell. We don't eat no sour cream or cheese. Just cilantro and onions." Indeed, he did have the best tacos I had ever tasted. And this is why I love Broadway.

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Ortakoy Mosque, Istanbul; artwork courtesy of : Joshua D. Anderson

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