Urban Literacy

Learning to Read the
City around You

Leanne Serbulo

URBAN LITERACY: LEARNING TO READ THE CITY AROUND YOU

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CONTENTS

The intersection of N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and N.E. Alberta Street in Portland, Oregon, looks like a busy crossroad in any large city. Multistory buildings anchor the northwest and northeast corners. On the ground floor of the building on the northwest side, there is a bright and spacious coffee shop with large windows. A butcher shop sits on the southwest side. The entrances faces Martin Luther King Boulevard and the shop is graced by two colorful murals. The painting, titled *Still We Rise,* depicts an African American man cradling a small child and pointing off into the distance surrounded by scenes of Black history, resistance and life. The other mural, *Until We Get There,* shows people of all ages reading, working, and resting amid a vibrant backdrop of water, plants, birds, and sky. On the southeast side of the street, there is a small, corner plaza paved with uneven bricks. Two picnic tables are set up against a one-story building that houses a national pizza chain delivery service and a new, local restaurant. Bus stops dot three of the four corners, and people hurriedly dash across the street when the walk sign flashes.

Even a casual passerby can see that there is a lot happening in this ordinary corner of the city. If they were to linger for a few hours, they might discern some patterns in how people ride the various transit lines. They may discover new images or hidden meanings in the murals. They might learn something about the community by wandering into one of the shops or chatting with someone hanging out at the plaza.

But there is more here than what is visible to the casual observer. This intersection has a rich history. The land the butcher shop sits on was acquired by the city for an urban renewal project. It sat empty for years. When the city finally started the redevelopment process, community members protested and successfully halted the urban renewal agency's original plans to build a commercial development that included a national grocery chain. This historically African American community had been displaced by urban renewal projects since the 1950s. Although the development that was ultimately built includes a grocery store, it is also home to the butcher shop and other Black-owned businesses. In addition, the agreement between the city and community members resulted in the construction of new affordable housing complexes located about a mile south of this intersection.

This intersection is also part of the Columbia River and Willamette River watersheds. Anything that washes down the drain here might eventually end up in the Willamette River to the west, which empties into the Columbia River that sits just a few miles north. The Columbia's once abundant salmon runs and the

Willamette's Pacific lamprey population supported the indigenous communities who have lived in this region for at least 10,000 years.

The name of the busy, four-lane street itself tells a story. Formerly Union Avenue, the street was renamed to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1989. The effort to name a street in honor of Dr. King began years earlier and sparked an ugly backlash. Threats were made to a local Black newspaper that launched the renaming campaign and a national white supremacist organization got involved. After the city council unanimously approved the name change and successfully defeated the renaming opponents in court, the street became MLK Boulevard. Since that time, streets have been renamed to honor other civil rights pioneers, including Rosa Parks and César Chávez.

There are many untold stories waiting to be discovered at this intersection and at the crossroads of your city. The purpose of this book is to provide you with the background you need so you can read the stories in the city around you. This book is designed to introduce you to some basic concepts and theories about how cities function and develop. The book is organized into thematic chapters that highlight different aspects of urban life, from the environment to culture to housing. There is a set of questions at the end of each chapter that you can use to test your understanding of the concepts presented. There is also a set of activities that you can use to apply what you have learned to your own city, so you can uncover the hidden stories in its streets, structures, and communities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DEDICATION

To my sister Kim who taught me to love cities.

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CITIES

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter you will be able to:.

- Define the key characteristics that make a place a city
- Identify the main features of ancient cities
- Understand how the physical characteristics of a city create unique social relationships
- Compare and contrast urban and traditional societies
- Examine how the design of cities create opportunities for intimacy, anonymity, and new forms of social interaction
- Articulate the role that public space plays in influencing urban social life

What makes a place a city? When we think about cities, often the first thing that comes to mind is a skyline dotted with tall buildings. But some cities, like Marrakesh, Morocco or San Jose, California, have low-rise skylines, and towering structures can exist outside of urban areas. There are giant grain silos in small farming towns and soaring lighthouses perched on isolated, rocky shores. If cities are not defined by their skylines, then how can we differentiate urban places from small towns or rural communities?

In this chapter, we will identify the defining features of cities. We'll look at how cities emerged and how they changed social relations in the ancient world. We will then focus on the contemporary elements that

are common to all cities no matter where they are located. Finally, we will explore how these defining characteristics of cities shape the lives and relationships of the people who live within them.

Ancient cities

Within the broad scope of human history, cities are a relatively recent phenomenon. The earliest cities were established nearly 10,000 years ago in the Middle East. The emergence of these initial urban centers coincided with the development of agriculture. As ancient peoples began to farm rather than hunt and gather, they were able to establish more permanent settlements. When these communities began consistently producing a surplus of food, it allowed some residents to devote their time to non-agricultural tasks, such as religious duties or art, which resulted in differentiated social roles and more complex forms of community organization.

Cities appeared in earnest around 6,000 years ago, developing simultaneously across the globe from North Africa to East Asia to the Americas. Despite their geographic and cultural differences, these ancient cities shared many common traits.[1] These were densely settled communities made up of permanent structures with a specialized division of labor that supported a ruling class or a group of people whose sole function was to make economic, political, or religious decisions. Residents of early cities had to contribute a portion of the goods they produced as a tax or tribute to a centralized authority. That surplus was used by authorities to construct temples, civic buildings, and monuments, and in exchange for their contributions, urban dwellers were granted certain rights and were guaranteed protection. Many ancient cities developed systems of writing that helped keep track of citizens' contributions and made advancements in the sciences and art. Finally, these cities conducted trade and imported raw materials from areas beyond their borders.

Not all early cities had monumental architecture or developed systems of writing.[2] While initial influential scholars of ancient cities identified the physical characteristics that early urban settlements shared, more recently, researchers have focused on the social and cultural characteristics that differentiated the urban experience from village life and on the relationship between ancient cities and their surrounding hinterlands.

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1. Alexander R. Thomas, "Urbanization before Cities: Lessons for Social Theory from the Evolution of Cities," *Journal of World Systems Research*, 18, 2 (2012): 211-35.
2. Natalie N. May and Ulrike Steinert, *The Fabric of Cities: Aspects of Urbanism, Urban Topography and Society in Mesopotamia, Greece, and Rome. Culture and History of the Ancient near East*, (Boston: Leiden, 2013)

Regardless of the types of buildings they contained or systems of accounting they used, all ancient cities were centralized settlements that held political, economic, or cultural influence over the outlying countryside. Urban societies developed forms of specialization, had population diversity, and created institutions or networks of power that shaped the political, religious, economic, or cultural life both within and outside of the city's walls.

Ancient cities did not arise in isolation. The emergence of cities was closely tied to the developments that occurred within the larger societies that they were a part of. Cities should not simply be understood as a major mark of progression in human history, but as a product of societies that were engaged in a longer-scale process of developing more complex community systems and networks.[3] In other words, before cities could be developed, economic and social infrastructure such as trading networks already had to be in place to support their rise. Still, Uruk, Babylon and other ancient cities differed significantly from the smaller villages and migratory communities they replaced. Not only were they visibly different in terms of their physical size, population densities, and notable structures, they also created new ways of living, forms of social organization, and culture.

Not all ancient cities had kings

Until recently, not much was known about ancient cities in Africa due to Eurocentric biases in archeology and the lack of large-scale archeological digs on the continent. The ancient city of Jenne-Jeno (Djenné-Djenno) was located along the Middle Niger River valley in Mali. Unlike early urban settlements in other parts of the world, Jenne-Jeno contained an outer wall, but it had no palaces, elite residences, or other monumental buildings. Instead, there was a clustering development pattern where smaller compounds were grouped closely together. The

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3. Alexander R. Thomas, "Urbanization before Cities: Lessons for Social Theory from the Evolution of Cities," *Journal of World Systems Research*, 18, 2 (2012): 211-35.

archeological evidence indicates that there was a variety of types of economic activity and a diversity of burial practices, suggesting that the city contained a people from a number of different cultural groups who specialized in particular trades like herding, agriculture, fishing, or pottery-making. Rather than being organized in a hierarchical manner and ruled by force, Jenne-Jeno appears to have had a more decentralized form of government that was based on trading relationships. There is evidence that people may have migrated there from other parts of the Sahara as the climate began to change and lakes and rivers dried up. The city of Jenne-Jeno endured for more than 1500 years, and archeologists have found no evidence of warfare during that time. As we learn more about the ancient cities of Africa, our understanding about how early urban settlements came about and subsequently, how cities function may change dramatically.

Roderick J McIntosh, "Different Cities: Jenne-Jeno and African Urbanism," in The Cambridge World History, ed.Norman Yoffee, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) 364-380.

Three characteristics of urban places

While cities had existed for thousands of years, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries urban populations grew exponentially as countries in Western Europe and North America industrialized. In the first half of the 19th century, England began to urbanize at a rapid rate and before the end of that century, a majority of Europeans were living in cities. By 1920, the United States became a majority urban society.[4] As nations were shifting from being predominantly rural societies to urban ones, scholars observed and analyzed the impacts that rapid industrialization and urbanization had on society, community relationships, and individual behavior.

Late 19th century European scholars Ferdinand Tönnies and Emile Durkheim explored how urban society

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4. U.S. Census Bureau, *History: Urban and Rural Areas,* accessed June 15, 2017. https://www.census.gov/history/www/programs/geography/urban_and_rural_areas.html.

differed from village life. Tönnies used the phrase *gemeinschaft*, which means communal, to describe typical village life, which is structured around shared values and has strict social roles and rules. He contrasted this with *gesellschaft* or society, which described a more complex and individualistic urban world that is governed by self-interest. Similarly, Durkheim coined the term mechanical solidarity to characterize the shared culture and values of traditional rural life. His concept of organic solidarity referred to the structure of urban society, which is based more upon selective interdependence and governed by institutions and laws rather than shared cultural traditions. Both theorists were concerned with the demise of traditional communal life and worried that rapid urbanization would produce an overly individualistic society. However, neither theorist identified the criteria that makes a place urban or rural.

Traditional (rural) society

What Tönnies labelled "Gemeinschaft" and Durkheim called "Mechanical Solidarity"

- Homogeneous
- Static roles
- Shared beliefs, values, social ties
- Places the community above the individual

Urban society

Tönnies called this "Gesellschaft" and Durkheim used the term "Organic Solidarity"

- Heterogeneous
- Social mobility and economic specialization
- Held together by interdependence and voluntary association
- Self-interested, rather than communally driven

In 1938, Louis Wirth, a U.S. sociologist, argued that previous philosophers of urban life had equated urbanization with industrialization and capitalism. Wirth set out to separate the city from the larger-scale economic and social changes that were fueling its growth and development. He described the city as a "relatively large, dense and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals."[5] In order to fully understand Wirth's definition of the city, we need to break down each of the statements within it.

Wirth states that a city must be a "relatively large" place. But, what exactly does large mean? According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a community must have at least 50,000 residents to be considered urban.[6] However, having 50,000 residents spread out over 100 square miles wouldn't constitute a city. In addition to having a certain number of residents, the Census Bureau also stipulates that this population needs to be clustered in a fairly compact space that contains mixed land-uses such as homes, businesses, industries, government institutions, and other types of services. Other nations use different population thresholds to differentiate urban places from rural ones. Given this variation in official definitions of urbanized communities, the United Nations has declined to create a uniform definition of a city, instead accepting the definitions that each nation uses to define and count its own urban populations.[7] But basic definitions of urban places include both a population threshold and some marker of density as identifying features.

Having a large population in one place produces particular characteristics and conditions. Wirth argued that large populations create increased specialization and diversity. As cities have grown and developed, the level of specialization within them has also increased far beyond the craftspeople, scribes, and priests that once distinguished ancient urban societies from rural ones. While you'll rarely find a movie theater that specializes in Japanese horror films from the 1970s or a vegan delicatessen that sells vegetable-based meat substitutes in a small town, you would not be surprised to discover such a place in a city. Having a large population size allows like-minded groups of people to find one another and bond over obscure interests. Specialization and diversity

5. Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology* 44, 1 (July, 1938): 1-24.

6. US Census Bureau, *Geography Urban and Rural*, accessed June 17, 2017, https://www.census.gov/geo/reference/urban-rural.html.

7. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Population Division, World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 revision*, accessed June 30, 2017, https://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/General/FAQs.aspx.

are also evident in urban economies. While there may be only one or two restaurants in a small town, cities often have a wide-range of eateries that cater to diverse tastes.

That specialization contributes to the outsized role cities play in the world economy. The 600 largest cities in the world are home to just 20% of the global population, but will soon generate 60% of the worldwide economic output.[8] The largest of these cities are called megacities. The United Nations considers any city with a population of more than 10 million a megacity. There are currently 29 megacities in the world, many of which are located in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. While the megacity concept is a useful way to identify the shared challenges large cities face, it is often used in an alarmist fashion to draw attention to the resource strains and struggles that cities in lower-income countries face as large numbers of rural residents migrate to them. Even though many megacities struggle to provide adequate resources to their inhabitants, megacity residents almost always have greater opportunities and a higher standard of living than people do in the surrounding rural areas.

Top 10 megacities

The ten largest megacities in the world by population (including their metropolitan areas)

1. Tokyo, Japan   37 million
2. Delhi, India   31 million
3. Shanghai, China   28 million
4. Sao Paolo, Brazil   22 million
5. Mexico City, Mexico   22 million
6. Dhaka, Bangladesh   22 million
7. Cairo, Egypt   21 million

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8. UN Habitat, *World Cities Report 2016 Urbanization and Development: Emerging Futures,* accessed June 17, 2017, http://wcr.unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Chapter1-WCR-2016.pdf.

8.	Beijing, China	21 million
9.	Mumbai, India	20 million
10.	Osaka, Japan	19 million

Christele Harrouk, "The Twenty Largest Cities in the World-2021," Architecture Daily, April 21, 2021, https://www.archdaily.com/906605/the-20-largest-cities-in-the-world-of-2018.

Cities not only impact those within their immediate boundaries but also the regions around them. The U.S. Census Bureau differentiates between cities and urbanized areas. A metropolitan area (also referred to as a Metropolitan Statistical Area, or an MSA by the U.S. Census Bureau) refers to a city and its surrounding suburbs and neighboring towns that are interdependent in terms of geography, economics, and infrastructure.[9] The concept of an urbanized or metropolitan area is not unique to the United States; it exists around the world. In China, the official boundaries of a city may encompass a variety of land uses from a densely populated urban core to still undeveloped farmlands, because cities are defined as political administrative units.[10] While an entire metropolitan area or administratively defined city zone may share important traits, life within the core city still differs dramatically from life within the less densely populated areas around it. For example, life in a suburban Long Island town has a different pace and rhythm than life in New York City does. And a small farmer living on the edge of Chongqing may interact with her immediate community in different ways than her counterpart in the city does.

The key characteristic that differentiates the city proper from its surrounding communities is the density of

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9. U.S. Census Bureau, *Metropolitan and Micropolitan,* accessed June 17 2017, https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/metro-micro/about.html.

10. Kam Wing Chan, *The Problem with China's Urban Population Data*, accessed June 17, 2017, http://faculty.washington.edu/kwchan/Chan-article-EACWtr10.pdf.

its population. Wirth argued that density leads to intense competition for space and a tendency for people to take advantage of one another. As a result, he concluded, cities need to develop forms of social control to keep this chaos organized. Wirth also believed that density exposes urban residents to stark contrasts, which some of the social critics of his day worried could lead to urban dwellers adopting a blasé or callous attitude towards other residents.

The negative associations that Wirth ascribed to densely populated places have been challenged by other urban theorists. Jane Jacobs chronicled the flow of daily life on her New York City block and concluded that density produced uniquely urban forms of cooperative social organization.[11] Jacobs cataloged her neighborhood's "sidewalk ballet," a highly choreographed and complex form of organic organization that kept her neighborhood functioning in a way that made residents feel safe and intimately connected to others in the community. Regardless of the impacts that size and density have on urban life, these are defining features of urban places.

Wirth also noted that cities are characterized by their heterogeneity. Cities are filled with different types of people, some of whom have lived there for generations and others who were born elsewhere but are drawn to the wide-ranging economic or social opportunities that urban areas offer. Cities' diverse economies and cultures attract migrants who may be from nearby rural areas or far-flung parts of the globe. Since urban residents come from different places seeking out better opportunities, cities often have a more diverse and fluid social structure.

Wirth noted that urban residents' interactions with diverse groupings of people led to more flexibility in one's social status and position. While village or small town residents are often assigned a set role to play within their community, urbanites may adapt and shift their identities over time and even within the course of a day as they interact with different groups of people. This social fluidity can provide increased individual opportunity and advantage, but Wirth and many of his contemporaries argued that it also led to a loosening of traditional community bonds and a loss of social connection.

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11. Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992).

Urban subcultures

In the 1970s, sociologist Claude Fischer further explored the concepts of size, density and heterogeneity and arrived at a very different conclusion than Louis Wirth.[12] While Wirth based his ideas on how anonymous city dwellers reacted to other strangers in public spaces, Fischer instead focused on the unique norms and values that develop among like-minded individuals in their private networks. Fischer theorized that the large, dense, and heterogeneous character of the city allows for subcultures to develop and flourish. A critical mass of individuals who share a particular interest, ideology, or identity can connect with one another and form a network. That network, in turn, may develop unique behaviors and values that become a distinct subculture.

A subculture is a community within a larger society that develops a set of values, norms or behaviors that is different than or in opposition to the dominant culture. Sociologist Dick Hebdige views subcultures as expressions of the social experiences of their members.[13] In subcultures, fashion, music, hairstyles, or leisure activities become key symbols of the group's redefinition of itself. For example, the punk music scene emerged in the United Kingdom during a time of economic recession when the dominant political discourse was concerned about despair and national decline. Punk fashion embraced those narratives of working-class decline by donning torn clothing, wearing everyday objects like safety pins as jewelry, and appropriating profane symbols in a way that jeered at the British economic and political system.

Hip hop: A New York subculture goes global

Subcultures are influenced by the time and place where they developed. Hip hop emerged in the South Bronx in the 1970s. During this time, the city was facing an economic crisis that was

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12. Fischer, Claude S. "The Subcultural Theory of Urbanism: A 20th Year Assessment," *American Journal of Sociology*, 101, 3, (1995): 543-77.
13. Hebdige, Dick, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1979).

felt even more intensely in Black and low-income neighborhoods in the Bronx. White flight and deindustrialization gutted neighborhood infrastructure, leading to a lack of entertainment and recreational spaces for young people. Neighborhood youth hosted block parties in the abandoned lots and buildings that featured local DJs. DJs like Kool Herc who were part of the Jamaican dub scene would play extended breaks or percussion-heavy musical interludes during which people could show off their best dance moves. Break-boys or break-girls (later shortened to B-boys or B-girls) would dance on makeshift cardboard stages. DJs eventually began rhyming over the breaks to encourage the dancers, and MCs were born.

Hip-hop culture had four main elements: DJing, MCs, break dancing, and graffiti. Each element was influenced by the cultures of the people who lived in the Bronx and the urban landscape they were a part of. Jamaican, Black, and Puerto Rican musical traditions shaped DJing and the rhyming call/response structure of MCing. Break dancing was influenced by capoeira, a Brazilian dance-like martial art developed by enslaved people, and other dance traditions. Graffiti artists who painted their tags on subway cars developed unique styles of writing that were designed to be seen in motion.

Today, hip hop is a global youth culture. While the early elements of this cultural style that was born in the South Bronx are still evident today, the sounds and traditions of different hip hop scenes around the world are shaped by their local cultures and cities. For example, Aboriginal and Maori hip hop artists in Australia and New Zealand incorporate traditional dances into their performances and rely upon their communities' long oral traditions when writing lyrics. While the histories of indigenous people in settler colonial societies differ from the experiences of African Americans, the hip hop subculture speaks to the shared experience of oppression. Through hip hop, bonds of solidarity are built and strengthened.

Samy Alim, Awad Ibrahim, and Alastair Pennycook, Global Linguistic Flows: Hip Hop Cultures, Youth Identities and the Politics of Language (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2008)

PQ, Rory, Hip Hop History from the Streets to the Mainstream, Icon Collective, November 25, 2019, https://iconcollective.edu/hip-hop-history/.

Fischer argued that urbanism facilitates the development of subcultures. The presence of subcultures contribute to cities' reputations for being avant-garde places where alternative ways of living or interacting can develop and thrive. For example, many cities are known for having strong lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) communities. Cities with large LGBTQ communities are sometimes located in very conservative regions, not often known for being LBGTQ-friendly.[14] Louisville, Kentucky, was recently recognized for its pro-LGBTQ policies by the Human Rights Campaign.[15] While Kentucky is not usually known for its progressive politics, cities in states or regions that are conservative become strong beacons to LGBTQ young adults who may feel isolated living in nearby small towns or rural communities. Having a critical mass of community members, even in areas that may be somewhat hostile, can provide a sense of solidarity, strength, and safety and allow a supportive subculture to develop. These subcultures can in turn, influence the cities and regions that incubate them.

Cities not only provide the population size, heterogeneity, and density that are necessary for subcultures to form, but they can also offer physical spaces that incubate alternative cultures. These physical spaces can take many forms, from the collective punk house that hosts shows in the basement to the community rooms in public housing projects that sponsored early hip hop parties to entire neighborhoods where people who are marginalized can feel safe and supported. The term gayborhood refers to an urban neighborhood that has a concentration of LGBTQ institutions and residents and is associated with LGBTQ subcultures.[16] Some famous gayborhoods include the Castro district in San Francisco, Greenwich Village in New York, and Soho in London.

Both Wirth and Fischer agreed that the size, density, and heterogeneous nature of cities leads to unique

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14. New York Times, The Upshot, *Metropolitan Areas with the Largest, and Smallest, Gay Populations,* accessed July 1, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/21/upshot/the-metro-areas-with-the-largest-and-smallest-gay-population.html?_r=0 .

15. Human Rights Campaign, *Municipal Equality Index, 2016: All-Star Cities.* Accessed July 1, 2017, http://www.hrc.org/blog/municipal-equality-index-2016-all-star-cities.

16. Andrew Gorman-Murray, "Gayborhoods." In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of LGBTQ Studies*, ed. Abbie E. Goldberg, Abbie E., (Thousand Oaks,, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2016) 438-439.

forms of social organization and life. Having a critical mass of people in a dense setting from different backgrounds leads to complex specialized economies, allows diverse and obscure businesses to develop, helps communities and cultures flourish, and nurtures new ways of living and interacting.

Cities—A network of villages?

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Wirth and his contemporaries painted a negative picture of urban life. They believed that industrialization and urbanization created a new type of human being that was individualistic, uncaring, and completely free of all community responsibilities. Observing people in any busy, downtown public area could easily lead one to this conclusion. You would see city dwellers moving quickly through the streets avoiding eye contact, ignoring pleas for spare change or shouts of street hawkers selling wares.

Claude Fischer's city of vibrant and avant-garde subcultures creates a different picture of urban life. In Fischer's city, residents are not strangers to one another, but rather are so closely tied that they create new ways of interacting and behaving. However, the close ties Fischer observed were relationships formed by choice, not tradition. So his work provides little insight into the debate over whether traditional community ties are incompatible with urban life.

In the 1950s, sociologist Herbert Gans moved to a low-income, Italian-American neighborhood in Boston.[17] His intention was to study life in a community that had been declared a slum and was slated for redevelopment under the federal Urban Renewal program. Gans questioned many of the assumptions urban planners made about people living in "blighted" neighborhoods. He wanted to learn firsthand how living in a run-down community affected residents' lives.

Gans not only discovered that many of the common assumptions about so-called slum neighborhoods were not true, but he also uncovered a tight-knit community structure in Boston's West End. Residents socialized in small circles of extended family and close friends and emphasized communal values and loyalty to their immediate social group, rather than identifying with larger organizations or social structures. Gans described the neighborhood's community life as a working-class subculture. The close ties of West End

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17. Herbert Gans, *The Urban Villagers* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962).

residents challenged earlier urban scholars' characterizations of city life as isolating and individualistic. The neighborhood relationships Gans described more closely resemble traditional community ties than they do the cold depictions of city life that were painted by early urban sociologists. Despite the insular nature of people's social ties, the dense urban fabric of the West End neighborhood and the issues tenants faced with deteriorating housing drew people together beyond their immediate peer groups.

In the late 1960s, Carol Stack, a white urban anthropologist, moved into a predominantly African American housing project to conduct a research study. She noticed a similar interdependent network and strong reliance on communal bonds among the residents she worked with.[18] Like their counterparts in the West End, occupants of "The Flats" formed close relationships with extended family members and longtime friends. These communities repeatedly pooled their resources and spread the limited income and material goods they had around in order to maximize group members' welfare. Stacks' description of the resource-sharing strategies within this community mimic the village-like bonds that early scholars claimed city life had destroyed.

As with the West Enders, specific urban characteristics – density, economic inequality, and heterogeneous populations – helped shape the mutually beneficial community networks residents of the Flats established. The size and density of the housing project allowed residents to easily share and swap resources. The heterogeneous character of the community led many to adopt longtime friends and neighbors as honorary family members, and the economic deprivation they faced necessitated a communal approach to stretch the limited resources each household had.

But these communal survival strategies can be jeopardized when neighborhood conditions deteriorate. In a more recent study of communal networks in a public housing project, Danielle Radenbush found that residents engaged in selective solidarity.[19] High rates of crime and violence led to wariness and distrust among residents, so they were careful about who they interacted and shared resources with. Residents tended to "keep to themselves" and were hesitant to involve people who they observed to be spending time out on the streets in their networks. Survival strategies require reciprocity and trust. If someone is thought to be untrustworthy or unwilling to provide mutual support, they may be not be invited to share resources.

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18. Carol Stack, *All of Our Kin* (New York: Basic Books, 1974).
19. Danielle Radenbush, "I Stay by Myself": Social Support, Distrust, and Selective Solidarity among the Urban Poor." *Sociological Forum*, 31, no. 4 (2016): 1018-039.

These types of ties are not unique to low-income communities in U.S. cities. A 2015 survey of neighborhoods in Cairo, Egypt, also documented strong, mutually supportive ties among residents, especially in informal or self-built communities.[20] Communities in the self-built areas closely resembled the village-like interdependence that Gans, Stack, and Radenbush documented. Since informal neighborhoods often lacked basic urban services, community members had to work together to provide security, health care, and connections to electrical power sources. Some of these communities also had a shortage of businesses and community spaces, so holiday and religious celebrations took place in the streets, further providing opportunities for residents to interact and cement their ties.

Tight-knit communities are not incompatible with urban environments. In fact, having a strong sense of community can help city dwellers overcome the isolation and sense of fear that Wirth and earlier researchers associated with living in a crowded place. Residents who feel a strong sense of attachment to their neighbors are less afraid of crime than those who are more socially isolated.[21] Jane Jacobs, the urban theorist who documented daily life on her New York City block, observed that some of her neighbors acted as "eyes on the street," noticing who seemed out of place in their busy neighborhood. While it seems counter-intuitive that size, density and heterogeneity would promote a sense of safety, in close-knit communities, residents are aware of the rhythms of daily life in their neighborhood and take note when someone behaves in a way that is out of the ordinary.

Neither stranger nor friend: Neighboring and relationships in urban environments

Cities are not just collections of people who are strangers to one another; there are neighborhoods and subcultures within them where people's lives are very closely intertwined. But how do these relationships develop? Rick Grannis studied neighboring – the process of forming relationships with those who live

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20. Sarah Eldefrawi, "Community and Neighborhood in Egyptian Context, Case Formal and Settlements-Cairo," *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 5, 3 (2015): 281-7.

21. John Schweitzer, Jun Woo Kim and Juliette Mackin, "The Impact of the Built Environment on Crime and Fear of Crime in Urban Neighborhoods," *Journal of Urban Technology*, 6, 3 (1999): 59-73.

nearby – in his home city of Los Angeles. He outlined the stages in the neighboring process.[22] The first stage begins with simply living within a certain geographical proximity of a potential neighbor. Grannis considered potential neighbors to be those who live within a network of walkable face-blocks. A face-block includes all of the buildings that line both sides of a city block from one intersection to the next. Since meeting one's neighbor requires face-to-face contact, Grannis noted that some blocks serve as barriers within a neighborhood. For example, neighbors might know those who live a block or two away, but they may not know the neighbors who live on the other side of a busy street or just across an intersection with lots of traffic. The geography of a potential pool of neighbors would include all of those living on either side of the block that you would come in contact with if you were walking along the residential streets in your immediate neighborhood. Your likelihood of developing a close relationship with someone who lives across a major street or commercial thruway is low, so these residents would not be included within the potential pool of neighbors.

Developing a relationship with a potential neighbor starts with recognition. Through regular contact with one another, you may begin to wave or nod when you pass by. Once this more distant form of neighboring is established, the relationship may progress to conversation or to deliberate interactions, then finally, into a stage of friendship and then a sense of "mutual trust" that resembles the village-like ties early sociologists wrote about.[23]

Stages of neighboring

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22. Rick Grannis, *From the Ground up: Translating Geography into Community through Neighbor Networks* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

23. Grannis, *Ground Up,* 30.

Stage One: Geographic Proximity	Living in very close proximity (on the same floor or block) to someone will increase the chance of interaction, even passive interactions
Stage Two: Passive Contact	Living nearby and crossing paths frequently enough that you begin to recognize or acknowledge each other
Stage Three: Intentional Contact	Choosing to interact with someone who lives nearby (i.e. having a conversation, borrowing things, visiting one another)
Stage Four: Mutual Trust	Having a closer connection that involves trust and reciprocity (i.e. kids playing together, collecting your mail if you are on vacation, having a BBQ)

Rick Grannis, From the Ground up: Translating Geography into Community through Neighbor Networks (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

The network of face-blocks in a neighborhood creates an opportunity to establish relationships with the people in an immediate area. Easily walkable neighborhoods with no steep hills or other impediments encourage pedestrian activity.[24] Communities that are not solely residential, but have shops and stores mixed in, also promote more walking. People who take leisurely walks through their neighborhood are more likely to have a stronger sense of community.

Public space and community among strangers

It is not just the residential areas of a city that promote social interaction. Public spaces play a role too. Lewis

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24. Lisa Wood, Lawrence Frank, and Billie Giles-Corti, "Sense of Community and its Relationship with Walking and Neighborhood Design," *Social Science and Medicine,* 70, 9 (May 2010): 1381-1390.

Mumford described the city as a "theater of social action."[25] He believed that cities were places where grievances between groups get worked out, where cultures experiment and grow together, and where individuals exposed to this constant drama and action develop their own tastes and personalities from it. In Mumford's concept of the city, the public spaces, parks, streets, shopping areas, and transit lines are the stage for an ongoing, ever-evolving social drama. The metaphors that Mumford uses to describe the city not only capture the cosmopolitan aspects of urban life, but also imply that cities are places of liberation. The number of diverse groups of people coming together in a tightly packed space creates opportunities to collectively reimagine life, which in turn, reshapes our cities.

Mumford's drama plays out in the public spaces of the city. The streets, shops, parks, libraries, transit centers, cafés, and playgrounds are the social infrastructure of a city.[26] Although the primary function of these spaces may not be to produce social interaction, these are the metaphorical stages that "allow life to happen" in cities. They are spaces where strangers can interact and subconsciously cooperate with one another. You may not notice the intricate social dance that occurs as people stroll along a sidewalk, because these unspoken rules for navigating shared space are invisible until those norms are disrupted.

One example of social infrastructure is the central plaza or *zocalo* that is found in many Latin American cities. The typical *zocalo* is bordered by a church, the market, and important political or municipal buildings.[27] These public plazas host a variety of city dwellers who use the space throughout the day for different purposes. It can be a place to play, shop, exercise, people-watch, rest, converse with friends, flirt, eat, relax, or gather. The *zocalo* is also a site for organized events, like political rallies, concerts, and celebrations. In the mornings, the square may be filled with elderly friends or parents with small children. In the afternoon, workers eating lunch, schoolkids on break, or shoppers pass through. In the evenings, friends, couples and families flock to the town square to simply stroll around. Different vendors and entertainers frequent these squares during different times

25. Lewis Mumford, "What is a city?" in *The City Reader*, eds. Richard LeGates and Frederic Stout (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 92-6.

26. Alan Latham, and Jack Layton, "Social Infrastructure and the Public Life of Cities: Studying Urban Sociality and Public Spaces." *Geography Compass*, 13, no. 7 (2019).

27. Setha Low, On *the Plaza: the Politics of Public Space and Culture* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000).

of day, catering to whoever has gathered. Plazas provide opportunities for people of all social classes, ages and backgrounds to interact.

Having adequate public space is important, but an abundance of space alone does not necessarily lead to deeper engagement within cities. Spaces that are too tightly controlled or unwelcoming will not allow for the types of interactions among strangers that increase trust and tolerance. A sense of trust is developed by interacting with strangers in the unregulated, messy public spaces of the city.[28] These are spaces that are often crowded, contain a multitude of activities and may seem chaotic to outsiders. Cooperatively negotiating these spaces with hundreds of other strangers is a quintessentially urban experience. Sociologist Lyn Lofland argues that urban life entails being comfortable as a "stranger in the midst of strangers."

Geographer Ash Amin has developed this concept further.[29] He describes the situated surplus that emerges when people effectively and cooperatively navigate densely packed, busy, and seemingly chaotic public spaces. Regularly encountering this type of unregulated public space produces a tolerance for difference and sense of connection as people learn to "trust the situation" in these spaces. That connection and tolerance is built not by conforming to particular rules, but by constantly adapting to situations that break the organic patterns that develop in multi-use crowded spaces. For example, people in a hurry in a subway station might climb past those who are standing still on an escalator. The stair-standers may move to the right to allow someone to pass on the left-hand side, but if a parent and small child are sharing a stair, the passer might have to stop and wait for them to rearrange themselves, or the parent might pick up the child in anticipation of the passer. This constant breaking of unwritten patterns and the instantaneous adjustments that are made produce a sense of freedom and confidence. This comfort around strangers then carries over into other interactions and spaces within the city.

Not all spaces encourage this type of interaction.[30] Spaces where people are static and engaged in similar activities may not allow for the constant patterning and unpatterning that occurs when people move through

28. Ash Amin, Collective culture and urban public space, *City,* 12:1 (2008): 5-24. Lofland quoted in Mark Hutter, *Experiencing Cities Second Edition* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2017), 16.

29. Amin, *Collective Culture*

30. Oleg Pachenkov, *Urban Public Space: Facing the Challenges of Mobility and Aestheticization*. (Frankfurt Am Main; New York: PL Academic Research, 2013). Jahn Gehl, *Life between Buildings.* (Washington DC: Island Press, 2011).

a space and use it for different purposes. The design of a space can also affect how it is used. People use public spaces for three main types of activities: necessary, optional, and social. Necessary activities include traveling to work or school, grocery shopping, or other errands. Optional activities are those which are dependent upon weather and the design of a space. Some examples of optional activities are going on a walk, running, or sunbathing. If there aren't good paths or sidewalks, or if there's a lot of traffic, it could discourage some optional uses. Social activities like meeting a friend are dependent upon both the design of a space and the amount of other activity going on there. If there are not a lot of necessary and optional activities taking place, a space may not feel welcoming to those who are going there to socialize.

Some observations about the use of public space

1. **Activity attracts activity:** People are more likely to use spaces where there is lots of activity going on
2. **Human activity attracts more attention than physical infrastructure does:** People pay more attention to street performances, construction work or other human-involved activities than they do to shop windows or buildings
3. **Pedestrian oriented streets attract more activity:** Areas with high traffic volumes have fewer pedestrians
4. **Social interactions in city streets and commercial centers is more superficial:** Passive contact, like overhearing conversations, is still a form of social activity. More in-depth encounters take place in public spaces where people are likely to know each other such as near schools, workplaces, or in neighborhoods.
5. **Pedestrians prefer direct paths:** Walkers seek out the shortest path between two points and look for shortcuts
6. **People linger in edge zones:** The areas that divide one space from another are used as gathering places where people gravitate if they want to stay for a while.
7. **People need places to sit:** A public space without adequate sitting spots will not be a place where people gather

8. **People like to see what is going on:** Public spaces should be open enough and small enough for people to be able to see what is happening throughout the space.

Jahn Gehl, Life between Buildings. (Washington DC: Island Press, 2011)

In Mumford's city as a theater of social action, the public spaces are where conflicts are worked out and new ways of relating to one another are developed. While Amin's situated surplus increases tolerance and cooperation, it does not produce new forms of being and relating. However, urban public space can be an incubator of fundamental change. When urban residents appropriate a public space in the city and change its intended use to meet their needs, an emancipatory space can emerge.[31] One example of this is the encampments that were set up during the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong. Protesters not only set-up tents where they could sleep, they also created makeshift bathing areas, medical stations, a "Lennon Wall" where anyone could add a post-it note with their thoughts, ideas or favorite song lyrics or poetry stanzas, and revolutionary art honoring the movement and movements that preceded it both locally and from around the world. The campers organized themselves into villages where they connected and collaborated with friends and strangers. This emancipatory space was not just a protest site, but it also was a living demonstration of how people in Hong Kong could organize themselves to meet their own needs. The Tempelhof airport in Berlin is another example of an emancipatory space. When the city closed the airport, residents began to use the large open space and abandoned runways for biking, kite boarding, and gardening. When the city attempted to redevelop the old airport, Berliners successfully resisted the planned luxury housing development. In this case, the vision that ordinary citizens had for this space became its permanent use.

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31. Hui Yew-Foong, "The Umbrella Movement: Ethnographic Explorations of Communal Re-spatialization." *International Journal of Cultural Studies.* 20, 2 (2017): 146-61. Brigitte Kratzwald, "Urban Commons – Dissident Practices in Emancipatory Spaces." in *Urban Commons*, ed. Brigitte Kratzwald (Berlin, Munich, Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 26-41.

Summary

Cities are defined by their size, density, and heterogeneity. While these characteristics lead to increased specialization and individuality, they can also inspire feelings of isolation and self-interested behaviors. However, these same conditions create opportunities for like-minded people to bond together in subcultures and to invent new ways of interacting and living.

In the smaller components that make up urban areas – neighborhoods or housing complexes – social life may more closely resemble the tightly woven bonds that exist in small towns and villages. These bonds are often found in networks of close family and friends, but the geography of neighborhoods creates opportunities for people to relate on a variety of levels from acknowledging a shared familiarity to becoming an intimate friend.

On a larger scale, the public spaces of the city create opportunities for social groups and individuals to come into contact with one another. These points of contact may produce conflict or cooperation. They can fundamentally reshape the communities involved and the city as a whole. At the very least, the social dramas of the city expose its inhabitants to new ways of thinking and behaving.

In all of these definitions of the city, one thing remains constant. The physical and demographic makeup of urban places fundamentally alters the social ties of city dwellers. Urban places produce new forms of social organization and relations.

Test your Urban Literacy

Think about how the concepts in this chapter apply to your own city

1. List three criteria that make a place a city. These characteristics should be present in cities throughout the world. Provide examples from your own city of how it meets these particular criteria.

2. Identify a criteria that makes a place a city that was not discussed in this chapter. Argue for why this criteria should be part of a definition of what makes a place a city.

3. Density produces heterogeneity and specialization. Use an online mapping application to explore the types of businesses that line a downtown or busy urban neighborhood shopping district. Find examples of heterogeneity and specialization.

4. While elements associated with traditional or rural societies may be present within some urban neighborhoods and communities, cities allow individuals to play more fluid social roles to highlight different aspects of their identity as they interact with different groups. Describe how your own social role or identity shifts as you engage with different people in your city throughout the course of your day.

5. What subcultures are associated with your city? Do these subcultures operate in particular neighborhoods or spaces?

6. Public spaces provide the social infrastructure in cities, but not all public spaces produce the types of conditions that are necessary for creating what Amin called a "situated surplus." Identify some public spaces in your city where people could experience the give and take that is involved in being a "stranger in the midst of strangers."

Learn to read the city around you

Apply what you've learned in this chapter by completing a hands-on activity in your own city

1. ***Create a face-block map:*** Draw a map of a frequently travelled route that you take in your neighborhood or city. You could trace the route you take to a transit stop, your friend's house, a local coffee shop, the grocery store, or work. Your map should include the names of the streets that you walk on and should highlight any important landmarks along the way, like a park or businesses. It should also identify your "face-block" or the people that you regularly see as you walk this route. A face-block includes anyone who is familiar to you or those whose faces you recognize even if you've never spoken. This could potentially be your neighbors, shopkeepers, regular customers, or just people who hang out in the area. For each familiar face you encounter along your route, create symbols and a key that ranks the depth of your relationship (i.e. familiar face, acquaintance, good friend) with that individual.

2. ***Observe the sidewalk ballet:*** Get to know the rhythms and patterns of urban life on a busy block, at a transit stop or intersection, or in a park, plaza, or indoor public gathering space. Over the course of several days, note the activities and people flows that occur in this space during a consistent block of time (i.e. weekday mornings from 8-10). Document how many people move through the space at different times, what activities they engage in, if there are regular events or frequent users of that space, how long people spend in the space, the times that activities occur, and any other details you think could help describe daily rhythms of life. Pay attention to the context of your observations by noting weather patterns, holidays, or other major events that might affect the patterns of use and interaction. Use your notes to compile a detailed narrative description of daily life in this corner of your city. You might also

include maps or diagrams of the space and/or of people flows in your final write-up.

3. ***Explore the subcultures of your city:*** Find at least three places, events, publications, websites, or other media, or organizations that are representative of a subculture within your city. Learn more about this subculture by attending an event, visiting a place, or by reading, viewing or listening to their media. Write a short review of your exploration that notes what you learned about this community, its relationships, and its contributions to your city. Identify what makes this subculture unique, where and how it can be accessed, and how it is connected to other communities within the city. Collect all students' reviews and compile them into a subcultural atlas of your city.

4. ***Collect data about heterogeneity in your city:*** Explore census or neighborhood data to find data points that demonstrate heterogeneity in a neighborhood or in your city. Try to find data points that represent different aspects of heterogeneity from population demographics to economic statistics to building and land use types. Present your findings in a one page infographic that highlights the heterogeneous character of your neighborhood or city.

5. ***Create an urban movie setting:*** Film two, short (less than 2-3 minute) opening scenes for a movie that identify its setting and establish a sense of place. For the first scene, film an opening sequence that could represent a city anywhere. You will want to find images and scenes that are representative of all cities. For the second scene, create a montage that specifically depicts scenes from your own city. In this scene, an audience should immediately be able to recognize your particular city, so you will need to find images that are unique to your location.

6. ***Identify the unwritten rules for a busy public space:*** Find a busy, public space that qualifies as the type of place that Amin describes as contributing to the situated surplus. Visit the space at least three times and observe how people interact with one another. Take notes on the types of interactions you see. Identify the unwritten rules for navigating this space. For example, do shoppers at a farmers market enter and exit booths in a particular pattern? Provide examples for each rule from your notes. Your examples may include situations where people break the rules. Present your findings to the class.

2.

ENVIRONMENT

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- Explain how nature influences urban development
- Consider the ecological impacts of urbanization
- Provide examples of urban infrastructure challenges and creative ways that residents work together to solve them
- Define environmental justice and describe how access to clean air, water, and toxin-free land is socially determined
- Identify how cities contribute to climate change and how urbanized communities can reduce emissions and adapt to rising temperatures and changing climate patterns

This chapter explores the complex relationship between the natural and the built environments. We begin by looking at how nature influences the location of cities and shapes their design and layout. We then examine the infrastructure challenges that cities face and consider how urbanization contributes to air, water, and other forms of pollution. Next, we will explore the relationship between social inequalities and exposure to environmental toxins. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the problems posed by climate change.

Nature and the Location of Cities

Nature plays a major role in determining where cities will emerge and develop. Ancient cities were constructed in areas that had sufficient resources to produce a reliable surplus of food that could support a significant non-farming population.[1] In order to grow enough food to sustain a large number of people, a year-round source of freshwater, fertile soil, and a relatively temperate climate are necessary. Ancient cities were usually located in warm weather regions along rivers or other water sources that could be used to irrigate fields.

During medieval times, cities developed along trade routes, which tended to follow major waterways. As the industrial revolution took hold, water continued to play a key role in determining where cities would be established. Rivers provided a power source for mills and factories. The navigability of rivers also helped determine where populations would settle. The cities of Wilmington, Delaware; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Trenton, New Jersey; are all located along the Delaware River. Each city was established at a portage site – a section of river that is not easily passable because of rapids or other obstacles.[2] In these sections of the river, boats had be taken out of the water and transported overland to get past the rapids or falls. These sites became prime spots for urban development, because the bottlenecks created by the river's natural obstacles caused waterway travelers to have disembark and stay in the area for a while.

Although cities were established in areas that have an abundance of natural resources, those resources are not necessarily used to benefit the local urban population. Some cities are export hubs that facilitate the transfer of a region's natural wealth to other parts of the world. In nations that were colonized in Africa, Asia and Latin America, Europeans developed cities along coastal areas and rivers in order to extract and export resources abroad.[3] One of the legacies of colonization in Africa and Latin America was the establishment of a primate or primary city, which served as an export hub and was the undisputed capital of economic and political power

1. Nancy Kleniewski, *Cities, Change and Conflict: A Political Economy of Urban Life, 3rd Edition* (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006).
2. Jeffery Lin, "Geography, History, Economies of Density and the Location of Cities," Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, *Business Review*, Q3 (2012): 16-24.
3. Akin Mabogunje, "Urban Planning and the Post-Colonial State in Africa--a Research Overview," *African Studies Review*, 33, 2 (1990): 121-203.

for an entire nation.[4] Primate cities are at least twice the size of the next largest city in the country and at least twice as significant economically. Although primate cities exist in countries throughout the world, in formerly colonized nations, economic development and wealth are concentrated within the primate city often at the expense of other cities and regions. The concentration of wealth and development can put a strain on local resources. Export-dependent economies can also degrade local environments. Agriculture, mining, and other resource extractive industries can pollute air, land and waterways while providing little economic benefit to the cities and regions where they occur.

How Nature Shapes a City

From ancient Pakistani and Indian cities to the wide streets of modern-day Chicago, most urban areas are laid out in a grid or crisscrossing rectangular street pattern.[5] To accommodate the grid and the parcels of developable land generated by this street pattern, hilly areas are flattened, creeks and waterways are diverted underground, and wetlands are filled in. Simply looking at the breaks in the grid pattern on a street map will reveal some of the city's original topography, the areas where mountains, canyons or rivers could not be engineered into a flat, developable landscape and had to be incorporated into the built environment rather than forced to comply with it.

Some cities are now seeking to reclaim natural landscapes that were once considered barriers to development. The San Antonio River has become a key attraction in San Antonio, Texas. The Riverwalk, a network of pedestrian paths laid out along the riverfront, is lined with shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues.[6] Decades ago, the San Antonio River was associated with destruction, because periodic, catastrophic flooding led to death and devastation. After a flood control dam and diversion canal were constructed, the river came to be considered an asset to the city and was developed as a major tourist attraction.

Natural and geographical features also shape cities in more subtle ways. The aesthetics and design of a city's built environment are influenced by its natural setting. Vernacular architecture refers to structures that are

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4. David Clark, *Urban World/Global City* (London: Routledge, 1996).

5. John Rennie Short and Lisa Benton Short, *Cities and Nature* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).

6. The Riverwalk, *History of the Riverwalk*, accessed July 6, 2017, https://www.thesanantonioriverwalk.com/history/history-of-the-river-walk.

designed and constructed in keeping with local cultural traditions and their natural surroundings.[7][/footnote] A significant number of buildings in cities around the world are considered vernacular architecture. These buildings are not designed by professionals and rely upon materials and techniques that are indigenous to particular area. Vernacular dwellings accommodate the rhythm and flow of daily life, support cultural traditions, and intersect in a meaningful way with other structures in a community in order to fulfill the public's needs.

Characteristics of Vernacular Architecture:

- Built with materials from the local area
- Uses techniques developed within the community and passed down over generations
- Is used to meet basic daily needs
- Reinforces cultural traditions in its design and structure
- Is adapted to unique climate and conditions of a place

Camilla Ghislani, "What is vernacular Architecture?" Architecture Daily, Nov. 25, 2020, https://www.archdaily.com/951667/what-is-vernacular-architecture.

Urban vernacular architecture reflects and shapes the environment and culture of a city. The traditional form of housing in Beijing, China was the *siheyuan,* a complex of four buildings oriented around a central courtyard.[8] These courtyard compounds housed extended family members and provided a balance between the private spaces in the interior rooms and the communal area of the courtyard where household tasks

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7. Allen Noble, *Traditional Buildings a Global Survey of Structural Forms and Cultural Functions* (London and New York: IB Tauris, 2007).[footnote]null
8. Renee Chow, *Changing Chinese Cities: The Potentials of Field Urbanism* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 2015).

were carried out and family gatherings took place. A compound sometimes contained multiple courtyard complexes. The height and size of the dwellings lining the four sides of the courtyard were determined by their directional orientation, with the largest and tallest pavilion located on the north/south axis, and smaller, less important buildings constructed on the east/west sides. This design maximized the amount of natural light and heat the courtyard compound received during Beijing's cold winters, and the overhanging eaves of the pavilion and deciduous shade trees planted within the courtyard were designed to keep the compound cool during the city's hot summers. The prescribed heights and depths of the various compound pavilions and the layout of courtyards along a neighborhood's lanes and alleyways allowed for maximum sunlight to reach neighboring complexes without being shaded by the structures in adjoining compounds.

The traditional architecture of Shiraz, Iran, contains many features that help keep buildings cool in a hot, semi-arid climate.[9] Like the vernacular styles in Beijing, buildings in Shiraz contain inner courtyards. These courtyards have a small pool or water feature, which helps cool the open space and surrounding rooms. The oldest buildings in the city were constructed with wind catchers, which are tall chimneys set near the entryway of the home that circulate air through an underground pool and create a natural air conditioning system. Like vernacular styles in other cities with hot climates, the homes in Shiraz have thick, mud-brick walls and small high windows that allow for air flow, but prevent rooms from becoming overheated.

While this traditional building design keeps the house cool by incorporating passive solar elements, most Iranians today use swamp coolers during the hottest times of the year, even if their homes were built with natural cooling elements.[10] A study conducted in the city of Yazd measured the temperature in various rooms in vernacular homes during different times of day. During the hottest time of day, the rooms remained cooler than outside, but only the basement rooms stayed cool enough to be considered comfortable. Traditionally, Iranians rotated their living spaces seasonally. The main living rooms were moved to the basement during the hottest times of the year. Today most Iranians use air conditioners, because moving rooms seasonally is inconvenient and the damp basement air is considered unhealthy and unappealing. In this case, the vernacular

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9. Najmeh Najafi, "Iranian Traditional Architecture and Energy Saving (case study: Shiraz Ghajar houses)," *International Journal of Energy and Environment*, 4, 5 (2013): 871-878.

10. Ahmadreza Foruzanmehr and Marcel Vellinga, "Vernacular architecture: questions of comfort and practicability," Building *Research & Information*, 39, 3 (2011): 274-285.

designs can effectively and sustainably cool homes in a hot climate, but the cultural traditions involved in maintaining that system no longer fit with most people's daily lives.

Vernacular housing design and disaster resilience in Nepal

Nepal is a country that is vulnerable to earthquakes and seasonal flooding. It is largely rural, and outside of the cities, most of the homes are self-built using vernacular designs. In 2015, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake killed nearly, 9000 Nepalese and destroyed a half million homes. During the annual monsoon season, the country experiences an average of 70 significant flood events.

Only 10 percent of buildings in Nepal are constructed using earthquake-resistant reinforced concrete. Most buildings are made with local materials and methods. In the plains areas, timber-framed rectangular homes have withstood both earthquakes and floods. These traditionally designed homes have four to six pillars running from the ground to the roof that help make the structure earthquake resistant. The homes are raised one story off the ground, which protects them from flooding.

These traditional building techniques evolved over time to address repeated natural disasters. Homes that lacked timber-frames were more likely to be destroyed during the 2015 earthquake, and timber-framed homes that do not use local agrakh wood can lose strength if the timber posts become water-logged.

Vernacular housing can be retrofitted with traditional materials that can make it more earthquake and flood-resistant. Retrofitting homes is a cheaper alternative to replacing them with reinforced concrete structures. Relying on vernacular materials and methods recognizes local ingenuity and knowledge and respects cultural traditions.

Dipendra Gautum, Jyoti Prajapati, Kuh Valencia Paterno, Krishna Pumar Behtwal, and Pramod Nepane, "Disaster resilient vernacular housing technology in Nepal," Geoenvironmental Disasters, 3, 1 (2016).

Urban Infrastructure

Although cities are located in areas with relatively abundant natural resources, the provision of food, water, waste, and sewage disposal to a large, concentrated population requires far more resources than are contained within a city's immediate boundaries. While cities only occupy 2% of the earth's land surface, they consume 75% of the world's natural resources.[11] One way to estimate the amount of productive land that a city requires to meet the needs of its population is to calculate its ecological footprint.[12] The ecological footprint measure is a tool that was developed to measure the average amount of productive land and water resources that a household, city, region, or country uses based upon its overall consumption patterns. A footprint measure takes into account all of the land/water resources that are necessary to support the energy, food, housing, and transportation needs of a population. Footprints are calculated in global hectares per capita. The footprint measurement is a useful way to compare the ecological impacts of various places. For example, in 2017, the United States had an ecological footprint of 8.04 hectares/person, while Afghanistan's footprint was only 0.66 hectares/person.[13] The footprint measure can also be used to track the progress that a city or region makes toward becoming more ecologically sustainable. Calgary has a footprint that exceeds the Canadian national average, so the city began using the ecological footprint measure to assess its development plans and to chart more sustainable pathways forward.

One example of how a city's ecological footprint far exceeds its geographical boundaries is the New York City drinking water system. New York City's drinking water is supplied by a complex system of reservoirs,

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11. Haripriya Gunimeda, "Urban Ecological Footprint and a Livable Future," accessed on May 4, 2021 https://www.smartcitiesdive.com/ex/sustainablecitiescollective/ecological-footprint-and-livable-future/118866/#:~:text=Two per cent (2%),waste, causing huge ecological footprints.&text="We are using 50 per,than the Earth can provide.

12. Mathis Wackernagel, Justin Kitzes, Dan Moran, Steven Goldfinger, and Mary Thomas, "The Ecological Footprint of Cities and Regions: Comparing Resource Availability with Resource Demand," *Environment and Urbanization* 18, no. 1 (2006): 103-12.

13. Global Footprint Network, accessed May 4, 2021, https://data.footprintnetwork.org/#/compareCountries?cn=all&type=EFCpc&yr=2017.

some located 125 miles away.[14] The eighteen reservoir system and its surrounding watersheds occupy nearly 2,000 square miles. Water is carried to the city through a system of aqueducts, the largest of which is thirteen feet wide and eighty five miles long. Due to the age of the system, approximately 36 million gallons of water leak each day from cracks in the aqueducts and delivery pipes, a loss equivalent to 3-6% of the city's daily water supply.[15] The problem is even more severe in other cities. London loses about 25% of its daily water supply due to leaks in its system, and Johannesburg loses 30%.

Despite its large footprint and flaws, the fact that New Yorkers can turn on a tap and have access to a safe, reliable water source is a major feat. Too many urban residents lack access to basic infrastructure, such as running water, sewage, or adequate housing. The United Nations uses the term slum to refer to a household that lacks access to running water or sanitation, has precarious rights to their housing or land, lives in a substandard dwelling, and/or a house that is overcrowded.[16] In 2000, at least one billion people worldwide lived in these conditions.

The term slum, which is used by the United Nations and other international development organizations, can be problematic. Slum is considered a pejorative in most countries, although in India it is used by the urban poor as an empowering term. The phrase informal settlement is often used as a euphemism for slum, but this term refers to a specific type of community where members do not have secure title to the land where they have settled and built their homes. Informal communities refers to the social and legal status of the residents, while the term slum encompasses both social and economic deprivation.

Half of the urban populations in Africa, Latin America, and Asia live in slums or informal settlements.[17] Many homes in these communities are not connected to municipal water systems, so family members have to

14. Kate Ascher, *The Works: Anatomy of a City* (New York: Penguin, 2005).

15. Laurie Winkless, *Science and the City: The Mechanics behind the Metropolis* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Sigma, 2016).

16. Kim Dovey, Tanzil Shafique, Matthijs van Oostrum and Ishita Chatterjee, "Informal Settlement is not a Euphemism for 'Slum': What's at Stake beyond the Language?" *International Development Planning Review,* (July 2020), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/ 343266742_Informal_settlement_is_not_a_euphemism_for_'slum'_what's_at_stake_beyond_the_language.

17. Neal Pierce, Curtis Johnson and Farley Peters, *Century of the City No Time to Lose* (New York: The Rockefeller Foundation, 2008).

draw water from a communal tap if there is one nearby or purchase it from a private seller. Buying water from a private seller is ten to twenty times more expensive than paying for municipally supplied tap water. Since most households that lack running water are poor, purchasing water places an extra economic burden on families. Additionally, it takes time to transport water, and when a resource is so costly, it's used sparingly, often putting the family at risk for dehydration and other health problems.

The social causes of unsafe drinking water in the U.S.

Although the United States has some of the safest drinking water systems in the world, areas with high poverty rates and large populations of color are more likely to experience violations of safe drinking water laws. While the immediate culprit is often a contaminated water source or aging infrastructure, the underlying causes of a water crisis are often economic and political. In 2014, residents of Flint, Michigan, noticed that their tap water was discolored and smelled bad. Children began to experience health problems. The changes in the water quality coincided with a decision to switch the city's water source from Lake Huron to the Flint River to save money. The city was in the midst of an economic crisis, and the state appointed an emergency manager who was empowered to make unilateral budgetary decisions.

Flint is an aging industrial city whose population declined by nearly half over the past fifty years. Once a booming auto manufacturing town, the city never recovered from the wave of plant closures that began in the late 1970s. By the time the water crisis emerged, the city had lost a significant portion of its tax base due to declining populations, shuttering businesses, and lower property values and was in deep financial trouble. The state refused to support Flint and other struggling cities by raising new revenues or providing subsidies, preferring instead to impose stringent austerity measures.

The water from the Flint River had a high chloride content, which was corrosive when it came in contact with the city's lead pipes. After the switch, the city's tap water exceeded the lead limits set by the federal government and children's lead blood levels doubled and tripled in some areas.

No level of lead is really considered safe. Children are especially vulnerable to lead poisoning, which can cause irreversible brain damage and even death.

The Flint water crisis awakened the nation to the issue of lead in drinking water. In 2016, the city of Newark, New Jersey, tested the drinking water in its public schools and found alarming levels of lead. The city tested water samples from homes and found lead levels that matched some of the highest concentrations found in Flint. The city adjusted its water treatment procedures, distributed filters to affected homes, provided bottled water, and began replacing its pipes.

Like Flint, Newark is an aging industrial city with high poverty rates. Its drinking water infrastructure is more than 100 years old. With a declining tax base, the city could not afford to maintain and replace old service lines. While the state has provided some financial support to help the city address the water crisis, investments in infrastructure could have prevented the problem.

Newark, Flint and other cities with large Black populations do not receive the same levels of investment and support at the state and federal level that white-dominated communities do. Racially discriminatory housing practices created segregated metropolitan areas where Blacks were often concentrated in the oldest parts of the city near industrial areas, while whites were able to move to newer suburban neighborhoods. As a result, Black and Latino households are more likely to be exposed to unsafe drinking water.

Josiah Bates, "Newark officials providing bottled water to over 15,000 homes over lead contamination concerns," Time, August 27, 2019, https://time.com/5653115/newark-water-crisis/.

Yolanda J McDonald, and Nicole E. Jones, "Drinking Water Violations and Environmental Justice in the United States, 2011-2015." American Journal of Public Health (1971) 108, no. 10 (2018): 1401-407.

Rose Mooney, "We still have lessons to learn from Woburn, and Flint is a good place to start," The Notre Dame Law Review 96, no. 3 (2021): 1318.

More than 2.6 billion people worldwide lack access to sanitation, more than twice the number that lack clean, running water.[18] Connecting homes to a municipal sewage system can be costly, but the Orangi Pilot Project in Pakistan developed a low-cost method to connect households to existing sewage lines by training community residents to design, engineer, install, and maintain the lines within their settlement.[19] By relying on local labor, the project was able to connect families to sewage lines at one fifth of the normal cost, and community members gained training and skills.[20] Access to clean water and sewage are not just problems in lower-income countries. In the urban United States, most residents have access to municipal water, but it comes at a cost. The poorest urban residents are often faced with the difficult choice of deciding whether to their pay their rent or utility bills. In 2014, the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights condemned the city of Detroit for issuing water disconnection notices to more than 30,000 residents who had fallen behind on their bills, noting that if a resident is truly unable to pay, cutting off their water supply is a violation of their basic human rights.[21] Homeless residents also face challenges getting access to water and sanitation.[22] Public restrooms can be difficult to find in many urban areas, and relieving oneself on the street or sidewalk is considered a criminal act in most cities.

The challenges of providing water, sanitation, and adequate housing to urban residents worldwide are daunting, but the collective organization, knowledge, and ingenuity of people living under inadequate conditions has generated some creative and sustainable solutions. Slum Dwellers International is a group of informal settlement residents that began in India in the 1980s.[23] This female-led group initiated a savings

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18. United Nations Habitat, *Slum Almanac,* accessed July 12, 2017, https://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02-old/Slum Almanac 2015-2016_EN.pdf.

19. Orangi Pilot Project, accessed July 12, 2017, http://www.oppinstitutions.org/.

20. Pearce, Johnson, and Peters, *Century of the City.*

21. United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Detroit: Disconnecting Water from People Who Cannot Pay—an affront to Human Rights says UN Experts,* accessed July 14, 2017, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14777.

22. National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, *Housing and Homelessness in the United States of America,* accessed July 14, 2017, https://www.nlchp.org/documents/UPR_Housing_Report_2014.

23. Pearce, Johnson, and Peters, *Century of the City.*

program where each household in the community set aside a small amount of money that was pooled together to finance and leverage loans to construct community-wide improvements. In the city of Manila in the Philippines, the municipal water company agreed to extend underground water lines to the edges of informal settlements if community organizations took responsibility for installing water pipes to connect each block to the municipal line and agreed to collect payments for the services, which saved residents money by not having to purchase water from private sellers.[24] Some blocks decided to install a communal water tap that multiple households could access. Communal solutions to water and sewage provision are often more cost-effect than installing services at the individual household level. In Seattle, Washington, the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) created an Urban Rest Stop downtown where homeless people can access restrooms, showers, and laundry facilities.[25] LIHI now operates three urban rest stops around the city.

Providing basic services to its residents isn't the only infrastructure challenge that cities face. Existing infrastructure needs to be maintained, and aging systems may produce environmental problems. More than 850 towns and cities in the United States have a combined sewage overflow system, which means that rainwater is mixed with industrial and household wastewater and processed through the same sewage and water treatment system.[26] Many of these sewage systems were built before flush toilets became widespread, and they were initially designed to divert the garbage, animal and human wastes that were left in open sewers of industrial cities away from streets and homes during large rainstorms.[27] The early sewage systems emptied the rainwater and wastes directly into a nearby rivers, bays, lakes, or the ocean. Today, wastewater is processed through a complex treatment system before it enters a waterway to remove hazardous bacteria and sludge. But in combined sewage overflow systems, heavy rain or snowmelt overwhelms the system. When the volume of

24. Water and Sanitation Program, *Global Experiences on Expanding Services to the Urban Poor,* accessed July 15, 2017, https://www.wsp.org/sites/wsp.org/files/publications/SA_GUIDANCENOTES_globaleg.pdf.
25. Low Income Housing Institute, accessed July 14, 2017, https://lihi.org/history/.
26. Environmental Protection Agency, *Combined Sewer Overflows,* accessed July 15, 2017, https://www.epa.gov/npdes/combined-sewer-overflows-csos.
27. Mary Anna Evans, "Flushing the Toilet has Never Been Riskier," *The Atlantic,* (Sept 17, 2015) https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2015/09/americas-sewage-crisis-public-health/405541/.

rain and wastewater become too large for the sewer pipes and treatment system to handle, excess untreated wastewater ends up being released untreated into waterways.

Combined sewage overflow systems are a major source of water pollution in the United States. In New York City, the system experiences overflows during half of all rainstorms, resulting in about 40 billion gallons of untreated wastewater flowing each year directly into the harbor.[28] Releases from combined sewage overflows have been tied to algal blooms, degradation of drinking water supplies, fish and marine life kills, and spikes in gastrointestinal illnesses.[29] Cites have come up with a variety of solutions to this problem. New York is constructing underground reservoirs that will temporarily store excess wastewater until volumes return to normal levels and the system can process it, and Portland, Oregon's Big Pipe project created a series of underground tunnels that slowed the flow of wastewater and reduced untreated wastewater releases by 90%. [30]

Air Pollution

Urbanization not only impacts water quality, but it also produces air pollution. In urban areas, air quality is degraded by burning fossil fuels for transportation, energy generation and industrial production. According to the World Health Organization, 80% of people living in metropolitan areas breathe air that exceeds global pollution thresholds.[31] Air pollution is not equally distributed across the globe. Ninety eight percent of urban residents in low and middle income countries are exposed to poor quality air, while only 56% of city dwellers breathe dirty air in higher income countries. Cities in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and China currently have some of the highest levels of air pollution in the world. In the United States, the cities with the poorest air quality are concentrated in California and the Midwest. There are many factors that contribute to a city's air quality including its geography, climate patterns, design, industrial mix, transportation and energy infrastructure. Breathing polluted air increases the risk of heart and lung diseases, stroke, and asthma.[32]

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28. Ascher, *The Works,* 174.

29. Evans, "Flushing."

30. Ascher, *The Works,* Evans, "Flushing."

31. World Health Organization, *Global Urban Ambient Air Pollution Database (2016 update),* accessed July 16, 2017, http://www.who.int/phe/health_topics/outdoorair/databases/cities/en/.

32. World Health Organization, *Global Air Pollution.*

To improve outdoor air quality, cities can upgrade infrastructure, regulate industrial emissions, or encourage residents to change personal habits. In China, where air pollution causes over a million deaths each year, the government is switching from coal fired plants to cleaner energy sources, improving emissions standards for cars, requiring higher quality gasoline, and installing air scrubbers and other anti-pollution devices in plants.[33] Other countries are taking less comprehensive, but significant steps to reduce urban air pollution. Bangalore, India, achieved a 20% reduction in vehicle-based pollution by running buses on natural gas instead of diesel fuel and encouraging residents to take public transit.[34] European cities like Zurich, Helsinki, and Copenhagen are restricting cars in certain areas, constructing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and improving public transit.

Air quality can also be improved by making informed and deliberate decisions about where and how urban development occurs. People who live in more densely populated neighborhoods use less gasoline and electricity than their suburban counterparts do.[35] Even when urban and suburban residents have similar commute times to work, suburban residents end up driving more. The low-density, auto-dependent design of most suburban communities means that residents have to drive to accomplish other daily tasks like shopping, visiting with friends and family, or going out. Suburbanites tend to live in larger, single family homes, which results in greater electricity use, especially for heating and cooling. In the United States, the cities where summer temperatures require air conditioning are located in parts of the country where urban development occurred later, which means that these cities are lower-density, more suburbanized and auto-dependent; therefore, they consume more electricity per capita than older cities located in the colder regions of the U.S.

33. National Geographic, *China's Surprising Solutions to Clear Killer Air,* accessed July 17, 2017, http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/05/china-air-pollution-solutions-environment-tangshan/.

34. The Guardian, *How are Cities around the World Tackling Air Pollution?* Accessed July 17, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/may/17/how-are-cities-around-the-world-tackling-air-pollution.

35. Edward Glaeser, *Triumph of the City: How our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier and Happier* (New York, Penguin: 2011).

Grassroots Organizing for Cleaner Air in Colombia

Medellín is located in a high valley in the Colombian Andes. Since the 1990s, private car and motorcycle ownership in the city has risen exponentially. The increase in exhaust from private vehicles has resulted in deteriorating air quality. Medellín has two seasons when weather patterns trap smog in the air—in spring when the rains begin and in early fall. The city began taking steps to reduce air pollution in the 2000s, but after a few years of particularly bad smog seasons, activists demanded that the city do more. To protest poor air quality, activists placed masks on the city's famed statues and petitioned city officials to take immediate action.

Mayor Federico Gutiérrez implemented car-free days, prohibited cars according to the letters on their license plates from driving on certain days, and made public transit free. The city also worked with grassroots groups, government agencies and the private sector to create a comprehensive plan to improve air quality. The plan will electrify the entire city bus fleet and install charging stations.

One of the groups that helped pressure the city to take action on air quality was Unloquer, a tech-savvy grassroots organization. When Unloquer was unable to find consistent data about air pollution levels in Medellín, they set up their own system of simple air quality monitoring devices around the city. They made the readings from these devices available on an hourly basis to all residents through a free app. The project has expanded to more than 250 monitoring stations throughout the city. Having access to real-time data about pollution levels allows individuals to take precautionary measures and adjust their daily routines to protect their health.

Breathe Life, Medellín's Air Quality Plan Leads to Improvements, August 3, 2018, https://www.ccacoalition.org/en/news/medellíns-air-quality-plan-leads-improvements.

Juan-Carlos Valencia and Oscar Fonseca, "Air Pollution, Citizen Data Collectives, and Communication Agenda Setting in Colombia," WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment, 236 (2019):33-44.

In addition to outdoor pollutants, some urban residents around the globe are also exposed to air pollutants inside their homes. Some households cook over open fires using wood, animal or crop wastes as fuel, which causes carbon monoxide and particulate matter to be released. The World Health Organization estimates that up to one hundred times the recommended amounts of soot and other particulates are found in poorly ventilated cooking areas.[36] Since women are primarily responsible for household tasks like cooking and childcare, women and young children are far more likely to be affected by poor indoor air quality. About half of all deaths of children under 5 years old from pneumonia are caused by indoor air pollution, and four million people die worldwide each year from exposure to these toxins. Providing households with access to cleaner fuels and better cooking technology could help alleviate the suffering and death caused by indoor air pollution.

Toxins and Environmental Justice Movements

Industrialization expanded and intensified the urbanization process. The growth of large-scale manufacturing required a massive influx of laborers, which led to dramatic population growth in cities. The energy and raw materials that fueled factories left long-lasting ecological scars in communities where they were mined, harvested or produced. Manufacturing also produced waste on a scale that far surpassed previous modes of production. Much of that waste was discarded in dumps on or near factory sites or discharged into urban waterways. The sanitary movements that emerged in the late 19th century focused on disposing of household wastes, keeping drinking water systems free of human wastes and other disease-causing contaminants, and cleaning-up the public spaces of the city.[37] Less visible industrial waste products, like dioxins or heavy metals, were ignored, because their impact on human health had not yet been established. As a result, many industrial cities were contaminated with manufacturing wastes that posed long-term threats to human health.

The 1962 publication of marine biologist Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* raised awareness about

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36. World Health Organization, *Household Air Pollution and Health,* accessed July 17, 2017, http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs292/en/.
37. Short and Short, *Cities and Nature.*

environmental impacts of pesticides and other chemicals.[38] *Silent Spring* documented how pesticides like DDT can negatively impact ecosystems and can bio-accumulate in toxic levels as they move up the food chain. During the 1960s, public opinion about the environment began to change. In 1969, the Cuyahoga River, which runs through Cleveland, caught fire when a spark from a passing train ignited an oil slick on top of the waterway.[39] This was not the first time the river had caught fire, and the event did not initially cause a local uproar. The Cuyahoga had long been used as an unregulated, industrial waste dump, but local officials led by Mayor Carl Stokes, the first African American elected to lead a large U.S. city, had recently allocated money to begin cleaning up the waterway. Clevelanders had previously viewed the river's contamination as an unsightly, but necessary trade-off for the city's flourishing industrial economy. By the late 1960s, manufacturing employment had begun to decline, and Clevelanders started to rethink their city's relationship to the troubled waterway. When Time magazine published a story about the river fire months after it happened, it captured national attention and helped spur federal environmental legislation including the founding of the Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Water Act.

In 1977, residents of a working-class neighborhood in Niagara Falls began noticing sludge seeping into their yards and basements and started experiencing new health problems. Their neighborhood was built atop an abandoned canal that had been used as a chemical disposal site for decades.[40] In the 1890s, William Love halted construction on a canal project after he ran out of money. The five-mile-long ditch became a dump site for the Hooker Chemical Company, which eventually filled in the land and sold it to the Niagara Falls school district for one dollar in 1953. The district built an elementary school on top of the disposal site and a suburban development grew-up around it. Residents of the area had noticed occasional problems from the 21,000 tons of buried waste prior to the 1970s, but repeated heavy snowfalls and melts in the late 1970s caused major leakages.

38. Christopher Wells and Paul Sutter, *Environmental Justice in Postwar America. Weyerhaeuser Environmental Classics.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018.

39. Lorraine Boissoneault, The Cuyahoga River Caught Fire at least a Dozen Times, but no one cared until 1969," *Smithsonian Magazine,* June 19, 2019, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/cuyahoga-river-caught-fire-least-dozen-times-no-one-cared-until-1969-180972444/.

40. Jennifer Thomson. *The Wild and the Toxic.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

The state and federal authorities investigated and found significant land and groundwater contamination.[41] They also documented increased rates of miscarriage, chromosomal breakage, and liver damage in neighborhood children, but environmental regulators were hesitant to take action until they could definitely prove that these health issues were caused by the dioxins, the benzene and the other chemical compounds present in Love Canal. They instead issued guidance to residents warning them about potential pregnancy risks and recommending that they avoid their basements and not plant edible gardens in their yards. The Love Canal Homeowners Association (LCHA), a local renters association and community groups organized to demand further action. The homeowners, in particular, were very vocal. They were concerned that declining property values would leave them unable to sell their homes and afford to move to a safer community.

The organizing efforts at Love Canal lasted for years. Most of the advocacy was led by women. Lois Gibbs was a housewife and president of the Love Canal Homeowners Association. She recruited a respected female scientist to help the residents conduct a community health survey. The survey found increased risk of miscarriage, urinary diseases, asthma, birth defects, and central nervous system problems among residents. In addition to community-based research, activists from the LCHA, renters' organizations, church groups, and the NAACP staged protests and even once barricaded EPA officials in the LCHA office for five hours. Eventually, hundreds of families were evacuated and compensated. The Love Canal disaster spurred the passage of the Superfund law, which empowers the federal government to designate contaminated sites, clean-them up and recoup the mitigation costs from the polluters.

In 1982, the residents of Warren County, North Carolina, made headlines when they laid down in along a highway to physically block trucks carrying soil contaminated with PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) that was headed to a local landfill.[42] Nearly five hundred residents were eventually arrested protesting the state's decision to site a toxic waste landfill in their community. This was the largest civil rights and mass civil disobedience campaign since the 1960s.

The controversy in Warren County began years earlier when a Raleigh-based company illegally dumped PCBs along 240 miles of roadway across the state. The owner of the company was arrested and jailed, and the federal and state authorities began removing contaminated soils and searching for a location to construct

41. Ibid.
42. Thomson, *Wild and Toxic;* Wells and Sutter, *Environmental Justice*

a landfill where the soil could be safely disposed of. They eventually selected a small community in Warren County, which was the poorest county in the state and is 65% Black. Warren County is relatively low-lying and the water table is just five to ten feet below the ground, raising concerns that the contaminants could potential leak in well-water.

Given the physical unsuitability of the landfill site, residents believed their community had been chosen because it was low-income and predominately Black. The EPA and state authorities asserted that the siting process had been fair and transparent. But wealthier places have more political sway and are often able to stop unwanted uses from being sited in their communities. Poorer communities are sometimes perceived to be so desperate for economic investment and jobs that they will tolerate potentially harmful industries. The citizens of Warren County challenged that perception.

While they were unable to stop the construction of the landfill, the Warren County protests ushered in a new era of environmental activism that was led by people of color and focused on improving the environments where people live, work, and play rather than preserving pristine areas or saving endangered species.[43] This new movement framed their struggle as a fight for "environmental justice." A study conducted by the United Church of Christ in 1987 found that the majority of toxic waste sites were located in low-income communities and in communities of color. This landmark study documented the "environmental racism" inherent in siting of unwanted land uses. In 1991, the first national people of color environmental leadership conference was held.

The environmental justice movement believes that everyone has a right to live in a safe, healthy community. The movement focuses on improving the actual environments in the urban and suburban communities were people live, work and play. Like the residents of Love Canal, environmental justice advocates believe that polluters should bear the burden of proving that the toxins they produce and discard are safe, instead of communities having to wait until a definitive scientific link can be found between the contaminants in their neighborhood and their health before authorities take action. Activists believe that industry should adopt a

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43. United Church of Christ, Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty, 1987-2007, https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/toxic-wastes-and-race-at-twenty-1987-2007_Part1.pdf; Shirley A. Rainey, and Glenn S. Johnson. "Grassroots Activism: An Exploration of Women of Color's Role in the Environmental Justice Movement." Race, Gender & Class (Towson, Md.) 16, no. 3/4 (2009): 144-73.

credo of doing no harm. They also believe communities should have a say in the decisions that impact them. They want transparency and input into decision-making about the siting of potentially toxic land uses, just as Warren County protesters were fighting for.

The environmental justice movement seeks to remedy the disproportionate health burden that communities of color and low-income communities bear. While not all decisions about where wastes are stored or polluting industries are located are made with racist intent, data clearly shows that the costs of energy production, industrialization, and consumerism are not borne equally. Those who benefit the least often bear the greatest cost, while those who have the largest environmental footprint bear little to none. For example, it is estimated that between 60-80% of uranium in the U.S. is mined on tribal lands, yet indigenous people receive little benefit from the nuclear power plants and weapons industry it fuels.[44] On the Navajo reservation, cancer rates doubled from 1970-1990, and 27% of Navajos had high uranium levels detected in urine samples compared to 5% of the overall population.[45]

Women play a major role in environmental justice movements.[46] Women of color often take on leadership positions in these grassroots groups. As caregivers, women are more likely to notice the impacts that pollutants have on their family's health. Lois Gibbs' activism began after her son experienced health problems connected to the contaminants dumped at Love Canal.

There are more than a thousand local environmental justice groups across the United States. The movement has won some considerable gains and made inroads to federal policymakers. The Environmental Protection Agency now has an office of environmental justice. But environmental racism still persists.

44. Curtis Kline, "Uranium Mining and Native Resistance: The Uranium Exploration and Mining Accountability Act," July 2, 2013, https://intercontinentalcry.org/uranium-mining-and-native-resistance-the-uranium-exploration-and-mining-accountability-act/#:~:text=There are also 1,200 abandoned,worldwide is on Indigenous land.

45. Laural Morales, "For the Navajo Nation, Uranium Mining's Deadly Legacy Lingers," National Public Radio, April 10, 2016, https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2016/04/10/473547227/for-the-navajo-nation-uranium-minings-deadly-legacy-lingers.

46. Shirley A. Rainey, and Glenn S. Johnson. "Grassroots Activism: An Exploration of Women of Color's Role in the Environmental Justice Movement." Race, Gender & Class (Towson, Md.) 16, no. 3/4 (2009): 144-73.

Climate Change and Cities

The Earth's climate has varied over time. But the planet warmed or cooled over a span of thousands of years. Once the planet begins to cool or warm, it can trigger feedback loops that accelerate climate changes.[47] For example, as Arctic permafrost thaws due to warming temperatures, methane and carbon, two greenhouse gases, are released into the atmosphere. Greenhouse gases cause further warming by trapping heat in the atmosphere. During the last Ice Age, there were 190 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. That increased to 280 parts per million during the current warmer cycle we are in. The rate remained relatively stable over thousands of years until industrialization began. Then the carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere increased to 400 parts per million. Global temperatures have risen by one degree Celsius in the past 150 years.

The main cause of the accelerated climate changes we are experiencing is greenhouse gas emissions from our industrialized societies. Urbanization is a key driver of climate change.[48] Seventy percent of emissions originate in cities and towns. Urban populations are growing around the world. In 1970, only 18% of the Chinese population lived in urban areas; today more than 40% of the population lives in cities. This increase is equivalent to the entire population of the United States moving from rural to urban communities in just twenty years. Although China has a significantly smaller ecological footprint than the U.S. does, urbanization nonetheless increases greenhouse gas emissions.

Cities are also vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Since most cities are built near coastal areas or waterways, flooding due to storm surges or sea level rise can threaten people and structures. Some of the most populous cities in the world, including Tokyo, New York, Hong Kong, London, Kolkata, and Buenos Aires, could see increased flooding in the very near future. Climate change can cause other challenges for cities. Heat waves can be devastating in communities that lack green space. Temperature changes and drought can compromise water sources, cause crop damage and impact food supplies, and damage existing infrastructure.

47. Felix FitzRoy and Elissaios Papyrakis, *An Introduction to Climate Change Economics and Policy. Second ed.* Routledge Textbooks in Environmental and Agricultural Economics ; 16. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016)
48. Harriet Bulkeley, *Cities and Climate Change. Routledge Critical Introductions to Urbanism and the City*. (London: Routledge, 2013); Kenny Tang, *Green CITYnomics: The Urban War against Climate Change.* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2017).

Older cities are also saddled with legacy infrastructure that was built decades or even centuries earlier that can be difficult to upgrade to accommodate more climate-friendly technologies.

However, cities can also play a key role in mitigating climate change. The concentration of knowledge and power in urban areas can spur innovations and create the political will to adopt climate-friendly policies. The density of urban places makes it easier to design and implement carbon-neutral transportation networks and energy systems. Cities also facilitate mobilization. Grassroots organization and pressure is pivotal for creating lasting social change.

Three Responses to Climate Change Defined

Climate Mitigation: Policies that reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions and slow the rate of climate change. Example: Using clean fuels instead of diesel in buses

Climate Adaption: Policies that protect communities from the impacts of climate change. Example: Reducing the number of trees and shrubs directly near structures in wildfire-prone communities to provide a natural fuel-free barrier

Climate Resilience: Policies that consider and plan for the impacts of climate change so communities can prepare for and respond to climate-related emergencies Example: Creating designated cooling shelters in urban neighborhoods that would automatically open during heat waves, providing resources necessary to operate these shelter, and doing outreach so residents can access the shelters

"Mitigation, Adaption, Resilience: Three Pillars of the Response to Global Warming," UN Climate Change Conference, Bonn, 2017-2018 https://cop23.com.fj/mitigation-adaptation-resilience/.

One of the most all-encompassing efforts to address climate change is the construction of model eco-cities.[49] The notion of a built-from-scratch, utopian city is not new. The British urban planner Ebenezer Howard designed the Garden City in the late 1800s, and a number of towns and communities in Europe and North America were developed using his concepts. China has unveiled plans to address urbanization, in part, by constructing new eco-cities. One of the planned cities is Wanzhuang, which would replace the existing city of Lang Fang and connect it with surrounding villages. The plans call for preserving agricultural lands, creating a public transportation loop, and using renewable geothermal energy sources. Plans for establishing brand-new eco-cities like Wanzhuang are often walked back once construction begins. Abu Dhabi, one of the United Arab Emirates, announced plans to build a completely carbon-neutral town called Masdar City.[50] Masdar City would be a hub of clean technology businesses and research, would use green building methods, encourage the use of alternative transportation, and be powered by solar and other renewable energies. Since construction on the town began, environmental sustainability goals have been reduced and the timelines for completion extended. While eco-city projects can provide inspiration and innovation, the promises often fall short.

Not every effort to combat climate change has to involve a complete overhaul. Puerto Princesa City in the Philippines set a goal to reduce its climate emissions by 10%.[51] That reduction was achieved by making a series of small but meaningful changes. They turned streetlights off an hour earlier, shut down air conditioning systems in buildings during lunch hour, and installed a biogas plant that transformed organic wastes into energy that was used to power electric scooters and vehicles in the city's fleet.

Cities are not only planning to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, they are also preparing to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Kansas City, Missouri, created an Extreme Heat Program (EHP) in 1980 after the city experienced 16 consecutive days where temperatures exceeded 102°F (38.9°C).[52] The EHP runs a heat relief

49. Peter Newman, Peter, and Anne Matan, *Green Urbanism in Asia the Emerging Green Tigers.* (Singapore; Hackensack, NJ: World Scientific, 2013)

50. Steven Griffiths and Benjamin K Sovacool, "Rethinking the Future Low-Carbon City: Carbon neutrality, green design, and sustainability tensions in the making of Masdar City," *Energy Research and Social Science,* 62, (April 2020).

51. Newman and Matan, *Green Urbanism*

52. David M. Mills, and William D. Snook. "Adapting to Extreme Heat Events: Thirty Years of Lessons Learned from the Kansas City, Missouri, Extreme Heat Program." In *Natural Disasters and Adaptation to Climate Change*, eds. Sarah Boulter, Jean Palutikof, David John Karoly, and Daniela Guitart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 53-64.

hotline and fan distribution program. They also worked with the local public health department and National Weather Service to develop and issue heat advisories that would trigger responses like opening cooling centers and staffing the hotline. The EHP evaluates its response each season and creates new initiatives to address gaps in its response. For example, some isolated elderly and disabled residents who were particularly vulnerable to heat-related illnesses were not responding to heat advisories and warnings. The EHP has made an effort to reach out to vulnerable populations through local organizations that serve these communities.

Toledo, Ohio, was built on a wetlands and is prone to flooding.[53] Northwestern Ohio has experienced increased precipitation due to climate change. The city has adopted green infrastructure techniques to absorb storm water runoff and reduce flooding. On a small scale, green infrastructure can include planting rain gardens or creating bioswales that are designed to channel runoff to natural areas where it can be absorbed. On a larger scale, green infrastructure might include restoring wetlands and flood plains in flood-prone areas. The city calculated the cost of implementing a green infrastructure program and discovered that it would be economically beneficial to the community when compared to the potential losses from increased flooding.

In Miami, sea-level rise threatens some of the most expensive homes in beachfront areas.[54] Some homeowners have increased the heights of their seawalls, and new buildings are raised several feet to accommodate for rising sea levels and potential flooding. However, climate change is also impacting neighborhoods farther inland. Liberty City, a low-income, predominantly Black community, is seeing rising housing costs and gentrification pressure as Miamians seek out property insulated from the effects of climate change. Liberty City residents have created a land trust that will help keep a portion of the housing permanently affordable.

53. "All Hands on Deck' Creating Green Infrastructure to Combat Flooding in Toledo, *U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit,* accessed March 10, 2021, https://toolkit.climate.gov/case-studies/all-hands-deck-creating-green-infrastructure-combat-flooding-toledo.

54. Ian Stewart and Lulu Garcia Navarro, "Building for an Uncertain Future: Miami Residents Adapt to the Changing Climate," National Public Radio, March 31, 2019, https://www.npr.org/2019/03/31/706940085/building-for-an-uncertain-future-miami-residents-adapt-to-the-changing-climate.

Nature and the City

Early scholars writing about life in the industrial city rarely considered the relationship between nature and the urban environments. Frederick Engels vividly documented the contaminated settings that poor and working class urban residents in England lived and died in, but he did not examine how capitalism and urbanization impacted the environment.[55] By the mid to late 20th century, urban theorists had begun to visualize the city as a complex system of inputs and outputs.[56] Natural resources went into the city and wastes came out, each impacting the environment.

During the 1970s, environmental movements reshaped the way we think about nature and human activity. Human processes and built environments are not separate from their natural surroundings, but rather deeply intertwined with them. Urban political ecology views urbanization as a social, political, and ecological process that impacts both the urban and rural places.[57] In other words, how nature is used to produce the built environment, the impact that urbanization has on natural resources, and how the costs and benefits of these processes are borne by different communities within urban areas are all determined by our political, economic, historical, and cultural systems. This approach allows us to see nature as an integral part of the urban system, rather than simply viewing it as something that is fed into and spit out of it.

Summary

Urbanization is not simply the inverse of nature. Instead, urban regions are fundamentally shaped, constrained, and co-produced by their natural environment. Natural resources determine where cities are located and influence their design. The ecological footprints of cities are much larger than their official boundaries, and the quality of the infrastructure provided in an urban region can have a substantial impact on both the environment and the health of the region and its residents. Water and air pollution degrade the quality of life

55. Erik Swyngedouw and Maria Kaika, "Urban Political Ecology. Great Promises, Deadlock....and New Beginnings?" *Documents d'Anàlisi Geogràfica,* 60, 3 (2014): 459-48.

56. David Wachsnuth, "Three Ecologies: Urban Metabolism and the Society-Nature Opposition" *The Sociological Quarterly*, 53 (2012): 506-523.

57. Wachsmuth, "Three Ecologies"

in many cities. These problems are exacerbated by urban design. Lower-density development leads to increased energy usage and greater vehicle emissions.

In addition, not all urban residents have equal access to clean air, toxin-free neighborhoods, and clean water. Environmental justice highlights how communities of color and low-income people have borne a disproportionate burden of the toxins and pollution produced by cities. Another challenge cities face is climate change. Mitigation efforts can help curb the onset of climate change, but cities will also have to adapt and become more resilient as climate patterns change. Seeing the city as part of the larger natural environment, rather than simply as contrary to it, helps us understand the fundamental role that natural systems play in urban life.

Test your Urban Literacy:

Think about how the concepts in this chapter apply to your own city

1. Describe how your city's natural setting influenced its history, design, layout, and way of life. Provide at least three concrete examples of how the natural environment has shaped your city.
2. Identify some common vernacular design features that are present in buildings throughout your city. How do these elements reflect the unique climate, culture, and natural environment you live in?
3. Find one example of air pollution, water pollution, or toxic contamination in your city. What is the source of this pollutant? Who is impacted by it? What efforts have been made to clean up or reduce the harmful impacts of this toxin?
4. If an environmental justice movement were to form in your area, what might its demands be? Are there specific neighborhoods or areas within your city that bear a disproportionate burden

of the environmental costs of urban living?

5. How can your city reduce its carbon footprint? What urban design changes could you make to help reduce carbon emissions?

6. Urban political ecology views urbanization as part of a larger social, political, economic, and ecological process that transforms landscapes both within and beyond a city's borders. Provide one example of how the infrastructure in your city (water, energy, transportation, etc.) impacts the natural or human environment in another part of your region.

Learn to read the city around you:

Apply what you've learned in this chapter by completing a hands-on activity in your own city

1. ***Design a prototype community that reflects your city's natural setting:*** Design a cluster of homes, an apartment complex, or a mixed-use (commercial and residential) building complex that takes into account the local culture and environment. Your structures should incorporate materials that are found within your region. The buildings must also be appropriate for your region's climate and should not rely upon energy-intensive features to maintain a comfortable temperature during all seasons. The design should facilitate your area's unique culture or social life. If you live in a multicultural environment, you may want to create flexible spaces that can be adapted to the users' unique needs. Create a drawing and floor plan for your complex and present your design to your classmates.

2. ***Conduct a water and sanitation resources survey:*** Create a chart that shows the free public restrooms, bathing or hygiene facilities, drinking water, or garbage cans available to people who are experiencing homelessness or who lack access to any of these basic services. Focus your efforts on one concentrated area of your city's downtown core or on one neighborhood. Identify potential hygiene and sanitation resources and note their hours of operation and any restrictions that might limit their use, such as having a door code on a public restroom. You should also pay attention to the ways in which these resources can accommodate different purposes. For example, you might be able to wash your hair or take a makeshift sink bath in a public restroom that allows only one user at a time. Your resources survey should show which facilities are available within a 24 hour period. Identify any gaps that exist and propose potential solutions for filling those gaps.

3. ***Audit your water usage:*** In communities that lack access to running water, women and girls walk an average of 5 kilometers (3.2 miles) to get water for their families. Even when water resources are located nearby, families might ration the amount of water they use, because transporting water can be a laborious task. People who have access to running water in their homes are often not aware of how much water they use each day. Do some research to find out how many gallons of water basic household tasks like showering or washing dishes require. Record how much water you use during a 24-hour period. Imagine how your water usage might change if you had to haul your supply from someplace outside of your home. Identify ways that you could save water by eliminating some daily tasks or changing how you conduct them. Think about how you could conserve water by using it for multiple tasks. For example, you could collect the water you use to rinse dishes and use it in the garden. You may also choose to take this experiment a step further by trying to actively reduce the amount of water you use during a 24 hour period.

4. ***Evaluate a City Park:*** Cities have limited green spaces, so these spaces need to accommodate a variety of types of activities from recreation to quiet contemplation. Visit a park in your city. Create a map of the different areas and uses within the park (basketball courts, playground, green space, etc.). Identify objects or areas that are designed to

accommodate human activities such as benches, grassy spaces, picnic shelters, or restrooms. Spend some time observing which spaces are used most frequently, which spaces are empty, and how people adapt spaces for uses that they may not be designed for (i.e. using a basketball court for an outdoor exercise class). Write an analysis evaluating how well this park meets residents' needs for various uses like recreation, meditation, contemplation, connection with nature, socialization, and so on. Provide specific examples from your observations to support your analysis. Make suggestions for how the park could be improved to better meet residents' needs.

5. **Calculate your ecological footprint:** Find a website that allows you to calculate your ecological footprint. Input the data needed and record the result. Read about the criteria that is used to determine your footprint. Think about how you could reduce your footprint by considering the changes that would need to be made in each of the criterion used to determine it. Identify the individual actions you could take to lower your footprint and the structural solutions that your city, region or state would need to make in order to live more sustainably. Create a list of recommendations that includes five individual and five structural solutions for reducing your ecological footprint.

6. **Explore the social distribution of pollution within your city:** Research how pollution impacts different neighborhoods and communities in your city. You can find data about emissions, air quality, toxic facilities and so on by exploring environmental agencies' and advocacy groups' websites. You may be able to locate maps of heat islands, tree cover, or emission levels. Use this data to identify the neighborhoods that are most at risk for pollution exposure. Learn more about each of those communities by looking at census or neighborhood data. See if any patterns emerge. Brainstorm ways to improve the environmental conditions in these communities. As you think about possible solutions, use the principles of environmental justice by incorporating the voices of those who are most impacted. Craft your solutions based upon the suggestions or actions that community members have taken. Present your analysis and recommendations to the class.

7. **Create a field guide to native plant, tree, bird, insect and/or animal species:** Identify

3-5 native tree, plant, bird, insect or animal species that continue to be widespread in your city. Locate examples of those species in your neighborhood or city. Create a field guide entry for each species you identify. Your entry should include the species Latin and common names, a description of it, its habitat, the role it plays in your ecosystem, its traditional uses, and where you might find it in your city. You can compile students' entries to create a class field guide to the native species in your community.

8. ***Assess the green potential of two neighborhoods:*** Choose two neighborhoods in your city that differ in significant ways (i.e. high density vs. low density, upper income vs. lower-income, central city vs. urban edge). Develop a list of criteria that you will assess to determine how environmentally sustainable each neighborhood is. For example, you might rate the transportation options, green space, or tree cover. Complete a walking and observational tour of each neighborhood taking careful notes about the features that are environmentally friendly and the aspects of the neighborhood that are unsustainable. Create a chart that compares the two communities. Make suggestions for how each neighborhood could improve its green potential.

3.

DEVELOPMENT

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- Describe how a city's layout and form reflect its history
- Articulate the impact that new modes of transportation had on urban development patterns
- Explain how globalization impacts cities and sparks new types of development
- Understand the role that local governments play in the redevelopment of urban neighborhoods
- Identify grassroots development methods and alternatives to growth-oriented development.

At the beginning of this chapter, we consider the factors that influence a city's physical form, structure, and land uses. We'll then explore how a city's morphology reflects its history and how transportation technologies affect growth and development patterns. Next, we will investigate how changes in the global economy have reshaped cities and fueled urbanization. Then, we will also look at the ways in which local governments direct and spark redevelopment, changing who lives where and what our neighborhoods look like. Finally, we'll examine different forms of bottom-up development and alternatives to traditional ideas about urban growth and development.

Historical Urban Development Patterns

If you walk the streets of a city anywhere in the world and pay close attention to the layout and design, you may be able to identify when a particular area was developed. Cities that emerged during different historical time periods have distinctive forms. For example, ancient cities were very compact and were surrounded by a defensive wall, and cities that were established as colonies during the Roman Empire are laid out in a grid pattern with two major thoroughfares, one running north/south and another laid-out in an east/west orientation.[1]

Despite their cultural and geographical diversity, ancient cities built between 3,000-8,000 years ago share some similarities. Two features that were present in ancient cities across the globe were the outer walls that surrounded them and their inner citadels, or walled fortifications within the city that were the center of religious and political life.[2] Cities in the Mesopotamian region were oval-shaped, while ancient Chinese cities had a square shape.[3] In some ancient cities, settlements grew up outside of the city walls, but when ancient Greek cities grew beyond their capacity, a new satellite city-state was formed.

Citadels were constructed in many ancient cities. In Western European cities, castles, a form of a citadel, were built in the center of the city.[4] Erbil, a Kurdish city in Iraq, is home to the longest, continuously inhabited citadel in the world. The Erbil citadel complex is 6,000 years old.[5] This Unesco World Heritage site contains the Grand Mosque, where residents of the city still worship, a museum, a few businesses, many residential and commercials buildings that are in various states of ruin, and one family's home. The presence of this lone home preserves this citadel's status as the world's longest, continuously occupied city center. The newer parts of the city radiate out from the citadel and resemble more modern urban forms, but the citadel remains a relic of the city's early history, and it continues to play a central role in the lives of Erbil's residents.

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1. Vitor Oliveira, *Urban morphology: An introduction to the study of the physical form of cities* (Urban book series). (New York, London, and Heidelberg: Springer, 2016).
2. "History of Cities and City Planning," Cliff Ellis, accessed October 8, 2017, http://www.art.net/~hopkins/Don/simcity/manual/history.html.
3. Oliveira, *Urban Morphology.*
4. Ibid.
5. Ron Nordland, "After 6,000 year of habitation, one family and lots of mice," *The New York Times,* Oct. 10, 2017, 46.

Ancient cities were primarily concerned with protecting themselves from outside threats, hence their walls and fortified inner citadels. In Mesopotamian cities, the areas located closest to the citadel were designed and planned intentionally and had an ordered structure to them, while the farther from the citadel you went, structures were more informally built and arranged.[6] Those living outside of the city's walls were less influenced by the religious, social and architectural customs of the city. However, cities in other parts of the world were more cohesively structured. Ancient Chinese cities were laid out in a grid pattern with the major thoroughfares leading to the city gates.[7] The Greeks and the Romans also used a grid pattern to plat streets in their colonial cities.[8]

While the ancient cities' cores were intentionally designed and planned, residential neighborhoods were more in flux. Neighborhoods in ancient cities were usually bounded by a natural feature, such as a river or stream, but the street layouts and built environment shifted as the needs of the inhabitants changed.[9] Neighborhoods were often populated by residents who shared a common occupation, religion, or ethnicity, but they were heterogeneous and included people of different status. In the ancient Mexican city of Teotihuacan, large apartment complexes were built to house between 60-100 people who all shared the same occupation or craft.[10] Homes were sites of production as well as residences, and in some ancient cities, neighborhoods included fields where crops were grown.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, cities in Europe were repeatedly attacked and destroyed.[11] When cities began to re-emerge in the 10th and 11th centuries, urban settlements were designed around commerce and trade. While these medieval cities also contained fortified outer walls, as the cities grew, new concentric walls

6. Ellis, "History of Cities"

7. Oliveira, *Urban Morphology*.

8. John Rennie Short, *The Urban Order: An Introduction to Cities, Culture and Power,* (Cambridge, MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

9. Natalie N. May and Ulrike Steinert, *The Fabric of Cities: Aspects of Urbanism, Urban Topography and Society in Mesopotamia, Greece, and Rome. Culture and History of the Ancient near East*, (Boston: Leiden, 2013).

10. Geoff Emberling, Sarah C. Clayton, and John W. Janusek. "Urban Landscapes: Transforming Spaces and Reshaping Communities." in The Cambridge World History, ed. Norman Yoffee, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 300-316.

11. Oliveira, *Urban Morphology*.

were built to accommodate the growing population. In ancient cities, houses opened up to inner courtyards and the outer street-facing walls were designed for privacy. Medieval homes were mixed-use with the bottom floors occupied by businesses and the upper ones designed as residences. The central plaza of the city was used as a marketplace, rather than for religious or political purposes.

During the Renaissance period, European cities continued to highlight commerce and trade but were also concerned with aesthetics and art. Cities that developed during this era have plentiful public spaces and made major investments in urban culture. Renaissance cities often have a primary main thoroughfare that was dotted with public artworks like sculptures and fountains. Cities that were established during this era are dense with radial street patterns that included wide main streets that could accommodate horses and carts, and smaller pedestrian only lanes in the residential areas.

The industrial revolution caused an exponential growth in the size and number of cities. In 1800, only 3% of the world's population lived in a settlement that contained more than 5,000 people.[12] By 1900, 10% of the world's population was living in cities. Today, more than half of the globe resides in cities, and by 2050, an estimated 70% of the world will live in an urbanized area.[13]

Cities that developed or grew during industrialization looked different than their predecessors. As populations expanded, the need for perimeter protective walls disappeared. [14] Massive factory districts were constructed near city centers. New communities were built around these large, factory complexes. In Manchester, New Hampshire, the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company was established on an undeveloped plot of land along the Merrimack River in 1837, and the company built the town around its massive plant.[15] The factory owners laid out a street grid around the textile mill complex and sold lots to developers to build

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12. Short, *The Urban Order*, 37.

13. "Human Population: Urbanization," Population Reference Bureau, accessed October 15, 2017, http://www.prb.org/Publications/Lesson-Plans/HumanPopulation/Urbanization.aspx.

14. Nancy Kleniewski, *Cities, Change and Conflict: A Political Economy of Urban Life*, (Belmont, CA: Thomson, Wadsworth, 2006).

15. Tamara Hareven and Randolph Langenbach, *Amoskeag: Life and Work in an American Factory-City*, (New York: Pantheon, 1978)

housing for their workers. Manchester's urban form is typical of many industrial cities with a central business and industrial district surrounded by working class residential areas.

In addition to gridded street patterns, industrial cities also contained central business districts, or downtown areas where commerce, government, and business functions were located.[16] Factories and manufacturing zones were initially centered in or just outside of the central business area.[17] Adjacent to the manufacturing zones were working class housing districts that were overcrowded, poorly built, and heavily polluted.[18] Residents' levels of wealth, access to open space, and decent sanitation increased the farther one traveled away from the central city. Unlike ancient or medieval cities where the powerful lived near the center, those with wealth and power lived outside the industrial city in single family homes where open space and fresh air were plentiful.

Class-based segregation was evident in both the physical geography and layout of industrial cities. The wealthiest residents lived far enough away from the factories they owned or managed to escape the smoke, wastes, toxins, and smells that these industries produced.[19] Roads, and later, railways made it possible for the wealthy to travel to and from the central city without having to pass through working class districts. In his description of industrialized Manchester, England, Friedrich Engels explained how all of the roads leading out of the central business area were lined with commercial enterprises, which helped hide the squalor of working class housing districts that were located off the main road. These commercial arteries effectively served to "conceal from the eyes of wealthy men and women of strong stomachs and weak nerves the misery and grime which form the complement of their wealth."[20]

In the industrial cities of the northern and midwestern United States, residential segregation was not only based on class, but also on race. Even prior to the Great Migration, when the Black population in northern cities was small, there was evidence of racial segregation. In 1899, noted sociologist W.E.B. DuBois

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16. Kleniewski, *Cities, Change, Conflict.*

17. Ernest Burgress, "The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project," in *The City Reader: Second Edition,* ed. Richard LeGates and Frederic Stout, (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 153-161.

18. Friedrich Engels, "The Great Towns," in *The City Reader: Second Edition,* ed. Richard LeGates and Frederic Stout, (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 46-55.

19. Engels, "The Great Towns."

20. Engels, "The Great Towns," 49-50.

documented the discrimination that African American residents faced in Philadelphia in housing, employment and political life.[21] Blacks were concentrated in the inner city 7th Ward and faced higher housing costs than whites did. They were confined to some of the worst housing in the city, and landlords routinely refused to make repairs on dwellings occupied by African American tenants. While not barred by law from living in majority white districts, when Black families moved into white areas, they faced outright hostility and harassment from their neighbors. These patterns of segregation, disinvestment, and violent discrimination would come to characterize African American experiences in U.S. cities throughout the twentieth century.

Life in the Industrial City: Nineteenth Century York

Although York was established 2,000 years ago and survived numerous conquests and plagues, the northern English city's population grew rapidly and exponentially during the Industrial Revolution.

In the early 1900s in the poorest districts of the city, 30% of the houses were built back-to-back, which meant three sides of the dwelling were attached to neighboring units leaving only one side available for windows and ventilation. Some homes were built along narrow lanes and alleys that were only 3-4 feet wide. Less than half of the homes had an indoor water tap; the majority had to share a common tap with up to 20 other households. The water tap was usually located in a shared courtyard that also contained midden privies, or open-pit latrines, that were also used by multiple households. Most courtyards weren't paved and waste from the privies often seeped into surrounding soil. Homes were damp with brick floors that were laid directly upon the ground with no foundation.

The city had more than 94 slaughterhouses, which dumped their waste directly into open sewers

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21. William Edgar Burghardt (W.E.B.) DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study,* (Philadelphia: Published for the University, 1899).

that ran through working-class neighborhoods. Small dairy producers maintained cowsheds in residential areas. York was more densely populated than most U.S. cities at the time, but was less crowded than Manchester or London. However, the working-class neighborhoods were heavily populated with densities of more than 300 people/acre. Nineteenth century reformers considered densities of more than 25 people/acre to be unhealthy.

The crowded, unsanitary conditions led to high rates of infant mortality. In England and Wales, infant mortality rates were already high with 160/1,000 newborns not surviving past their first year. York's working-class districts' infant mortality rates were 247/1,000. The leading cause of death was dysentery, and typhoid fever, another disease caused by poor sanitation, was also prevalent. Children who did survive were malnourished. They weighed less and were shorter than their peers in other districts. The mainstay of most working-class families' diets was bread with butter or jam, supplemented with small portions of meat or vegetables, if the family could afford them.

Rowntree, B. Seebohm. Poverty, a Study of Town Life, London: Macmillan, 1901.

Although the Industrial Revolution sparked widespread urbanization in Western Europe and North America, most of the world remained largely rural. European colonization and North American imperialism facilitated industrialization and urbanization in the "core" parts of the world through the mass extraction and export of raw materials from "periphery" nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.[22] Just as agricultural surpluses fueled the development of ancient cities, industrialization was enabled by the mass plunder of resources and people from Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Colonization not only involved the complete subjugation of the indigenous economic and political systems

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22. David Clark, *Urban World/Global City, Second Edition,* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003).

for the benefit of the colonizer, but it also transformed the geography of the colonized nation.[23] Colonization left its imprints on many cities in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Some of the characteristics of cities that were subject to colonization include extensive infrastructure geared toward the transportation and export of agricultural and mining products, Western influence in architecture, and hyper-segregation and massive inequality between the sectors of town that were inhabited by colonial settlers and the areas that were home to indigenous populations.

Core and Periphery—terms to describe the global imbalances of power

The terms "core" and "periphery" are used to describe the unequal economic, political and cultural relationships that exist between the wealthier nations in North America, Europe, Australia and parts of East Asia and the rest of the world. The terms core and periphery replace outdated and imperialistic terms like "developed" and "less developed" that are still used by international organizations to distinguish between nations that are advantaged in the global economy and those that are disadvantaged. Rather than grouping nations on their levels of development, which implies that nations who were colonized have the same opportunities to build wealth that their colonizers did, the terms core and periphery more accurately describe the economic, political, and cultural imbalances of power that exist among regions of the world.

Even after independence, colonialism left lasting imprints on layout, planning, and design of African cities.[24] Port cities located along the coast or rivers had the most highly developed economic and political infrastructure. They had been developed under colonial rule as export centers. Additionally, the colonial governments limited indigenous Africans' ability to settle in these cities. Europeans also concentrated urban

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23. Time Edensor and Mark Jayne, (2012). *Urban Theory beyond the West: A World of Cities,* (London, New York: Routledge, 2012).

24. Garth Andrew Myers, *African Cities Alternative Visions of Urban Theory and Practice,* (New York: Zed Books, 2011).

planning functions within the national government, rather than allowing local authorities to manage their own growth and development. After independence, many of these cities experienced large waves of rural to urban migration, and local governments were unable to provide housing and infrastructure to accommodate them.

Since many of the export-oriented cities that were influenced by colonization had already been in existence long before any settlers arrived, to understand cities in Asia, Africa, or Latin America as being solely shaped by their colonial experience only reinforces a Eurocentric worldview. Despite sharing some similar characteristics, cities throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America are diverse and their structure is influenced by their unique development histories before, during, and after the colonial period.

Some African nations sought to break free from legacies of colonialism by constructing new capital cities based upon indigenous traditions.[25] Abuja was planned and built in the 1970s and 1980s and became the official capital of Nigeria in 1991. Despite being intentionally planned as a post-colonial capital, Abuja replicated some of the characteristics of colonial cities, including having a central business district that is dominated by government institutions and housing districts that are highly segregated along class lines. Although the city was built using a master plan, it is a patchwork of formally constructed areas, remnants of the indigenous villages that existed prior to its construction and informal settlements. Dodoma, Tanzania, is another post-colonial African capital that has been more successful at dismantling colonial urban forms. Established in 1974, Dodoma was planned to be a physical manifestation of *ujamaa*, which was an African political and economic philosophy that built upon traditional village communalism, self-reliance, and interdependence. Residential neighborhoods in Dodoma were designed in pods of 10 homes that were built around a communal green space meant to replicate rural Tanzanian village life. While rural to urban migration outpaced the ability to construct formally planned neighborhoods, Dodoma experienced less of an influx of residents than Abuja did. Residents living in the planned communities worked with residents in informal areas to regularize these areas, to pressure the government for resources, and to involve residents in the planning process.

25. Myers, *African Cities.*

Transportation and Urban Development

In the United States, cities expanded their urban footprints over time, while European cities remained more densely settled. The lower densities of U.S. cities were due, in part, to the relative abundance of undeveloped land, but cities also grew in concert with advancements in transportation technologies.[26] Throughout time, the borders of cities have consistently been established at distances that are approximately 45 minutes travel time from the city center. As new, faster transportation modes emerged, cities began to open up more land for development, and the edges became more distant from the center.

Until the mid-1880s the predominant form of travel within U.S. cities was by foot or horse-drawn vehicle. Cities built during this period were small, dense and highly concentrated.[27] Wealthier citizens could afford to travel by horse and carriage and, therefore, could live farther away from the city center. In the 1890s, the electric streetcar facilitated development of lands that were once considered too far away to be developed. Residential neighborhoods, known as streetcar suburbs, emerged around these electric trolley lines. The growth of streetcar suburbs produced a star-shaped development pattern with residential neighborhoods expanded out on either side of the trolley line, but remaining within walking distance of the railway. In these streetcar suburbs, the avenue the trolley ran down became a thriving commercial zone, with residential streets laid out along a grid on either side. Streetcars were the first form of mass transportation, and the communities that emerged along the lines varied in make up from lower working class enclaves to middle class neighborhoods.

The introduction of the mass-produced automobile in 1916 significantly reshaped the urban development patterns.[28] As car ownership grew, the undeveloped areas in between various streetcar lines became attractive sites for homebuilding. These new car-dependent neighborhoods reduced the demand for constructing new streetcar lines. As car ownership grew, automobiles began to compete for road space with trolley lines and mass transit ridership fell.

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26. Peter O. Muller, "Transportation and Urban Form: Stages in the Spatial Evolution of the American Metropolis," in *The Geography of Urban Transportation, Third Edition* ed. by Susan Hanson and Genevieve Giuliano, *New* York: The Guilford Press, 2004), 59-85.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

The rise of the automobile not only helped spark development in unbuilt sections of cities away from rail lines, but it also led to an exodus of residents to new communities being developed outside of the city.[29] In the 1920s and 1930s, parkways or roads that were designed strictly for automobiles were constructed outside of major cities. These roads were precursors to freeways and took urban motorists out into the countryside. The earliest suburban communities sprung up alongside parkway routes. Parkways were not only embraced by real estate speculators, but also supported by farmers, because these thoroughfares allowed them to transport their crops to urban markets more efficiently. By 1929, every state had instituted a gas tax to fund new road construction to accommodate the nation's growing fleet of automobiles. While state and eventually the federal government viewed road building and maintenance as public services that should be funded by tax dollars, mass transit projects like streetcars received no subsidies, yet were forced to keep their fares artificially low under local regulations.

As road construction accelerated and automobile usage grew, streets no longer functioned as multipurpose public spaces.[30] During the 19th century, the street was more than just a transportation thoroughfare through urban neighborhoods. It was a place for recreation, a place to sell goods, and a neighborhood gathering spot. With the rise of the automobile, streets were built and designed for fast travel. The speed and number of cars made it unsafe for people to use the street for any purpose besides traveling from one place to the next.

After World War II, federal housing policies and subsidies coupled with advancements in construction technology fueled massive suburban development.[31] Veterans returned from the war to a nation that had a severe housing shortage. Few housing units had been built during the Depression or the war, and young GIs were eager to start their own families. In response to the wave of home foreclosures during the Great Depression, the U.S. government guaranteed low-interest mortgage loans through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and later through the Veterans' Administration (VA). These low-interest loans made homeownership accessible to white, working class families. The underwriting rules used by the FHA and VA and adopted by private sector lenders favored newly constructed, single-family homes in racially and ethnically

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29. Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States,* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.

homogenous neighborhoods. These homes were likely to increase in value, so families looking to purchase new suburban homes had no trouble getting financing. These same underwriting rules viewed inner city communities, Black neighborhoods, and racial and ethnically heterogeneous areas as too risky to lend to and refused to issue mortgage loans in these communities. This racial and anti-urban bias in home lending often made it cheaper for white families to purchase a new home in the suburbs than to continue to rent in the city. One of the enduring legacies of racial biases in the mortgage industry is the large Black/white homeownership gap that persists to this day. In 2017, 71.9% of whites owned their own homes, while only 41.8% of Black families were homeowners.[32]

The availability of federally insured home loans coincided with developments in the construction industry that enabled the mass production of housing.[33] State-subsidized roads and parkways and the surge in automobile ownership opened up farmlands outside of cities for development. Homebuilders began to purchase cheap farmland to construct large residential developments. One of the nation's largest homebuilders, Levitt and Sons, used an assembly-line construction process that allowed them to quickly build simple homes with identical floor plans and finishes. While these innovations in homebuilding didn't originate with the Levitts, they became associated with them due to the publicity their developments received and the sheer number of homes they built. The Levitts constructed more than 140,000 homes. The first Levittown on Long Island was the largest housing development ever constructed by one company. It contained more than 17,000 identical four-room homes that were designed to be easily expanded as families grew. The development included some playgrounds and green space, but initially, there were no stores, schools or other amenities. Levittown came to characterize the suburban homogeneity that was captured in the lyrics of Malvina Reynolds' 1962 song Little Boxes: *Little boxes on the hillside, little boxes made of ticky tacky…little boxes all the same.*

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32. "Breaking down the Black-White Homeownership Gap," Jung Hyuan Choi, accessed on December 19, 2020, https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/breaking-down-black-white-homeownership-gap.

33. Jackson, *Crabgrass.*

Characteristics of the Post World War II Suburbs

- Located outside the urban core
- Dominated by low-density, detached single-family homes with yards
- Homogeneity in terms of design, with just a few different home plans available in developments across the country
- Affordability for white working and middle class households (who were able to obtain mortgage lending)
- Racial segregation
- Class segregation
- Dominated by young, nuclear families
- Mostly residential

As a result of the postwar suburban boom, cities became far more decentralized then they were in the past. Automobile-dependent cities retained their walking city cores, but the central city was now surrounded by multiple rings of suburbs that decreased in density the farther away from the core you went.[34] As white urbanites began to move en masse to suburban areas, manufacturers and retailers soon followed. The resulting development pattern was polycentric with multiple business centers within a single metropolitan area, and communities that are stratified along class, race, age, lifestyle, and occupational lines. Today's suburban residents are now far more likely to work in their own or a neighboring suburb than they are to commute to the central city.[35] The Los Angeles metropolitan area is representative of the prototypical U.S. urban form in the

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34. Muller, "Transportation and Urban Form"
35. "Commuting in America 2013: The National Report on Commuting Patterns and Trends," American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, accessed on October 30, 2017, http://traveltrends.transportation.org/Documents/B15_Commuting Flow Patterns_CA15-4_web.pdf.

21st century. Rather than a dominant central city surrounded by residential suburbs, it is more of a city region with multiple networked employment and industrial centers that maintain ties to other parts of the region as well as to global production networks.[36]

Scholars have identified new elements of the city region. Joel Garreau uses the term "edge city" to describe the centers of industry, retail, and office space that have emerged on the metropolitan fringe.[37] Edge cities develop in existing suburbs or in exurban, or newly developing areas, on the outer suburban fringe. Edge cities are hubs of employment, office and retail space, and some are centered near airports or other transportation hubs. Robert Fishman describes the technoburb as a sprawling, suburban agglomeration of high-tech companies, low-density office parks, retail, housing, and agricultural spaces that emerge along highway corridors and span multiple towns and jurisdictions.[38] An example of a technoburb is the eastern Seattle suburbs that line highways 520 and 405 and are home to the headquarters of Microsoft and other tech giants.

Globalized Cities

By the 1970s and 1980s, U.S. cities were increasingly decentralized with poorer residents clustered in declining inner city neighborhoods and wealthier residents living in newer, more socially homogenous suburbs away from the urban core. Many U.S. cities' populations shrunk as a result of the mass exodus to the suburbs. European cities did not follow this model. Greater state involvement in planning and welfare provision, more regulation, a relative lack of land to expand upon, and longer urban settlement histories produced cities where wealth and power were concentrated in the urban core, while impoverished residents were relegated to suburban areas.[39] Cities in Asia, Africa, and Latin America followed a model similar to the European one, with the poor living on the edges of the city and the wealthy settling in the center of town. However, due to different historical trajectories, these cities exhibited characteristics not seen in Western Europe or North America. Cities in the Global South have concentrations of power and wealth in central city areas that were

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36. Edward W. Soja, *My Los Angeles. 1st ed.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

37. Joel Garreau, *Edge City: Life on the new frontier.* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1991).

38. Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and fall of Suburbia.* (New York: Basic Books, 1987).

39. Kleniewski, *Cities, Change, Conflict.*

once dominated by a colonial elite.[40] Some of these cities also have Western-style suburban commercial business districts, and most have vast neighborhoods of informal settlements often built in vulnerable areas like hillsides or flood plains that may lack adequate housing, water, sewage, and other basic infrastructure.

Toward the end of the 20th century, the process of globalization began to reshape urban development patterns around the world, blurring some of the regional differences that had defined cities under earlier world economic systems. Globalization is the strengthening and deepening of world economic ties enabled by innovations in technology, like the rise of computers, mobile networks and container shipping.[41] These technological advances coupled with changes in political and economic policies have exponentially increased global trade, reshaped labor networks, facilitated the movement of people, goods and cultural products around the world, and changed how our cities look and function.

What is Globalization?

Capitalism has always been a world system. Since its rise, industrial capitalism has consisted of global supply chains of raw materials, labor, and manufacturing. For example, the cotton that fueled the textile mills in Manchester, England, was imported from the American South and was planted, tended, and harvested by enslaved Africans who had been kidnapped from their communities and forced into labor by a global human trafficking system. What distinguishes our current system of globalization from the world-spanning capitalist networks that emerged 500 years ago?

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40. "The Developing City: A comparative analysis of urbanization in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America," Dara MacDonald, accessed on October 30, 2017, https://atlismta.org/online-journals/0607-journal-gender-environment-and-human-rights/the-developing-city/.

41. "What is Globalization?" SUNY Levin Institute, accessed on October 31, 2017, http://www.globalization101.org/what-is-globalization/.

According to geographer David Harvey, globalization produces "time-space compression" – the elimination of traditional barriers of distance, borders, and space. Since money and information can travel the world in mere milliseconds, two cities separated by thousands of miles are now more intensely intertwined. The click of a keyboard in one city can determine the fortunes of a place across the world. Financial transactions made in a city thousands of miles away may now have more of an impact on the economic well-being of a community than a policy made by their national government.

The new globalization phenomenon developed as a result of technological innovations in computing and container shipping that enabled a faster exchange of goods and services and revolutionized the structure of the global economy from being organized around industrial production to creating a system where knowledge and information drive profit and development. Sociologist Manuel Castells calls our current iteration of capitalism the "Information Age." In the Information Age, simply having more knowledge isn't as important as finding new ways to process and apply that knowledge. The new knowledge networks reshape our economic, political, social and cultural relationships leading to new spaces of inclusion and exclusion.

Harvey, David. 1990. The condition of postmodernity: an enquiry into the origins of cultural change. Oxford [England]: Blackwell.

Castells, Manuel. The Rise of the Network Society. 2 Vol. 1. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Two of the main features of globalization that have heavily influenced life in all cities are the mobility of capital and investment and the subsequent New International Division of Labor. Technology has made it easier for companies to stretch production across the globe. As a result, the management, research and development functions continue to take place in wealthier regions of the world, while manufacturing and low-end services have moved to lower-wealth regions in Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

Many U.S. and Western European cities were built or developed during industrialization. These cities must now compete with lower-cost regions for manufacturing employment and need to rebrand themselves to

attract technology, financial, and other high-end service firms. As the New International Division of Labor was beginning to emerge, industrial cities engaged in smokestack-chasing by offering large tax breaks and incentive packages to retain and attract new companies.[42] As competition increased and the types of jobs and firms they were chasing after shifted from manufacturing to technology and services, cities launched extensive place-marketing campaigns. These campaigns included branding and advertising, but cities also invested in large-scale, publicly-financed projects that provided little immediate economic benefit for their residents, but politicians hoped would help put their city on the map. These types of projects include building new sports stadiums to attract or hold on to a major league sports team, bidding to host world-class events like the Olympics or World Cup, or constructing new art museums or cultural centers, preferably designed by internationally renowned architects.

By investing in splashy projects, sports franchises, and cultural institutions, cities aimed to provide the lifestyle trappings that appealed to CEOs and upper management; however, these were not the only projects cities embraced to promote economic development. As manufacturing moved offshore, large, inner-city factory and warehouse districts were left empty. Many cities launched waterfront redevelopment projects that created parks, high-end retail, restaurants and housing along rivers and ports.[43] Historic and arts districts emerged in inner city communities, pushed along by public and private funds. Cities hosted annual music, arts and cultural festivals and built convention centers to attract tourists.

These trends are visible in the central business districts and inner city neighborhoods across North America and Western Europe. The core areas of most cities contain high-end retail, cultural, and entertainment zones alongside more typical business functions. In many cities, old warehouses have been converted into lofts and pricey apartments. Inner cities have been redesigned to attract wealthier residents and tourists. These neighborhoods are outwardly oriented, not only serving local residents, but also attracting visitors from across the region and around the globe.

While North American and Western European globalizing cities are noted for their rising economic inequality, cities in periphery have also been affected by changes in the global economy. As late as 1950, most of

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42. John Rennie Short, *Alabaster Cities: The Urban US since 1950,* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006).

43. Short, *Alabaster.*

Asia and Africa were predominantly rural.[44] Countries in the Global South, unlike their North American and Western European counterparts, were unable to create an industrial base, because their natural resources and wealth were being exported to fuel urbanization and industrialization in Europe and North America.[45] Andre Gunder Frank described this process as the "development of underdevelopment." However, globalization and the resulting New International Division of Labor sparked urbanization in Asia, Africa, and throughout the Global South. The reason the world has now become majority urban is because of the massive urbanization process that is happening in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.Cities in the Global South became home to large manufacturing complexes. Rural residents, pushed off land from industrial agriculture, flocked to cities in search of jobs and opportune-ities.[46] These rapidly growing cities attracted more industry and services and were seen as new markets for consumer goods, but they were also characterized by economic inequality. Cities in the periphery are home to an internationally oriented elite, a growing middle-income consumer class, the urban poor, and recent migrant populations. Rapid urbanization has given rise to a large and complex informal sector. The informal sector refers to economic activities that are not officially registered with or regulated by governing authorities. Informal sector workers are often self-employed, and they engage in a wide variety of activities from selling food or drink, to child care, to collecting or recycling waste, to parking cars, to small-scale manufacturing. Informal sector work is integrated into the formal economy, even though it is not officially recognized. In some nations in the Global South, 30-50% of the gross national product is created by informal sector workers.[47]

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44. Clark, *Urban World/Global City.*

45. Kleniewski, *Cities, Change, Conflict.*

46. Clark, *Urban World/Global City.*

47. Clark, *Urban World/Global City,* 116.

The Globalization of Sports: African players in European football leagues

Sports are a reflection of society. Soccer may be the universal sport, but talented football players across the globe are not granted equal opportunities to compete professionally, and globalization has reinforced longstanding economic inequities even as the professional landscape has shifted for players on the African continent.

In 1995, new rules were adopted that allowed European soccer leagues to recruit more international players. By 2019, more than half of the players in the top leagues in England, Italy, and Germany were born abroad. Soccer had truly become a globalized sport.

Thirty percent of non-European international players are from the African continent. While this represents a significant increase in the number of African players in the European leagues, not all talented African football players have an equal opportunity to reach the Premier League or the Bundesliga. Most of the expatriate players hail from five West African countries—Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, or Senegal. Some of the focus on these nations can be explained by their colonial histories. For example, Ivory Coast is a former French colony, and France has a long history of recruiting players from nations it had colonized in Africa. But this does not fully explain the different opportunities players have on the continent.

In many West African nations, migrating to Europe or North America to pursue economic or educational opportunities is fairly common. Families sometimes pool their resources to send a member abroad. While migration networks are well-established in this region, people in the East African nations of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania tend to pursue economic opportunities within their home countries or in a neighboring nation. Football players from these nations are rarely recruited by European soccer leagues.

The West African soccer players who are drafted by European clubs are often initially paid less than their peers from other parts of the world. While African soccer players are competing at the highest levels, their personal achievements haven't translated into major revenue for the soccer

federations in their home countries. African leagues do not have the same resources that soccer federations do in Europe or South America. As a result, players are recruited to European clubs at a younger age and are sent to platform nations like Belgium or Switzerland, where they receive additional training to prepare to compete in world's top soccer leagues.

Not all soccer migration occurs from the Global South to the Global North. Players in East Africa are recruited by leagues in other parts of Africa, and South African clubs are emerging as a destination spot for players throughout the continent. In addition, Qatar, which is scheduled to host the next World Cup, is establishing local football academies in Africa to recruit players to play for their national team.

Poli, Raffaele. "African Migrants in Asian and European Football: Hopes and Realities." Sport in Society 13, no. 6 (2010): 1001-011.

Ungruhe, C, and Schmidt, M.B. "Why Are East African Players Absent in European Football? Localizing African Football Migration along Structural Constraints, Colonial Legacies and Voluntary Immobility." Journal of Sport and Social Issues 44, no. 5 (2020): 397-420.

The differences between cities in the core and cities in the periphery have become less apparent over time. When scholars first began to theorize about how globalization was reshaping cities, they noted that characteristics that used to be associated with cities in the Global South were becoming more prevalent in the global cities in the North.[48] Globalization scholars initially focused their attention on cities that sat at the top of world urban hierarchies. The concept of the world city was first developed by Peter Hall in the 1960s.[49] Hall's world cities, which included New York, London, Tokyo, Moscow and others, were described as places

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48. Michael Bounds, *Urban Social Theory: City, Self and Society,* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

49. "The Remarkable Legacy of Peter Hall's "The World Cities" (1966), P.J. Taylor, accessed on October 31, 2017, http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/rb/rb423.html.

that were home to large concentrations of globally oriented businesses, government agencies, educational and cultural institutions and acted as a headquarters for their nation's interactions with the world. Saskia Sassen built upon Hall's notion of a world urban hierarchy when she explored how globalization was reshaping cities. Her "global cities" are places where the financial decision- makers of the world economy are concentrated.[50] She argued that cities like New York, London, and Tokyo, despite their different histories and cultural contexts, share similar characteristics that are a result of their place in this global urban hierarchy. These cities produce a concentration of highly paid financial and managerial service workers who require a larger group of retail, restaurant, clerical, and other low-paid service sector workers to support their needs. This results in a bifurcated economy, where high-paid workers drive up the cost of living for workers in lower-paid sectors. Sassen noted how makeshift housing and the informal economy, elements that used to be associated with cities in the Global South, are now deeply entrenched in these global cities.

The concept of world or global cities has been critiqued by researchers for failing to capture how ordinary cities, which don't contain a high concentration of financial services, are being reshaped by globalization. Jennifer Robinson argued that the focus on global cities replicates a North American and Western European bias and instead suggested that all cities, regardless of where they sit in a global urban hierarchy, are connected to larger transnational networks that restructure the social relationships and spaces within the city.[51] She highlighted how Manila is home to a large number of employment agencies that recruit Filipino/a workers for low-paid, temporary jobs abroad. The presence of this employment network impacts family, economic and community life in both the city of origin and the destination city.

The Process of Redevelopment

While a region's economic niche, its history, and transportation infrastructure all shape a city's form and structure, decisions about where, how, and whether things will get built, demolished or redeveloped also play a critical role in how a city functions and grows. The majority of structures in most cities are built by private market developers, but the rules and regulations governing what gets built where are determined by city

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50. Bounds, *Urban Social Theory*.

51. Jennifer Robinson, "Global and World Cities: A View from Off the Map," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26, no. 3, (2002): 531-54.

governments. One of the primary ways that local governments shape the built environment is through zoning. Zoning laws regulate the purpose and uses of a building, minimum lot sizes, the percentage of land that can be built upon, building features, parking, setbacks, and much more. Prior to the adoption of zoning laws in 1916 in New York City, there was no separation between businesses, industries, and residential areas, so a tannery or slaughterhouse could operate next to an apartment building.[52] Zoning improved safety and livability in cities, but it also became a tool that was used to enforce segregation. Wealthy communities could zone-out apartment buildings by only allowing single family homes or by requiring that homes be built upon a large-sized lot, effectively making it too expensive for lower-income people to live in their town or neighborhoods. In inner city communities, industrial and commercial land was over-zoned, so speculators could purchase an apartment building with plans to eventually tear it down and convert the lot into a more profitable commercial or industrial use. Up-zoning is when city governments increase the density of structures allowed on a parcel of land. If a lot that has a single family home is up-zoned to allow for a duplex or apartment complex, investors might purchase the home with the intent to demolish the structure and develop the land into a more profitable use. Land speculators have little reason to invest in the property's current use, which can lead to owners refusing to make any repairs and can subsequently result in substandard and unsafe housing conditions. Local authorities do not merely regulate land uses, they can also play an active role in developing parcels. In the U.S., cities have the authority to condemn, purchase, and redevelop land, if it is in the public's interest. The Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954 provided funding for cities to purchase and demolish blighted or slum neighborhoods and sell the parcels to developers for large-scale projects.[53] Cities were supposed to build replacement housing units for those that were destroyed, although they did not have to construct them on the same site. This process was known as Urban Renewal. During its duration from 1949-1973, 600,000 housing units were destroyed on over 1,000 square miles of land, and 2,000,000 people were displaced.[54] Two thirds of those who were displaced were Black or Latino/a, prompting noted author James Baldwin to dub the program,

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52. Jackson, *Crabgrass.*

53. Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass,* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1993).

54. Short, *Alabaster,* 20.

"Negro Removal."[55] Public housing units were built as replacements for the demolished communities, but these projects were usually high density, located in existing ghetto neighborhoods, and sometimes required the demolition of additional housing units in order to construct them.[56] In some neighborhoods, as few as 10% of displaced residents ended up being rehoused in public housing units.[57]

Urban renewal as it was practiced before 1973 does not occur in U.S. cities today, although local governments still occasionally acquire properties for transportation or public interest projects. However, this level of government involvement in redevelopment occurs in other cities around the world. Between 1990 and 2005, more than 85% of the traditional *siheyuan* or courtyard-style housing in Beijing was torn down and replaced with modern apartment buildings.[58] As urban populations increased in China, these courtyard homes were subdivided multiple times, and many housed 10 or more families.[59] Many residents appreciated the new apartments that were built and saw them as an improvement over the housing conditions in the *siheyuan*. In this case, redevelopment improved the housing situation for many displaced residents; however, the loss of this historic and unique urban form of housing raised alarms both in Beijing and around the globe. In 2005, the government launched a program to preserve and upgrade the remaining courtyard complexes.

State-sponsored redevelopment is not the only form of neighborhood change. Gentrification, or the process by which a low-income neighborhood is transformed into a middle or upper-income area, can be viewed as a private sector version of urban renewal.[60] Like urban renewal, older, more affordable housing is renovated

55. Emily Badger, "Why Trump's Use of the Words Urban Renewal is Scary for Cities" *New York Times,* December 7, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/07/upshot/why-trumps-use-of-the-words-urban-renewal-is-scary-for-cities.html?_r=0.

56. Massey and Denton, *American Apartheid.*

57. Short, *Alabaster.*

58. "Chinese Courtyard Housing under Chinese Socialist Market Economy," Donna Zhang, accessed on November 1, 2017, https://www.chinacenter.net/2016/china_currents/15-1/chinese-courtyard-housing-under-socialist-market-economy/.

59. "Beijing: The Lost City?" Jasper Goldman and Carlo Ratti, accessed on November 1, 2017, http://senseable.mit.edu/papers/pdf/20030509_Goldman_Ratti_BeijingLost_Aspenia.pdf.

60. "Gentrification, Displacement and the Role of Public Investment: A Literature Review," Miriam Zurk, Ariel Bierbaum, Karen Chapple, Karolina Gorska, Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, Paul Ong and Trevor Thomas, accessed on November 1. 2017, http://www.urbandisplacement.org/sites/default/files/images/displacement_lit_review_final.pdf.

or replaced by more expensive units, businesses change, and the original residents of the area are displaced. However, since gentrification relies upon myriad actors in the private sector making individual decisions to invest in a community over time, the process is patchy and chaotic.

Neighborhoods face gentrification pressures when real estate is undervalued and there is a population of people who are willing to live in inner city areas and have enough income to purchase and renovate property or move into newly remolded units.[61] The undervalued real estate is the supply-side input of the gentrification process. Real estate investors and speculators will buy up cheap properties, if they believe they have an opportunity to resell them at a profit. The disinvestment that occurred in inner city neighborhoods after suburbanization made these areas particularly vulnerable to gentrification pressures. Population losses, low homeownership rates due to discriminatory mortgage lending practices, and years of neglect by absentee owners drove the value of inner city real estate far below median prices. In addition, as the economy changed due to globalization, scores of factory buildings and warehouses were left empty in industrial neighborhoods.

While disinvestment and the changing urban economy provides a supply of low-cost real estate, gentrification also requires demand.[62] Starting in the 1970s and 1980s, younger singles and couples began moving back to the city from the suburban communities where they had grown up. The demand side of gentrification was also spurred by economic transformations. High-end service and technology sector companies and their workers began moving into downtown and close-in urban neighborhoods. As companies relocated to renovated warehouse and factory districts, their employees followed.

While gentrification is primarily fueled by private sector investors, local governments do play a role in sparking redevelopment.[63] Investors are reluctant to put money into neighborhoods that are neglected by city authorities. The initial investments made in these communities often come from the public sector in the form of a new park, transit line, arts facility, mixed-income housing project, or other state-subsidized development.

Gentrification results in displacement, but the neighborhood changes can take decades to unfold and happens in an uneven manner.[64] Low-income renters, families with children and the elderly are most at

61. Ibid.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.

risk of displacement in gentrifying communities. Homeowners are not as affected by rising housing costs, although as the value of their home increases, some may decide to sell, or they may also be displaced if their property tax bills rise as a result of increases in home values. Since longtime residents live alongside newcomers, gentrification can also produce neighborhood clashes or conflicts.

Alternative forms of Urban Development

While the public and private sectors play a large role in shaping our built environment, not all urban development happens from above. There are grassroots forms of urban development. Community development is when neighborhood or community groups organize to create, plan and carry out projects that will improve their own lives[65]. Community-based development often refers to neighborhood-centered nonprofit organizations that build affordable housing, provide small business assistance or job training programs, or make physical or social improvements in their communities.[66]

In U.S. cities, community development corporations carry out revitalization projects in the neighborhoods they serve. The New Community Corporation (NCC) in Newark, N.J., was founded in 1968 as disinvestment was accelerating in the city due to major civil unrest.[67] The faith-based organization focused on the Central Ward, which lacked many basic services. Their first project was an affordable housing development on a two acre-tract of land that was part of larger-scale plan to redevelop a 45-acre area to provide housing, jobs, and needed services like child care. Fifty years later, NCC has created more than 4,000 affordable housing units, provides support services to neighborhood families, has child care and health centers, offers job training and runs a credit union. The organization also operates a major grocery store. The store was significant, because Central Ward residents used to have to leave the city to do their grocery shopping.

Community-based development strategies aim to bring resources and projects to underserved neighborhoods, but focusing solely on neighborhood redevelopment has its limitations. Redevelopment can

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65. George Kent, "Community-based development planning," *Third World Planning Review* 3, no. 3 (August 1981): 313-326.

66. "Community Development and Community Organizing: Apples and Oranges? Chicken and Egg?" Randy Stoecker, accessed on November 1,, 2017, https://comm-org.wisc.edu/drafts/orgdevppr2c.htm.

67. "New Community Corporation", accessed on January 12, 2020, https://newcommunity.org/about/

become so successful that it sparks private investment and gentrification, which can end up displacing the very people that the community-development organization was designed to serve. Community development also doesn't challenge the systemic issues that cause disinvestment. Community organizing can be either an alternative or a complementary strategy to community development that can address these limitations.[68]

While community development invests in projects, community organizing invests in people. Community organizing is when a group mobilizes to gain political power or to force those in power to provide the resources needed to make improvements in their lives. One of the most famous examples of community organizing is the Back of the Yards neighborhood organization that Saul Alinsky helped found. This multi-ethnic, working-class Chicago neighborhood mobilized and took direct actions to force public and private institutions to invest resources in their community. They were able to win financing for home improvement loans that provided much needed renovations in 90% of the neighborhood's housing units.[69]

Typically, development, whether on an international or neighborhood scale, implies a growth-oriented, linear model that measures achievement in terms of wealth.[70] Sustainable development is an alternative approach to how development is measured. A sustainable development approach focuses on the long-range viability of plans, emphasizes land and resource conversation, and strives for the improved health and well-being of residents.[71] A sustainable urban development philosophy aims to create a city that reduces its ecological footprint, builds infrastructure and programs that will benefit current and future generations, and has an economy that meets residents' basic needs.

In South America, an emerging alternative concept of development is the *Buen Vivir* approach. *Buen Vivir* is a philosophy that is heavily influenced by Quechua and other indigenous perspectives.[72] Like sustainable development, *Buen Vivir* promotes ecological health, but it also emphasizes collective, rather than individual,

68. Stoecker, "Community Development"
69. "Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council," Encyclopedia of Chicago, accessed on November 1, 2019, http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/100.html.
70. Kent, "Community-based development"
71. Stephen Wheeler, "Planning Sustainable and Livable Cities," in *The City Reader: Second Edition*, ed. By Richard LeGates and Frederic Stout, (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 434-445.
72. "Buen Vivir: The Social Philosophy Inspiring Movements in South America," Accessed on November 1, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/blog/buen-vivir-philosophy-south-america-eduardo-gudynas.

well-being. *Buen Vivir* strives to create harmony among all community members, and in this worldview, all living beings – human, plant and animal – are considered community members. It eschews placing a monetary value on interactions and exchanges and decries materialism. Elements of the *Buen Vivir* philosophy have been adopted into the Ecuadorian and Bolivian constitutions.[73]

Summary

Our cities' layouts and built environments reflect the eras when they were developed. As transportation technologies changed, cities grew and developed in distinct ways. While North American urban regions suburbanized, European cities remained more compact, with wealth and power concentrated in inner city areas, rather than in the newly built fringe. Cities in the Global South were shaped by colonialism and imperialism. The extraction of wealth from these nations fueled North American and Western European industrialization and urbanization, while nations in the periphery remained largely rural.

Globalization has reshaped cities across the world, regardless of the role they play in the global economy. The hyper-mobility of capital led cities to compete with one another for investment and jobs. The resulting place-marketing strategies created publicly funded festivals, events, and developments that were aimed at attracting outsiders, rather than serving the needs of local residents. The New International Division of Labor sparked widespread urbanization in Global South and created a new middle class, while the industrial cities in Western Europe and North America sought to redevelop waterfront and factory complexes. State-driven urban renewal efforts have been replaced by public and private sector cooperation to remake communities, resulting in gentrification of inner city areas and displacement.

Development does not have to adhere to a growth-oriented model. Community-based development, sustainable development and *Buen Vivir* all advocate for greater accountability and community control over development decisions.

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73. "Buen Vivir: A New Era of Great Social Change," accessed on November 1, 2017, https://www.pachamama.org/blog/buen-vivir-new-era-great-social-change.

Test your Urban Literacy:

Think about how the concepts in this chapter apply to your own city

1. How does the built environment of your city reflect the era during which it was founded and developed? Identify at least three examples of your city's design and layout that are unique to the historical time frame during which it was developed.
2. Urban neighborhoods look different depending upon what the dominant form of transportation was when they were developed. Compare two neighborhoods in your city that were built during different time frames. How do the car-dominant neighborhoods differ from those that were built prior to the automobile era?
3. Provide two examples of residential segregation in your city. How do you know that these particular neighborhoods are associated with a certain economic class or racial/ethnic group? What aspects of the built environment provide clues to who lives there and who may be excluded?
4. Globalization has transformed cities across the world. Think about how your city's downtown area has been reshaped by globalization. Create a list of buildings, businesses, institutions, and public spaces that have been transformed by the deepening of global economic ties.
5. The process of gentrification involves hundreds of private sector transactions, which means it happens unevenly across the space of a neighborhood. What does the slow, uneven nature of gentrification mean for the residents who live in a neighborhood that is undergoing redevelopment? What types of conflicts or potential opportunities for collaboration and transformation exist in neighborhoods that are undergoing gentrification?
6. Choose one alternative method of development (i.e. sustainable development) and consider what your city might look like if these principles were adopted.

Learn to read the city around you:

Apply what you've learned in this chapter by completing a hands-on activity in your own city

1. ***Map patterns of inequality:*** Collect statistical data points that demonstrate different aspects of inequality within your city or region. Your data can come from different local institutions, like health authorities, housing bureaus, or criminal justice departments. Some potential data points could include: educational attainment levels, housing tenure, housing conditions, traffic accident rates, disease rates, income or unemployment levels, or crime rates. You will want to make sure that the data you choose is available on the neighborhood, ZIP code, or Census tract level. Once you collect your data points, map them. Do you notice any patterns? Are there neighborhoods that are more socially advantaged and others that are socially disadvantaged? If you see patterns of inequality, choose two advantaged neighborhoods and two disadvantaged neighborhoods. Collect more data about them. Are there any trends that you notice? For example, are lower-income neighborhoods more disadvantaged, or are neighborhoods located farther away from the urban core more socially advantaged? What do these patterns reveal about segregation within your city or region?

2. ***Repurpose a vacant suburban shopping mall:*** You are part of an urban planning committee that is tasked with coming up with a proposal to repurpose an empty shopping mall. Your close-in suburban community hopes that the renovated mall project will spark further investment in your town. Your community has become increasingly poor over the past two decades, and the town desperately needs more property tax revenue to repair roads, build new schools and maintain parks. While many businesses have left within the past decade, there is some hope. There is a large, recent immigrant population that has opened a

number of new, small businesses in the downtown core, which is an area that was badly in need of investment. You also have a large senior citizen population, many of whom live on fixed incomes. Your community is located near a rail line, which potentially makes it attractive to young professionals who are being priced out of the neighboring large city. The town has an opportunity to spark new investment, raise tax revenues and meet the community's needs by redeveloping a long-vacant shopping mall. The mall has two big box anchor stores and 20 shops in between. It also has a large parking area and is across the street from the rail station. Design a plan to repurpose this empty shopping mall. How would you develop this space? What types of businesses or other uses (i.e. industrial, residential, recreation) should occupy this space? Write a plan that describes how the mall is to be redeveloped. Include a detailed planning map that shows how the indoor and outdoor spaces will be used.

3. **Make a photo essay about gentrification:** One of the defining features of gentrification is the juxtaposition of two seemingly different worlds sharing the same space (rich/poor, old/new, black/white, young/old, etc.). Make multiple visits to a gentrifying area in your city and document what you see. Organize your photos into a visual essay or slide show. Think about how the images relate to one another and how you want to use these photos to tell a story. You may include short captions under each photo, or you could let the images tell the story on their own.

4. **Trace a transnational network:** Identify a transnational network that your city is a part of. You might find transnational connections within local industries, like auto manufacturing or sportswear, or tied to specific businesses, such as a multinational corporation headquartered in your area. You may also have communities that have transnational ties. For example, your city may be home to people from a particular region of Mexico or to a small religious sect from Iran. You can also find transnational connections within your local university or within arts or cultural institutions. Find out as much as you can about the geography of this network. Create a diagram that shows the different geographic nodes within this network, how they relate to one another and the role each one plays within it. Write a short reflection about the impacts each node in the network has on the others.

5. ***Outline small steps your neighborhood or campus could take toward sustainability:*** Imagine that your city has decided to integrate a sustainable development perspective into its policies and programs. Define what sustainability means and how you will use this perspective to guide decision-making. Outline 10 small action steps (i.e. place recycling cans in all school buildings) your neighborhood or campus could take to become more sustainable.

6. ***Compose a letter to the local newspaper protesting urban renewal:*** Identify a neighborhood where urban renewal occurred. The neighborhood may be in your city or can be in another. Research what the neighborhood was like before it was bulldozed and what it was replaced with. Write a short (250 word) letter from the perspective of a resident or business owner who is going to be displaced by urban renewal. In your letter, describe why the neighborhood should be saved.

7. ***Adapt your city to the transportation of the future:*** Choose an emerging form of transportation that might become more commonplace in the near future (like self-driving cars or high-speed rail). What types of infrastructure will this form of transportation require? How will it change the ways in which we get to and from places? Will it spark new ways of living, working, and socializing? Create a booklet that outlines how this new form of transportation might change how our cities are structured, laid out and will function.

8. ***Compare two business districts from different eras in your city:*** Visit a part of your city that was built in the walking or streetcar suburb era and then visit an auto-oriented neighborhood. Take a 30-minute walk in the neighborhood and record your observations. You can film the area and narrate what you see or you can take notes and photographs of your observations. Create a short video or essay that compares the land uses, layouts, and social life in these two neighborhoods.

4.

REPRESENTATION

By the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- Articulate the types of decisions that are made on the local level
- Describe the unique opportunities and challenges that urban governments face given the role that cities play in the larger political economy
- Recognize how powerful individuals and interests may shape urban policy making
- Explain the concept of the right to the city
- Understand the relationship between public space access and representation in urban environments

In this chapter, we examine how the diverse communities within a city achieve recognition and gain the right to participate in decisions that impact urban life. We begin by defining exactly which types of decisions are made on the urban level. Then, we focus on citizen participation and examine the various populations that influence the local decision-making process. Next, we address the concept of the right to the city. Does such a right exist? And finally, we look at the role public spaces play in incubating representation and bridging differences.

What decisions get made on an urban level?

Before you can consider how effectively urban governments represent their constituents, you must first identify the specific decision-making responsibilities that fall under the purview of local governments. Early urban theorists did not identify the unique political powers that cities had: instead, they sought to distinguish how urban communities differed from traditional rural settlements and to articulate the ways in which cities produced new social relationships. The field of urban studies arose in reaction to the wave of urbanization and industrialization that swept Europe and North America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During this era, the city was politically subordinate to the nation-state, which made many of the major decisions that impacted urban economies, legal structures, public revenue streams, and trading relationships.

Cities have not always been governed by a larger national body. Some of the earliest urban settlements were city-states, or sovereign territories that encompassed a city and its agricultural hinterlands. City-states existed in the Middle East, Mediterranean, Europe, Asia, Central America, and Africa.[1] The Sumerian city-states of Ur, Uruk, and Lagash flourished 5,000 years ago, and the city-states of the Niger Delta region remained self-governing until Europeans colonized the area in the 1890s. City-states were politically and economically autonomous units, but they did not always remain independent entities. For example, dating as far back as 900 A.D., more than 100 city-states of varying populations and geographic sizes were established in the Mixteca region of southern Mexico. These city-states retained much of their political sovereignty even after they were conquered by the Aztecs but lost their independence when the Spanish colonized Mexico.

While many city-states were monarchies or oligarchies, ruled by a small group of property owners, the ancient Greek city-states were the first democracies. The Greek term *polis* referred to a city-state and all of the territories and public spaces within it.[2] The term *polis* was also used to describe a process of popular rule that was used in these independent communities.[3] Greek *poleis* were governed by citizen assemblies. Participation

1. Mogens Herman Hansen, "A Survey of the 37 Identified City-State Cultures," accessed December 16, 2018, http://www.teachtext.net/bn/cpc/.
2. H.D.F. Kitto, "The Polis," in *The City Reader*, eds. Richard LeGates and Frederic Stout (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 31-6.
3. Mogens, Herman Hansen, *Polis: An Introduction to the Ancient Greek City-State* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

in these assemblies was limited to men who were citizens and were not enslaved. Although these assemblies disregarded the voices of large portions of the city-state population – women, children, slaves, and immigrants – the *polis* represented the first system of democratic rule in the ancient world.[4]

The *polis* fostered a culture of political participation where all male citizens were equal regardless of their wealth or standing. In *poleis*, assemblies of varying sizes and age groups passed criminal laws, administered justice, created currencies, collected taxes and solicited loans for public projects, purchased property, made foreign policy decisions, went to war, negotiated treaties, organized festivals and religious ceremonies, determined procedures and rules for governing, and made decisions about the economic, political, and social life of all of those who lived in the *polis*. Each city-state was like an autonomous country, which might join in confederation with other *poleis* or, occasionally, go to war with them.

During the Renaissance in Europe, city-states like Venice and Genoa flourished due to their role as long-distance trading centers.[5] These mercantile cities issued their own currencies, maintained transportation infrastructure, and provided capital and finance to merchants, roles that are now under the purview of national political or economic institutions. Charles Tilly, a sociologist and historian, observed that cities during this time period were places where capital and wealth was produced and concentrated and where decisions were made about how to circulate excess profits.[6] Tilly argued that the nation-state primarily gains its power through coercive means, largely by maintaining and deploying a significant military force, rather than by using economic influence like the self-governing mercantile city-states did. From the Middle Ages up through the 18th century, European monarchs began to concentrate military and economic power into their own hands. Instead of relying on decentralized militia forces in times of war and collecting taxes and tributes from city-states and wealthy merchants, ruling families absorbed these formerly independent financial and military apparatuses into national political, military, and economic institutions that subsumed many of the duties and decisions that had once occurred at the city level. As the monarchs consolidated control over city-states, these

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4. Kitto

5. Michele Frantianni and Franco Spinelli, "Italian city-states and financial evolution," *European Review of Economic History* 10 (2006): 257-278. Jonathan Spence, "The Roots of Modern Capitalism." *New York Times*, July 10, 1983, https://www.nytimes.com/1983/07/10/books/the-roots-of-modern-capitalism.html.

6. Charles Tilly, "Cities and States in Europe 1000-1800," *Theory and Society* 18, no. 5 (September, 1989): 563-584.

smaller political entities lost their autonomy, and decisions regarding foreign and economic policy were instead made by the crown.

Beginning in the 19th century, industrialization and rapid urbanization posed new challenges for city dwellers, sparking reform movements that won increased regulatory powers for local governments. As manufacturing drove urbanization, rapidly built tenement neighborhoods emerged to house factory workers. Tenement buildings were overcrowded, had no plumbing or sanitary facilities, and lacked light, ventilation, and safety features. The squalid living and dangerous working conditions in industrial cities resulted in low life expectancies for the urban working class.[7] In 1860, the average life expectancy in Liverpool was just 25 years. While urban workers had higher wages than their rural counterparts, poor living and working conditions led to disease and malnourishment. Height can be an indicator of malnutrition. In the early to mid-19th century, urban English men were shorter than those living in rural areas, due in part to nutritional deprivation.

As workers organized for better pay, reasonable hours, and safe working conditions, an array of urban reformers pushed for improved housing and neighborhood conditions. The emerging medical and public health fields documented the links between diseases like cholera and poor environmental conditions. In 1842, British lawyer and reformer Sir Edwin Chadwick led a team of researchers who produced a detailed social survey called the *Sanitary Conditions of the Laboring Populations of Great Britain.*[8] Social surveys document a community's living or working conditions by collecting detailed statistics like the number of people residing on a particular block or the amount of rent they paid, the numbers of windows in a dwelling unit, the hours they worked and so on. Chadwick's survey led to the first housing codes, which stipulated basic requirements for ventilation and sanitation and to the establishment of local health inspectors who were charged with enforcing these building codes. The emerging sanitary movement spread to the United States. Starting in the 1860s and

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7. "Did Living Standards Improve during the Industrial Revolution?" accessed December 26, 2018, https://www.economist.com/free-exchange/2013/09/13/did-living-standards-improve-during-the-industrial-revolution.

8. Russell Lopez, *Building American Public Health: Urban Planning, Architecture, and the Quest for Better Health in the United States,* (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2012).

1870s, New York City adopted a series of Tenement House Laws that required fire escapes and ventilation in all multi-family dwellings.[9] By 1910, nearly every large city in the United States had enacted building codes.

Tenement Laws and the Limits of City Government Authority

The Tenement Laws that New York City began passing in the late 1800s demonstrate how the city's authority to improve housing for the poor was limited. Tenements are multi-family apartment buildings that were constructed in the mid to late 19th and early 20th centuries. They were built quickly to house working-class immigrant families. Tenements built before the passage of the initial laws took up most of their lots, and their side walls abutted the building next door. They only had windows in the front and rear side of building, leaving the interior rooms with no source of natural light or ventilation. The early Tenement Laws passed in the 1860s and 1870s mandated that all new apartment buildings had to include fire escapes and windows. This gave rise to the Old Law Tenements or dumbbell tenements. Developers continued to construct buildings that were adjacent to one another and got around the new regulations by making dumbbell-shaped buildings that had interior air shafts that the windows looked out on, which only provided minimal light and ventilation. In 1901, the city passed additional regulations, which required minimal setbacks meaning that the building could no longer take up the entire lot. The law also mandated indoor bathrooms, additional fire protection, and stricter ventilation requirements and eliminated the air shafts that characterized the Old Law tenements. New Law Tenements were often built on corners or had an H, C, or L shape, which accommodated more outward facing windows. These buildings were taller than the four to five story pre-law or Old Law tenements. Allowing developers to increase the number of stories incentivized the ongoing construction of multi-family housing units.

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9. John Middlemist Herrick and Paul Stuart, *Encyclopedia of Social Welfare History in North America,* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005).

Since millions of New Yorkers lived in tenements, the passage of construction regulations did not eliminate substandard housing conditions. The pre-law buildings constructed prior to the 1860s and the Old Law tenements continued to house families for decades after the passage of stricter 1901 law. Poor families couldn't afford to move into newer improved housing. Some of these buildings still stand today, although they have been renovated up to modern standards.

The Tenement House Act of 1901 established an inspector's office, which had the authority to fine building owners who violated housing codes. However, the code enforcement office was subject to political pressure, since the director served at the behest of the mayor and elected officials controlled its funding. Real estate developers and landlords could pressure City Hall to fire directors that were too enthusiastic about enforcing building codes. Even without the political pressure the office faced, fining violators could be an ineffective tool to improve housing for the poor. Landlords who were forced to make improvements might pass the cost on to their tenants, resulting in a lack of affordable housing.

While regulation created standards for new construction, it didn't solve the issue of housing the poor. Since the new regulations made it more expensive to build, landlords charged higher rents, leaving the lowest-income New Yorkers confined to the substandard pre-law and Old Law tenements. It wasn't until the 1930s when the federal government authorized public housing construction that New York City was able to play a more active role in improving housing conditions for the poor.

Henderson, A. Scott. Housing and the Democratic Ideal, New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2015.

Sarah Bean Appman, "Tenement House Act of 1901," Off the Grid, Village Preservation Blog, April 11, 2016, https://www.villagepreservation.org/2016/04/11/tenement-house-act-of-1901/.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries became known as the Progressive Era in the United States, and it was characterized by labor, social welfare, and housing reforms. While many of the new regulations were passed at

the federal level, local governments began to play a more active role in ensuring that their residents had access to safe living conditions and basic services. Many of the services that are taken for granted in contemporary cities started as grassroots efforts to improve the living and working conditions of impoverished urban residents. For example, Hull House, a settlement house in Chicago, was established in 1889.[10] Settlement houses were community centers in inner city neighborhoods that were staffed by volunteer residents. Volunteers were usually middle class reformers, and many were women. They worked with neighborhood residents to identify community needs and provide collective solutions to them. Hull House provided services such as English classes for recent immigrants, child care, and summer camp programs. There was meeting space for clubs and labor unions. Eventually, Hull House grew into a complex of buildings that included a library, labor museum, theater, book bindery, gymnasium, kindergarten, and housing for single, working women. Settlement houses were precursors to the social work profession, and many of the services and spaces they established, like playgrounds and summer camps, eventually were absorbed and managed by local government authorities.

The urban planning profession was created during the Progressive Era. City governments established planning departments that were charged with relieving some of the worst impacts of industrialization and rapid growth.[11] Planners laid out long-term visions that articulated how and where the city should develop paying careful attention to the need to provide adequate sewage systems, roads, and open space. As the planning profession emerged, designers from a variety of backgrounds wrote popular books that contained grand schemes and ideas about how to improve cities. The City Beautiful movement consisted of landscape designers, planners and architects who laid out visions for enhancing city life by creating great monuments and civic structures that would uplift urban residents with the grandeur of their designs. In England, Ebenezer Howard published a book that outlined his vision for the establishment of Garden Cities – small, cooperatively owned towns that combined the best of urban and rural living. The Garden Cities concept influenced generations of planners who adopted the design, but not the social elements of Howard's vision. The concept influenced the development of suburban communities in the U.S. and garden villages in the U.K.

The organizing efforts of labor activists and social reformers greatly expanded the decision-making powers of local governments in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While national political institutions continued

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10. Ibid.
11. Mark Hutter, *Experiencing Cities,* (Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 2012).

to determine economic, trade, and foreign policy decisions that had been under the purview of ancient city-states, local governments gained the authority to regulate the built environment and development within their boundaries and to manage various social welfare programs designed to benefit urban residents.

City governments and the global economy

Manuel Castells used the term "collective consumption" to describe the types of political responsibilities like maintaining infrastructure, regulating housing, and delivering social services that fall under a city's purview.[12] In the early 1970s, Castells sought to illuminate the role that the city played in the overall political and economic systems. Using a Marxist analysis, he theorized that cities were responsible for the reproduction of the labor force or supplying all of the essentials that were necessary for a household to survive so its members could participate in the workforce. While employers paid wages that enabled workers to purchase transportation or housing, the city took on the responsibility for building networks of roads, creating and running a public transit system, providing water and sewer service to households, and facilitating the construction of privately sold and publicly operated housing. The city also provided an array of services from public safety, fire protection, health, recreation, and education. Local governments collectivized the costs of creating and distributing these necessary services to the general public. Castells argued that the collective consumption responsibilities of cities were critical to the functioning of the overall economy and potential sites of struggle and conflict among urban dwellers.

David Harvey, an urban geographer, analyzed how the built environment of cities enabled the functioning of the broader capitalist economic system. He noted that pre-industrial cities emerged in resource-rich areas that were capable of producing surpluses that were distributed among the people living within that area. There were regional variances in resource availability, which led to dissimilar production and consumption patterns. In industrial society, many of these regional differences were smoothed over, because mass production and efficient transportation networks allowed for a wide-ranging distribution of consumer goods.[13] Harvey did not see the city as simply a site of production or reproduction of labor, as Castells did. Instead he recognized that

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12. Manuel Castells, *The Urban Question- A Marxist Approach*, trans. Alan Shendan, (Cambridge, MIT Press: 1977).

13. David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City,* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1973).

cities are also places where consumers can access a huge variety of goods and services that are not necessarily dependent upon local resources.

In addition to outlining the role the city plays in producing and distributing goods and services, Harvey viewed cities as important investment sites for capital. He identified a "secondary circuit of capital" that consists of urban real estate and infrastructure.[14] When business owners have more revenue than can be reinvested into their companies in the form of new machinery, buildings, equipment, or higher wages – what Harvey refers to as the "primary circuit of capital" – they seek out other profit-making ventures to invest in. Urban property markets and infrastructure become attractive investment opportunities. The flood of money into these markets helps spur urbanization, but also leaves areas ripe for speculation and a subsequent real estate crash. In Harvey's view, the urban built environment itself is critical to profit-making and the functioning of capitalism; therefore, decisions about growth, development, and redevelopment become vital functions of local governments that can have a significant impact on the wider political economy. One example of this was the Great Recession in 2008. Home lending practices and real estate speculation created a housing bubble and contributed to the foreclosure crisis and stock market crash. City governments played a critical role in facilitating the overheating of the housing market by fast-tracking building permits, loosening land use laws, allowing condominium conversions, and up-zoning land for denser residential development.

Harvey also notes that decision-making about where to locate advantageous and disadvantageous public and private goods are also sites of potential political conflict in cities, as well as avenues for economic redistribution. For example, decisions about where to construct a park can have tangible health and economic benefits for those who live near the site, while locating a sewage treatment plant near a residential area can lead to poor air quality, negative health impacts, and depressed property values to those who live nearby.

A decade later, Paul Peterson noted that the redistributive, allocative, and developmental impacts of urban policies are limited by the role cities play in the larger national and global political economy.[15] Cities face the simultaneous challenges of having to attract and maintain businesses and jobs, while meeting their residents' needs. The collective consumption responsibilities Castells highlighted cost money to implement. While federal or state funds may defray some of the costs of providing for urban residents' needs, city budgets are

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14. Ibid.

15. Paul Peterson, *City Limits,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

largely funded through local tax revenues. Yet, businesses and property owners may be driven away by high local tax rates, which creates political tensions for city officials. Given this conundrum, Peterson concluded that a city's most effective tool for controlling development and mitigating inequality is to invest in infrastructure and enact land use regulations. By controlling land uses, city officials can attract the types and amounts of businesses and investments that they believe are necessary to meet the community's economic and social needs.

Peterson's observations revealed an essential contradiction in the role that cities play in the global capitalist economy. Urbanization is the most efficient spatial form for organizing systems of production and consumption.[16] But the population density and heterogeneous nature of cities also facilitates community organizing, coalition-building, and protest actions. The very geography that produces networks of power enables the powerless to organize, demand change, and threaten the status quo.

While the contradictions inherent in urbanization have been present since the dawn of capitalism, the common responsibilities that urban governments assume and the strategies they use to maintain political stability have shifted over time. Scholars from a variety of perspectives from Marxist political theorists to capitalist macro-economists have identified overarching trends in how the global economy and political institutions, including urban governments, are structured during distinct historical time periods.[17] The need to periodically adopt new arrangements for structuring economic production and to create new governing strategies stems from the inherent contradictions within the capitalist system. A completely laissez-faire or unregulated economy will eventually result in crisis. For example, during the Gilded Age of the late 1800s, owners of industries within certain economic sectors began acquiring their competitors and creating large monopolies. With minimal state regulation, huge wealth disparities emerged. Had this trend been allowed to continue unabated, it could have led to a situation of lost profitability, since the vast majority of workers had minimal buying power.

As urbanization and industrialization accelerated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and workers began to organize to demand better pay and conditions, new governing structures emerged to maintain stability in the global economic system. Labor unrest coupled with a worldwide Great Depression in the 1930s produced

16. Paul Knox and Steven Pinch, *Urban Social Geography: An Introduction. 6th ed*. (London, England; New York, New York: Routledge, 2013.)
17. Amin, Ash, *Post Fordism: A Reader,* (Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell, 2008).

a new political/economic order that scholars call Fordism.[18] The term Fordism refers to the dominant mass production and mass consumption economic model that emerged in North America and Europe after World War II. It is named after the automaker Henry Ford, whose business model was characterized by assembly-line production where workers would repeat the same task over and over again throughout the workday. Ford's workers were paid enough to be able to purchase the low-cost vehicles he produced. The Fordist mode of mass production of goods designed for mass consumption was supported by governing arrangements that stabilized and facilitated the system. The dominant political and economic arrangements also fostered distinct social relationships and cultural practices.

Unlike the laissez faire attitudes of the mid-19th century, Fordism was characterized by government regulation, labor/management cooperation, and social welfare provision.[19] Federal governments played an active role in fiscal policy and in ensuring the availability of credit to both producers and consumers. Facilitated by strong labor movements and political rules and regulations that encouraged labor/management cooperation, the middle class flourished. Federal, state, and local governments worked together to provide a social safety net, to invest in large- scale public works projects, and to create financial and regulatory systems that supported a middle class consumerist lifestyle. The social welfare system helped prevent destabilization when economic downturns occurred by maintaining at least a minimal standard of living and level of consumer demand.

Urban administrations had a critical function under this governing arrangement. With funding assistance from federal and state governments, cities administered social welfare programs and played a key role in developing and carrying out infrastructure projects. For example, local public housing authorities managed services, maintained buildings, and planned for new developments. Urban planning agencies and other quasi-governmental regional planning authorities took responsibility for designing and managing large-scale public construction projects such as highway systems, airport expansions, and ports, rail and road systems. Decisions made on a local level and carried out by city bureaucrats both reinforced and reshaped the system of mass production and consumption.

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18. Ibid.

19. Joe Painter, "Regulation Theory, Post-Fordism and Urban Politics," in *Readings in Urban Theory Third Edition,* eds. Susan S. Fainstein and Scott Campbell (Chinchester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 23-41.

In the United States, the predominant geography of Fordism was suburbanization. Suburban expansion was enabled by transportation networks that connected residents to their jobs downtown. The suburban boom fed consumer demand for appliances, cars, furniture, and other household items, which fueled production in the factory complexes that remained in the urban core and provided employment for city residents.

The working and living arrangements that emerged under a Fordist economy supported the formation of nuclear families and reinforced patriarchal relations. Middle class families could survive with just one male wage earner, which enabled women to be stay-at-home mothers while their children were young. It also allowed middle class children to complete a high school education. While the heterosexual, male-headed, single earner household was characteristic of the Fordist era, this family type was not necessarily the norm everywhere. Communities of color, new immigrants, and female-headed households could not always afford to support their families on one income and did not reap the full benefits of a Fordist economy.

In the 1970s, profitability under the Fordist political and economic arrangements began to decline. The oil crisis coupled with the problems of low growth, rising inflation and high unemployment that emerged simultaneously created economic challenges that the existing political institutions were unable to solve.[20] At the urban level, the crisis became particularly acute in New York City. In 1975, the city was on the verge of bankruptcy due to the increasing cost of social welfare programs and the declining property tax revenues due to white middle class flight. The city nearly defaulted on its loans, and the federal government was initially unwilling to bail it out.

In midst of the crisis of Fordism, a new economic paradigm was emerging.[21] New technologies created opportunities to reorganize systems of production and consumption. The resulting post-Fordist society is characterized by flexible or just-in-time production. Rather than mass production, companies are able to customize their products to cater to niche markets and rapidly changing tastes. The mass consumerism of the Fordist era is replaced by more targeted advertising to different segments of the population enabled by the rise of the information economy. Instead of large-scale factories, production is spread out among multiple sites across the world, and work may be subcontracted to temporary vendors. Workers no longer maintain the

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20. Alejandro Reuss, "That 70s Crisis," *Dollars and Sense,* November/December 2009.
21. Amin, *Post-Fordism.*

same job over a lifetime. They may end up switching careers multiple times and vacillating between secure employment and more precarious forms of work like temporary or gig economy jobs.

The new economic order gave rise to new governing strategies. Footloose capital defied Fordist political structures, and global networks of production led to the hollowing out of the nation-state and the concomitant rise of global economic structures like the World Trade Organization alongside the elevation of local governments in their quest to attract and retain investment in a competitive new world. "Glocalization," or the growing importance of both global and local institutions, not only means that power has shifted, but the ways in which all governments relate to businesses and citizens has also changed.[22]

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22. Eric Swyngedouw, "Neither global nor local: 'glocalization' and the politics of scale," in *Spaces of Globalization*, ed. Kevin Cox (New York: Guilford Press, 1997), pgs.137-166.

Fordism	Post-Fordism
Mass production of goods	Flexible production methods able to meet just-in-time deadlines and to switch to different products
Mass consumption and homogenization of products	Consumption tied to lifestyle groups and specific population segments who consume different goods and services
Age of advertising and mass marketing	Targeted marketing to niche groups based on extensive use of consumer data collection and analysis
Job security and benefits	Precarious employment
High unionization rates	Declining unionization, challenges in organizing contingent workforces, workers no longer characterized as employees, but as independent contractors
Large middle class	Economic inequality
Government ensures minimal standard of living through social welfare programs	Cuts to social welfare, "workfare" rules make benefits harder to attain, social welfare distributed by non-governmental organizations with various rules and regulations
Public infrastructure projects and services	Privatization of public goods like education, parks, security services
Collective ties to place, nation, workplace, neighborhood, and community emphasized	Culture based on individualism and self-marketization

The dominant mode of governing that emerged in the post-Fordist era is called neoliberalism. The neoliberal ideology has its roots in the philosophy of Austrian economist Friedrich Hayek, who believed that the free market was the only avenue for maximizing individual liberty; political institutions were incapable of doing

so.[23] A neoliberal governing strategy orients public institutions toward serving the needs of private enterprise. It runs government like a business and can entail the privatization of public services, the retraction of government from social service provision and the outsourcing of these tasks to nonprofit or for-profit organizations, and shifts the focus of government from providing for residents' collective consumption needs to facilitating private investment and entrepreneurship. Early post-Fordist governing strategies were dominated by roll-back neoliberal policies, which slashed public services, eliminated welfare programs, curtailed regulations, and privatized some public agencies.[24] As the post-Fordist system matured, roll-out neoliberal policies like the use of public/private partnerships, charter schools, and contracting with non-governmental organizations for social welfare provision developed.

Post-Fordism has redefined urban governments' role in the global economy and their relationship to their residents.[25] Local governments engage in urban entrepreneurialism as they compete with other cities to attract businesses. This can include smokestack chasing – offering subsidies or tax breaks to incentivize industries to move – or investing in urban development projects such as stadiums or art museums in order to make the city more appealing to business owners. The social welfare provisions that had characterized urban policy under Fordism have been deeply cut or contracted out to nonprofit agencies. The primary role of the post-Fordist city government is to attract and facilitate investment and to create spaces for consumption. These goals are sometimes achieved through heavy-handed policing tactics that sweep homeless camps, ticket street vendors, or target low-income youth and communities of color.

Who participates in urban decision-making?

Although the role that urban governments play in the larger political economy has shifted over time, there is still a need for local decision-making bodies that will keep the city functioning. Who makes those decisions? Who do those decision-makers represent? Are all city residents represented equally in decision-making that

23. Christelle Mourel Journell and Gilles Pinson, *Debating the Neoliberal City,* (New York: Routledge, 2017), and Margit Mayer, "Post-Fordist City Politics," in *The City Reader*, eds. Richard LeGates and Frederic Stout (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 229-239.
24. Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell, "Neoliberalizing space," *Antipode*, 34, no. 3 (2002): 380 - 404.
25. Knox and Pinch, *Urban Social Geography.*

directly affects their lives? Who serves on the many non-elected boards that help shape the decision-making process?

When city governments began to take on greater regulatory responsibilities during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, they were ruled by political machines. Political machines developed in the mid-1800s in cities like New York, Boston, and Philadelphia that experienced exponential population growth due to large waves of immigration. Machine politics emerged as a way to incorporate working-class immigrant communities into the political system.[26] Political machines were systems that traditional political parties used to gain the votes and loyalties of particular neighborhoods or communities. A local boss, or influential community member, would deliver votes to the party in exchange for promises of jobs or services to neighborhood. This hierarchical patronage system, while corrupt, provided an avenue for poverty-stricken and newly arrived immigrant communities to gain tangible, collective consumption benefits that local governments had not systematically provided prior to the Progressive Era.[27] Middle-class reformers pushed back against the anti-democratic aspects of the political machines and were able to successfully enact reforms such as hiring professional city managers to oversee local government bureaus, creating a professional civil servant class that stayed in their jobs regardless of who was in office, and electing representatives city-wide rather than by neighborhood or district. While machine politics were anti-democratic, they were still somewhat effective at providing services to their constituents. In the early 20th century when cities were expanding the types of services they provided and developing new infrastructure, U.S. cities, many of which were governed by political machines, were able to more quickly and effectively provide services than their European counterparts whose governments were more democratic. Machine politics are not common in U.S. cities today, but similar patronage systems continue to dominate city governments in many parts of the world.

The demise of machine politics did not necessarily mean that city governments became more representative. In many cities, large property holders and those with economic power have a greater influence on local

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26. James J. Connolly, *An Elusive Unity: Urban Democracy and Machine Politics in Industrializing America*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018).

27. Bernard Ross and Myron Levine, *Urban Politics: Power in Metropolitan America, Sixth Edition,* (Itacsa, IL: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 2001).

government decisions than the average city resident does. In the 1950s, political scientists began to examine how city governments functioned and who influenced local politics.

The first theories of who held decision-making power in cities emerged from broader community studies, which are detailed, ethnographic accounts of a neighborhood, subculture, or small town. Community studies were one of the primary research methods early U.S. urban sociologists employed. They are similar to the social surveys that reformers used to draw attention to problems in industrial cities. A community study of Muncie, Indiana, revealed that a small business elite and one powerful family dominated political decision-making in the town.[28] In 1953, Floyd Hunter investigated political influence in the city of Atlanta and discovered that a power elite comprised of influential business and investment firm leaders drove policy making. A few years later, Robert Dahl examined decision-making in the city of New Haven, Connecticut, and found that rather than being governed by a small elite, the city's political landscape was shaped by shifting coalitions who held sway over particular policy areas such as education, transportation, or urban development. Dahl described a pluralistic form of urban politics, where multiple groups exert influence.

John Logan and Harvey Molotch developed the concept of the "growth machine" to describe the coalition of powerful people and interests that influence urban policy.[29] By tracing the history of urban boosterism, or place promotion, Logan and Molotch demonstrated how urban policy is oriented toward continual development and expansion. Rather than simply being driven by a small business elite, growth policies are embraced by a wide variety of local institutions within the city. Universities, local media, utility companies, arts organizations and professional sports teams, all of which rely upon popular support and benefit from population expansion, are often key backers of growth-oriented policies alongside small-and large-scale businesses. Logan and Molotch argued that while this business and institutional coalition might benefit from growth policies, they do not necessarily provide clear benefits to local residents, like access to jobs or higher wages. The addition of new businesses into a city can provide increased opportunities for locals, but depending

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28. Ross and Levine, *Urban Politics*. Menes, Rebecca, *The Effect of Patronage Politics on City Government in American Cities, 1900-1910*. (Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1999).

29. John Logan and Harvey Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place,* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1987).

upon the types of economic activities that are added, they may also attract workers from outside the region, resulting in increased housing costs and development pressures.

As local government functions like planning, housing and transportation became housed in professional bureaus, ordinary residents often had little voice in how urban development decisions were made. During the 1960s, the federally funded War on Poverty created Community Action Agencies that were designed to address problems in disadvantaged urban neighborhoods. [30] These decentralized, neighborhood-based agencies were mandated to encourage "maximum feasible participation" in identifying areas of community concern, designing grassroots solutions, and allocating resources. While the citizen participation requirements of the War on Poverty programs were ultimately short-lived, the notion that marginalized communities should have a say in the decisions that affect their lives and neighborhoods continued to resonate with urban residents. The 1970s ushered in a widespread expansion of citizen participation efforts. Some were instituted by public agencies, but many were initiated at the grassroots level. In the early 1970s, neighborhood activists in Southeast Portland mobilized to stop a freeway from being constructed along Powell Boulevard. [31] With the support of a progressive City Council, the neighborhood groups forced a vote on the issue, and Portlanders rejected the proposal to construct the Mount Hood freeway.

In 1969, Sherry Arnstein used the metaphor of a ladder to describe citizen participation programs as a continuum of efforts that could involve at the bottom rung, a manipulation of participants by powerful actors, or at the top, complete citizen control. [32] Arnstein's ladder provides a powerful visual tool that can be used to evaluate the quality and sincerity of citizen participation efforts. She argued that citizen participation processes should allow those without power to have a real say in the decisions that affect their lives.

30. Ibid.

31. "Mt. Hood Freeway," The Oregon Encyclopedia, Oregon Historical Society, accessed December 26, 2018
https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/mt__hood_freeway/#.WkQ7vvmnHIU.

32. Sherry Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35, no. 4 (July 1969): 216-224.

Ladder of Citizen Participation

Source: Sherry Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," Journal of the American Institute of Planners 35, no. 4 (July 1969): 216-224.

	Forms of Citizen Control
8	Citizen Control
7	Delegation
6	Partnership
	Tokenism
5	Placation
4	Consultation
3	Informing
	Non-Participation
2	Therapy
1	Manipulation

While U.S. cities provide some opportunities for citizens to get involved in planning decisions or other local policies, most efforts fall along the lower rungs of Arnstein's ladder. However, in other parts of the world, city governments provide greater participation opportunities. In Brazil, a National Constituent Assembly

convened in 1988 to write a new constitution after two decades of repressive military rule.[33] The post-dictatorship Constitution was written by hundreds of elected representatives, but Brazilian citizens were allowed to contribute bills for consideration, and more than one hundred amendments written by ordinary Brazilians were included in the final document. The new Constitution mandates that all urban development and public property must fulfill a social function.[34] In Brazilian cities, residents must have an opportunity to participate in designing health, housing, and educational policies and in urban planning efforts. The city of Porto Alegre pioneered a process called participatory budgeting in 1989.[35] The process begins at the neighborhood level, where the budgets from the previous year are reviewed and new priorities are established. Ideas from the neighborhoods are shared at regional assemblies where priorities are discussed and voted upon by representatives, then passed along to a citywide assembly, where representatives of the regional councils deliberate and vote upon the final budget.

Fung and Wright call grassroots processes like these "empowered deliberative democracy."[36] This form of decision-making is characterized by empowering ordinary people to define and describe the problems that affect their lives and to determine solutions to them. Empowered deliberative democratic processes engage directly with people on the local level and ensure that there is communication and accountability between local resident decision-makers and the government agencies that implement their solutions and policies. Cities are the perfect sites for this type of direct democratic rule. Their governments are small enough to allow for meaningful popular engagement and the decisions they are responsible for have a direct impact on their residents' lives.

33. "Under Threat, Brazil's 1988 Constitution Celebrates 30 Years," The Brazilian Report, accessed January 2, 2019, https://brazilian.report/power/2018/10/05/threat-brazils-constitution-30-years/ .

34. Teresa Caldeira and James Holston, "Participatory Urban Planning in Brazil," *Urban Studies* 52, no. 11(2015): 2001-2017.

35. Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright, "Deepening Democracy: Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance," *Politics and Society* 29, no. 1 (2001): 5-41.

36. Ibid.

The Right to the City

The concept of rights is not often associated with local politics. Rights tend to be enshrined in national constitutions and in international documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Rights guarantee access to resources and/or opportunities and protect certain behaviors. Rights are codified by governments and are backed up by the power of the state.[37] Given their political nature, rights are also reflective of the social relationships and historical realities of specific eras and places.

The concept of having a right to the city was conceived by Henri Lefebvre, a French sociologist and philosopher in a treatise published in 1967.[38] The notion was embraced by students and workers during the May 1968 Paris uprising and popularized around the world. The right to the city has since been adopted by the activist groups and academics and has been enshrined in charters that outline rights for particular cities and in international documents supported by the United Nations.[39] However, many of these current incarnations of the right to the city diverge from its more elusive theoretical formulation and instead interpret this concept as a practical list of material and political rights that should be guaranteed on the urban level.[40]

Mexico City's Urban Movements and the Right to the City Charter

Mexico City is one of the most populous cities in the world. It's a place of contrasts with large

37. Don Mitchell, *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space,* (New York and London: The Guilford Press, 2003).

38. Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, trans. Eleonore Korfman and Elizabeth Lebas (Oxford and Cambridge MA, Blackwell, 1996).

39. "Historic Consensus Reached on 'Right to the City' in New Urban Agenda," Gregory Scruggs, accessed on December 28, 2017 http://citiscope.org/habitatIII/news/2016/09/historic-consensus-reached-right-city-new-urban-agenda.

40. Mark Purcell, "Possible Worlds: Henri Lefebvre and the Right to the City," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 36, no. 1, (2014): 141-154.

visible divides between the neighborhoods of the wealthy and those of the poor. In 1985, a massive earthquake struck the city, and the government failed to provide aid or relief to residents. Community groups launched a grassroots response to rescue those trapped under rubble and to help people rebuild their homes.

The city's vibrant urban social movements that coalesced around earthquake relief efforts continued to push for housing reforms and support for the poor throughout the 1980s and 1990s. A coalition of community-based groups called the Movimiento Urbano Popular (MUP – Popular Urban Movement) embraced the notion of the Right to the City as a way to unify the diverse demands of the city's grassroots.

In 2008, the MUP launched an effort to draft a comprehensive Right to the City charter. The document describes six broad categories of the Right to the City: the right to exercise basic human rights, the right to use land and property for the common good, the right to democratic management of the city and participation in decision-making, the right to create an economy that works for all, the right to an environmentally sustainable city, and the right to enjoy the city and its cultural offerings.

While some of the sentiments of the Right to the City Charter were written into the city's legally binding constitution a few years later, the charter is primarily an aspirational document. Some of the rights enshrined in the document were already outdated by the time it was adopted, since the city is ever-evolving. While the document produced no tangible policy outcomes, it did help frame the MUP and other grassroots' organizations struggles. They were able to win money to improve housing for the poor and to develop libraries, parks, and community centers in low-income neighborhoods.

The Right to the City charter raises the question about the utility of trying to translate this rallying cry into a cohesive set of demands. Since the city is work in progress, can the right to the city ever be achieved?

Gerlofs, Ben. "Dreaming Dialectically: The Death and Life of the Mexico City Charter for the Right to the City." Urban Studies, 57, no. 10 (2020): 2064-079.

Lefebvre's original outline of the right to the city was more abstract and was not conceptualized as an entitlement to any particular resource or as a form of political expression guaranteed by the state.[41] Instead, Lefebvre envisioned the right to the city as the ability of all urban dwellers to access the social possibilities that living in a densely settled, diverse community offers. Lefebvre argued that city is a "place of encounter, priority of use value" and that it has the capacity to be an "inscription in space of a time promoted to the rank of supreme resource among all resources."[42] What he means is that the right to the city is the right to interact with strangers, to create spaces that reflect the needs and desires of their users, and to collectively make a city that allows its inhabitants to have control over all aspects of their daily lives.

Lefebvre repeatedly refers to the city as an *oeuvre,* or a work of art that should be constructed collectively by those who inhabit it. [43] His vision was a utopian one that celebrates the possibilities that urban society offers. The city in its current formulation emphasizes property ownership and profit-making over the material and social needs of its residents. It is designed by rational experts, like planners or architects, who impose their own visions of what urban life should be like. A recurring theme in Lefebvre's work is the complex relationships between urban space, or the physical city, and social relations. The right to the city is quintessentially the right for its inhabitants to create physical spaces that facilitate daily life not as it currently is, but as they would like to lead it.

After participating in the urban uprisings that swept across the world in 1968, Lefebvre turned his attention

41. Purcell, "Possible Worlds"
42. Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities,* 158.
43. Ibid.

to how urbanization produced alienation and social inequality and how cities and the unique social relationships they produced were a potential source of liberation.[44] Lefebvre argued that urbanization was not simply an outgrowth of capitalism and industrialization; it was an all-encompassing social process, an end in itself, rather than simply a means of organizing industrial production and consumption patterns. He saw urbanization as a totalizing force that reshaped life in both the city and the countryside. Lefebvre envisioned a city where its inhabitants could create a built environment that would suit their individual and collective needs and desires, instead of one designed by bureaucratic staff to benefit business interests. While other urban theorists like Castells and Harvey identified the specific roles the city played in the larger political economy, Lefebvre believed that social relations were a product of urbanization and that these relationships could only be altered if urban residents were able to imagine and produce spaces that served their needs.

In recent years, the right to the city concept has been used by academics and activists to demand specific improvements to city life. In all of its current iterations, the right to the city is always conceived of as something that all urban dwellers should have.[45] It is not just a benefit for those who are registered to vote or have citizenship or residency status. In his original text, Lefebvre was quite clear that this right belong to all who "inhabit" the city, although he specifically excluded the ruling elite whose daily activities are not closely tied to place, but rather "transcend everyday life."[46]

In Caracas, Venezuela, expansion of the public transit system can be seen as an expression of the right to the city.[47] The construction of cable car and subway lines that serve far-flung informal settlements gave low-income residents affordable and efficient access to the central city. In this case, the right to the city wasn't a right to transportation per se, but rather a right to access the urban spaces in the center of the city that facilitate the types of social relationships that Lefebvre identified as one of the potentially liberating aspects of city life.

The right to the city is also a right to participate in decision-making and city-building activities. It is the right for all urban inhabitants to shape the place they live in so it serves their needs and desires. The right to

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44. Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution,* trans. Robert Bononno (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

45. Purcell, "Possible Worlds"

46. Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities,* 159.

47. Daniel Kingsbury, "Infrastructure and Insurrection: The Caracas Metro and the Right to the City in Venezuela," *Latin American Research Review* 52, no. 5 (2017): 775-791.

participation is closely tied to the right to access information. Lefebvre acknowledged that residents needed access to information, but in the 50 years since this right was originally conceived, information has become a critical factor in every aspect of human life. Data and information play a key role in the production of urban spaces.[48] For inhabitants to truly create a city that satisfies their individual and collective needs, they need to have full control over and access to information and data. A right to information could encompass a wide range of scenarios from knowing what types of toxins or contaminants are contained on a piece of property to being notified about potential development decisions to having municipal ownership over wireless or fiber-optic networks.

Public Spaces–Incubators of Representation

One thing that sets a city apart from rural areas or small towns is its abundance of public space. Lyn Lofland describes the public realm as the physical locations in a city where strangers mingle with one another.[49] The public realm includes streets, sidewalks, parks, plazas, shops, restaurants, public and government buildings, community centers, and so on. It is basically any space where entry is not controlled. Lofland argues that the public realm is social territory. It facilitates the full spectrum of human connection. In public spaces, one can simply sit back and people watch, or have an intimate conversation with a close friend. The public realm also plays an important role in facilitating what Lofland describes as cosmopolitanism—the ability to interact with others across differences. In the public realm, we learn to behave cooperatively with strangers, which provides a basis for breaking down barriers of difference.

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48. Joe Shaw and Mark Graham, "An informational right to the city? Code, content, control and the urbanization of information," *Antipode* 49, no. 4 (2017): 907-927.
49. Lyn H. Lofland. *The Public Realm: Exploring the City's Quintessential Social Territory,* (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1998.)

Gender Identity, Public Space, and the Right to the City

The notion of the Right to the City fails to take into account the fundamentally different experiences of urban space that people have based upon their gender, sexuality, gender identity, race, ethnicity, disability status, religion, and other social identities. Thinking about the ways in which women, transgendered, and gender non-conforming people experience the city can reveal aspects of the right to the city that may not be apparent when it's considered a universal right.

Patriarchy, or a male-dominated social system, makes a distinction between private and public spaces. Traditionally, women have been associated with and in some societies, confined to the private sphere, while men controlled public spaces and dominate public life. Despite being thought of as women's space, the private sphere is not always a safe place. Gendered violence and abuse can make private spaces unsafe, and women might feel like they have very little control over how the spaces of their home are organized or how they spend their time there.

For transgendered or gender non-conforming people, private space may be the only space where they feel comfortable being who they are. People often first express their true gender identity within the confines of their home, before they are ready to come out in public spaces. However, the private sphere may also not be safe space for transgender or non-binary people.

In patriarchal societies, public spaces are places where rigid definitions of gender are enforced through ridicule, harassment, or violence. Women, transgendered, and non-binary people may experience gender-based harassment or violence in public space or fear experiencing it, which can prevent them from using all of the spaces of the city. Some women feel a strong sense of belonging and safety in their neighborhoods and may also appreciate the anonymity they can experience in spaces that aren't familiar to them.

Transgendered and non-binary people might adapt their gender expression in public space in order to keep themselves safe. For example, a transgendered woman might avoid speaking to strangers on transit or a non-binary person may dress in gender-specific clothing when going to the mall to protect themselves from harassment. Some gender non-conforming people may

find public spaces to be more supportive than private spaces, especially if other transgender and non-binary people are visible and welcomed in those spaces.

Enacting the right the city may involve different strategies for people from different backgrounds and identities. For a right to the city to be realized, the ways in which all communities interact with public space must be considered.

Fenster, T. "The Right to the Gendered City: Different Formations of Belonging in Everyday Life." Journal of Gender Studies. 14, no. 3, 217-31.

Doan, Petra L. "The Tyranny of Gendered Spaces – Reflections from beyond the Gender Dichotomy." Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography 17, no. 5 (2010): 635-54.

Despite Lofland's celebration of the positive potentials of public spaces in the city, they may not always be experienced as safe or tolerant places. Don Mitchell surveyed some of the major struggles over the use of public space in the United States.[50] Protest movements, homelessness and unconventional uses of public space incite conflicts over who should be allowed to access this shared realm and how they can behave there. To control public spaces, cities have enacted laws banning sleeping, sitting on sidewalks, or marching in the street without a protest permit. Mitchell argues that laws that prohibit some groups from using public spaces pose a threat to the rights of all urban residents. "When all is controlled, there can simply be no right to the city."[51]

Another trend is the increasing securitization and privatization of the public realm. Los Angeles has been described as a fortress city full of gated communities, heavily policed housing projects and a network of surveillance cameras along the streets.[52] In many U.S. cities, neighborhood businesses band together to pay for private security forces and public space improvements. While the quality and maintenance of these spaces

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50. Mitchell, *The Right to the City.*

51. Mitchell, *The Right to the City,* 229.

52. Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles,* (London: Verso, 1990.)

may improve, these private improvement districts gain control over how space is used and who has access to it. In London, there has been a proliferation of POPs, or privately-owned public spaces that are governed and managed by building owners or associations.[53] While these plazas, gardens and parks are indistinguishable from their publicly controlled counterparts, the unstated rules within them guard against any behavior deemed deviant or unorthodox. Unlike a traditional park or plaza, POPs do not permit demonstrations or political gatherings and often criminalize homeless people who try to sleep or spend significant amounts of time there.

Summary

Cities have unique functions and play critical roles in the larger economic system. Cities are responsible for the collective consumption needs of their residents and provide transportation, health, housing, education, and other services. As the global economy shifted from a Fordist model of production to a post-Fordist system, local governments have focused on attracting investment and developing urban spaces for consumption. Cities are also investment sites and business elites may dominate governing coalitions, although more pluralistic forms of leadership are possible too. Cities are often geared toward growth and this agenda may dominate policies, although they may not benefit the resident population.

Multiple groups use and access the city from its residents to global-oriented businesspeople. These competing groups may come in conflict with one another over the use of public spaces. Cities allow residents to participate in varying degrees in political decision-making, but the quality and scope of that participation can vary from simple consultation to full community control.

The right to the city is a concept that embraces the liberatory potential of urban social relations. In its original formulation, Lefebvre called for all urban dwellers to have the right to create spaces that reflected their own needs and desires. The right to the city has come to be understood as a right to basic collective consumption needs, to participation in decision-making and to access to opportunities. The right to the city is realized in urban public spaces where heterogeneous groups mingle and coexist. Limiting access to public space curtails the ability of urban residents to assert their right to representation.

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53. Jack Shenker, "Revealed: The Insidious creep of pseudo-public space in London," *The Guardian,* July 24, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/jul/24/revealed-pseudo-public-space-pops-london-investigation-map.

Test your Urban Literacy:

Think about how the concepts in this chapter apply to your own city

1. What aspects of daily life do urban governments make decisions about? Name three departments or bureaus in your city government that are responsible for providing key services.
2. Compare and contrast the Fordist and post-Fordist political and economic systems. Provide an example of a neoliberal or post-Fordist governing arrangement in your city.
3. How can ordinary citizens influence the key decision-makers in your city? What opportunities are there for citizen participation in the meetings of your city's governing body? Using the concepts presented in this chapter (i.e machine politics, deliberative democracy), which decision-making model best describes decision-making at the local council level?
4. What does the right to the city mean?
5. Is it possible to achieve a "right to city?" How useful is this idea for creating a more inclusive city?
6. Describe the relationship between the right to the city and access to public space. Use a specific example from your city to explain this relationship.

Learn to read the city around you:

Apply what you've learned in this chapter by completing a hands-on activity in your own city

1. **Attend a public meeting:** Attend an in-person or virtual public meeting in your city. It can be a city council meeting or a meeting of a local commission or board. Read the agenda and any accompanying information that is publicly available before you go. Take notes about the types of decisions that are being made, who the decision-makers are, and which communities they represent. Pay attention to the public participation portions of the meeting. Who can sign up to speak? What topics did they address? Which perspectives did they bring? How did the decision-makers respond to their input? Also note if there are any professionals or experts who are invited to provide testimony or make presentations. What types of information did they present? Write up your observations of the meeting you attend. Consider whether the meeting provided adequate opportunities for representation.

2. **Observe how people use public space:** Find a busy public space in your city. It could be a park, a plaza, a shopping area, or other place where large numbers of people hang out. Make at least two to three site visits. Try to visit on different days and times. While you are there, make notes about what you see. Who is using this space? What types of activities do they engage in? What parts of the space do they use? How long do they stay? How are they treated by other users of this space? You should also create a diagram of what the space looks like. Are there any barriers there that may prevent people from using that space? Write a reflection about what you observed. How welcoming is this space? Did the users represent a cross section of your city? Was anyone excluded from this space?

3. **Conduct an audit of your city government website:** Explore your city government's

website. What departments or programs exist? What types of services is the city responsible for? What departments or programs seem to have greater priority? Where are the different departments located? Who leads these agencies? Write a report about what you find. Organize the data you collected into charts or graphs that communicate the breadth and relative importance of the services your city provides and analyze how representative the different functions of city government are.

4. ***Evaluate the accessibility of your city's public spaces:*** Take a walk through a neighborhood in your city to evaluate how accessible it might be for someone who has limited mobility, is hearing impaired, visually impaired, or very young. What barrier exist? Would someone with a disability or of a very young age be able to access the services in this neighborhood? Are the public spaces accessible? What improvements need to be made to make sure that everyone can use this space? Present your findings to the class.

5. ***Propose a Right to the City charter amendment:*** Your city has decided to create a Right to the City charter. Propose at least one amendment that you believe belongs in this charter. You might want to look at examples of other Right to the City charters. Your amendment should include a rationale for why this particular right or bundle of rights belongs in this document. It should also include a description of any additional rights that fall under this category. Finally, provide an example of what this right would look like if it were realized in your city.

6. ***Community Representation Analysis:*** Choose a community in your city that you believe may be under-represented. Collect data about how members of this community are represented in different aspects of city life. You can examine the community's economic situation, educational experiences, relationship with the criminal justice system, health outcomes, housing conditions, and political status. You will want to compare the community's situation with data for the overall population within your city. Present your findings to the class. Include suggestions for how the various institutions within the city might change to become inclusive.

7. ***Examine representation in images of your city:*** Collect images from local business and

real estate advertisements, official public agency publications, billboards, informational or tourist brochures. Analyze those images to understand how the city is represented to various audiences. Who is represented in these images? What aspects of the city do they show? Who is the intended audience and what is the purpose of these images? Who and what are not shown? Is this an accurate representation of your city? Why or why not? Share your analysis with the class.

8. ***Representation from the ground-up:*** Choose an underrepresented community within your city and explore the platforms that members use to communicate with one another. These platforms may include community newspapers, local radio or television programs, social media posts from influential members or organizations, and/or organizational literature or actions. What are the main issues facing this community? How do they articulate these issues? What changes would they like to see? How is the community organizing to make those changes happen? Write about what you learned. As much as possible, try to convey the community's perspectives about their under-representation within the city.

5.

CULTURE

By the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- Recognize the role that ethnic enclaves play in immigrant communities
- Identify how ghettoization happens and how it impacts a community's power and opportunities
- Define the different groups that use a city and how their needs are taken into account
- Understand how the symbolic economy reshapes urban culture and life
- Discuss the concept of urban authenticity
- Explain the relationship between culture and gentrification

This chapter examines the role that culture plays in shaping urban life. First, we will explore the mechanisms that lead to racial and ethnic segregation and examine how ethnic enclaves and ghetto neighborhoods affect residents' opportunities and influence their identities. Next, we will turn to the concept of multiculturalism, and then we will explore how the city is shaped by the various groups that use it. At the end of the chapter, we will consider the ways in which culture impacts urban economies and fuels gentrification.

Ethnic Enclave Neighborhoods

Flip through a guidebook to a large city nearly anywhere in the world, and you will find listings of neighborhoods that are associated with a particular ethnic group or culture. Cities are made up of diverse communities, but those communities are not necessarily evenly dispersed throughout the urban neighborhoods and suburban towns that make up a metropolitan area. Some ethnic communities concentrate themselves in a particular area of the city in order to maintain their cultural ties and provide support to one another, while other groups may be forced into a particular neighborhood because of discrimination and exclusionary practices perpetrated by the dominant racial or ethnic group that exerts power within their society.

Neighborhoods where members who share the same culture are clustered are called ethnic enclaves.[1] An example of an ethnic enclave is the Danforth neighborhood in Toronto, which is known as Greektown. During the 1960s and 1970s, a large wave of Greek immigrants settled in Toronto.[2] Although they initially moved into affordable neighborhoods throughout the city, a concentration of Greek immigrants laid down roots in the Danforth neighborhood, an area that was home to a large Italian and other immigrant populations. Greek restaurants and shops opened along the commercial area, and in the 1970s the neighborhood was nicknamed Little Athens. About 30,000 people of Greek descent, about half of the Greek population in Toronto, lived in the Danforth community. By the end of the 1970s, Greek residents began moving out of the neighborhood, but the number of Greek-owned businesses along the commercial strip multiplied. In the 1980s, despite the continued out-migration of Greek households from the area, local merchants formed a business improvement district, renamed the neighborhood "Greektown," and began promoting the area's ethnic history and businesses.

The story of Greektown illustrates many of the defining characteristics of an ethnic enclave. Ethnic enclaves are home to concentrations of people who share a culture or ethnicity. New immigrants often face limited housing

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1. Peter Marcuse, "Enclaves: Yes, Ghettos No, Segregation and the State," in *Desegregating the City: Ghettos, Enclaves and Inequality*, ed. David Varady (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), 15-30.
2. David Wencer, "Historicist: Greektown on the Danforth," *The Torontist*, accessed 16 October, 2016, https://torontoist.com/2016/10/historicist-greektown-on-the-danforth/.

choices due to their economic status and/or a lack of facility with the language or ways of doing business in their new city. They might settle in a community where they already have some social ties or where they feel comfortable and can access foods, services, and institutions that are familiar or find places to participate in cultural or religious activities. While ethnic enclaves are home to a concentration of people who share the same cultural background, not everyone from that ethnicity lives in that area, and the neighborhood may not be exclusively dominated by only one ethnic group.[3] While Greeks made up a significant portion of the Danforth community, they were never the sole occupants of that neighborhood. This is one of the characteristics of ethnic enclaves that differentiates these neighborhoods from ghetto communities, which we will focus on later in this chapter. In ghetto communities, a majority of members of an ethnic group are segregated into an area or neighborhood where they are isolated, stigmatized and lack adequate opportunities or infrastructure.[4]

Ethnic enclave communities evolve over time. When a group first immigrates to the city, the enclave neighborhood provides social support and, sometimes, an avenue for economic mobility. Cuban immigrants who settled in the Little Havana neighborhood in Miami in the early 1970s had greater economic opportunities than Mexican immigrants who arrived during the same years.[5] Immigrants from Mexico were more dispersed. Unlike their Cuban counterparts, they worked on the open labor market and were segmented into jobs that were low-paid, where their bosses were white and native born, and they had little room for advancement. Cuban immigrants often went to work for other Cubans who owned businesses in Little Havana. While their earnings were similarly low, they had more opportunities to advance in their jobs and to eventually start their own businesses. While businesses within an ethnic enclave can provide economic support to new immigrants, more recent Cuban emigres who settled outside of Miami and work in the open labor

3. Ceri Peach, "The Ghetto and the Ethnic Enclave," in *Desegregating the City: Ghettos, Enclaves and Inequality*, ed. David Varady (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), 31-48.

4. Peach, "The Ghetto and Enclave"

5. Alejandro Portes and Robert Bach, "Immigrant Earnings: Cuban and Mexican Immigrants in the US," *The International Migration Review* 14, 3, (Autumn, 1980): 315-341.

market have higher earnings than their counterparts residing in Little Havana.[6] Some of these differences may be explained by the recent immigrants' class background and their education and English proficiency levels.

Koreatown, Los Angeles: Portrait of an Ethnic Enclave

At one point, Los Angeles was home to the largest Korean community outside of the Korean peninsula. Prior to changes in U.S. immigration policy in 1965, there were few Korean immigrants in the United States. Those who were able to emigrate settled in Hawaii or California. In the early 1900s, the small Korean population in Los Angeles established a church and community center near downtown. Although the Korean population lived all around the metropolitan area, the neighborhood where these institutions were became the center of the community's cultural and social life.

As more Koreans arrived, the center of the community moved north of the original neighborhood to a mixed-race area near Olympic Boulevard, where there was a cluster of banks and the Olympic Market grocery store. In the early 1970s, local business owners formed an association, financed Korean language street signs, and started the annual Korean Street Festival, which continues today. By 1976, there were more than 1,000 Korean small businesses in the neighborhood and 70,000 Korean-American residents.

Like most ethnic enclaves, Koreatown was not exclusively Korean, nor did the majority of Koreans in Los Angeles live there. Today, it is a majority Latino neighborhood, but about 30% of residents are Korean. Although many second- and third-generation Korean Americans have moved to other neighborhoods, the Koreatown continues to serve as a commercial, social, and cultural center for the community.

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6. Carla Davis, "Beyond Miami: The Ethnic Enclave and Personal Income in Various Cuban Communities in the United States, *International Migration Review* 38, 2 (Summer, 2004): 450-469.

*Eui-Young Yu. ""Koreatown" Los Angeles Emergence of a New Inner-City Ethnic Community,"
Bulletin of the Population and Development Studies Center 14 (1985): 29-44.*

*Survey LA: Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey, Korean Americans in Los Angeles, August,
2018,* https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/ef26fda2-f0d7-488c-9766-5a3491d0a6f7/
[SurveyLA_KoreanAmericanContextandResources_Aug2018.pdf](https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/ef26fda2-f0d7-488c-9766-5a3491d0a6f7/).

Greenpoint, Brooklyn, provides another example of how an enclave economy can provide economic opportunity, but in this case, it came at the expense of some of the co-ethnic residents in the neighborhood. [7] Greenpoint became a destination for Polish immigrants in the 1980s and '90s. New Polish migrants were able to find affordable housing in the neighborhood through informal social networks and Polish real estate companies. The neighborhood networks also helped connect new migrants to jobs, especially in the construction trades, with a large group finding work in asbestos removal. A community credit union provided banking services, and as new migrants accumulated savings, some invested their money in Greenpoint real estate, becoming landlords themselves. In the 2000s as real estate prices rose, Polish landlords began leasing their units for a higher price to non-Polish tenants. The same network of Polish real estate agents that helped connect new immigrants to affordable apartments began working with landlords to convince them to rent to non-Poles and acting as an intermediary in many of these transactions. While local landlords and real estate agents made more money from renting to people from outside the community, new Polish migrants could no longer afford to live in Greenpoint and started settling instead in communities in Queens and New Jersey. Soon Greenpoint institutions, like the local credit union, followed.

The experience of Polish migrants who were priced out of Greenpoint illustrates another characteristic of ethnic enclaves. These neighborhoods are often temporary communities. [8] As subsequent generations

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7. Filip Stabrowski, "Social Relations of Landed Property: Gentrification of a Polish Enclave in Brooklyn," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology,* 77, 1 (January, 2018): 29-57.

8. Peach, "The Ghetto and Enclave"

assimilate and intermarry with people from other backgrounds, the enclave is no longer an attractive place to settle. Many enclaves house successive waves of new immigrant groups from different parts of the world. For example, the Lower East Side of New York was hone to German, Jewish, Italian, Chinese, and Puerto Rican migrants at various and often overlapping points in its history.

The succession of immigrants out of enclave neighborhoods and into other areas doesn't necessarily result in the erasure of the ethnic identity from the community. Greektown maintains its identity despite housing relatively few people of Greek descent. Little Italy is a neighborhood centered around Mulberry Street on the Lower East Side of New York City that continues to attract tourists who patronize the Italian-owned restaurants and businesses and attend the annual San Genaro street festival. [9] While Italian-owned businesses dominate part of Mulberry Street, very few people of Italian descent reside in the neighborhood anymore. Like Greektown, ethnic-owned businesses have survived, but the community's identity has become a marketing tool, rather than a true cultural representation of its current population.

In Little Italy, not only have people of Italian ancestry moved out to the suburbs, but they also no longer work in most of the neighborhood's businesses, including the Italian-owned establishments. Albanian immigrants from Kosovo and Albania are employed in large numbers as waiters in Little Italy establishments, while the kitchens are staffed by immigrants from Latin American countries.[10] Many of the waiters pass as Italians by assuming an Italian-sounding name at work and learning a few words of the language to intersperse into their dialogue with customers. The illusion of Italian identity is maintained in the neighborhood as a new wave of immigrants find an employment niche in its restaurants.

Not all ethnic enclaves go through the same transitions that Little Italy and Greektown did. According to spatial assimilation theory, as successive generations of immigrants become more assimilated in the United States, they move out of urban ethnic enclaves and into suburban communities.[11] But this is not necessarily the case for every ethnic group. For example, Italian-Americans continue to live in ethnic enclave neighborhoods in

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9. Elisabeth Becker, "Little of Italy?" Assumed Ethnicity in a New York City Neighbourhood," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38:1 (2015): 109-124.

10. Ibid.

11. Richard Alba, John Logan and Kyle Crowder, "White Ethnic Neighborhoods and Assimilation: The Greater New York Region, 1980-1990," *Social Forces* 75, 3 (March 1997): 883-912.

the city, inner suburbs and, to a lesser extent, the outer suburbs in the New York metropolitan region at higher rates than Irish or German Americans do. Those Italian Americans living in urban or suburban ethnic enclaves are more likely to speak Italian at home than are their counterparts living in non-enclave neighborhoods. These enclave neighborhoods continue to serve as a cultural resource for first-, second-, and third-generation immigrant communities.

In the 21st century, metropolitan areas have changed, and a new type of enclave neighborhood serves the purpose that older, inner city enclaves did during prior immigration waves. The ethnoburb is a suburban ethnic enclave that is home to new immigrant populations.[12] During the 19th and 20th centuries, new immigrants settled in urban neighborhoods, but this is no longer always the case. Ethnoburbs are multiethnic communities that contain concentrations of a particular immigrant group. These communities often have higher income levels than urban enclaves do, and many have existing clusters of residents who share the background of the new immigrant community. In the Los Angeles area, Chinese-Americans moved out of the city's ethnic enclaves and into some of the suburban communities in the San Gabriel Valley. A new wave of Chinese immigrants began to settle directly in these suburban areas, rather than in the urban Chinese enclaves. These ethnoburbs are not exclusively Chinese and Chinese-American. There are residents from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds living there, including immigrants from Southeast Asia.

This new direct-to-the-suburbs migration pattern is representative of the global economic changes that have occurred. New immigrants are now more likely to work in the service industry rather than in inner city manufacturing plants. Many ethnoburb businesses have direct ties to businesses from the immigrants' nation of origin. While overall income levels in ethnoburbs may be higher than urban enclave communities, there are pockets of poverty and immigrant groups from various countries may be stratified into lower paying occupations and poorer housing. These communities may also be marred by xenophobia from native born, white populations.

Ghetto Communities

While the ethnic enclave is a voluntary and heterogeneous neighborhood that can provide economic

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12. Wei Li, *Ethnoburb: The New Ethnic Community in Urban America* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009)

opportunities for its residents, ghettos are communities where residents who share the same racial or ethnic background are forced to live because of exclusionary policies or practices.[13] Ghetto neighborhoods are stigmatized and are characterized by a lack of opportunity and power. Ghettoization, or the process of separating a particular racial, ethnic, or religious community into a specific space, mutually reinforces bigoted ideas about a population and their spatial segregation. The bigoted ideologies within the majority racial, ethnic, or religious community that promote separation use the resulting poor living conditions in ghetto neighborhoods as a justification for maintaining segregation.

The word ghetto derives from the Venetian term *geto*, which means foundry.[14] In 1516 after centuries of exclusion and discrimination, the Venetian government decreed that all Jewish residents would be forced to live on a small island that once housed a copper foundry. The Vecchio Ghetto was walled and gated, and residents were allowed out during the day, but confined and locked in during the night. The process of Jewish ghettoization in Italy coincided with the rise of local state authorities where bureaucratic governments used spatial confinement to exert territorial control over a population with different religious beliefs.[15] The development of the initial ghetto in Venice served the needs of the church and the emerging state. Ghettoization policies were in keeping with Catholic Church's systematic religious persecution of Jews, but they also allowed Jewish Venetians to play a limited role in the local economy, which was desired by the state.[16] The establishment of the Venetian ghetto was continuously resisted by the local Jewish community. The decree that created the ghetto allowed Jewish residency in the city in the confined quarter for five years. Venetian Jews lived under constant threat that the decree would not be renewed and that they would be expelled from the city. In the mid-1500s, the Pope decreed that Jewish ghettos would be established throughout the Italian peninsula.

The more contemporary and well-known mass ghettoization of Jews in Europe occurred under the Nazis.

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13. Peach, "The Ghetto and Enclave"

14. Mitchell Duneier, *Ghetto: The Invention of a Place, The History of an Idea* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2016).

15. Stefanie Siegmund, *The Medici State and the Ghetto of Florence: The Construction of an Early Modern Jewish Community*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006)

16. Benjamin Ravid, "Ghetto: Etymology, Definition, Reality," in *The Ghetto in Global History 1500-present*, eds. Wendy Z. Goldman and Joe William Trotter (New York: Routledge, 2018) 23-39.

Ghettoization was first proposed by the Nazis in 1939.[17] Ghettos were instituted in German-occupied territories and some encompassed significant parts of an existing Jewish neighborhoods, while others consisted of a series of houses scattered around the city. Under the Nazis, ghettos were similar to concentration camps where residents were tightly monitored, subject to cruel and inhumane conditions including starvation, lack of medical care, and forced labor, and were basically imprisoned until they were killed or sent to death camps. In the face of these horrifying conditions, residents still managed to resist the terms of their confinement, employing a range of strategies from appeasement and negotiation to armed uprisings.

Ghettoization in Rome Past and Present: The Creation of "Outsiders Within"

Rome segregated its Jewish citizens into a ghetto longer than any other Italian city. Jews were ghettoized in Rome for more than three centuries from 1555 until 1870. The Jewish ghetto was established during a time when the Catholic dominance of the city was under threat from the Protestant Reformation. The Catholic Church sought to establish its religious dominance by scapegoating Jewish residents in a campaign to rid Rome of its religious minorities. The ghetto remained a powerful political tool for various church and political leaders who could tighten or loosen control of the space. Meanwhile, the Jews who were confined within its walls and deprived of resources developed a strong collective identity and launched efforts to resist their segregation.

In contemporary Rome, the city's recent policies toward its Roma population resemble its earlier history of Jewish ghettoization. The Roma began moving to the city in the 1950s and 1960s and established small communities of caravans and self-built homes on the outskirts of town where

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17. Anike Walke, "There was no work; we only worked for Germans. Ghettos and ghetto labor in German occupied Soviet territories." in *The Ghetto in Global History 1500-present*, eds.Wendy Z. Goldman and Joe William Trotter, (New York: Routledge, 2018) 93-109.

many rural Italian migrants had settled. In the 1980s, the Roman government recognized that the Roma deserved protections and subsequently labeled them a "nomad culture" and provided some services to their self-built communities. Most of the Roma who live in Rome are not nomads. Many are Italian citizens. Yet, the government mandated in 2009 that Roma living in self-built communities had to move to state-established villages.

The forced relocation of Roma to official villages eerily echoes the history of the Roman Jews. In the Roma villages, residents must have ID badges and there are fences, guards, and surveillance cameras. The Roma are required to send their children to school and to work. Like earlier ghettos, this forced separation creates a population of "outsiders within" the city that is used as political tool by powerful elements within the majority population. However, as sociologist Loïc Wacquant recognized, the paradox of ghettoization is that the forced separation and segregation also helps sow the "seeds of its own destruction" by creating conditions that enable resistance movements to organize and thrive.

Isabella Clough Marinaro, "The Rise of Italy's Neo-Ghettos." Journal of Urban History 41, no. 3 (2015): 368-87.

While the use of ghettos to facilitate genocide was unique to the Nazi regime, mandatory racial, ethnic, or religious residential segregation continued to persist. In the United States, the African American population has been systematically ghettoized at various points in history. After Reconstruction, the post-Civil War military occupation of the South that briefly guaranteed civil and voting rights for Blacks ended in 1877, white Southern elites and politicians instituted a series of Jim Crow laws that mandated segregation and deprived Black Southerners of their basic political and human rights.[18] Prior to the enactment of Jim Crow, it was not

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18. Alana Semuels, "Segregation had to be invented: During the late nineteenth century blacks and whites in the South lived closer than they do today," *The Atlantic*, February 17, 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/02/segregation-invented/517158/.

unusual to see mixed Black and white blocks and neighborhoods in Southern cities. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many Southern towns passed laws that banned residents from selling their home to Blacks if they lived on a majority white block and vice versa.[19] By the mid to late 20th century, Southern cities were, in general, less residentially segregated than those in the North and Midwest, but Jim Crow laws ensured the subjugation and social isolation of Black Southerners regardless of where they lived.[20]

Beginning around 1915 and continuing through the 1960s and '70s, millions of Blacks moved out of the South and into Northern, Midwestern, and Western cities.[21] This internal mass movement became known as The Great Migration. It was driven by a desire to flee the oppressive Jim Crow regimes of the South. Restrictions on immigration and two World Wars created worker shortages in cities in the North, Midwest, and West. Black men and women filled those jobs, moving in large numbers to cities like Chicago, Detroit, and New York, and in later years to Los Angeles and other West Coast cities. Prior to the Great Migration, these cities had relatively small Black populations that were often clustered in particular areas, but were not restricted to living in one part of town.

As more Blacks began to move into Northern and Midwestern cities, they were greeted by periodic episodes of mass racial violence and terrorism.[22] These riots drove many Black migrants to move out of white neighborhoods where they felt more vulnerable to attacks. Beginning in 1910, white property interests and developers began to use more institutional strategies to promote racial segregation. Restrictive covenants were signed, neighborhood-wide agreements that had to be approved by at least 75% of residents that explicitly prohibited individual homeowners from selling their homes to someone who was Black or of another race or ethnicity. Restrictive covenants were declared illegal in 1948 by the U.S. Supreme Court.

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19. Werner Troesken, "The Limits of Jim Crow: Race and the Provision of Water and Sewerage Services in American Cities, 1880-1925," *The Journal of Economic History,* 62, 3 (2002): 734-772.

20. Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of an Underclass.* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1993).

21. "The Great Migration," *Black Past*, accessed August 6, 2019, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/great-migration-1915-1960/

22. Massey and Denton, *American Apartheid*

Terrorism in East St. Louis: White mob violence in the 1917 race riot

From July 1, 1917, to July 3, 1917, Black residents in East St. Louis, Illinois, were attacked by a white mob. More than 300 homes and businesses were burned and the official death toll was thirty nine, although police estimates put it closer to 100.

Racial tensions flared during the winter of 1917. In 1910, East St. Louis, a small industrial city located across the river from St. Louis, had a Black population of 6,000. By 1917, the population had doubled. When white aluminum workers went on strike, the company hired a mix of Black and white strikebreakers, but the strikers targeted Black replacement workers and residents. In July, white men shot into Black homes from a Ford. Armed Black residents gathered to protect their neighborhood, and fired at a Ford car full of white men, who turned out to be police.

This incident sparked three days of rioting. White rioters burned down Black homes and business and attacked people as they fled the fires. They shot, hanged, and beat people. Families fled across the river to St. Louis, some escaping in homemade rafts. The following school year, Black enrollment fell by half, because many families were afraid to return. Twenty one people were eventually tried and convicted of crimes associated with the riot and a Congressional investigation was launched, but a true reckoning of the events of 1917 has yet to occur. Many murders went unpunished, no compensation was paid for the immense loss of property, and an accurate death toll has not been determined.

The East St. Louis race riots are an extreme example of the type of terrorism that was used to enforce segregation and racial oppression. While racial residential patterns in Northern, Midwestern and West Coast cities were established through real estate and banking policies and practices, they were maintained, in part, through acts of violence against those who dared to challenge the status quo.

Tim O'Neil, "Race Hatred, Workforce Tensions Explode in East St. Louis in 1917," St. Louis Post

Dispatch, July 2, 2021, https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/illinois/look-back-race-hatred-workforce-tensions-explode-in-east-st/article_9bfa1b5d-c627-5dc7-b1da-6d58993f3ecb.html.

Allison Keys, "The East St. Louis Race Riot Left Dozens Dead, Devastating a Community on the Rise," Smithsonian Magazine, June 30, 2017, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/east-st-louis-race-riot-left-dozens-dead-devastating-community-on-the-rise-180963885/.

By that time, more subtle and obscure policies had been implemented that helped enforce racially segregated residential patterns. In 1933, in the midst of the Great Depression when many were in jeopardy of losing their homes to foreclosure, the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) was established, and it redesigned housing finance market by introducing long-term, fixed-rate mortgages.[23] The HOLC created federal standards for how homes were to be appraised and how lending risk was determined. Because it was issuing a loan that would last for decades, the HOLC had to evaluate whether or not a home

would hold its value if the borrower defaulted on the loan and a bank had to assume ownership. A five stage, color-coded system was developed to assess lending risks in various neighborhoods and wards in cities across the country. Areas were ranked according to the average age of the housing, with new homes valued higher than older ones, and by the perceived stability of the neighborhood, which was based upon its racial, ethnic, and socio-economic demographics and its physical condition. The HOLC ascribed to the commonly held belief at the time that neighborhoods went through life cycles. Life cycle theorists asserted that newly built neighborhoods would slowly decline as housing aged and increasingly lower-income people moved in. Eventually, new immigrants or African Americans would occupy the area indicating that the area had reached its so-called final life stage Adherents to this idea assumed that higher-income, native born whites would no longer find such an area desirable, and, therefore, property values would decline precipitously.

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23. Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985)

The HOLC did not invent this theory, nor was it the first organization to use it to appraise housing; however, it systematized these ideas and spread them nationwide.[24] The result was the redlining of inner-city and African American neighborhoods. Red refers to the color that was assigned to the lowest ranked neighborhoods on HOLC maps, which were considered too risky to lend to. Redlining was not segregation, but it reinforced segregation by depriving African American homeowners of access to mortgage lending. Redlining also devalued the homes that Blacks owned and created the persistent association in real estate brokers', bankers', and white homeowners' minds that an influx of Black homeowners would lead to declining property values.

As more African Americans moved north and the ghetto communities grew overcrowded, people began to move into adjacent neighborhoods. A process known as blockbusting emerged in Chicago and other cities.[25] Real estate agents would rent or sell a few homes in an adjacent white neighborhood to Black families and spark a panic among their white neighbors. The ensuing panic would prompt whites to sell their homes at an artificially low price to enterprising real estate agents who would turn around and sell them at an inflated cost to Black middle class families looking to live in a more integrated setting. These practices and widespread racist attitudes virtually ensured that neighborhoods would remain tenuously integrated for short periods of time until they flipped entirely.

In contrast to economic opportunities that ethnic enclaves provide for some of their residents, living in a ghetto neighborhood is associated with a lack of wealth and economic power. A home located in a ghetto community is often valued lower than one of equal size and quality located in a white neighborhood. In addition to lower property values, Black homeowners also lacked access to traditional mortgage lending. As a result, many were forced into predatory forms of lending like contract buying, where a property owner sells a home at an inflated price in a rent-to-own scheme that could result in a loss of the property if the purchasing tenant fails to comply with the strict terms of the contract. Predatory forms of lending are associated with higher costs, high rates of foreclosure, and fraudulent lending terms. It is not just housing that costs more;

24. Ibid.
25. Massey and Denton, *American Apartheid*

residents of ghetto neighborhoods also pay higher prices for many other goods and services including food and clothing. This phenomenon is known as the ghetto or poverty tax.[26]

In addition to economic deprivation, ghetto residents also lack power. In the late 1960s, civil rights activists began to see parallels between their own political situation and struggles of anti-colonial movements in Africa and Asia. Many began to conceptualize ghettoization as a form of internal colonization.[27] Like a colonized nation, ghettoized communities had their situation imposed on them from an outside group. That group then administrated the institutions within their neighborhood without the input or consent of residents, those institutions then reflected the dominant groups' own values and cultural judgments, and racism played a key role in justifying the situation. The Black Power/Black Nationalist movements of the 1960s and 1970s fought for community control over neighborhood institutions like schools, social services, and the police.

Some of the key legal gains that civil rights groups made were state and federal Fair Housing Acts and fair lending laws, like the Community Reinvestment Act. These laws helped curb redlining and paved the way for racial integration. Levels of Black/white segregation have steadily declined nationwide since the 1970s and '80s.[28] However, incidences of housing and lending discrimination continue to persist. In addition, the median white household has 12 times the wealth as the median Black household in the U.S., due in part to the legacy of segregation and ghettoization.[29] This lack of wealth limits families' abilities to freely select the neighborhood they want to live in.

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26. Howard Jacob Karger, "The 'Poverty Tax' and America's Low-Income Households," *Families in Society: Journal of Contemporary Social Services,* 88, 3 (July, 2007): 413-17.

27. Robert Blauner, "Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt," *Social Problems,* 16, 4 (Spring 1969): 393-408.

28. John Iceland and Gregory Sharp, "White Residential Segregation in US Metropolitan Areas: Conceptual Issues, Patterns and Trends from the US Census 1980-2010," accessed on August 8, 2019, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3811941/.

29. Janelle Jones, "The Racial Wealth Gap," accessed on August 9, 2019, https://www.epi.org/blog/the-racial-wealth-gap-how-african-americans-have-been-shortchanged-out-of-the-materials-to-build-wealth/.

Measuring Black/White Segregation in U.S. Cities

The following table shows the Black/White dissimilarity index for 10 U.S. cities over time. Dissimilarity measures how evenly two populations are distributed across neighborhoods. A score of zero indicates perfect integration, while a score of one hundred means complete segregation. The higher the score, the greater the amount of segregation between the two groups.

	1980	1990	2000	2010
Chicago IL	90.6	87.4	85.2	82.5
New York, NY	82.8	83.5	83.2	81.4
Atlanta GA	79.6	81.3	81.6	74.1
Los Angeles CA	85	78.4	71.5	66.9
Portland OR	69.7	63.6	51.8	38.6

Dissimilarity measures only show the relationship between two racial or ethnic groups and are therefore limited. Exposure indices show how likely one group is to be surrounded by others from the same racial/ethnic group in their neighborhood. Exposure indices show the percentage, on average, that a neighborhood is made up of those from the same group. For example, an exposure index of 48 means that a white person lives in a neighborhood that is on average 48% white. This table shows the white exposure index for the cities listed above:

	1980	1990	2000	2010
Portland OR	88.4	85.4	77.8	74.4
Atlanta GA	76.5	75.6	72.7	67.5
New York, NY	78.2	72.7	65.4	62.4
Chicago IL	77.8	71.2	62	60.2
Los Angeles CA	72.4	64.8	57.2	54.9

Diversity and Disparities Project, Brown University, accessed July 7, 2021, https://s4.ad.brown.edu/projects/diversity/index.htm.

The process of ghettoization involves spatially confining or separating out a particular group within a population to further the social, economic and political stigmatization and racialization of that community. While this process in Venice during the 1500s looked different than it did in Detroit in the 1950s, there are some commonalities: the process was involuntary and the spatial separation was tied to the group's subjugation.[30] In all of these situations, there was always resistance, the ghetto was often quite permeable, and those who instituted or experienced segregation understood the historical connections to earlier ghettos. Examples of ghettos continue to exist around the world. From black townships in South Africa to the

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30. Wendy Z Goldman and William Trotter, "Conclusion: Common Themes and New Directions." in *The Ghetto in Global History 1500-present*, eds.Wendy Z. Goldman and Joe William Trotter (New York: Routledge, 2018), 93-109.

immigrant *banlieues* outside of Paris to the separation of Roma communities into "gypsy urban areas" in various European cities, new and recurring iterations of ghettoization continue to be an ominous presence in urban life.[31]

Multicultural cities

Cities are heterogeneous communities that have always drawn people from different backgrounds. Cities might reflect the multicultural nature of the nations they are part of or may attract migrants from other parts of the country or from around the globe. In our globalized world, people are more mobile than ever, and as a result, our cities are more multicultural. While segregation by race and ethnicity continue to persist, residents in multicultural cities often come in contact with people from different backgrounds. Even if an urbanite lives in an ethnic enclave, they will likely travel beyond their neighborhood's boundaries for work, school, or other activities. In addition, many ethnic enclaves are home to more than one cultural group, so people will intermingle with others in the public spaces of the neighborhood.

The term multiculturalism can refer to many different things. It can describe the demographics of a place, refer to a specific policy, or define a set of principles that guide decision-making. In its most robust form, a multicultural city will recognize, ensure the rights of, and provide resources to all of the racial and ethnic groups that call it home.[32] Each group will have the opportunity, the physical space, and the autonomy to continue to practice their culture and traditions. This model is very different from the assimilationist or 'melting pot" pressures that immigrants in the 20th century U.S. cities faced. In an assimilationist society, full rights and recognition are not granted until an individual adopts and conforms to the dominant culture's traditions.

While many 21st century cities have embraced some elements of multiculturalism, dominant cultural groups, regardless of whether they represent the majority of a city's residents, continue to play an outsized role in shaping urban spaces. In London, Paris, and New York, residents who are not white and native-

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31. Giovanni Picker, *Racial Cities: Governance and the Segregation of Romani People in Urban Europe.* (London: Routledge, 2017).

32. David H. Kaplan, *Navigating Ethnicity: Segregation, Placemaking, and Difference.* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018).

born get pushed to the geographic edges, and subsequently, the political, economic, and social margins of the city. During the Great Migration, African Americans were segregated into Harlem, a neighborhood in upper Manhattan. While deprived of economic and political opportunity, subject to poor housing, a lack of services, and discriminatory policing, Harlem fostered cultural, intellectual, and social movements. Today's new migrants to New York from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia are dispersed throughout the metropolitan area from the aging suburban communities on Long Island to nearby satellite cities, like Newark and Elizabeth, New Jersey. Their geographic location leaves then isolated from the center of urban life, and the lack of public spaces in the suburban communities where people settle makes it harder for new immigrants to organize, create, and influence the culture or politics of the city at large. When a community is dispersed and does not have a place of their own, it can be more difficult to gain political or cultural recognition.[33]

Occupying a central city neighborhood for a long time doesn't always guarantee a community access to opportunity, representation, or autonomy. In Redfern, which is located near central Sydney, Australia, there is an Aboriginal housing project known as the Block, which was established during the indigenous civil rights movement in the 1970s.[34] The Block was often stigmatized as a crime and addiction-ridden community, but in recent years, real estate investment has transformed the surrounding Redfern neighborhood, and the Block has been slated for redevelopment. The rhetoric used to attract investment to the community and the styles of housing that have been developed reinforce the colonial and white identity of the area, while downplaying its indigenous roots. The Victorian buildings in the area were viewed as a good investment because they had historic value. The historical values of these Victorian structures that represent the white and colonial histories of Sydney were seen as worthy of preservation, while the indigenous housing project that represented both the culture and the political struggles of the Aboriginal people was viewed as a blight on the community. The new developments in Redfern also reflected only its white cultural heritage. Loft-style apartments that evoked images of New York were built and marketed as part of the redevelopment push, once again emphasizing a white aesthetic, rather than the multicultural reality of inner Redfern.

While there are many developments that reflect the dominant cultures and classes within a city, communities

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33. Gareth Millington, *'Race', culture and the right to the city: Centres, peripheries and margins.* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
34. Wendy Shaw, *Cities of whiteness* (Antipode book series) (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

that have been traditionally marginalized and excluded from decision-making have fought to have a role in shaping the spaces of the city. Chattanooga, Tennessee, is a city that was built on land that was home to the Cherokee nation.[35] During the Trail of Tears forced relocation, Chattanooga served as an internment camp for Cherokee people. Enslaved African Americans also played a significant role in the developing the city. Despite these contributions, Native Americans and African Americans' stories were often missing from the city's official monuments.

The riverfront areas of downtown Chattanooga were recently redeveloped, and part of that revitalization included monuments that noted the multicultural history of the city[36]. Recognition of the Cherokee and African American communities' stories didn't necessarily translate into increased decision-making power or economic resources, and the impacts of the riverfront redevelopment threatened to displace African American communities adjacent to the downtown area. However, Chattanooga also has a long history of grassroots neighborhood involvement where residents joined across racial, religious, ethnic, and geographic lines to help shape the future of their city. There are numerous community-led efforts underway to curb displacement and create more affordable housing. The increased awareness of the multicultural histories of Chattanooga can help city officials become more receptive to the demands of these community-based development efforts.

Who uses the city?

Cities are polyglot communities that have been shaped by the contributions of residents who come from a variety of racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds. In a globalized society, cities have become even more complex and are now being reshaped to accommodate more than just their permanent inhabitants. Guido Martinotti identifies four populations that have a connection to, an interest in, or an impact on city life.[37] The first are the city's inhabitants, or its permanent residents. Next are commuters who work in the city, but live outside of it. The third group is urban users who live and work outside of the city, but they access it for its services, like shopping, entertainment, or dining out. Urban users may be visitors who stay for a few hours

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35. Courtney Elizabeth Knapp, *Constructing the dynamo of Dixie: Race, urban planning, and cosmopolitanism in Chattanooga, Tennessee,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018).

36. Ibid.

37. Guido Martinotti, *The New Social Morphology of Cities,* UNESCO/MOST conference paper, presented February, 1994.

or tourists who stay for days or weeks. Finally, metropolitan businesspeople access the commercial networks of a city. This includes convention goers, consultants, and professionals who visit with clients, colleagues, or potential business partners.

The city is increasingly oriented toward the short-term users of the city.[38] Although these temporary populations are not able to participate in the political decision-making, their economic influence shapes many land-use and development decisions. Metropolitan businesspeople bring economic benefits to the city, so many municipalities will invest public money into convention centers, hotels or airports to attract and serve this economically influential group. In a globalized economy, cities often compete for businesses and investment dollars. While the permanent residents of a city might not use the convention center their tax dollars pay for, many elected officials believe that investing in business-oriented infrastructure will eventually pay off. However, permanent residents might resent having to pay for infrastructure that does not meet their needs, especially if urban services are underfunded as a result of that investment.

According to John Urry, there are four ways in which the various urban users consume elements of the city.[39] First, cities have become centers of consumption as urban economies have shifted to providing services, rather than producing goods. Second, the image of a city is consumed by various users and designed to appeal to different groups of people. Third, well-known destinations and sites in a city can become overused and literally consumed by throngs of visitors. Finally, one's identity can become associated with particular aspects of a place.

Barcelona, like many popular tourist destinations, has seen its share of conflicts between visitors and inhabitants. After a well-publicized incident where nude, male tourists ran through the streets and photographed themselves, residents began to organize against the negative impacts of tourism.[40] Despite the fact that the city's economy is tourism-dependent, residents were fed up with the ways in which tourist infrastructure negatively impacts permanent residents. Residents in the central parts of the city launched a campaign against the all-night noise that emanated from the bars and clubs that are clustered in their

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38. Ibid.
39. John Urry, *Consuming places* (International library of sociology). (London ; New York: Routledge, 1995)
40. Jonathan Rolleau, "Every (nocturnal) tourist leaves a trace: Urban tourism, nighttime landscape and public places in Ciutat Vella, Barcelona," *Imaginations Journal,* 7, 2 (2017) 58-71.

neighborhood. They hung signs from their balconies declaring their right to sleep, and a few have even thrown eggs at all-night partiers.[41]

Although Barcelona has become a popular tourist destination, the spaces of the city that tourists enjoy are not solely designed for them or consumed by them.[42] The city initially began revitalizing its buildings and public spaces after the fall of Franco, Spain's fascist dictator. Investment in the streets and public spaces helped reinvigorate a civic and cultural life that had been repressed by the dictatorship. Hosting the Olympic Games brought global attention to Barcelona. Part of its attraction was the city's unique culture. Therefore, some of the popular tourist spots are still frequented by locals, and consuming those spaces alongside locals has become part of tourist experience, which is tied to experiencing the unique culture of Catalonia. Inevitably, these shared spaces may have different uses for different groups leading to conflicts over noise and nightlife.

Another popular global tourist destination that is the site of conflict between visitors and residents is Venice, Italy. Venice has only 50,000 permanent residents, but receives more than 20 million visitors each year.[43] Many visitors arrive on cruise ships and flood the city streets, canals and famous squares. Most residents no longer venture into the central city, which has become crowded with a constant stream of visitors, and Venetians have been pushed out into neighborhoods on the edge of town. The absence of permanent residents in the city center has ironically produced a Venice that is devoid of Venetians. The city has become what French theorist Jean Baudrillard termed a "simulacrum."[44] A simulacrum is an imitation of a real item or experience that is devoid of its true essence. Venice is an extreme example of what happens when the needs of one of the populations that use a city overwhelms another.

41. Monica Degen, "Barcelona's Games: The Olympics, Urban Design, and Global Tourism," in *Tourism Mobilities places to play, places in play*, eds. Mimi Sheller and John Urry, (London ; New York: Routledge, 2004) 131-142.

42. Ibid.

43. Jason Horowitz, "Venice, Being invaded by Tourists, Risks Becoming the 'Disneyland by the Sea.'" *New York Times,* August 2, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/02/world/europe/venice-italy-tourist-invasion.html.

44. The University of Chicago, Theories of Media Glossary, "simulation, simulacrum" entries, accessed on January 10, 2017, http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/simulationsimulacrum.htm.

Welcome to Reykjavik Where the Tourists Outnumber the Locals

Tourism is booming in Iceland. The northern island nation is known for its stunning natural landscape. In 2019, this nation of just 330,000 saw 2.3 million visitors. Tourism now brings in a larger share of revenue than fishing, one of the nation's biggest industries.

The tourist boom is a relatively recent phenomenon in Iceland. It was fueled by the steep currency devaluation that resulted from the 2008 economic crash, which made it a cheap place to visit. Iceland Air began promoting layover vacations, which helped fuel the tourist boom. Internet tourist companies have made it easy to book a trip, and social media posts have popularized some of Iceland's natural wonders, making it the latest global tourist fad.

But tourism brings challenges. The government limited short-term rentals in Reykjavik because housing was becoming unaffordable to the locals. If the value of currency rises, it could make tourism more expensive. If the tourist boom goes bust, jobs could be lost.

Tourists consume a place, and tourist companies market that place as their product. This raises questions of authenticity. The Blue Pool hot springs is one of the most popular social media images of Iceland. It has become overrun with tourists. Strangely enough, this pristine-looking mineral springs is actually a wastewater pool from a geothermal plant.

Not only do tourists consume inauthentic versions of a place, but they also produce places. Reykjavik has seen a restaurant, bar and coffee shop boom, much of it catering to visitors. While Icelanders may mourn the loss of their once sleepy city, many also appreciate the cultural as well as the economic benefits of the boom. Iceland has a homogeneous population, so the influx of global travelers is welcomed by many. Even if those visitors are an inauthentic representation of their native countries and cultures.

Chris Baraniuk, "The Country that Tourism has Taken by Surprise," BBC, February 21, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20170222-the-country-that-tourism-has-taken-by-surprise.

Kyle Chayka, "My Own Private Iceland," Vox, October 21, 2019

The tourist experience doesn't simply involve a visitor's consumption of a historic site or monument. It is a complex interplay of objects and meaning that is constructed by both tourists and locals alike.[45] Visitors interact with places or objects that are imbued with meaning that is assigned by the tourist's own perceptions, experiences, and emotions. Part of the tourist experience is consuming the culture of a place, which means locals play a role in presenting their everyday lives to people outside of their community. Places frequented by tourists can be thought of as a stage where the culture of a place is performed by locals who may present a version of themselves that is quite different from how they live offstage. Venice's central city can be thought of as the staged version of Venetian life, while the farther-flung neighborhoods not frequented by most tourists are the sites of everyday Venetian culture. The front stage/backstage binary doesn't fully capture the diversity of tourists' experiences. Some visitors seek out places and experiences that are off the beaten path and are perceived to be more authentic representations of local life. In addition, locals may welcome visitors into the more intimate spaces of their lives. For example, study abroad programs that involve homestays or vacation rentals in residential neighborhoods might provide a more backstage perspective on local culture and life.

The cultural economy and cultural belonging

As cities' economies have shifted from manufacturing to service-based industries, culture has played an increasingly important role in the urban life. References to cultural industries usually evoke images of art museums and opera houses, but the cultural or symbolic economy refers to service-based industries that market an experience or image, such as tourism, entertainment, restaurants, and fashion. [46] Sharon Zukin argues that the symbolic economy does not behave like a typical economic sector; instead, the proliferation of these types of services transform places, our images of those places, and how people use or are denied access to those places. There are three key ways in which the symbolic economy reshapes cities and produces specific types of investment and development. The images that are used to market cities and their neighborhoods influence the types of development that occur, the development and design of specific buildings and neighborhoods

45. Jane Lovell and Chris Bull, *Authentic and Inauthentic Places in Tourism : From Heritage Sites to Theme Parks* (First ed., Contemporary Geographies of Leisure, Tourism and Mobility). (London: Taylor and Francis, 2017)
46. Sharon Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities.* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).

can, in turn, change how investors think about a particular block or area, and investments in more large-scale, traditional cultural institutions like museums can spark private development.

In the early 2000s, the city of Berlin launched a marketing campaign that highlighted its multi-cultural, alternative and creative identity. [47] The abundance of cheap, abandoned spaces throughout the city had long attracted marginalized groups who adapted them to meet their communities' needs. Autonomous social movements created free living spaces, counter-cultural art and music venues, community gardens, and alternative social services. In addition to the lively subcultural scene, the city has attracted immigrants from around the world. However, Berlin has a tumultuous history. It was the capital of Nazi Germany, and for decades the wall that divided East Berlin from West was the frontline of the Cold War.

During the 2000s, the city marketed its vibrant subcultural spaces and multicultural neighborhoods to attract tourists and investment. It also acknowledged the sinister elements of its past by creating a downtown "memory district" that includes the memorials that honor the victims of the Holocaust and museums that wrestle with elements of the city's Nazi past.[48] While these new representations of the city may have been more inclusive, they risk threatening the survival of the same marginalized communities they celebrate. As tourists flock to immigrant neighborhoods and entrepreneurs develop abandoned buildings, real estate prices rise and counter-cultural squatters, low-income families, and local businesses get priced out.

Being priced out has become a ubiquitous part of urban life as cities around the world face gentrification pressures. The process of gentrification can change a neighborhood's cultural identity. As neighborhoods gentrify, real estate values rise, rents increase, and lower-income people and businesses become displaced and replaced by those who can afford to purchase a more expensive home or lease a pricey storefront. Gentrification also implies racial turnover, since Black, Latino, and immigrant neighborhoods have been systematically undervalued in U.S. cities, and residents have been denied opportunities to own homes or businesses, which make them more vulnerable to getting priced out during real estate market swings.

Gentrification happens in stages. In the initial stage, artists, musicians, and other non-neighborhood residents looking for cheap housing move into the community. During this phase, many in-movers view the

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47. Claire Colomb, *Staging the New Berlin: Place Marketing and the Politics of Urban Reinvention Post 1989*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2012)

48. Ibid, p. 250.

cultural or economic makeup of the gentrifying community as an asset. [49] However, as real estate values accelerate and increasingly wealthier groups purchase homes and open businesses in gentrifying areas, cultural diversity becomes a consumer amenity, rather than a social or political value. For example, the Southtown neighborhoods near downtown San Antonio were predominantly Latino communities that became gentrified. In the early stages, these neighborhoods attracted white residents who were drawn to the cheap historic housing. These initial gentrifiers remodeled their homes themselves, which contributed to the community's offbeat and alternative vibe. The funky homes coupled with the rich tradition of Latino mural art that depicted local civil rights struggles eventually attracted visitors and tourists. As new shops emerged, including galleries that showcased local Latino artists, cultural diversity became commodified. Those who visited the neighborhood experienced its diversity though their consumption patterns, rather than by interacting cross-culturally with their neighbors as they went about their daily lives or working together on pressing issues. In later stages of gentrification, a publicly funded arts complex and arts festivals were established. These investments not only attract more tourists and visitors to the community, but they also help generate further development, which leads to more displacement. Cultural diversity becomes a once-a-month or once-a-year event that can be experienced for a few hours as part of the larger cosmopolitan fabric of the city completely stripped of its political and historical meaning.

A concept closely tied to the commodification of cultural diversity is authenticity. Sharon Zukin writes that our ideas about what an authentic urban neighborhood is are rooted in activists and media representations of ethnic enclaves in the late 1950s and early 1960s. [50] The idealized urban neighborhood is close-knit, full of long-term residents and local businesses. It's an urban village with a vibrant street life. This image of authenticity can be used to inspire redevelopment, which displaces the low-income communities whose neighborhoods inspired this idealized image in the first place.

This happened in Harlem, where the neighborhood was marketed as undergoing a "new Harlem Renaissance," which attracted both Black and white middle and upper class gentrifiers. The Harlem

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49. Miguel De Oliver, "Gentrification as the appropriation of therapeutic 'diversity': A model and case study of the multicultural amenity of contemporary urban renewal." *Urban Studies*, 53, 6 (2016) 1299-1316.

50. Sharon Zukin, "Changing Landscapes of Power-Opulence and the Urge for Authenticity", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* 33,2 (2009) 543-53.

Renaissance refers to the neighborhood's early 20th century rich literary and artistic history. The images of the neighborhood used to sell real estate highlighted these Harlem Renaissance writers and artists, but neglected to showcase the poverty, substandard housing and other indignities that were also part of the community's segregated history. Zukin notes that authenticity can also be used to prevent displacement. In Red Hook, Brooklyn, food writers rallied to support Latino vendors who sold food in the neighborhood's parks and were threatened with eviction. Food critics had highlighted the quality and authenticity of their products, which raised the profile of the vendors and helped prevent their displacement.

Authenticity plays a key role in the process of gentrification. Part of the allure that draws the often young, middle class gentrifiers to inner-city neighborhoods is their nostalgic yearning to connect with the more hardscrabble past of these communities.[51] Alienated by a service and knowledge-based economy, some urban residents seek out connections to the industrial roots of the city. Many gentrified spaces are a mixture of old and new. The industrial pasts of these neighborhoods is preserved in the architecture as it becomes repurposed and redeveloped. For example, old factories or mills become upscale apartments, shops, or lofts. Their industrial exteriors are preserved as the interiors are modernized for residential, office, or commercial use.

The historic preservation of elements of a neighborhood's past provide a form of "staged authenticity."[52] From the aged brick of a former factory to the vibrant murals of a former ethnic enclave or ghetto, the elements of the old that remain in gentrified areas lend an aura of authenticity to visitors and tourists even though a company or community that formerly occupied that space may have closed, moved or been displaced somewhere else.

The perception of authenticity is a judgment that's made by outsiders.[53] Residents of an area do not think of their neighborhood as an authentic or inauthentic representation of their community. It is tourists who associate a specific building, park, square, or neighborhood with an element of its past. Visitors might look for objects or products that signify that a place is authentic. But tourists are not the only users of a city that make judgments about the authenticity of a place.

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51. Lovell & Bull, *Authentic and Inauthentic*

52. Dean MacCannell, "Staged authenticity: Arrangements of social space in tourist settings," *The American Journal of Sociology,* 79, 3 (November, 1973) 589–603

53. Lovell and Bull, *Authentic and Inauthentic*

The term hipster has been used to describe young urbanites who seek to differentiate themselves from mainstream culture though the consumer choices they make and their taste for more obscure trends within popular culture.[54] Hipster urbanites may seek out places across the city that are deemed authentic, because they offer distinct products or services. Rather than the "staged authentic" elements of a place, hipsters search for the backstage places that are not marketed to outsiders. As a restaurant or independent shop becomes popularized it may be deemed inauthentic as more visitors and outsiders begin to frequent it. In addition to specific shops or places, hipsters are often viewed as consuming entire neighborhoods through the gentrification process. While gentrification entails residential turnover and displacement, it also involves the commercial sector. When hipsters move into a neighborhood, shops, bars, cafes, and restaurants open that cater to their distinct tastes, which differ from their lower-income neighbors. These newcomers have more spending power and capital than their neighbors do, which can result in the rapid gentrification of the commercial spaces of the neighborhood.

Summary

Although cities are heterogeneous places, some neighborhoods may be culturally homogenous. Ethnic enclaves are areas where immigrant groups have settled and created businesses and institutions that provide cultural and social support. Enclave communities may evolve as immigrants become more assimilated and residentially dispersed. Unlike ethnic enclaves, ghettoization is the involuntary separation of a racial, ethnic or religious group that results in oppression and subjugation. African Americans were ghettoized in cities across the U.S. This spatial segregation led to unequal opportunities within many sectors of life, including housing, education, criminal justice, health, and wealth-building. Ghettoization also creates a strong collective identity and unintentionally facilitates resistance struggles.

Multiculturalism recognizes and celebrates cultural differences. Rather than expecting people to assimilate to the dominant culture, a multicultural society finds commonality in sharing places, values, and institutions,

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54. Ico Maly, and Piia Varis, "The 21st-century hipster: On micro-populations in times of superdiversity," *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 19, 6 (2016) 637-653.

rather than a particular way of life. However, cities are not just influenced by the people who live there. Commuters, visitors, tourists, and businesspeople also shape the design and development of cities.

Cities are spaces of consumption. Tourism can overwhelm a city, causing conflicts between locals and visitors. The symbolic economy produces images of the city that influence the urban development. The quest for authenticity can be a tool of gentrification or a means of resisting displacement.

Test your Urban Literacy:

Think about how the concepts in this chapter apply to your own city

1. Compare and contrast ethnic enclaves with ghetto neighborhoods. Identify a neighborhood in your city that served either as an ethnic enclave or ghettoized area at some point in its history. Describe what that neighborhood is like today.
2. Explain the relationship between residential segregation and economic and political subjugation.
3. What is multiculturalism? Would you consider your city to be a multicultural city? Why or why not?
4. What are Martinotti's four user groups that access the city? How does your city accommodate these different categories of people? Identify places or activities in your city that are associated with each of these user groups.
5. If you were to welcome visitors to your city, where would you take them to show them the authentic city?
6. Define the symbolic economy. Provide at least two examples of how the symbolic economy has impacted development in your city.

Learn to read the city around you:

Apply what you've learned in this chapter by completing a hands-on activity in your own city

1. ***Create an exhibit that shows the key points in the history of an ethnic enclave:*** Identify a neighborhood in your city that has been associated with a particular ethnic group or with multiple ethnic groups. Research the history of that community and the role it played in the lives of its residents. Create an exhibit that shows how the neighborhood changed over time and highlights some of the key events, people, and institutions that shaped the community.

2. ***Develop a tour guide to both the front and backstage of an aspect of your city:*** Organize a day long tour of some aspect of your city. You can focus on a particular neighborhood or subculture, or organize your tour around a specific theme, like public transit or parks. One half of your tour should highlight the frontstage of your section of the city or the typical tourist or visitor attractions. The other half should focus on the city's backstage or where the locals frequent. Create an itinerary of places you will visit and develop a pamphlet, self-guided tour map, or a short video of your front/backstage tour.

3. ***Conduct an opportunity analysis of two neighborhood:*** Choose two neighborhoods in your city that are home to different racial or ethnic groups. Find as much data as you can about different social indicators, like income levels, educational attainment, housing values, health status, transportation, air quality, and so on. Present your findings in tables or graphic form. Include a written analysis that considers the potential role that place plays in fostering inequality.

4. ***Curate a street art photo essay:*** Take photographs of graffiti, wheat pastes, stickers,

murals, or other types of street art. Curate a photo essay that has a theme or narrative arc and contains at least 10 photographs. Let the photographs tell most of the story, although each visual should be accompanied by text. Try to limit the amount of text to no more than 1-2 paragraphs per image. Your essay should have a title and a clear structure to it, with a beginning, middle and end. You may include a few written introductory or concluding paragraphs that are not accompanied by images to help tell the story.

5. ***Analyze local ads that are aimed at short-term city users:*** Collect advertisements from local travel associations, convention centers, hotels, shopping districts, or stores that are aimed at short-term visitors or tourists in your city. Analyze the images and language that is used to describe your city. How is the city represented in these ads? Consider how that representation impacts the various users of the city and how it might affect development. Write an analytical essay that summarizes your findings.

6. ***Compile a linguistic dictionary for your city:*** Create a dictionary of words that are unique to your locale. You can include words that are regionally distinct, those that are used to describe local places, phenomena, foods, and so on. You should also include local slang. Combine your entries with those of other students in the class to create a comprehensive dictionary for your city.

7. ***Research a culturally significant building:*** Identify a building in your city that has cultural significance to a particular community. Do some research to find out the history of this building and to identify the role it has played within the community and the wider city. Share what you find with your classmates.

8. ***Assemble a top 10 list of local artists:*** Create a top 10 list of books, poems, artwork, songs, albums, sculptures, or movies by local artists. You may concentrate on one particular arts genre (i.e. film) or you may create a list that covers multiple genres. Your list should be written for an audience that is unfamiliar with your city. The list should not simply include your favorite songs by local artists, but rather, it should provide the audience with a comprehensive understanding of the culture of your city.

6.

HOUSING

In this chapter, we will explore some of the key housing problems facing cities today. We begin by identifying the different ways that housing can be produced and distributed. Next, we'll discuss how housing markets operate and consider the housing affordability problem. Then, we will examine the issue of homelessness. We define it, explore its causes, and introduce some possible solutions.

Housing Tenure Sectors

Housing tenure sectors are broad categories that classify the ways in which housing is produced and distributed

in a society.[1] Housing can be privately constructed by individuals, groups, for-profit or nonprofit companies, or it can be publicly built by the government or by a quasi-governmental agency, such as a housing authority. The public and private tenure sectors are further differentiated by how housing is acquired by a prospective resident. Housing can either be purchased or leased on the open market, or a prospective resident can meet non-market qualifications to obtain their housing, like having an income below a certain threshold or holding a specific status or position, such as being a member of the military, a student, or having a disability. The "non-market" descriptor is a little misleading, since most occupants of this type of housing still pay to live in their residence.

When these descriptors are combined, they result in three main housing tenure sectors: private sector/market-based, public sector/non-market-based, and private sector/non-market-based.[2] The public sector does not produce housing for profit, therefore there is no public sector/market-based form of tenure. There are many variations within each of these general sectors. One major distinction within a sector is an individual's relationship to their housing. The two main types of individual housing tenure status are homeownership and rental. For example, Habitat for Humanity, a nonprofit organization in the United States, is part of the private, non-market-based housing sector. They sell homes to low-income families who are below a certain income threshold and contribute 300 hours of sweat equity helping to construct Habitat homes.[3] The qualifying family will be responsible for paying the mortgage on their Habitat-built home and will own the property, meaning they can pass it down to their heirs or sell it, if they choose. Not all residents living in privately-built, non-market based housing own their homes. Many are renters.

1. John Emmeus Davis, "Tenure Sectors," in *The Encyclopedia of Housing*, ed. Andrew T. Carswell (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2012) 742-744.
2. Ibid.
3. Portland Metro East Habitat for Humanity, accessed May 12, 2020, https://habitatportlandmetro.org/programs/homeownership/qualify-and-apply/.

Housing Tenure Sectors

	Market-Based (Purchased or leased on the open market)	Non-Market-Based (Need to meet qualifications in order to purchase or lease)
Private Sector (Individuals, companies, or non-profits produce housing)	X	X
Public Sector (Government or quasi-governmental agency produces housing)	N/A	X

In the United States, 90% of housing is market-based and privately constructed.[4] The remaining 10% is non-market-based and publicly or privately built. This includes public, nonprofit, and military housing. There are 1.1 million units of public housing, which were federally funded but were built and are managed by 3,000 local housing authorities. To qualify to live in public housing, an applicant must make less than 80% of the median income for their area, and 40% of public housing units are set aside for the lowest-income residents, those making less than 30% of the median income. Local housing authorities can also add other preferences for their buildings, such as being elderly, disabled, or a veteran. The U.S. public housing program began in 1937 and continued to expand the number of units it built and managed up through the 1980s, reaching a peak of 1.4 million units in 1994.[5] Public ownership and management of housing fell out of favor during the 1980s and was replaced by policies that favored the private/non-market and private/market-based sectors, like the Section 8 vouchers, which low-income residents can use to subsidize the cost of their private-market rental housing.

Not all countries are as heavily skewed toward private, market-based sector. In Singapore, 90% of residents live in public sector housing.[6] This highly developed public housing sector was established after Singapore became independent from the British. When the city-state gained self-rule in the 1950s and independence in 1965, it embarked on an ambitious housing development program aimed at improving the living conditions of its residents, many of whom were living in substandard, self-built dwellings. Providing affordable and safe housing became a cornerstone policy for the People's Action Party, which has ruled the country since 1959. It is politically unthinkable in Singapore to oppose the goal of universal housing.

Much of the land in Singapore is state-owned, which makes it easier to plan and implement a universal

4. Emmeus Davis, "Tenure Sectors"

5. Alex F Schwartz, *Housing Policy in the United States, Second Edition,* (Routledge: New York and London, 2010).

6. Beng Huat Chua and Meisen Wong, "No one left homeless: Universal provision of housing in Singapore," in *Housing Policy, Wellbeing and Social Development in Asia. Routledge Studies in International Real Estate*, eds. Rebecca Lai Har Chiu, and Seong-Kyu Ha (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2018) 106-123.

housing program.[7] The Housing and Development Board (HDB), which constructs the mostly high-rise modern apartment units, began selling housing to qualified Singaporeans in 1964. All working citizens contribute a mandatory percentage of their income to an employer-matched, tax-exempt account called the Central Provident Fund. This is their retirement savings account. When a Singaporean purchases a unit from the HDB, the monthly mortgage payment is deducted from their retirement account, which means that they effectively maintain their same level of take-home pay. However, to qualify to purchase a home, the household must show that they can afford the cost and still save for retirement. Over time, the HDB has created additional programs to increase access to housing. One grant provides low-income families with enough money to cover up to 75% of the purchase price. Another pays a bonus into the retirement account of elders who downsize and move into a smaller unit once they are no longer working. As a result of these housing policies, 80% of Singaporeans who acquire their housing through the public sector own their unit.

The public sector housing program allows the Singaporean government to control housing prices and keep them affordable, which in turn, keeps wages relatively low.[8] Since housing costs do not reduce take-home pay, companies, many of which are also state-owned, can pay workers less, which makes them competitive in the global market. In addition, housing policies incentivize workers to find and maintain steady jobs and to increase their levels of personal savings.

As seen in the case of Singapore, providing large-scale access to housing can have an impact on broader economic policy. Universal housing policy with an emphasis on homeownership in Singapore redefined workers' relationship to employment and increased the nation's competitiveness in the global marketplace. In the U.S., federal policies began encouraging homeownership in the 1930s and '40s.[9] As a result of these policies, the U.S. transitioned from being a majority renter population in the 1940s to becoming a majority homeowner society in the 1960s. For individuals, homeownership is one of the largest sources of personal wealth.[10] Wealth refers to the total assets that a household owns (for example, a home, stocks, or a business)

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7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Schwartz, *Housing Policy*

10. Pew Research Center, "Income and Wealth by Income Tier," accessed May 13, 2020, https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/08/22/chapter-7-income-and-wealth-by-income-tier/.

minus the debt they owe. For middle and lower-income households in the U.S., buying a home is the most common way of accumulating wealth, while upper-income households are more likely to gain wealth by purchasing stocks or owning a business. Your home or other forms of wealth can be sold or borrowed against to gained additional money for unexpected expenses or to get capital to open a business, purchase another house, make home improvements, or fund a family member's education. In addition, the housing market plays a critical role in the U.S. economy. Housing makes up more than 20 percent of the gross domestic product in the U.S.[11]

In the U.S., homeownership is associated with independence, security, and freedom. Homeowners can make changes to their unit without having to seek out a landlord's permission. They also have some protection against rising housing costs, especially if they have a fixed-rate mortgage where payments are guaranteed to remain the same throughout the life of the loan. Homeowners have more security, since they can't be evicted or have a lease terminated due to landlord turnover. However, owning a home also comes with responsibility and additional costs. Repairs, maintenance, property taxes, and bills can make homeownership more burdensome for people who with low or fixed incomes. Owning a home also keeps you tied to place, and it can be more difficult to make sudden, necessary moves.

Additionally, not all communities have equal access to homeownership opportunities. Historically, the U.S. housing market was characterized by segregation and discrimination. Both this legacy of discriminatory housing policies and the persistence of bias in the real estate industry have led to wide racial gaps in the homeownership rates. In 2020, 73.7% of white households owned their own home, while only 44% of black households, 48.9% of Latino households, and 59.1% of Asian/Pacific Islander households were homeowners.[12] The lack of access to homeownership, which is the most accessible way to build wealth in U.S. society, has led to a pernicious racial wealth gap. The median white household owns more than 10 times what the median

11. Schwartz, *Housing Policy,* 41.

12. U.S. Census Bureau, April 28, 2020, Quarterly Residential Vacancies and Homeownership, First Quarter 2020, https://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/files/currenthvspress.pdf.

black household does and nearly seven times what the median Latino household owns.[13] When last measured, in 2000, the median wealth for white families was fifteen times that of Native American households.

While the wealth gap in Germany is high by European standards, wealth is far less concentrated there than it is the U.S. Although Germany also has one of the lowest homeownership rates in Europe, its relatively large wealth gap is not attributed to housing policies. Instead, the growth of single person households, changing labor conditions and the resulting income gaps helps fuel inequality.[14] Germany also lacks a wealth tax and is home to many medium-sized corporations that accumulate large sums of money, which is used to reinvest in the company.[15]

The low rates of homeownership in Germany are not viewed as problematic. In large German cities, more than 75% of residents are renters.[16] In 1971, Germany instituted strict tenant protections.[17] Landlords can only evict tenants with cause, and they must provide three months' notice. The Rent Regulations Act limits how much landlords can increase an existing tenant's rent each year. Many tenants live in buildings that are cooperatively owned or managed, rather than run by a private owner. As a result of these strong tenant protections, renting isn't stigmatized in Germany. Many Germans prefer the flexibility that renting provides and associate homeownership with having children and a long-term career. Homeownership is not viewed as a means to generate wealth, nor is it necessarily seen as a step up from renting.

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13. Kimberly Amadeo, "Racial Wealth Gap in the United States: Is there a way to close it and fill the divide?" accessed May 19, 2020, https://www.thebalance.com/racial-wealth-gap-in-united-states-4169678.

14. OECD, "Growing Unequal? Income distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries," accessed May 19, 2020, http://www.oecd.org/germany/41525346.pdf.

15. Florian Diekmann,, "A Look at Germany's Extremely Unequal Wealth Distribution," *Der Spiegel,* Jan 26, 2018, https://www.spiegel.de/international/business/inquality-and-wealth-distribution-in-germany-a-1190050.html,

16. Anna Granath Hansson, "City Strategies for Affordable Housing: The Approaches of Berlin, Hamburg, Stockholm, and Gothenburg," *International Journal of Housing Policy: Special Issue: Housing Affordability and Affordable Housing.* 19, 1 (2019): 95-119.

17. Marja Elsinga, *Home Ownership beyond Asset and Security Perceptions of Housing Related Security and Insecurity in Eight European Countries. Housing and Urban Policy Studies; 32.* (Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2007).

Cooperative Housing

Cooperatives (co-ops) are housing that is collectively owned. Housing co-ops are often multi-family buildings, but the model can also be applied to individuals who live together in a single family home. Members of a co-op purchase a share in the building, rather than just their own individual unit. Co-op members make collective decisions about how their building is managed and maintained. In large co-ops this might entail electing a board. In smaller buildings, residents might all share the responsibility for running the building.

Cooperatives are more popular in European countries than in North America. In Scandinavia, nearly a quarter of housing units are cooperatively owned. In the United States, only 1% of households live in co-ops. They are most popular in New York.

Some cooperatives are limited-equity co-ops, which means the amount of profit a member can make by selling their share is capped. By limiting the resale price, the co-op stays permanently affordable.

Hilary Silver, "Cooperative Housing," in The Encyclopedia of Housing, 2nd edition, ed. Andrew T. Carswell, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012) 102-107.

Steven Soifer, "Limited Equity Cooperatives," in The Encyclopedia of Housing, 2nd edition, ed. Andrew T. Carswell, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012) 426-427.

While renting and homeownership in either the public or private sectors are the predominant types of housing tenure in cities in Europe and North America, in much of the rest of the world, a sizable portion of homes are self-built on land that is occupied by squatters. Squatting means taking possession of an unoccupied

building or piece of land without the owner's permission for long-term use.[18] It is estimated that there may be up to one billion squatters worldwide. In the cities in the Global South, the typical squatter builds their own home on a piece of land that they have occupied with other families. These squatted neighborhoods are often referred to as "informal settlements." You read about some of the challenges these communities face in Chapter Two. In the cities of the Global North, squatters are more likely to occupy abandoned buildings, which they sometimes rehabilitate to make more livable. Squatting in many European cities is associated with autonomous political movements where squats not only provide housing, but also nurture alternative ways of living and served as sites of political resistance.

Regardless of the form squatting takes, it is driven by a lack of access to housing.[19] In other words, it is a result of the failure of the private market and the government to provide an adequate and affordable supply of safe, habitable housing. People squat because they have no viable alternative to securing housing. Squatting is a way of making do.

Squatting can also be thought of as a process.[20] When squatters first occupy a plot of land or a building, they usually construct a simple, temporary shelter or make minimal repairs, because their situation is tenuous. As time goes on, squatters will improve the space, and makeshift housing will be replaced by more permanent structures. As the inhabitants are able to save more money, they may build additional rooms or add a second story to their home. Over the long term, families might add a separate wing for their adult children and their families. A study of informal settlements in Bogotá, Colombia, and Mexico City found that 30 years after these neighborhoods were initially squatted, 80% of the homes were occupied by the original builders or their children, and structures had been added to and improved. [21] This process of making home improvements over time is often associated with informal neighborhoods in the Global South, but the same process plays out in squatted buildings and communities in North American and European cities too. Dignity Village, a tiny home community located near the airport in Portland, Oregon, was initially established in 2000 as a roving tent city.

18. Alexamder Vasudevan, "The makeshift city," *Progress in Human Geography*, 39, 3 (2015) 338–359.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Peter M. Ward, "Housing Rehab for Consolidated Informal Settlements: A New Policy Agenda for 2016 UN-Habitat II,." *Habitat International* 50 (2015): 373-84.

A group of homeless Portlanders pitched tents on a piece of publicly owned land under a bridge downtown and called their community Camp Dignity.[22] When they got evicted, they moved their homes and belongings to another piece of public land. After a number of moves, the city agreed to provide the roving tent city with a semi-permanent space on city-owned land near the airport. The community pitched their tents and started construction on individual tiny homes. Today, the village provides homes to 60 people, and it has communal gardens, a shared kitchen building, showers, and workspaces for microbusinesses.

In addition to transitioning from temporary to more permanent structures, over time, squatters may also gain more security and access to infrastructure and services over time. The process of making public investments and bringing infrastructure and services to informal communities is known as upgrading. The first upgrading programs started in Latin America and spread around the globe in the 1960s and 1970s.[23] In Indonesia, the Kampung Improvement Program was launched in Jakarta in 1969. In its first five years, the city was able to build roads, extend water, sewage and waste pick up, and provide health and education services to 1.2 million people living in informal settlements, and it cost only $13 per person. [24] Upgrading initiatives may also include granting title to squatters, especially if the land they built on is publicly owned. In New York City in the 1970s and 1980s, a homesteading movement emerged in the South Bronx and on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.[25] The city was in a major fiscal crisis; it was losing population to suburbanization, and housing abandonment was a serious issue in low-income neighborhoods. Neighbors organized takeovers of empty tenement buildings and began fixing them up. Eventually, the city launched a homesteading program that granted squatters titles to the buildings they occupied and provided money to buy materials to make repairs. In the Lower East Side, more than 30 buildings were homesteaded and turned into low-income housing cooperatives until federal funding for the program was cut.

22. Dignity Village, "Origins," accessed December 19. 2020, https://dignityvillage.org/history/origins/.

23. Jakub Galuszka, "Housing provision and improvement programmes for low income populations in the developing world. A review of approaches and their significance in the European context," *Bulletin of Geography*, 18, 18 (2012) 29–38

24. Dodo Julliman, "The World's First Slum Upgrading Programme," UN Habitat, June, 2006, https://mirror.unhabitat.org/cdrom/docs/WUF7.pdf.

25. Clayton Patterson, *Resistance: A Radical Social and Political History of the Lower East Side,* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2007).

Squatting can also be thought of as both a result of and a response to urban precarity.[26] Precarity is a term used to describe the tenuous economic and social conditions that exist in 21st century capitalist nations. As workers are increasingly employed in the gig economy and other temporary arrangements, their ability to find and maintain stable housing is jeopardized. Squatting can be seen as a viable alternative to having to make expensive housing payments each month, so it is a result of the increasing precariousness of urban life. Squatting is also a response to precarity. Squatting often involves groups of people working together to create solutions to their situation. Whether it's an informal neighborhood or an urban homestead, the act of collectively producing shelter challenges the individualist isolation and the precariousness of modern urban life.

Housing Markets and Shortages

In countries like the United States, where the bulk of housing is produced and distributed in the private market, the cost to rent or purchase a home is affected by the dynamics of supply and demand. Only 1-2% of the housing on the market in any given year is new construction, so most housing is bought, leased or sold, and resold multiple times during its lifespan.[27] The price of new or existing homes is determined by a number of different factors. If there is increased demand for housing, due to an influx of population in a particular city, prices will rise. Having access to credit or lower interest rates can also help drive housing demand as the ability to purchase a home becomes more accessible and the cost of obtaining a loan more affordable. If the demand to purchase homes increases, some landlords might sell their rental properties or convert them into condominiums. As the supply of rental housing shrinks, prices might rise. If there is a high vacancy rate, meaning a number of apartments or rental homes are sitting empty, landlords might lower the price to attract tenants.

Housing shortages can cause prices to skyrocket. During World War I, New York and other cities experienced a severe housing shortage.[28] In the years leading up to the war, there was a large influx of

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26. Vasudevan, "Makeshift City"

27. Christophe André, "Housing Markets." In *The Encyclopedia of Housing*, 2nd edition, ed. Andrew T. Carswell, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012) 367-369.

28. Robert M. Fogelson, The Great Rent Wars. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

immigrants into the city, and New York passed the Tenement Law, which introduced building codes designed to improve the quality of housing. Apartment construction boomed. By 1916, more than 40% of apartments had been built after 1903. The production of new housing easily offset the housing that was demolished to comply with the standards set by the Tenement Law. Renters were able to move into better housing, and landlords began to offer incentives to attract and retain tenants. When there is a glut of rental housing, the production of housing begins to decline. The decline in housing construction coincided with the start of the war. As wartime production increased, the cost of building materials rose, construction laborers were in short supply, and war workers flooded into the city. The units that had been empty just a few years before quickly filled. Construction virtually stopped, leading to a severe housing shortage in the following years.

When housing is in short supply, like it was in New York, the price rises. Landlords can afford to be choosier about who they rent to and may demand large deposits or long leases. Renters might end up living in housing that is overcrowded, substandard, or not meant for year-round living. While the New York City housing shortage was caused by unique historical circumstances, restrictions in housing supply still occur. It is fairly common to see prices skyrocket after natural disasters, especially if a large portion of the housing stock is temporarily uninhabitable or destroyed. Housing shortages can also be caused by a sudden influx in population due to an industrial boom, which has happened in the North Dakota oil and gas fields.

Fluctuations in supply or demand are not the only determinant of housing costs. Starting in the mid-1990s, the cost of housing across North America and Europe rose faster than inflation, even doubling in some places in just 10 years.[29] This global increase in housing costs wasn't due to changes in supply or demand, but rather to the transformation of how housing was financed and commodified. The subprime mortgage market provided high-risk loans to people who did not qualify for traditional mortgages. Subprime lenders also aggressively marketed their products to low-income, Black, Latino and elderly homeowners, many of whom actually qualified for lower-risk traditional mortgages. In addition to subprime lending, new financial products called mortgage-backed securities were created, sold to investors, and traded in the financial markets. Mortgage-backed securities are a type of bond that consists of bundles of real estate loans sold by the banks and brokers who issued them. Investors who purchase these securities get payouts, which are based upon the mortgage

29. André, "Housing Markets"

holders' monthly payments. When banks and brokers can sell their loans, they have less incentive to make sure that the lender can repay them, since they are essentially passing the risk of default on to the investors.

As housing and home loans became investment opportunities, prices soared.[30] Housing costs had once followed the same trajectory as wages. If wages rose, demand for housing increased, but if they remained stagnant, buying power decreased and demand dropped. As real estate become an investment opportunity disconnected from actual buyers and sellers, prices no longer reflected homeowners' wages. Over the past few decades, housing costs far outpaced the rate of inflation.

Housing Affordability

Housing costs may rise or fall, but the cost alone doesn't predict housing affordability. The concept of affordability considers how paying for housing impacts one's ability to purchase other goods and services. Since housing is a durable good that cannot easily be traded in for a cheaper option, and it is usually the first bill a household prioritizes, measures of affordability consider the relationship between housing and all other basic needs. In the United States, banks, landlords, and government agencies will examine an applicant's income to housing cost ratio when they are making decisions about whether someone qualifies for housing.[31] Most housing providers and lenders use a 30% rule when determining whether an applicant can afford to pay for housing. In other words, housing should cost no more than 30% of one's pre-tax income. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) considers anyone who spends more than 30% of their income on housing as "cost burdened," and those who spend more than 50% of their income on housing as "severely cost burdened." According to HUD, households with the worst case housing needs are those who are both "severely cost burdened" and who are very low-income income earning less than 50% of the median family income in their community.

Taking into account the total amount of income a household earns is important when identifying those who have the worst-case housing needs. Families who spend a large percentage of their income on housing but have a large overall income may not struggle to pay their rent or meet their basic needs. Defining housing

30. André, "Housing Markets"
31. Lucy M. Delgadillo, and Melanie Jewkes. "Affordability," in *The Encyclopedia of Housing*, 2nd edition, ed. Andrew T. Carswell, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012) 13-16.

affordability simply by the percentage of income one pays for housing may not accurately measure the impact that housing costs have on people's ability to pay for food, transportation, education and other needs.[32] The residual income approach looks at the amount of income a household has to spend after housing costs are subtracted. Michael Stone uses the residual income approach to measure "shelter poverty." Shelter poverty is when a household cannot meet their basic needs due to a limited income and unaffordable housing costs. To measure shelter poverty, the amount of income households of various sizes would need to meet all of their basic expenditures is calculated. The percentage of income left over is the percentage that the household could affordably spend on housing. If a household is spending more than they can afford, they are considered to be shelter poor. Since 1970, the percentage of U.S. households that were shelter poor has fluctuated between 30-36%.

This is roughly the same percentage of households who are considered cost burdened under HUD's measure of housing affordability. In 2020, approximately 45% of all renter households were cost-burdened.[33] Households of color were disproportionately likely to be paying more than 30% of their income for rent. Fifty four percent of Black renter households, 52% of Latino renters and 44% of white and Asian renters were cost-burdened. If the shelter poverty measure is used, 50% of renter households and 25% of homeowners are shelter poor.[34] While the overall numbers of households that are cost-burdened and shelter poor are approximately the same, the makeup of those groups differs. When the shelter poverty measure is used, the population struggling with housing affordability includes more families with children and fewer couples and single-person households. Latino households are most likely to be shelter poor, followed by Black families, Asians, then whites. Women and female-headed households are also more likely to be shelter poor. For homeowners, single mothers and the elderly make up a disproportionate share of the shelter poor.

National and local governments can address housing affordability issues by increasing the supply of affordable options or by reducing demand for lower-cost housing. Affordable housing policies can be directed

32. Michael Stone, "Shelter Poverty." in *The Encyclopedia of Housing*, 2nd edition, ed. Andrew T. Carswell, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012) 671-673.

33. Joint Center for Housing Studies. State of the Nation's Housing 2020. https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/reports/files/Harvard_JCHS_The_State_of_the_Nations_Housing_2020_Report_Revised_120720.pdf

34. Stone, "Shelter Poverty"

towards the public or private sector. On the supply side, the state can produce low-cost housing to increase the availability of affordable options. Public or social housing refers to units that are constructed, owned, and managed by a government housing authority. In the United States, the large-scale production of public housing began with the 1949 Housing Act.[35]

This act authorized urban renewal or the wholesale clearance of dilapidated neighborhoods and created the public housing program as a replacement option for demolished units. Although the Housing Act aimed to produce 810,000 units within six years, that goal wasn't met until 1968. Construction of public housing continued for a few more decades reaching a peak of 1.4 million units in 1994. Since then, the number of public housing units has declined. By the mid-1980s, public housing fell out of favor with lawmakers who instead opted to fund demand-side housing programs like the Section 8 subsidy. The number of public housing units has steadily declined since the 1994 peak, and the new construction has been limited to replacing units that were demolished as part of public housing redevelopment programs.

One of the major impetuses for developing public housing projects in the United States was to improve the overall quality of housing. In 1920, only 1% of housing units in the U.S. had indoor plumbing and electricity.[36] By 1970, plumbing and electricity were nearly universal. In Europe, housing shortages were one of the primary motivators for initiating a public or social housing program. Cities were devastated by World War II, and many European governments launched large-scale social housing programs to respond to housing shortages.[37] Unlike public housing in the U.S., European social housing was not limited to people with the lowest incomes. Government-produced housing was made available to working and middle class families. In the Netherlands, Austria, and Scotland, 30% of all housing is social housing. In England, social housing makes up 20% of the housing stock. Denmark, Hungary and France continue to add publicly constructed units to their housing stock. Social housing is widespread in Asia. In Hong Kong, 30% of all units are publicly owned.[38] The Hong

35. Schwartz, *Housing Policy*
36. Christine M.E. Whitehead, and John Goering, "Local Affordable Housing Dynamics in Two Global Cities: Patterns and Possible Lessons?" *International Journal of Urban Sciences*, 25, S1 (2021): 241-65.
37. Kathleen Scanlon, Christine Whitehead, and Melissa Fernandez Arrigoitia, *Social housing in Europe. Real Estate Issues.* (Somerset: WILEY, 2014).
38. Nicole Gurran, and Glen Bramley, *Urban Planning and the Housing Market.* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017).

Kong government is able to produce low-cost housing because the state owns the land, which makes it easier to construct housing that is affordable.

Substandard housing and affordability

Families struggling to afford housing sometimes find themselves living in unhealthy or dangerous conditions. Often the only housing that is affordable is in poor repair. The 1949 Housing Act aimed to provide a "decent home and suitable living environment for all." In 1940, 30% of homes in the U.S. lacked indoor toilets. While nearly every home has indoor plumbing today, habitability problems persist.

Forty percent of U.S. homes have at least one serious issue: broken heating, holes in walls, problems with plumbing, insect or rodent infestation, leaky roof, falling plaster, crumbling foundation, radon, lead, mold, or missing smoke detectors. These conditions can cause physical health problems. More than 250,000 children have elevated lead levels, mostly due to exposure in their homes. Mold, roach infestations, and poor ventilation can contribute to asthma, which affects 1 in 13 people in the U.S. Poor living conditions can also cause stress and anxiety.

People living in substandard conditions may lack the power and the resources to improve their housing. Homeowners may not be able to afford repairs. Renters may be afraid to ask their landlord to make repairs out of fear of losing their housing or having the rent raised. Housing habitability issues cannot be fully addressed without also dealing with issues of housing affordability and tenants' rights.

Deborah Howe, "Substandard Housing," in The Encyclopedia of Housing, 2nd edition, ed. Andrew T. Carswell (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012) 715-718.

National Center for Healthy Housing, United States 2020 Healthy Housing Fact Sheet, accessed on June 4, 2021, https://nchh.org/resource-library/fact-sheet_state-healthy-housing_usa.pdf.

While other countries have embraced publicly constructed housing as a strategy for providing affordable

units to people of various income levels, the United States has moved away from supply-side solutions. Very little new public housing was built after the 1970s. Instead the government has focused on demand-side housing solutions. Over the past 50 years, the supply-side programs have focused on using tax credits and other subsidies to incentivize nonprofit and some for-profit developers to build and manage low-income housing. The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), established in 1986 reduces the tax liability of housing developers who build affordable units or projects.[39] The credits can also be sold to investors who can use them to reduce their tax bills. The LIHTC has funded the development of more than 1.6 million units of affordable housing, which surpasses the number of public housing units. But this program has some major drawbacks. Units developed with tax credit financing can convert to market-rate housing after 15 years. Additionally, many of the lowest-income households cannot afford tax-credit housing unless they have some other kind of subsidy. Rent in public housing projects is capped at 30% of a tenant's income, so if that tenant has very little income, they pay very little rent. In contrast, most LIHTC housing has a set rental rate that is supposed to be affordable to tenants making below a certain income threshold. If the tenant's income is far below that threshold, they may end up paying much more than 30% of their income on rent for "affordable" housing.

Public sector interventions can help increase the supply of affordable housing, distribute housing to those most in need, and offset housing costs through subsidies, but governments can also impact housing affordability through private sector regulations, incentives, and taxation. Cities can encourage private sector housing production by streamlining the development process and by upzoning, or increasing the number of units allowed on a parcel of land.[40] When the supply of housing is increased, tenants and homebuyers can exert more influence over the price. If a landlord or seller sets the price too high, they may not be able to find an interested renter or buyer. In order to attract a buyer or tenant, the owner will have to lower the price. In addition, multifamily units like townhomes or apartments are less costly to produce than single family homes, since more units can be developed on a single parcel of land. This makes these options more affordable to renters and homebuyers. Cities can also incentivize the production of affordable housing by allowing homeowners to build accessory dwelling units on their lots. Accessory dwellings are independent

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39. Schwartz, *Housing Policy*

40. Local Housing Solutions, Increasing the Affordability of Rental Housing, examples, 2021, https://www.localhousingsolutions.org/act/increasing-the-affordability-of-rental-housing/.

housing units that are attached or detached from the main structure on a lot. Accessory dwellings are also called mother-in-law apartments, granny flats, or depending on their size, tiny homes. They can be stand-alone structures, garage or basement conversions, or additions to the main housing unit. Accessory dwellings can be more affordable than conventional units, and they encourage more intensive development of land parcels, which can help lower costs.

In addition to changing zoning regulations to allow for denser development, cities can also adopt inclusionary zoning programs. Inclusionary zoning programs require developers to produce a certain number of affordable units.[41] They usually require that at least 10-15% of units in a development over a particular size be made affordable to lower-income households. The program might also include incentives for builders to help offset the cost of developing affordable units. Offsets could include allowing more stories on multifamily buildings or waiving requirements like parking or development fees. This type of land use regulation can offset exclusionary zoning practices. Exclusionary zoning regulations might prohibit multi-family housing or require large lot sizes, which make housing less affordable and promote economic and racial segregation by pricing out lower-income households and households of color who are more likely to have lower incomes due to historic and ongoing discrimination.

Unlike public housing or LIHTC properties, units produced under inclusionary zoning programs are more integrated throughout a jurisdiction, which creates opportunities for low-income people to move into neighborhoods they might not otherwise have access to. However, the units produced under these programs may not necessarily be fully integrated into the overall development. They might be located in a separate building, and under some programs, developers are allowed to meet their obligations by funding the development of affordable units on a different site altogether. While inclusionary zoning programs are effective tools for increasing the affordable housing stock, these units are often priced too high for the lowest-income renters.

The final regulatory strategy that cities can use to keep housing prices affordable is rent control. Rent control can take many different forms. Early rent control programs put a hard cap on the amount of rent that landlords

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41. Daniel Mandelker, "Inclusionary Zoning." in *The Encyclopedia of Housing*, 2nd edition, ed. Andrew T. Carswell, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012) 387-389.

could charge.[42] Rent control was instituted in the United Kingdom in 1915 to curb housing cost inflation during World War I.[43] At the time, 90% of the British lived in private market housing. New York created its first rent control regulations in 1920 and expanded them in 1943 when World War II led to housing shortages and price inflation. These early rent control programs were intended to be temporary, but they lasted much longer than the housing crises they were designed to address.

These early rent control strategies are sometimes referred to as first generation rent control programs.[44] First generation rent control measures required landlords to keep rents below an established ceiling, except in specified circumstances. The New York program was designed to be temporary, but once soldiers returned home from World War II, housing shortages persisted, so New York kept its protections in place even as most other cities repealed their rent control programs. The New York City program placed a cap on rents in units built before 1947. Economists are highly critical of first generation rent control programs because the hard caps can result in housing market distortions. A study of rent controlled units in New York in 1968 found that they were listed at 40% below market rates. If landlords are unable to meet their costs and to profit, they have little incentive to keep units on the market, or they might stop doing basic maintenance or make necessary repairs. Rent control also incentivizes tenants to stay in a unit when they otherwise would move to find a more spacious place, to downsize, or to relocate to a more convenient neighborhood. This lack of turnover makes units unavailable to those who might need them and eventually results in a mismatch where the neediest tenants are unable to get a rent controlled unit, while some of those who are occupying them may be able to afford market rents. Finally, landlords may find ways around strict rent control laws by charging exorbitant "key fees" or pushing tenants out, if regulations allow for rent increases between tenancies.

These critiques do not necessarily apply to second and third generation rent control programs.[45] Second

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42. Hugh Grant, "Rent Control." in *The Encyclopedia of Housing*, 2nd edition, ed. Andrew T. Carswell, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012) 597-599.

43. Whitehead and Goering, "Local Dynamics."

44. Richard Arnott, Richard. "Time for Revisionism on Rent Control?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 9. 1 (1995): 99-120. Grant, "Rent Control"

45. Hanna Kettunen and Hannu Ruonavaara, "Rent regulation in 21st century Europe. Comparative perspectives," *Housing Studies,* 2020, 1-23. Arnott, "Time for Revisionism"

generation rent control programs are the dominant type of rent regulation in the United States today. These programs allow rents to rise each year by a certain percentage and let landlords raise them further to pass on the cost of repairs or upgrades to the unit. Third generation rent control strategies are used in parts of Europe and put caps on increases for the length of the tenancy, but allow the unit to be decontrolled when the tenants leave. These rent control strategies are more effective at controlling prices without creating disincentives for landlords to uphold their responsibilities.

Rent control also needs to be considered as part of a larger, overall housing regime. The concept of a housing regime refers to the ways in which housing is produced and distributed in a defined area and the ideologies that guide that system.[46] For example, in the United States, property rights are sacrosanct, home ownership is viewed as the desirable form of tenancy, and in general, the rights of landlords to profit often outweigh tenants' protections, although tenants may have more rights in jurisdictions that have a high percentage of renters. In Norway, where homeownership rates exceed the United States, renters have far more protections. Norway's push for homeownership was tied to a housing regime that viewed landlordism as a form of exploitation. In 1951, Norwegian Labor Party leader Trygve Brattelli spoke before Parliament and asserted that "owning other people's homes as a field of private enterprise" was unacceptable. Norway subsidized and encouraged both single-family homeownership and cooperative ownership of multifamily properties. Tenants, despite making up a relatively small percentage of the population, have fairly strong protections. Three-year leases are common, and there are protections against large rent increases. The Swedish housing regime also gives more power to renters. Sweden's homeownerships rates are similar to the U.S., but rents on multifamily units are set through negotiations between the Swedish Union of Tenants, publicly owned multifamily housing corporations, and private landlords. If the parties cannot come to an agreement on the appropriate price for a particular unit, a rent tribunal sets the price.

Homelessness

The word homeless evokes images of people sleeping on park benches, under bridges, or in makeshift camps

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46. Hannu Runnovaara, "Rethinking the Concept of 'Housing Regime'," *Critical Housing Analysis,* 7, 1 (2020): 5-14. Kettunen and Runnovaara, "Rent Regulation."

along freeways, but coming up with a comprehensive definition to describe this situation is a far more complex task than it seems. People sleeping outdoors are obviously homeless, but what about those staying in a shelter? How about people who are able to scrape together enough money to pay for a motel for a few nights? What about those living in cars, at campgrounds, rest stops or in recreational vehicles? How about the young person who couch surfs and stays with different friends each night? What about the family that is living with relatives because they lost their housing? Are these people homeless?

The way in which homelessness is defined is culturally, socially, and politically constructed.[47] In Ghana, there is no word for homelessness in any of the country's main languages. It is considered shameful for a family to allow one of their members to stay unhoused. Homelessness exists in Ghana, but the government defines it very narrowly. It only considers those living outdoors to be homeless. In many nations in Latin America and Africa, homelessness is defined as both lacking shelter and being outside of society (i.e. a drug user, criminal, or mentally ill). In India, rural migrants may be homeless in the city they work in, but they have a home back in their village.

Defining homelessness too narrowly can leave people out who do not have an adequate place to sleep at night. In Ghana, people who are living in shops or makeshift shelters would not be considered homeless under the government's definition.[48] But defining it too broadly can obscure the issue and make it difficult to prioritize those who live under the direst of circumstances. For example, the South African Homeless People's Federation, which is a grassroots coalition of people living in inadequate housing situations, includes people living in squatter settlements, shacks built on other's lots in the townships, and staying in hostel accommodations in their definition of homelessness. Under this definition, one in five South Africans is considered homeless.

The United Nations Habitat program has recently revised its definition of homelessness.[49] The organization

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47. Graham Tipple, and Suzanne Speak, "Definitions of Homelessness in Developing Countries." *Habitat International* 29, 2 (2005): 337-52.

48. Tipple and Speak, "Definitions Homelessness in Developing Countries."

49. Institute of Global Homelessness, "Briefing from the U.N. Commission on Social Development," accessed on June 1, 2021, http://ighomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/IGH-CSocD-Policy-Briefing-1.pdf.; Tipple and Speak, "Definitions Homelessness in Developing Countries."

spent more than a decade updating its definition to make it more reflective of the global situation. The prior definition placed too much emphasis on the ways in which homelessness is manifested in the North American and European contexts and not enough on the rest of the world. The new definition recognizes that:

homelessness is not merely a lack of physical housing, but is often interrelated with poverty, lack of productive employment and access to infrastructure, as well as other social issues that may constitute a loss of family, community and a sense of belonging, and, depending on national context, can be described as a condition where a person or household lacks habitable space, which may compromise their ability to enjoy social relations, and includes people living on the streets, other open spaces or in buildings not intended for human habitation; people living in temporary accommodation or shelters for the homeless, and, in accordance with national legislation, may include, among others, people living in severely inadequate accommodation without security of tenure and access to basic services

Having a clear definition of homelessness is important. Without agreed upon criteria that reflects the variety of ways that homelessness is manifested across the globe, international organizations cannot measure the scope of the problem. It is estimated that between 100 million and one billion people worldwide experience homelessness. With the new definition, countries can begin to more accurately measure of how widespread the problem is.

The U.S. government defines homelessness as lacking a "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence."[50] This definition can be vague and different agencies within the U.S. government use more or less expansive versions of this definition to determine whether someone qualifies for services. The European Federation of National Organizations Working with the Homeless (FEANSTA) uses a more holistic definition that includes four categories of homelessness. Rooflessness refers to those who are sleeping outdoors and have no shelter of any kind. Houselessness includes people who are staying in shelters or other temporary institutions. People with insecure shelter means those facing eviction, squatting, or living in an unsafe situations due to abuse or domestic violence. Finally, those living in inadequate housing includes people living in cars, caravans or campers, substandard or extremely overcrowded conditions.

The FEANSTA typology more fully captures the ways in which homelessness occurs in Europe and North

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50. D. MacKenzie, "Homelessness: Definitions," in *International Encyclopedia of Housing and Home*, ed. Susan J. Smith, (Jordan Hill: Elsevier Science and Technology, 2012) 25-35.

America and also acknowledges how people cycle through these different categories. Many people who lose their housing do not immediately end up on the streets. They may first stay with friends or family. Once they wear out their welcome, they may spend a few nights in a motel, sleep in their car, or camp in someone's backyard. When they run out of options or if they have no support system to provide them with a temporary place to stay, they turn to the shelters or the street.

The estimates of the number of people experiencing homelessness vary widely. Some of that variation is due to the conflicting definitions that homeless census takers use.[51] Simply tallying the number of people using shelter services or identifying those sleeping on the streets may not give you an accurate count of the numbers of people who lack adequate, permanent shelter.

In the United States, the issue of homelessness entered the public's consciousness in the 1980s when due to economic recession and policy changes, people began visibly living on the streets in most major cities. The early attempts to count the number of homeless individuals relied upon data from shelter and services providers. In the 1990s, it was estimated that 450,000-850,000 people were homeless at any given point in time. This estimate only included those who were literally homeless and had accessed or attempted to access services.

In addition to narrow focus on the literal homeless, these point-in-time counts provide limited data about how widespread homelessness really is. In 1994, Dennis Culhane and a group of researchers looked at homelessness service providers' data in Philadelphia and developed an estimate of the numbers of people who experience literal homelessness during the course of a year.[52] They discovered that 1% of the city's population overall and 10% of those living in poverty cycled through the homeless shelter system at some point during the year. National estimates based upon Culhane's methodology indicate that between 2.5 and 3.5 million people become literally homeless at some point during the course of a year, which represents 6.3%-9.6% of those living below the poverty line.

Estimating the number of people who experience homelessness over the course of a year provides a more complete picture of the scope and size of this problem. This annual projection captures the variation of people's experiences. Some may be homeless for a brief time period, others may cycle in and out of

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51. Martha Burt, "Homelessness, Definitions and Estimates of" in David Levinson, *Encyclopedia of Homelessness,* (Thousand Oaks, USA: SAGE Publications, 2004) 234-239.
52. Burt, "Homelessness Definitions, Estimates"

homelessness, and a smaller subset may remain homeless during the entire year. However, it is more difficult to collect data over the course of an entire year. Even if service provider data is used, it would have to be disaggregated to determine the number of unique users. Due to these data collection difficulties, the point-in-time or one-night counts are now conducted annually in all major U.S. metropolitan areas. Most point-in-time counts today include both the number of people using homeless services and a one-night census of people living outdoors. Some cities employ dozens of census takers who attempt to count unsheltered people in downtown areas and residential neighborhoods. Despite the aforementioned limitations of these counts, they do provide a snapshot of literal homelessness in the U.S. and allow communities to track changes in the population over time.

In 2020, the national point-in-time counts found that 580,000 people were literally homeless in the U.S.[53] Sixty percent of those were staying in shelters or transitional housing and the remainder were unhoused. One quarter of those counted were considered "chronically homeless." The term chronically homeless refers to individuals with physical or mental disabilities or addictions who have been continuously homeless for at least 12 months or who have experienced at least 4 episodes of homelessness in the past 3 years including one that lasted for at least a year. This term was devised by policy makers who wanted to identify the most difficult to house populations in order to focus resources on them. Compared to the overall literal homeless population, the chronic homeless are more likely to be unsheltered.

The annual point-in-time counts are not the only national census of homelessness in the United States. Every public school district in United States identifies students who qualify as homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act, because they are eligible for specific protections and services.[54] During the 2018-2019 school year, almost 1.4 million children and youth in the U.S. public school system experienced homelessness. This number is far greater than the 580,000 people counted in the annual census, especially when considering that only

53. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *The 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress,"* January, 2021, https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf.
54. National Center for Homeless Education, "Federal Data Summary, School Years 2016-2017 and 2018-2019, Education for Homeless Children and Youth," April 2021, https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Federal-Data-Summary-SY-16.17-to-18.19-Final.pdf.

30% of those in the point –in-time counts were families with children.[55] One reason for the difference in these estimates is that the student counts capture homelessness over the course of the entire school year. But this alone doesn't explain the large discrepancy between the two censuses.

The main reason for the large difference between the school district numbers and the annual point-in-time counts is the definition of homelessness that is used. The point-in-time counts only capture those experiencing literal homelessness – living in shelters or on the streets. School district personnel use a much broader definition of homelessness that includes people who are doubled-up with other households due to housing loss or economic hardship and those living in motels or hotels.[56] Seventy-seven percent of the students who were identified as homeless were living doubled-up with friends or family because they had lost their housing, and an additional 7% were living in motels or hotels.

> Homelessness: a continuum of experiences
>
> continuum of homelessness

Families with children and youth who are living on their own are more reticent to go to homeless shelters and will do anything to avoid having to live on the streets. Parents often worry that the state might take their children away if they do not have housing. So families who lose their housing are more willing to rely on friends or family for help. Unaccompanied youth, which refers to young people who are living on their own, might be concerned that if they seek services, they may be returned to an abusive or unsupportive household or be placed in foster care.

Unaccompanied youth only made up 1% of the national point-in-time homeless counts, but a recent comprehensive study of youth homelessness found that 700,000, or nearly 1 in 30, youth aged 13-17

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55. HUD "Annual Homeless Assessment"
56. National Center for Homeless Education, "Federal Data Summary"

experienced homelessness over the course of a year.[57] When the young adults aged 18-25 are included, nearly 10% had become homeless at some point during the year. Black, Latino, Native American, LGBTQ, and parenting youth were disproportionately likely to be homeless. Couch surfing, or staying temporarily with friends or family members, was a key strategy that homeless youth and young adults used to avoid going to shelters or sleeping on the streets. However, these arrangements are unstable, and many youth and young adults move around frequently, and some may cycle in and out of shelters or on or off the streets.

Like youth and young adults, women are also more likely to avoid homeless shelters, to hide their situation, and to stay out of the public view.[58] Women living in public spaces are vulnerable to sexual and physical assaults. One study found that 92% of mothers experiencing homelessness had been sexually or physically abused at some point in their lives.[59] Thirteen percent of women interviewed in another study reported being sexually assaulted within the last 12 months, and half of those had been assaulted more than once. Another research project found that nine percent of homeless women had been sexually assaulted within the last month. Women with mental illness who lack housing are especially vulnerable to sexual victimization. Ninety-seven percent of mentally ill homeless women had been victims of violence or sexual assault during their lives, and 28% report being physically or sexually assaulted within the last month.

To survive, many women hide their homelessness.[60] Women on the streets or in shelter represent just a fraction of the female homeless population. Women tend to stay in cars or with friends or family. Some may choose to stay in an abusive situation rather than live on the streets. Women may also find a partner on a nightly or longer term basis in order to avoid the streets. In some countries, there are no shelter spaces for women. In others, single women who are homeless may be stigmatized and ostracized, because they are not part of a male-headed household.

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57. Matthew Morton, and United States Department of Housing Urban Development Office of Policy Development Research Issuing Body. *Voices of Youth Count Comprehensive Report: Youth Homelessness in America : Report to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development,* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research, 2019).

58. Keri Weber Sikich, "Global Female Homelessness: A Multi-Faceted Problem." *Gender Issues*, 25, 3 (2008): 147-56.

59. Lisa Goodman, Katya Fels, Catherine Glen, and Judy Benitez, "No Safe Place: Sexual Assault and the Lives of Homeless Women," September, 2006, https://vawnet.org/sites/default/files/materials/files/2016-09/AR_SAHomelessness.pdf.

60. Sikich, "Global Female Homelessness"

It is estimated that 22% of the homeless population in the U.S. is female, and women make up 10-33% of homeless population in European countries. Since women are more likely to be part of the "hidden homeless," or those who are not visibly living on the streets or in shelter systems, it can be difficult to get an accurate count of the numbers of women who lack housing. In addition, if the definition that is being used to identify homeless people isn't broad enough to encompass the ways in which women experience homelessness, they won't show up in the statistics.

Overall, any attempt to quantify the number of homeless people on a global, national, or local level will only produce an estimate of the population that lacks adequate housing.[61] Definitions of homelessness need to be broad enough to capture the myriad ways in which different populations experience homelessness. Drawing conclusions about the size, scope, causes, or impacts of homelessness based upon the most visible populations can lead to assumptions that do not reflect the complexity of this issue.

The Causes of Homelessness

If you ask someone how they ended up staying in a shelter or living on the streets, they might tell you a story about a job loss, a bad relationship, a struggle with addiction, or a physical or mental health issue that led to their current situation. Are these situations the causes of homelessness? When thinking about the causes of homelessness, it is important to delineate between the proximate causes or the precipitating events that lead to someone losing their housing and the structural conditions that create homelessness.[62] The proximate causes can help shed light on the populations that are vulnerable to homelessness, but identifying the structural conditions that produce homelessness is necessary for finding lasting policy solutions.

Homelessness is produced when housing markets, labor markets and financial markets create grossly unequal outcomes.[63] Homelessness is also caused by the political failure to meet the needs of those left out of the housing or labor markets. If governments do not fill those gaps, people will be forced to find inadequate

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61. Burt, "Homelessness Definitions, Estimates"

62. Paul Koegel, "Causes of Homelessness: Overview," in *Encyclopedia of Homelessness*, ed. David Levinson, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2004), 51-58

63. Graham A. Tipple., and Suzanne Speak, *The Hidden Millions Homelessness in Developing Countries. Housing and Society Series*. (London; New York: Routledge, 2009).

housing alternatives or live on the streets. In many cultures, extended family networks play a critical role in providing housing and support to their indigent kin. However, if a family's resources are strained, they may not be able to provide for all of their members. In societies where extended family ties are de-emphasized and the nuclear family dominates, individuals who are at risk of becoming homeless have fewer resources they can rely upon. Therefore, family breakdown or social isolation can also contribute to homelessness. If someone does not have a strong social network and support system and their government ignores their needs, they could end up on the street.

In some parts of the world, housing markets simply fail to produce enough housing for the population. In 2002, India was in need of at least 19 million additional housing units. Sometimes, the market produces housing, but it is unaffordable for large swaths of the population. In Dhaka, Bangladesh, a two-room house leased on the private market would cost a family making the median wage their entire monthly salary. Seventy-five percent of Dhaka's residents cannot afford to pay for the housing produced by the private market. In Bangladesh, the typical laborer spends 70% of their income on basic food and clothing needs, leaving little left over to pay for housing.

In places where private market housing is out of reach for large segments of the population, they have to rely upon alternative survival strategies like squatting unused pieces of land and self-building homes. Having insecure tenure rights makes people more vulnerable to homelessness, and informal settlement housing is often inadequate. In addition, informal settlements may lack access to potable water, sewage, or other utilities. These neighborhoods also might not be served by transportation networks or by public education systems. The United Nations Habitat updated definition of homelessness notes that a lack of "security of tenure," "access to infrastructure," and "basic services" are hallmarks of homelessness.[64]

In the United States, there are enough housing units to provide shelter for all households, but there is a major shortage of units available that are affordable to those with the lowest incomes.[65] Prior to the 1980s, the

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64. Institute of Global Homelessness, "Briefing from the U.N."

65. National Low-Income Housing Coalitions, "The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Rental Homes," March, 2021, https://reports.nlihc.org/sites/default/files/gap/Gap-Report_2021.pdf. Alex Vadakul, "Sir Shadow, Maestro of the Last of the Bowery Flophouses," *The New York Times*, December 28, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/28/nyregion/

poorest urban residents could afford to rent basic housing. Most downtowns had skid row neighborhoods that contained concentrations of housing of last resort. Housing of last resort was often a single room occupancy (SRO) unit, which is a basic room with a shared bathroom down the hall that rents by the night, week, or month. Flophouses were even cheaper than SROs. Flophouses are communal lodgings where you can rent a bed for the night. Some flophouses are also known as cage hotels, because residents rent beds in a large open room that is divided into cubicles, which are separated from others by partial walls or chicken wire. In the 1970s, there was a surplus of these units, but many of these buildings were razed in downtown redevelopment projects, and by 1989, there was a shortage of more than 5 million units that were affordable to those with the lowest incomes. Currently, no state has an adequate number of rental units available that are affordable to the lowest-income households. In the most extreme cases, there is only 1 affordable unit available for every 5 low-income renter households, and even in the lowest cost housing markets, there are only 6 units available for every 10 households.

When people cannot afford to pay for private market housing, they make do in a variety of ways. In many parts of the world, people will self-build their homes on an unused piece of land.[66] In places where self-building one's home is not an option, low-income people make do by doubling-up with friends or family, by renting inadequate housing options, or by spending significant portions of their paycheck on rent. All of these situations are unstable and put people at risk for homelessness. An argument with a friend or family member or an unexpected expense could potentially lead to a loss of housing. Living in a substandard unit could also pose a health or safety risk that might lead someone to lose their housing.

An array of different types of housing market failures lead to the production of homelessness, but this is just one side of the housing crisis equation. Labor market failures also play an important role. If workers are not paid enough to cover housing costs, it's not just the housing market that is failing, the labor market is too. In much of the world, the majority of people work in the informal sector.[67] The informal economic sector refers

sir-shadow-maestro-of-the-last-of-the-bowery-flophouses.html. Tipple and Speak, *The Hidden Millions*; Koegel, "Causes of Homelessness"

66. Tipple and Speak, *The Hidden Millions*

67. International Labor Organization, "Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Portrait, Third Edition," 2018, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_626831.pdf

to businesses that are unregistered and unregulated. These businesses can be based within a household, or they can be large-scale organizations. Informal sector workers have no legal protections and lack benefits, guaranteed employment contracts, and basic workplace rights. Informal workers labor in a wide variety of types of trades, from street vendors to garbage pickers to unlicensed construction workers to drug smugglers. According to the International Labor Organization, 60% of laborers, or more than 2 billion people worldwide, work in the informal sector.

While not all informal sector workers are impoverished, informal workers are more likely to be poor than their formal sector counterparts are.[68] Although informal work is more prevalent in rural areas, in many cities the majority of people are employed in the informal sector. In North America, only 18% of workers hold informal sector jobs, but in Latin America, 53% of workers are informally employed. In Dhaka, Bangladesh, 63% of workers are employed in the informal sector.

Informal sector work can be unpredictable and unreliable.[69] Common informal jobs like being a caterer, waiter, rickshaw driver, porter, or construction worker are either seasonal or customer dependent, so workers are not guaranteed regular hours or pay. Many informal workers have multiple jobs. Despite its unpredictability and comparatively low wages, people engage in informal employment, because they do not have access to formal employment opportunities. Having more education closely correlates to being employed in the formal labor market. People who have never attended school or are illiterate are far more likely to work in the informal sector. Women are less likely than men to be employed in the informal sector worldwide, but women in lower-income countries have higher rates of informal sector employment than men. The very young and the elderly are also more likely to work informal sector jobs.

Even with steady hours and pay, informal workers may not earn enough to pay for their basic living expenses. In Dhaka, the average informal worker only makes enough to pay for a meal and a bed in a communal lodging house. Some informal workers try to save money by not paying for housing. Homelessness can be a survival strategy, especially for those who migrate to cities and are working to support their family who remain in their rural community. Sixty percent of India's urban homeless send money back to their villages.

Not all informal workers are homeless, and workers who hold formal sector jobs still might not make

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68. International Labor Organization, "Informal Economy"
69. Tipple and Speak, *The Hidden Millions*; International Labor Organization, "Informal Economy"

enough money to pay for housing, especially if they live in place with an expensive housing market. In the United States, people experiencing homelessness tend to have extremely low incomes. The average homeless individual made just 12% of the median income and earned a wage that put them at just 50% of the poverty line. With such low wages, it is nearly impossible to find affordable housing on the private rental market.

When housing and labor markets fail, the state can step in to provide income or shelter to those who are left out. The state can produce public sector housing that is affordable to those with the lowest incomes, or it can provide subsidies to purchase housing in the private market. The state can also provide welfare benefits to people with very low incomes or to those who are unable to work. In addition, the government can strengthen labor laws and raise the minimum wage to ensure that people who are working can afford to meet their basic needs.

The United States has a patchwork system of social service programs. As homelessness was becoming a major urban issue during the 1980s, the Reagan and Bush administrations were ushering in substantial cuts to housing and welfare programs.[70] Public and rural affordable housing programs were slashed deeply. Unlike food stamps or social security, the Section 8 housing voucher program is not an entitlement, meaning that the government does not guarantee funding for enough vouchers for all who qualify. As a result, only 24% of people who actually qualify for housing vouchers receive one. Those who fail to qualify can sit for years on a waiting list. Housing wait lists in many cities are closed, and people in need will have to wait for the list to periodically reopen. Some places hold lotteries to determine who will win a spot on the waiting list, because the need is so great.

Since housing programs are not sufficient to address the need, the government could provide cash assistance to low-income households to help fill the wage/housing gap, but cuts to welfare programs have made it difficult for poor individuals and families to access cash assistance.[71] Cash assistance programs mainly serve low-income

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70. Western Regional Advocacy Project, *Without Housing: Decades of Federal Housing Cutbacks, Massive Homelessness, and Policy Failures*, (San Francisco: WRAP 2006). Dylan Matthews, "76% of People Who Qualify for Housing Aid Don't Get It," *Vox*, May 31, 2014, https://www.vox.com/2014/5/31/5764262/76-percent-of-people-who-qualify-for-housing-aid-dont-get-it.

71. Peggy Berger, Peggy, and Kenneth Tremblay, "Welfare Reform's Impact on Homelessness." *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, 8, 1 (1999): 1-20. Liz Schott, "State's General Assistance Programs Very Limited in Half the States and

families with children. The 1996 welfare reform legislation placed strict time limits on welfare recipients and added job search and training requirements. Prior to welfare reform, at least 20% of welfare recipients had been homeless at some point in their lives. As families' cash benefits were terminated, states began to see an uptick in shelter usage. Unlike families with children, single adults rarely qualify for cash assistance. Most states used to offer general assistance, which was a monthly cash subsidy for low-income individuals, but now only 11 states offer assistance to able-bodied single adults. The amount of assistance is extremely low, ranging from $120 a month in Alaska to a high of $600 a month in Nebraska.

Politicians who pushed for welfare cuts and reforms insisted that poverty could be solved if people would work instead of receiving assistance. Not only does this political stance ignore the fact that many entry-level jobs do not pay enough to lift people out of poverty, but it also fails to take into account people who are unable to work. People with physical or mental disabilities may require long-term government support to meet their basic needs. The U.S. Social Security program provides monthly cash benefits to people of all ages who are too disabled to work. However, the benefit rate has failed to keep up with the cost of housing.[72] In Seattle, the cost of housing rose by over $600 in a five-year time period, but the average disability benefit had increased by only $50, leaving many households unable to find housing. The maximum individual disability benefit provides an income that is only 75% of the federal poverty rate, leaving recipients struggling to find affordable housing and, therefore, vulnerable to homelessness.

In many countries, the government does not have the revenue, capacity, and/or the political will to provide assistance to address housing and labor market failures. In countries that do not have a strong social welfare system, families often play a critical role in preventing homelessness among their kin. In Ghana, families traditionally lived in compound houses, which provide shelter for an entire extended family including in-

Nonexistent in Others, Despite Need." Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, July 2, 2020, https://www.cbpp.org/research/family-income-support/state-general-assistance-programs-very-limited-in-half-the-states.

72. David Kroman, "Once a safeguard against homelessness, disability payments can't keep up with the rent," Crosscut, Sept. 4, 2019, https://crosscut.com/2019/09/once-safeguard-against-homelessness-disability-payments-cant-keep-rent. Azza Altiraifi, "A Deadly Poverty Trap: Asset Limits in the Time of Coronavirus," Center for American Progress, April 7, 2020.

laws.[73] In family compounds, members share kitchen and bathing facilities and contribute to household and agricultural tasks. Relatives in need of a place to live cannot be turned away from the family's compound. However, compound life is not always easy. Interpersonal conflicts can drive family members away from the compound. Given the collective ownership rights of family members, disagreements might arise about who is responsible for upkeep and repairs. If the family faces economic hardship, collective ownership structures make it difficult to sell or borrow money against the property. Finally, women and their children can be kicked out of the family compound if their husbands dies or they divorce.

Women's homelessness is caused by the same structural factors that impact men's ability to obtain adequate shelter, but women face additional housing barriers due to gender discrimination.[74] In many countries throughout the world, women are paid less than men, which makes it even more challenging to afford housing. It's not surprising that female-headed households have a higher risk of homelessness than male-headed households do. Women may also face housing market barriers. In some parts of the world, women are barred from buying property or obtaining loans, which can make it difficult for them to find housing if they do not have a male spouse or partner.

In addition, women may lose their housing if their male spouse or partner dies or divorces them. Women lack inheritance rights in many countries, so if their husband dies, his family might inherit their home, leaving the widow with no place to stay. In Kenya, 70% of all informal sector households are headed by single women. One quarter of those lost their prior housing when their spouse died. Even in countries where women have inheritance rights, a woman may be reluctant to take her husband's family to court, because she may believe that the male-dominated court system will not rule in her favor.[75]

Throughout the world, women are subjected to domestic violence. In the United Kingdom, 13% of the

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73. Esther Yeboah Danso-Wiredu, and Adoja Poku, Adjoa. "Family Compound Housing System Losing Its Value in Ghana: A Threat to Future Housing of the Poor." *Housing Policy Debate* 30, 6 (2020): 1016-032.

74. Sikich, "Global Female Homelessness;" Tipple and Speak, *The Hidden Millions*

75. ACLU Women's Rights Project, Domestic Violence and Homelessness, accessed July 15, 2021, https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/dvhomelessness032106.pdf; Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness, The Intimate Relationship between Domestic Violence and Homelessness, October 27, 2018, https://www.icphusa.org/commentary/the-intimate-relationship-between-domestic-violence-and-homelessness-2/.

homeless population lost their housing after they fled a violent partner. In the United States, statistics vary widely, with anywhere from one quarter to one half of all women seeking out homeless services reporting domestic violence as the precipitating cause. In New York, 80% of homeless mothers reported experiencing domestic violence at some point in their lives, and one third of all homeless families lost their housing due to intimate partner violence. Domestic violence exacerbates all of the other structural causes of homelessness. An abusive spouse or partner will attempt to control all aspects of a woman's life, including preventing her from working, isolating her from her family and friends, and denying her access to bank accounts or credit cards. If she has no income and lacks a strong support system, a woman might stay in an abusive relationship to avoid living on the streets.

Children have even fewer rights than women do. The World Health Organization and UNICEF estimate there are more than 100 million homeless children worldwide.[76] UNICEF differentiates between children who are on the street and children who are of the street. Those who are on the street spend significant time working or playing on the streets of their city, but they have a home to return to at night. Children who are of the streets are literally homeless and are homeless on their own, not with an adult relative. This typology is somewhat simplistic, and it doesn't account for the full range of homeless children's experiences. For example, in India, many children who are on the street return at night to their families, who are also sleeping on the street.

Like adult men and women, one of the major causes of children's homelessness is poverty. Nearly all children of the street in low-income countries come from poor families. In countries where child labor is prevalent, young people might leave their homes in rural areas and go to the city to look for work. Even if they find work, they most likely will not be able to obtain shelter. Some street children work to provide money for their families. In Zimbabwe, 35% of homeless children send money to their family.

Throughout the world, family dysfunction leads to children and youth becoming homeless. Young people run away from abusive adults in their family. Family violence and neglect can make living on the streets appear to be a safer option than remaining at home. In sub Saharan Africa, the AIDS epidemic has orphaned many children. If relatives are unable or unwilling to care for their orphaned kin, they may end up on the streets. Children's homelessness is inexorably intertwined with women's rights. In countries where women's rights are

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76. Tipple and Speak, *The Hidden Millions*

limited, mothers may be unable to protect their kids from abuse by leaving their spouse or partner, leaving her children vulnerable to homelessness as they flee the abuse on their own.

In the United States, family dysfunction is one of the leading causes of homelessness for youth who are living on their own.[77] A disproportionate number of homeless youth have been in foster care or have shuttled between different relatives. Many report living in unstable family situations or having unstable housing situations before they became homeless. Physical or sexual abuse can also force youth to leave their homes. Discrimination also plays a role. Families who are unsupportive of a young person's sexuality or gender identity can also make it unsafe or untenable for them to live at home.

While poverty, affordable housing shortages, family breakdown, and a lack of a social safety net produce homelessness, it is also important to consider the precipitating events that can lead to an individual becoming homeless.[78] The proximate causes of homelessness can lend insight into the risk factors that make an individual vulnerable to losing their housing. In the United States, people experiencing homelessness are more likely to have a severe mental illness or to have struggled with substance abuse than the general population. Various studies indicate that between 20-25% of the homeless population has severe mental illness and 50% have substance abuse issues. However, these issues may be over-or understated depending upon how homelessness is defined and which subset of the homeless population was surveyed. Interestingly, people experiencing homelessness who struggle with mental health or substance abuse issues have more in common with the general homeless population than they do with housed populations who are mentally ill or have substance abuse disorders. This seems to indicate that these contributing factors may have exacerbated an individual's risk for homelessness, but addiction or mental illness alone are not the primary cause of their lack of housing.

Substance abuse and mental illness are not the only precipitating causes of homelessness. Having a history of housing and family instability may also raise a person's risk for homelessness later in life. A disproportionate segment of the homeless population spent time in foster care, an orphanage, or other institution during their formative years. In the year prior to becoming homeless, most individuals report some type of major change in their lives. Many report losing jobs or income; others had major physical or mental health issues, and some

77. Robertson, Marjorie J. "Youth, Homeless," in *Encyclopedia of Homelessness*, ed. David Levinson, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2004) 615-622.

78. Koegel, Paul, "Causes of Homelessness"

report an increase in their use of drugs or alcohol. Having a significant change in their relationship or family situation was also common. Breakups, divorces, or giving birth can all raise someone's risk of homelessness.

Living in an unstable housing situation and having a very low income or precarious economic situation makes it difficult to weather the unexpected events and crises that can be the precipitating cause of homelessness. If you are already paying more than half of your income for rent and you have a limited social support system, a breakup, job loss, worsening addiction, or health problem can end up pushing you over the edge and onto the street.

Homelessness Solutions

When the modern homeless crisis emerged in the 1980s, cities across the U.S. responded by establishing temporary shelters so people would not have to sleep on the streets.[79] By the early 1990s, there were 600,000 shelter beds available nationwide. A shelter is a place that provides a temporary accommodation. Most shelters are large, congregate facilities where people are provided a bed or cot for the night. In addition to a place to sleep, many shelters offer meals, showers, and basic supplies and services. Shelters allow residents to stay for the night and often require them to leave during the daytime hours. Shelters commonly prohibit drug and alcohol use, segregate residents by gender, and do not allow pets. Some shelters may place limits on the amount of time that someone can use their services, and others provide longer-term accommodations to residents who volunteer to help run the institution.

Shelters provide temporary housing for people who are homeless, escaping domestic violence, or fleeing a natural disaster. Shelters are usually run by public, nonprofit, or religious groups. In addition to these officially designated shelters, there are also facilities that become de facto shelters. De facto shelters are places that serve another purpose, but they end up also providing lodging to those who are homeless. Some examples of de facto shelters include: jails, emergency rooms, bus or train stations, subways, and campgrounds.

The presence of de facto homeless shelters in most cities reveals the limitations of relying upon the emergency shelter system as the primary solution to homelessness. Emergency shelters were established as the

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79. Kim Hopper, "Shelters." in *Encyclopedia of Homelessness*, ed. David Levinson, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2004) 499-503.

initial response to the modern resurgence of homelessness in U.S. cities, because most policymakers viewed the rise of homelessness in the 1980s as a temporary problem that would recede as the economy improved. However, the problem continued to persist and grow, and the number of homeless quickly outpaced the number of available shelter beds. Currently, there are enough shelter beds to serve only 51% of the single adults who were identified as homeless during the annual homelessness count in 2019.[80] Not only are there not enough shelter beds to meet the need, but for most people experiencing homelessness, having access to bed for the night does not help them find permanent housing.

During the 1990s, cities began to focus on providing more comprehensive solutions and creating longer-term shelter options.[81] A tiered system emerged. People would access emergency housing for a limited time period, then move into a transitional housing facility. Transitional housing programs allow residents to stay for longer periods of time, anywhere from a few months to up to two years. The purpose of these programs is to provide temporary housing and services for a target population, such as families with children or people in recovery, to help them transition into permanent housing. Transitional housing units can be singe-room occupancy or apartment units. In addition to increased privacy and security, transitional housing programs provide supportive services, such as job readiness programs, counseling, or mental health care. However, just like emergency shelters, these facilities also require residents to adhere to strict rules or regulations. Transitional housing programs are more effective at getting people into permanent housing than the emergency shelter system is; however, since residents occupy units for longer periods of time, there is slower turnover and a severe shortage of beds. In addition, some people have trouble complying with the facility's rules or may be ineligible for services, because they are active substance abusers or have a criminal record.

People experiencing homelessness and housing advocates began to question the need to transition people into permanent housing. Why not move them directly into a permanent place to stay? A new approach to homelessness services emerged in the early 2000s. Housing First moves people directly from the streets

80. National Alliance to End Homelessness, *State of Homelessness 2020 Edition,* https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-2020/.

81. Martha R. Burt, Laudan Y. Aron, and Edgar Lee, *Helping America's Homeless: Emergency Shelter or Affordable Housing?* (Washington D.C.: Urban Institute, 2001). Susan M. Barrow, "Housing, Transitional." in *Encyclopedia of Homelessness*, ed. David Levinson, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2004) 269-270.

into permanent housing.[82] This approach recognizes that people need to be housed before they can address any other issues they may have. Without stable housing, it is nearly impossible to maintain good health, get job training, or seek treatment. Housing First offers permanent supportive housing, which is a long-term accommodation where people can access an array of services. Residents are not required to obtain services, and there are no barriers to entry, so someone with a criminal history or active addiction can qualify for a unit. The Housing First approach is primarily targeted toward the chronic homeless, or the long-term, visible street population who can be difficult to house. While this approach has been successful, it can be expensive. Unlike transitional housing programs, housing first residents are encouraged to stay in their units for a long time, which can require deep, ongoing, public subsidies.

Emergency shelters, and transitional and permanent supportive housing facilities are all public policy approaches to addressing homelessness, but people experiencing homelessness have developed their own collective solutions as well. These solutions include both formal and informal encampments, self-built housing, and self-managed squats. Sometimes squats and encampments are set up as protest sites designed to demand additional shelter and housing options from local governments. In the 1990s in Seattle, SHARE and WHEEL, two organizations run by homeless men and women, established a tent city downtown to protest the city's sweeps of homeless encampments during the Goodwill Games.[83] The city eventually allowed the community of over 150 people to convert an abandoned bus garage into a temporary, self-managed homeless shelter. When the bus barn shelter closed, the city provided SHARE/WHEEL with a building where they created a self-run transitional housing facility. Encampments and building occupations by homeless people have been successful at creating new emergency, transitional, and permanent housing options. The resulting housing options have taken many forms from tiny house communities to car and tent camping sites to cooperative apartment buildings. Housing options that have been developed as a result of grassroots pressure are often self-managed, rather than administered by a nonprofit staff. When people experiencing homelessness

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82. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *Housing First in Permanent Supportive Housing Brief,* July 2014, https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Housing-First-Permanent-Supportive-Housing-Brief.pdf.

83. Seattle Housing and Resource Effort and Women's Housing Equality and Enhancement League, "History," accessed on July 28, 2021, http://www.sharewheel.org/Home/history.

design and demand their own solutions, they not only want more housing options, they also want to live with dignity and autonomy.

Not all encampments or squats are set-up as protest sites. The vast majority of makeshift housing communities are developed for survival. A communal encampment or squat not only provides shelter, but living with others also provides protection and allows people to pool their resources. Sometimes, self-built housing communities engage in protest, even though their settlements were not established as protest sites. In Fresno, California, residents of local encampments successfully organized to demand portable toilets and garbage cans from the city.[84] Other self-help homeless communities have fought city-sponsored sweeps, or evictions.

Throughout most of the world, self-help solutions play an integral role in stemming homelessness. Shelters are rare in countries in the Global South.[85] Only India, Bangladesh, and South Africa use shelters to address homelessness. In India, people who sleep on the streets are often wary of shelters, which split up family members by gender and mix people from different communities and castes. Many homeless people find the streets are safer than shelters in India.

Rather than focusing on providing emergency shelter options, most lower-income countries use their limited resources to increase or upgrade the housing supply. In China, the government tightly controls rural to urban migration. Only residents with an official permit can move to fast-growing cities. Controlling the pace of rural to urban migration has allowed the Chinese government to plan for growth and provide an adequate affordable housing supply. The South African government gives subsidies to the lowest-income households to construct or improve their housing or to purchase a plot of land. However, some families have struggled to maintain their upgraded housing because of the monthly bills they incur as a result of adding electricity or running water. Other families are unable to purchase plots of land near their workplace, which can result in transportation cost burdens. Sometimes community members will pool their subsidies to make collective improvements.

Although living in an informal community can make one vulnerable to literal homelessness, moving people

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84. Jessie Speer, "The Right to Infrastructure: A Struggle for Sanitation in Fresno, California Homeless Encampments." *Urban Geography* 37, 7 (2016): 1049-069.

85. Tipple and Speak, *The Hidden Millions*

out of informal areas and even off the streets into newly built housing elsewhere can also produce unintended hardships. Families may be relocated far from their place of work, and the survival networks they established within their community might be disrupted. When informal housing settlements are evicted in Bangladesh, entire neighborhood economies can collapse. Transportation workers, nannies, food deliverers, vendors, and housecleaners can disappear if a neighborhood is cleared.

Evicting people from informal settlements and moving them into newly built neighborhoods is not only disruptive, it's also costly. Rather than building new housing, most governments focus on providing services to informal communities and resources so residents can improve their own structures. An organization in Ecuador produces housing kits made from local materials that are affordable to the lowest-income families.[86] These homes can be assembled in a day and cost far less than the most affordable public housing. Families purchase the kits by paying monthly installments equal to 14-24% of the minimum wage for two years. The title to home is the names of the mother and children in the family, ensuring stability. The poorest households are prioritized. More than 100,000 families have built housing using these locally produced kits.

Throughout the world, the most effective solutions to homelessness involve providing resources directly to individuals and communities so they can improve their shelters and lives.[87] Upgrading existing makeshift housing and making infrastructure improvements to informal communities creates jobs and can potentially increase a household's income if they can expand their home enough to be able to take in boarders. Countries can also prevent women and children from losing their housing by making changes to property and inheritance laws. Brazil adopted a legal provision that puts land titles in the name of both partners in a household regardless of their marital status.

In countries that do not have the resources to provide housing to everyone who is living on the streets, strengthening labor laws and ensuring access to basic services can improve homeless people's lives. Making sure that people have access to toilets and other sanitary services as well as to education and health care are essential. In addition, homelessness needs to be decriminalized. No one should face the added burdens of being swept or

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86. World Habitat Awards, *Viviendas del Hogar de Cristo, Guyaquil,* accessed July 27, 2021, https://world-habitat.org/world-habitat-awards/winners-and-finalists/viviendas-del-hogar-de-cristo-guyaquil/.

87. Tipple and Speak, *The Hidden Millions*

evicted from public spaces. Criminalization can result in homeless people losing their source of income, their property or their liberty.

A Right to Housing

Every nation in the world has ratified at least one international agreement that recognizes the basic human right to have adequate housing.[88] Having a right to housing does not necessarily mean that governments have to take responsibility for building enough homes for all of their citizens, but rather, it involves extending legal protections to prevent people from being evicted or displaced, ensures tenure rights, and guards against housing discrimination. Some nations, like Mexico, South Africa, Russia, and Portugal, have language guaranteeing a right to housing in their constitutions. However, language ensuring a right to housing is worthless without specific policies that allow that right to be realized.

The Right to Adequate Housing

In 1991, the U.N Committee on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights outlined what an international right to adequate housing entails:

1. Security of Tenure: Regardless of whether one rents, owns, or cooperatively owns their home that is in the public or private sector, they should be protected from forced eviction or harassment.
2. Services and Infrastructure: Housing should include access to safe, clean drinking water, energy for cooking, heating, lighting, access to waste disposal and sewage, and emergency services.

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88. UN Habitat, The Right to Adequate Housing, Fact Sheet Number 21, Rev. 1, 2009, https://www.ohchr.org/documents/publications/fs21_rev_1_housing_en.pdf.

3. Affordability: Occupants should be able to pay for housing and still meet their other basic needs. Housing costs should be aligned with wages. Costs may include construction materials when housing is self-built.

4. Habitability: Housing should protect occupants from weather and the elements. It should be free of disease vectors, structural issues, and other health and safety risks.

5. Accessibility: Housing must be provided to all without discrimination. The specialized needs of various groups should be accommodated for in the housing that is provided.

6. Location: Housing should be sited in areas where there are jobs, educational facilities, and services.

7. Cultural adequacy: The cultural functions of housing need to be taken into account in its design and provision.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, CESCR General Comment No.4: The Right to Adequate Housing, https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/47a7079a1.pdf.

In 2003, Scotland updated its Homelessness Act to include language granting anyone who ended up homeless the right to be permanently housed in a public or private rental unit.[89] With this new legislation, Scotland became the first country in the world to guarantee homeless people the right to be immediately housed in a permanent housing unit for as long as they need. Prior to this act, Scotland already had a very expansive definition of homelessness, which made people living in domestic violence situations, those who were doubled-up, or those living on a boat or in a caravan eligible for housing services.

Scotland's legislation basically provides a right to housing. Under this act, local governments must enact

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89. Eric S. Tars and Caitlin Egelson, "Great Scot!: The Scottish Plan to End Homelessness and Lessons for the Housing Rights Movement in the United States," *Georgetown Journal on Poverty, Law and Policy,* 16, 1 (Winter 2009), 187-217.

plans to create additional housing units and to reduce the percentage of unhoused people. In 2020, 80% of people who applied for homelessness assistance were permanently housed, and many of the remainder ended up moving back in with friends or family.[90] Only 4% of those who applied for homelessness assistance in 2020 had been sleeping on the streets. Less than one-fifth of those who applied for assistance had been evicted or lost their housing. Most had been living with family and friends and were forced to leave after some kind of dispute. The reason that the percentage of homeless who lost or were unable to pay for housing is so low is because the Scottish government provides a wide array of homelessness prevention services.[91] For example, if your home is foreclosed, the government has the option to purchase it and rent it back to you. When people are evicted from their housing, the landlord must notify the local public housing authority, so they can provide accommodations. Finally, people being released from prison or from health care facilities are moved directly into housing. The Scottish system is far from perfect. Many individuals and families end up living in temporary housing for far too long, but the country has made great strides in holistically addressing homelessness and as a result has significantly reduced the numbers of people who end up sleeping on the streets.

There is no right to housing in the United States. New York City, Washington D.C., and the state of Massachusetts guarantee a right to shelter, which does not mean that state or local governments are required to connect people to permanent housing.[92] In these places, unhoused people are more likely to be sheltered, but that often means warehousing them in large, emergency shelters. The city of Sacramento is considering passing a right-to-housing mandate.[93] The mandate would obligate the city to provide more units of affordable housing. As it is currently proposed, the mandate would also be tied to an obligation to accept shelter. Some advocates are critical of linking the mandate to an obligation to accept shelter, arguing that it is contrary to the concept of human rights, which recognize the inherent dignity and autonomy of individuals.

90. Scottish Government, "Homelessness in Scotland 2020-2021," June 29, 2021, https://www.gov.scot/publications/homelessness-scotland-2020-2021/pages/3/.

91. Tars and Egelson, *"Great Scot!"*

92. Molly Solomon, "What would Housing as a Human Right look like in California?" KQED, February 12, 2020, https://www.kqed.org/news/11801176/what-would-housing-as-a-human-right-look-like-in-california.

93. Shawn Hubler, Sacramento Mulls a New Homelessness Strategy: Legally Mandating Housing, New York Times, June 30, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/us/sacramento-homelessness-right-to-housing.html.

Summary

Housing comprises a large swath of the physical infrastructure within a city. Housing can be produced by public or private entities and can be leased or sold on the open market or non-market-based criteria can determine who is qualified to move into a unit.

Housing affordability is a major issue in many cities across the globe. A lack of affordable housing can be caused by housing shortages, a mismatch between housing costs and wages, or by financializing mortgage loans and other functions of the housing sector. A household is considered cost-burdened or shelter poor if they are paying too large of a portion of their income for housing.

Cities can address the lack of housing affordability by producing more housing units. Affordable housing can be constructed by the public or private sector. Tax credits and zoning tools can help incentivize builders to create more affordable units. Cities can also subsidize housing costs for their residents. Rent control and tenant protections are important tools that cities can use to address the affordable housing crisis. Second-and third-generation rent control programs have fewer unintended consequences associated with them.

When housing and labor markets fail to produce housing that is affordable to all, homelessness can result. Homelessness encompasses more situations than simply sleeping on the streets. Having a more holistic definition of homelessness can produce a more accurate picture of the problem. In addition to housing and labor market failures, homelessness can also be caused by a lack of a social safety net and family support. Solving homelessness involves more than just simply providing people with a bed for the night. Longer-term housing solutions, often accompanied by services, can be more effective. Recognizing a right to housing can spur governments to take a comprehensive approach to preventing homelessness and providing immediate support for those who lose their housing.

Test your Urban Literacy:

Think about how the concepts in this chapter apply to your own city

1. Name the three housing tenure sectors. Provide examples of housing developments in your community that represent at least two of these sectors.
2. What does the concept of housing affordability mean? What criteria should be considered when developing a tool to measure whether a household's housing costs are affordable?
3. Identify three tools that cities can use to make housing more affordable for their residents. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these three approaches?
4. How would you define homelessness if you wanted to get an accurate portrait of this problem? What are the pros and cons of using an expansive definition of homelessness?
5. Describe three factors that cause homelessness. How do these factors produce homelessness?
6. What can cities do to address homelessness? Find three examples of programs in your city that address the problem.

Learn to read the city around you:

Apply what you've learned in this chapter by completing a hands-on activity in your own city

1. ***Create a prototype portable shelter:*** Design a cheap, lightweight, portable shelter that can be used by people living on the streets. The shelter should be waterproof and protect the user from extreme temperatures. As you design your shelter prototype, think about what the potential users may need. Make sure you think about the need for privacy, mobility, and security. Create drawings of your shelter design, and a plan that outlines who might be able to use these shelters, where and how they might be deployed, and how they could be distributed. Present your prototype and plan to your classmates

2. ***Calculate the housing wage in your community:*** A housing wage is the hourly, monthly, or annual salary that a person must earn to be able to afford the cost of housing in a particular community. The housing wage assumes that a household should pay no more than 30% of their income on housing. To calculate the housing wage, you will need to find out what the average rent is your area. The housing wage will fluctuate depending upon the size of a unit that a household needs. You should calculate the housing wage for at least two household types (for example, a single adult, or a single parent with two children). Once you calculate the housing wage, do some more research to learn what people are actually earning in your city or metropolitan area. Write a report about your findings.

3. ***Analyze real estate ads:*** Collect real estate advertisements from different neighborhoods in your city. Try to find ads from a variety of publications and websites that represent an array of different housing types. Analyze the pictures and texts in your advertisement collection to determine who these homes and units are being marketed to. Think about the demographics

of the potential tenants or buyers. Compare different housing types and housing in different neighborhoods. Consider the images and tropes that are used to market housing. What types of messages about home, family, and neighborhood do they reinforce? Write a short essay about what you learn and include pictures and texts from the advertisements to support your ideas.

4. ***Compile your personal or family's housing history:*** Think about the role that housing has played in you and your family's lives and how housing and other social policies have influenced where you've lived. Compile your own or your family's housing history. If you are collecting your family's history, go back as many generations as you are able to. Write down where you or your family have lived, what type of housing you lived in, whether you rented, owned or shared your home, and how you ended up living there. Think about the broader policies or events that shaped your own or your family's housing history. Present your housing history in a narrative form or as an annotated timeline. If you create a timeline, make sure you also include the dates of specific policies or events that influenced your family's housing history.

5. ***Design a flexible housing community:*** Design a housing community that can meet the needs of diverse households. Imagine that you have one square block to build a flexible housing community from scratch. Your community will need to serve households of various sizes, incomes, and family types. Think about how to create housing units that can meet the needs of young couples, single disabled adults, multi-generational families, and so on. You will need to think through how the individual units will be designed and how they will fit into a larger building and community. Also, think about the spaces between the buildings. Will there be shared public spaces? What will they be used for? As you design your housing community, think about how you can encourage interaction among residents. Create drawings of your community that show floor plans and the overall design for the block. Present your plans to your classmates.

6. ***Write a letter advocating for new homelessness policies:*** Write a one- to two-page letter to an elected official encouraging them to institute a specific policy that you think

would help address homelessness in your community. You will need to find out what your community is already doing to address this issue. You discover that your city has already adopted some effective strategies. If this is the case, you might highlight why you believe these strategies are effective and push for more funding or resources for them. If you find gaps in your city's approach to homelessness, you may wish to propose a new policy or strategy. This can be a strategy that you come up with, or it can be something that has been developed and implemented in another city or country. When you write your letter, make sure you describe your proposed policy change in detail and address why you think it would be more effective. You will want to persuade your elected official, not alienate them. Think about ways to establish common ground.

7. ***Develop a myth and fact sheet about a housing issue in your community:*** There are persistent popular myths about various housing issues. Select a housing issue that the public may be misinformed about. Create a myth and fact sheet that challenges commonly held beliefs by presenting clear and verifiable information. Make sure you cite your sources.

8. ***Explore the relationship between housing and home:*** Consider how our ideas about home relate to the production, distribution, and design of housing. Choose a creative way to examine this issue. You may want to conduct interviews with people in your city and create a short film about the meaning of home. You might approach this topic by reading poems or listening to songs about home. You could do a linguistic analysis or philosophical exploration of the importance of home. Capture your thoughts through a creative medium (i.e. poetry, art, sculpture, collage, film) and share them with the class.