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Letter From Editor

In 1960 34% of the global population resided in cities. As of 2015, the number is estimated to be 54% and growing. Reconciling these types of statistics and abstract conceptions of urban places with the dense concentrations of concrete and people that surround us on a daily basis is not easy. But to think critically about what a city is, how we have shaped cities and how they have shaped us, is about more than skyscrapers and boulevards. It is ultimately a question about what it means to be human in the 21st century.

So much of the work that is done by by students, not only at Brown and RISD, but around the world is wasted. It is read by two people--a student and a professor--before it is filed into desktop folders and campus recycling bins never to be seen again. The idea behind this journal was to provide an outlet for material that engages with the urban environment for students and faculty in Providence.

The Journal will be based out of the Urban Studies Program at Brown University and will appear annually in May. Funding was provided by the Urban Studies Program and the Harriet David Goldberg Endowment.

This journal, just like a city, is composed of a patchwork of components created through different media. The vision is that cumulatively these pieces are greater than the sum of their parts, each providing context for the others. It is my hope that this journal becomes a place for challenging ideas, for original journalism, for creative expression. But at the very least, it is my hope that it will make us all think more critically about ourselves, the cities we live in and the forces that shape them.

Contents

Down Wickenden Street	1
How the Kebab Became Catalan	3
Gentrification for Art Page.....	6
Cheaper ‘than most of Chicago’s slum clearance projects’ Mies van der Rohe’s first apartment tower and public housing in the US.....	7
Passing Through/ Scenes from Urban India.....	23
Formal and Informal Markets in Sri Lanka.....	32
The Flowering of a Trash Heap: Urban Revitalization in Medellin, Colombia.....	37
St. Industry Foreal.....	49
Fen(être).....	51
Cigarettes in the Air at the Sarajevo Film Festival.....	53
Getting Equity on Track: The Racial Demographics of the D.C. Streetcar Plan.....	54
Origins of the Brown Urban Studies Program.....	61
Holes.....	67
Walking in Warsaw.....	71

Down Wickenden Street

JACKIE ROBERTI

I did walk
the street
with the candy houses,
marble blue and peach
I did look
on the sea
where industrial towers
go dipping their feet
this highway flexes
its tongue
as if it could eat
these hacked-off piers
a petrol bay ringed
by a mouth of teeth
I did take
off coat, shirt, pants
felt february inside me
and a spine of cars like ants
I did sink
through oily sheen
left machines for the teeth
bare park, soon green

oh this water
ain't for
swimming
but spring's providence
left me
grinning

I did walk
back up the street
candy houses dripping
a hundred colors
through me.

How the Kebab Became Catalan

ARON LESSER

Cataluña is a startling site of raw cultural diversity. In 1991, about 8,000 foreigners lived in Barcelona. By 2013, that number totaled over 80,000, roughly 50,000 of which arrived in a burst between 2004 and 2006.

Nowhere was the influx of foreigners more evident than in Barcelona's El Raval, the "immigrant" section of the originally Roman city. In the late twentieth century Moroccans, Pakistanis and Filipinos took advantage of low housing costs in this district, and by the 21st century they became the area's most visible nationalities. El Raval is a mecca of new languages, cultures, and of course, food. The prime example of this is El Raval's adoption of the elusive, ubiquitous kebab. Today, this multi-national, multi-ethnic concoction has become both a treat for cash-strapped Spaniards and the poster child of El Raval's new, international vibe.

Eating the *barri's* (the Catalan word for neighborhood) food used to be only for the most adventurous, or poorest, Barcelonians. Yet when the 2008 economic crisis struck the country, families couldn't afford to eat out as much as they had, if at all. Exploring El Raval for lunch or dinner became a new, low-cost leisure activity. A full kebab lunch would only set one back €3.50, something rare in an area where even traditional Catalan light fare or fast food was out of reach for many Barcelonan working class families.

The origin of the "Döner Kebab" is a subject of debate among food historians and inebriated teens, but most agree that a Turkish immigrant to London put all the pieces together. The Döner is first mentioned in 18th century Ottoman travel books as a horizontal stack of meat. Only in London, a city that went from food disaster to food master, did it take its modern form as a multi-textured, sinfully rich mega-sandwich. Over the past two decades the kebab has travelled the world adapting to one new home after another. It's no surprise that the El Raval Döner tastes nothing like the ones to be found in London, Berlin, or Istanbul.

The preparation of the kebab is an essential part of the so-called 'kebab experience.' In the most revered places, fresh naan bread is made to order on a griddle and served while warm. Rotating skewered beef and chicken are crudely carved with loud, violent power-saws, and dumped into the bread—tools and techniques one certainly wouldn't find in grandma's kitchen. The pile of thinly shaved meat always holds an unexpected, salty crunch. While the meat crackles, the bread melts in one's mouth.



The Inside of a Döner Kebab Shop photo by Aron Lesser

Barcelona's kebab, however, is all Catalan. The standard cucumber, tomato and onion toppings are topped off with the salsa blanca sauce, a creamy garlic topping that is Catalonia's aioli's cousin and the dressing of choice for fideuà and paella. The garlic sauce is barely spicy and always tickles the back of the throat. It moistens the crispy meat and ties the kebab together, ensuring that each bite stays close to home. The kebab therefore serves as a treaty between Catalonia and its immigrants. The bread and heavy-duty meat carving might be foreign, but the regional produce and the homey sauce make it just exotic enough for the whole city to bond over.

Even as El Raval gentrifies and Catalonians populate its once-immigrant streets, the kebab remains central to the neighborhood and to the city's identity. Locals take their lunch breaks at places like Bismillah Kebabish and Istanbul Doner, skipping over bland corporate and industrially produced options. Despite no evident lack of Kebab joints, the establishments nevertheless often run out of food by 7 p.m.

Barcelona still has its integration problems. Racial tensions and deeply rooted xenophobia inform its residents' discourse on immigration, and Barcelonans still integrate slurs into their everyday conversations. "The Chino is closed." "Ok, I'll pick up some fruit at the Paki on my way home." A traditionally homogenous Catalan population, like the rest of Europe, is still struggling to figure out how to interact with the waves of immigrants escaping violence, conflict and plain unemployment in the Middle East and Africa. Even so, the kebab's popularity attests to the city's changing relationship with immigrants. Accepting a people's food may very well be the first step to accepting their culture. The kebab-eating experience and its ability to serve as an economic and cultural equalizer could even suggest a hopeful future for a new multi-ethnic Barcelona.



Gentrification for Art Page

DANNY SOBOR

Cheaper 'than most of Chicago's slum clearance projects:'¹

Mies van der Rohe's first apartment tower and public housing in the US

DIETRICH NEUMANN

Two seismic shifts profoundly altered urban housing in postwar America: cars became affordable and millions, especially families with children, left for the suburbs. The boom in high-rise apartments for the middle class and the wealthy in large cities had ended with the Depression, and urban apartment towers evolved into new types with smaller units and broader appeal. At the same time, high-rise housing for the poor became a main tool in federally funded urban renewal projects. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's (1886-1969) early work in Chicago was influential on both. The Weimar Republic's dream of placing modern architecture in the services of social housing for the working class had never been fully realized, as most housing projects ended up unaffordable for low income groups. In the US, finally, Mies came close to creating a type for mass production in housing, albeit, a type that ultimately failed.

In 1946 an unlikely collaboration began between a 60 year old well-known architect – whose career, however, seemed to flounder – and two

1 Charles Genter, the architect of record together with Mies for the Promontory Apartments as quoted in: 'Glass and Brick in a Concrete Frame,' *Architectural Forum*, vol. 92, no. 1 (January 1950): 69-74; Scholarship on the Promontory and Lake Shore Drive Apartments has made significant progress in recent years thanks to the work of David Dunster and Sarah Stevens. David Dunster, 'Selling Mies,' in: Charles Waldheim, Katerina Rüedi (Eds.) *Chicago Architecture: Histories, Revisions, Alternatives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005): 93-103 and Sarah K. Stevens, *Developing Expertise: The Architecture of Real Estate, 1908-1065* (PhD dissertation at Princeton University, 2012).

inexperienced men in their 30s who were just starting out. Herbert Greenwald (1915-1959) had recently given up his philosophical studies to enter the real estate business, and wanted to develop cheap apartment buildings for middle class clients in formerly affluent neighborhoods. He asked his friend and neighbor Charles 'Skip' Genter (1907-1987) to become his architect. Genter quit his job at Holabird and Root² and founded his own company, called PACE Associates (Planners, Architects and Consulting Engineers). To sell the project to financial backers and future owners, Greenwald was also looking for an architect with name recognition. He was turned down first by Frank Lloyd Wright, then by Eero Saarinen and finally by Walter Gropius, who suggested Mies van der Rohe. Since Genter had studied at IIT and had become friendly with Mies, he approached him.³ After 8 years in the US, Mies had only realized three smaller buildings on IIT's new campus⁴ and - to his great disappointment - IIT president Henry T. Heald had just bypassed him, giving the commission for several new dormitories to Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM).⁵ Weary about the pace of his career, Mies agreed to collaborate on a project whose outcome must have looked rather uncertain.

2 Genter had worked for Skidmore Owings and Merrill before. SOM and Holabird and Root were two of the most significant modernists in the US, and both, particularly SOM, had been working on social housing projects.

3 Greenwald later remembered having spent many afternoons with Mies and Hilberseimer at the Berghoff Restaurant in downtown Chicago, where they would "drink beer and talk." Interview with Charles Booher Genter by Betty J. Blum (Chicago Architects Oral History Project at the Ernest R. Graham Study Center for Architectural Drawings, Department of Architecture, The Art Institute of Chicago, Copyright © 1995, Revised Edition © 2003); online at: <http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/caohp/id/3612/rec/1>.

4 Minerals and Metals, Chemistry Building and Alumni Hall. Mies was also, slowly, working on the Farnsworth House, which was eventually built. His other projects at the time, the Cantor Drive-In Restaurant and a House for Joseph Cantor came to naught.

5 'Illinois Tech completes 2 dormitories' *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Sep 19, 1948): WB. Nathaniel Owens joined the IIT board of trustees in 1950 and many more commissions for SOM on the IIT campus would follow. 'Illinois Tech Widens Field, Triples Assets in 10 Years' *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Oct 10, 1950): B7.

As a third partner, Greenwald recruited his former employer, the developer/design firm Holsman, Holsman, Klekamp & Taylor. Greenwald had been fascinated with John Holsman's pre-war co-operative housing scheme called "Mutual Ownership Trust," which he adopted for the Promontory and later the Lake Shore Drive Apartments⁶. This arrangement offered future owners low entrance fees and monthly payments, as well as financial safety and substantial tax rebates. Greenwald sold all 122 certificates within a few months.⁷ It took longer to secure the necessary loan, which he finally received from a Cincinnati life insurance company.⁸

The Promontory's site faces the lake and is flanked by two apartment towers typical of the boom years of the 1920s.⁹ Immediately north stands the 16 story Flamingo Apartment Hotel of 1927 (architect William Reichert), in 'Spanish Style' with red brick, white Portland stone trim and dark roof tiles. The tall neighbor to the southwest is the similarly elaborate 19 story Jackson Towers apartment building (Walter W. Ahlschlager) of 1925.¹⁰

6 Future tenants would purchase certificates entitling them to lease an apartment and paid a monthly rent towards full purchase, while a separate board of trustees oversaw the building and carried the financial risk. Al Chase, 'Co-Op Home Movement Expanding: Takes Different Line Than in '20s,' *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Jul 9, 1949): A5 and Al Chase, 'Co-Op Home Ownership Plans Vary: Corporation Is Used Widely,' *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Jul 11, 1949): B5. John T. Holsman, 'Community Trust' *Architectural Forum*, vol. 92, no. 1 (January 1950): 78.

7 Certificates cost \$ 5000 and later \$ 6500; 'Walls of Big Co-op Rising on S. Shore,' *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Jul 11, 1948): NWC.

8 'The financing of Promontory,' *Architectural Forum*, vol. 92, no. 1 (January 1950): 77, 124. Apparently the loan was so tightly calculated that Greenwald frequently fell behind with his payments for Mies and Genther. Letter Greenwald to Mies, November 11, 1946 (MoMA, Mies Papers, Promontory Apartments Folder 1).

9 Eastern Hyde Park sits next to the former grounds of the Columbian Exposition of 1893, now called Jackson Park and the Museum of Science and Industry there is the fair's only built remainder. The Chicago Building Code of 1923 had allowed tall apartment towers here, and several of them with names such as 'The Shoreland,' 'The Powhatan' or 'The Windermere' - and styles ranging from Gothic to Renaissance and Spanish Vernacular - had sprung up during the boom years of the 1920s.

10 These elegant apartment hotels were firmly aimed at the middle- and upper middle class, and providing

The Promontory emerged in the midst of the assumed elegance of its neighbors with the brashness of a self-assured newcomer. Its relentless grid of 160 identical units between nine raw concrete piers¹¹ made no concessions to architectural conventions – it showed no discernable central axis, nor any hint of the common tripartite façade division into base, shaft and capital. Its aluminum ribbon windows spanned the full width of each bay boldly facing the morning sun over the lake. (Fig. 1) The Promontory Apartments were Mies van der Rohe's first building in reinforced concrete and the first high-rise building of his career. They were also the first high-rise apartment building in Chicago since the war.



Figure 1 Promontory Apartments Entrance
photo (c) Hassan Bagheri

a certain amount of amenities, such as maid service and a restaurant. For a history of Hyde Park Architecture, see: Susan O'Connor Davis, *Chicago's Historic Hyde Park* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013): 255-271.

11 Each pier is 1'-6" wide, all eight bays have an equal 16 1/2' distance and an interior 15' width, accommodating rows of exactly 20 1/2 facing bricks in front of concrete blocks. The concrete was mixed with the newly developed air entrained cement, which gave it a smoother exterior and made it more resistant to the freezing and thawing cycles typical for Chicago. Several historians have assumed that it was devised in steel first, and then changed to concrete under the pressure of the market, but the recollections by several team members, such as Charles Genther and Joe Fujikawa suggest otherwise. (Interview with Charles Booher Genther by Betty J. Blum, op. cit.). As a result of the war effort, steel was still rare - one steel company estimated an 18 month delay on shipments.



Figure 2 New York City, Stuyvesant Town (1943-1949), Architects: Richmond Shreve and Irwin Clavan (Corbis: U1102369INP)

In great contrast, New York City had recently seen a veritable flood of apartment towers for lower and middle income tenants, thanks to the close collaboration of urban planner Robert Moses with investors like the Metropolitan Life Insurance in so called ‘Slum Clearance’ projects. Many thousand apartments were built throughout the 1940s in projects such as Parkchester (Bronx), Riverton (Harlem) in 1943 and, most importantly, Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village (1943-1949) with 11000 apartments in 35 13-story towers.¹² (Fig. 2) They all followed the same design formula of sequential ‘cross plans’ where four short wings clustered around an elevator core, their steel frames clad with unadorned brick and rows of single windows.

¹² Samuel Zipp, *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): 114-136.

The Promontory Apartments responded to the monotony of these New York City projects with a structurally expressive design that referenced the visible frame and wide window openings of typical Chicago School office buildings – according to *Architectural Forum*, it was ‘a fresh victory for Chicago’s way of “building straight.”’¹³ The exposed concrete frame also brings Midwestern plants and warehouses to mind such as the Ford Assembly Plant in Highland Park of 1909,¹⁴ the Larkin R/S/T building in Buffalo of 1911,¹⁵ even the Lingotto Fiat Factory in Turin of 1914¹⁶. In fact, in an unpublished text of 1933, Mies had declared that the “architectural potential” of a “skeleton structures’ clear constructive appearance” had emerged with “large utilitarian buildings,” but would be “fully realized in the area of residential architecture.”¹⁷ Adopting a formal solution or material application from industry or commerce had long been one of Mies’ key strategies. Whenever such a utilitarian concept was adopted, refinements were introduced. In the case of the Promontory Apartments, beige bricks¹⁸ were chosen instead of concrete blocks (and fitted precisely into the concrete frames), wide aluminum windows with hinged lower sections, and the use of entrained cement secured a smoother surface and protection against changes in tempera-

¹³ ‘Glass and Brick in a Concrete Frame,’ *Architectural Forum*, vol. 92, no. 1 (January 1950): 69-74;

¹⁴ Albert Kahn’s much published building was shown in Le Corbusier’s *Vers une Architecture* in 1923 and in the German publication Werner Lindner, *Industriearchitektur*; (Berlin: Wasmuth, 1923): 110.

¹⁵ Henry-Russell Hitchcock had included the building by by Lockwood, Greene and Company in his 1940 exhibition on Buffalo Architecture at the Albright Knox Gallery. Reyner Banham, *Concrete Atlantis* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986): 89. (“Buffalo Architecture, 1816–1940 Exhibition - Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr.,” Albright-Knox Art Gallery.)

¹⁶ Giacomo Mattè-Trucco’s Fiat Factory of 1914 had been published in the magazine *G*, of which Mies was a co-editor, right next to his own Concrete Country House in 1922;

¹⁷ Mies van der Rohe, “Was wäre Beton, was Stahl ohne Spiegelglas?” (1933) in: Fritz Neumeier, Mies van der Rohe, *Das kunstlose Wort: Gedanken zur Baukunst* (Berlin: Siedler Verlag 1986): 378. (translation: DN)

¹⁸ Mies had begun using the same bricks for his buildings on the IIT Campus.

ture. Most importantly, though, Mies introduced setbacks for the concrete piers. They are deeper at the bottom, and then set back by about 4 inches above the 6th, 11th and 16th floor. When oblique sunlight hits, a staggered shadow line becomes visible. (Fig. 3) This decreasing thickness made structural sense, as the lower piers have to carry a higher load and therefore have to be stronger. However, since all supports are generously over-dimensioned (providing for exceptional load conditions and lateral wind forces), Mies' visible display of the decreasing load was more a formal representation than an actual depiction of the conditions at work.¹⁹ This structural expressionism had a famous Chicago predecessor in the Monadnock building (1893) whose outside brick walls became progressively thinner towards the top. Mies himself had implied the principle of progressively diminished loads in his 1923 Concrete Office Building, when he left the vertical piers intact, but instead progressively enlarged the floor plate.²⁰

Greenwald, Genther and Mies had worked with the structural engineer Frank Kornacker "to use all possible economies, at the same time providing a building for apartments in the middle-income level"²¹ and at \$ 8.55 per sq. ft., the apartments cost "less than most of Chicago's slum clearance projects."²²

19 The thickness of the interior columns and horizontal beams on the unadorned sides of the building is also progressively reduced. Of course, the reduction in load happened continuously floor by floor as you ascended, rather than abruptly every five stories. Inspired by Mies' example, a number of European architects took this idea further – Gio Ponti at the Pirelli skyscraper in Milan, or Schwedter at the Telefunken Hochhaus at Berlin's Ernst Reuter Platz.

20 Dietrich Neumann, "Three Early Projects by Mies van der Rohe" *Perspecta, Journal of the Yale School of Architecture* vol. 27 (1992): 76-97.

21 Frank J. Kornacker, "The Frame and Floor Structure – Design Principle" in: Charles R. Koehler (Ed.), *Design for Environments: Floor-Ceilings and Service Systems in Multi-Story Buildings* (Building Research Institute, Washington D.C. 1955): 79-85;

22 "Glass and Brick in a Concrete Frame," *Architectural Forum*, vol. 92, no. 1 (January 1950): 70;



Figure 3 Promontory Apartments, Chicago.
Photo: Hedrich Blessing, Chicago History Museum

The first floor contained a spacious glass-enclosed lobby, recessed from the perimeter in order to create a protective colonnade. Chicago's recently amended building code for the first time required a modest number of parking lots for apartment buildings - 1 space for three apartments. The 40 required spaces were accessed through the open bays on the either side of the building.²³

Mies' office had developed three alternatives for the organizational layout: a simple slab with two stair towers on the western side and a T-shaped version with double height apartments. The executed, double T- yielded the highest square footage. The layout and arrangement of the two and three bedroom apartments at the Promontory were superior and more sophisticated to those of their equivalents in New York City's Stuyvesant Town. Three apartments on each floor shared two elevators and two staircases (up to 12 apartments elsewhere), and each apartment had two entrances - the main access from the elevator lobby, and a service door into the kitchen from the emergency staircase.²⁴ Circulation space in each apartment was minimized due to an open connection from foyer to living and dining room. The comparatively low eight-foot ceilings were close to the permissible minimum of 7'6" and considerable less than in typical prewar apartments, such as the residential towers next door with their almost 10 ft ceilings.²⁵

23 The Zoning Code also suggested a 30 feet distance from the property line, but the construction company requested and received a zoning exemption. 'Builders of big apartment ask zoning change' *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Jul 13, 1947): S2. The building only occupied 18 ½% of the entire lot of 300 x 135 feet, the remaining space used for parking and a playground. Al Chase, 'Big apartment building will cost 1.8 million: work on South Side Unit to begin in July' *Chicago Daily Tribune* (May 4, 1947): no page number.

24 The main elevator opens into the lobby, the service elevator into the emergency staircase.

25 Chicago's Zoning Code prescribed a height limit on the site (a "volume 3 district") of 198 feet, into which the Promontory Apartments managed to fit 21 floors, compared to the 19 floors in the Jackson Tower Apartments next door, which had the same overall height.

Mies' office produced an advertising brochure with model photos, floor plans and drawn interiors with inserted photographs of potential views beyond their wide ribbon windows. In order to appeal to a broader audience, conventional furniture graced these unusual interiors which abandoned the protective interiority of typical 19th and 20th Century apartments in favor of wide views outside.²⁶

Emboldened by the Promontory's success, in 1948, Greenwald turned to his next project, the Algonquin apartments a few blocks north, with the same group of collaborators. Two 21 story high-rises of 5 x 4 and 5 x 5 bays placed on their site as two solitaires, were designed with essentially the same vocabulary. These two, unexecuted, towers occupy an important step in the evolution from the Promontory to the Lake Shore Drive Apartments.²⁷ The illustrations in the sales brochure reveal Mies' two central ambitions for the interior, which would become crucial design element at Lake Shore Drive: continuous ribbon windows on two sides of a corner room providing truly panoramatic views, and floor to ceiling glass in the dining and bedrooms (Fig. 4). Before the spandrels in the Promontory's top floor had been built, Mies and Genter had tested the view down from a corner room on the top floor, in order to understand the visual impact a floor to ceiling window would have.²⁸ Clifford

26 This photomontage shows the anticipated view from one of the larger apartments in the back towards the museum in Jackson Park. (In reality, most of it would have been obscured by the unsightly back of the Jackson Towers Apartments nearby.) Sandy Isenstadt has pointed to the fact that the picture window and its cherished view to the outside was just becoming a major asset of middle class life. Sandy Isenstadt, *The Modern American House: Spaciousness and Middle Class Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 168-178.

27 'Algonquin Apartment Buildings Scheme # 1 and #2, in: Franz Schulze (Ed.) *An Illustrated Catalogue of the Mies van der Rohe Drawings in the Museum of Modern Art, Part II 1938-1967, The American Work*, vol. 14 (New York: Garland, 1992) 23.

28 Joseph Fujikawa and Betty J. Blum, "Interview with Joseph Fujikawa," in *Chicago Architects Oral History Project* (Department of Architecture, Art Institute of Chicago, 1995): 17-18.

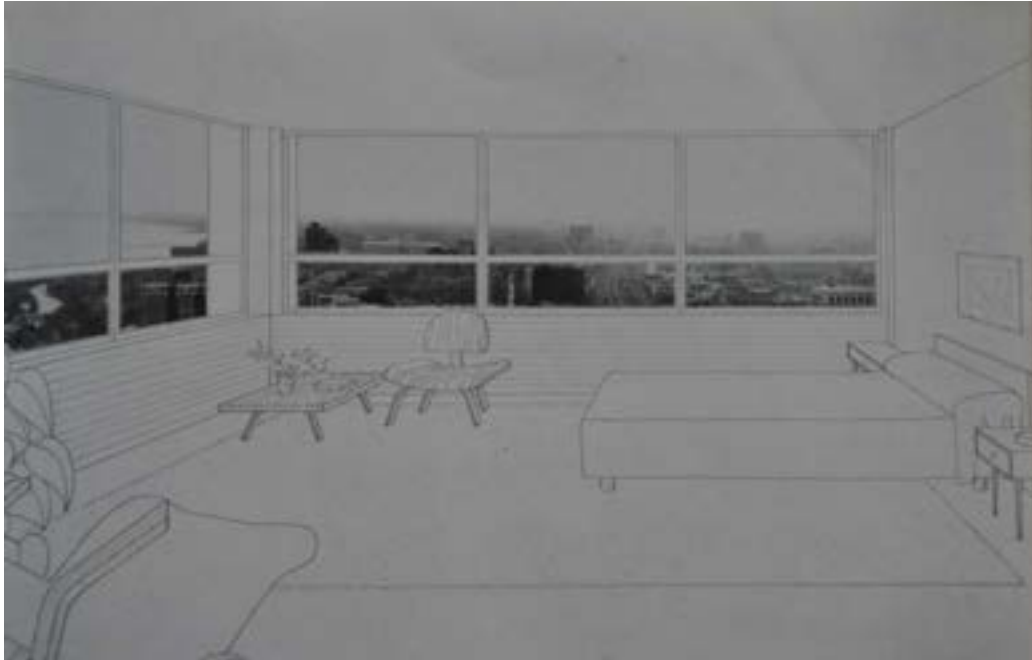


Figure 4 Sketch of Mies' Algonquin I project. Interior view north.
(From Algonquin Sales Brochure, MoMA, Mies Papers, Algonquin)



Figure 5 860/880 Lake Shore Drive Apartments, Chicago (1951)
Photo: Hassan Bagheri, 2013

McElvain of the Western & Southern Life Insurance, the main investor, conducted his own experiment, taking his family to the famous “Tip Top Tab” bar at the top of the Allerton Hotel, which had such floor to ceiling windows. When his wife and daughter sat at the window table he had reserved and seemed perfectly at ease next to the deep abyss outside, he approved the concept for the Algonquin and promised his support.²⁹

In the end, however, financial considerations forced Herbert Greenwald to abandon the two planned towers at the Algonquin and converted the project with Genter and Mies into six 14-story housing blocks.³⁰ Construction began in March 1950. The formal language was almost entirely unchanged from the Promontory project, including the setbacks in the outside concrete piers. The blocks now had a simple rectangular footprint and contained apartments with two, three and five rooms. Neither the envisioned floor-to-ceiling windows, nor the corner ribbon windows were executed.³¹

Mies van der Rohe himself used the Promontory’s and Algonquin’s formal language in three dormitory buildings on the IIT Campus in 1955, Bailey Hall, Carman Hall and Cunningham Hall. Here, finally, the panoramic corner windows were realized. And in Mies’ steel frame luxury apartment towers at 860/880 Lake Shore Drive in 1951, he finally managed to realize his vision of fully glazed outside walls. (Figure 5)

29 According to the sketches in the sales brochure, the unprecedented modernity of these views now justified contemporary furniture. As Mies’ Barcelona chairs were not yet available in the US (Knoll acquired the license in 1953) lightweight chairs by Charles and Ray Eames (DCM 10) were featured.

30 Al Chase, ‘South Side Rental Project. 2 Apartment Projects to Be Started Soon’ *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Jan 7, 1950): A 7. Greenwald had worked with the Federal Housing Association (FHA) which had just begun to offer billions of dollars in cheap mortgages and insurance (Housing Act of 1949). Its policy prohibited insuring buildings above \$ 500,000.

31 The Federal Housing Association was probably not supportive of this unconventional approach.

The Type

The *Architectural Forum* declared in 1949 that ‘through its architectural structure [...] Promontory’s influence has already spread.’³² The Chicago Housing Authority had finally agreed to permit high-rise apartment buildings for the urban poor.³³ One of the first to get a residential high-rise commission from the Chicago Housing Authority were Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, who modeled their 1949 Ogden Courts “closely on Mies van der Rohe’s Promontory Apartments.”³⁴ It was CHA’s first project with a raw concrete skeleton, bay-wide ribbon windows and comparable floor plans.³⁵ The price matched that of the Promontory at \$ 8.65 per sq.ft.³⁶ Chicago Modernists Keck & Keck employed Mies’ concrete frame, structural setback and outside access corridors at the Prairie Avenue Courts of 1951/52.³⁷ SOM again followed the Promontory Apartments closely in their Harold Ickes Homes of 1955. So did Laurence Armstadter in 1958 in his designs for the Cabrini high rise apartments at the Cabrini Green Housing project.³⁸ Often, the Promontory’s unusual double T lay-

32 ‘Glass and Brick in a Concrete Frame,’ *Architectural Forum*, vol. 92, no. 1 (January 1950): 69-74;

33 Even Elizabeth Wood (1899-1993), the social reformer and CHA director from 1937 to 1954, who had clear misgivings about their suitability for families with children, eventually approved them. Dominic A. Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009): 331-334.

34 ‘Chicago: Open Corridor Design and unfinished construction minimize costs and rents’ *Architectural Forum* 92 no. 1 (January 1950): 84.

35 Devereux Bowly, *The Poorhouse: Subsidized Housing in Chicago* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1978, 2nd edition 2012): 63; D. Bradford Hunt, *Blueprint for Disaster: The Unraveling of Chicago Public Housing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009): 124. See also Julian Whittlesey, ‘New Dimensions in Housing Design: an appraisal of Chicago’s multistory public housing projects.’ *Progressive Architecture* 4 (April 1951): 57-68.

36 Here, the infill was red brick, the width of the bays varied in order to accommodate different room sizes, and the apartments were accessed from galleries in the back – a solution that Mies and Genter had also toyed with.

37 Devereux Bowly, op. cit.: 65, 66.

38 Lawrence J. Vale, *Purging the Poorest: Public Housing and the Design Politics of Twice Cleared Communities* (MIT Press, 2013): 224.

out was also adopted. From the front it looked like a simple slab and thus quite different from the 'cross plans' common for high rise housing in New York City (as in Stuyvesant Town). The simple rectilinear slab slowly became the dominant mode, and was considered 'a major revolution in the housing field.'³⁹ In 1960, Mies' collaborator Charles Genther built the Green Towers - eight housing blocks of 15 and 16 stories with 1096 units, using the Promontory vocabulary. (Fig. 6) He applied the duplex layout with access from outside galleries – similar to those that had been on the drawing boards as an alternative for the Promontory Apartments.



Figure 6 Cabrini Green Housing Complex, Green Towers (Arch.: Charles Genther), 1960, demolished 2010.

³⁹ "Public Housing, anticipating new law, looks at New York's high-density planning innovations." *Architectural Forum* vol. 90, no. 6 (June 1949): 87. See also: Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City* (New York City: Columbia University Press: 1990): 255-267. SOM's seven 14/15 story Sedgwick Houses in the Bronx of 1950-52 were the first of many more to come.

Cabrini-Green eventually became one of the most notorious housing projects in the country, plagued by overcrowding, poverty, drug abuse, gun violence and gang activity. It finally had to be taken down. Tragically, this is also true for every single one of the above mentioned projects: Cabrini Green was demolished in 2009, Ogden Courts in 2007, Prairie Avenue Courts in 2000, the Harold Ickes Homes were closed and partially demolished in 2007. Neither Armstadter, nor Genther missed the irony of the lasting success of the Promontory Apartments and the complete failure of the same approach elsewhere. Armstadter recalled: 'We thought we were playing God in those days... We were moving people out of some of the worst housing imaginable and we were putting them into something truly decent. We thought we were doing a great thing, doing a lot of innovative design things, like putting open galleries on each floor so kids could play right in front of their apartments. We didn't foresee the kids throwing each other off them.' Genther agreed: 'We thought we were giving people the same thing that people who lived along Lake Shore Drive had, (...) we gave them good views and livable space in a great location. We all had our hearts in it.'⁴⁰ What sealed the fate of these housing blocks had less to do with their architecture, materials or internal organization and more with the social mix, availability of infrastructure, funding for upkeep, general housing policies, and the particularly volatile climate at the time. It provided a painful lesson in the limits of architecture's power to contribute to the solution of urban problems.

⁴⁰ William Mullen, 'The Road To Hell: For Cabrini-Green, It Was Paved With Good Intentions' *Chicago Tribune* (March 31, 1985). Larry Armstadter, architect of the Cabrini high rises is quoted in the same article with a similar statement: 'The apartments at Cabrini are larger and almost nicer in some respects than the high-rises along Lake Shore Drive. If the decision were ever made to gentrify Cabrini and make it into middle-class condos, I think it would be extremely successful, considering its location and proximity to the Gold Coast.'

Passing Through/ Scenes from Urban India

MAYA SORAJBEE





Formal and Informal Markets in Sri Lanka

PATRICIA DRANOFF

During a month-long journey throughout Sri Lanka, I chose to pay particular attention to markets, and their social and spatial relationships to their cities and surroundings. I made several discoveries about the informal transactions that spring up around a city's main commerce hub. Among the most notable discoveries were in the spaces between and around markets and transportation hubs, which was almost always the most dense area of informal trade.

In the maps below, the blue shaded regions are transportation hubs, orange zones cover the structured marketplaces and the red indicates informal markets and kiosks. In comparing the maps from the various cities, some trends can be defined. It seems like the official markets and transportation hubs are situated strategically in relation to one another, but somehow leave enough room for the informal transactions to sprout in between. Navigating these zones, I felt that the informal trade actually created a buffer between the infrastructure and the surrounding city and businesses.

On a next trip to Sri Lanka, I would like to remap these same cities and analyze any changes that may have taken place in the location of the informal markets and kiosks in relation to the transportation and official market zones. While it seems like things are in constant flux, it also feels like geographic reference is essential for the success of the markets, as customers are familiar with their shopkeepers and all transactions are formed on the basis of relationships.



Kandy is Sri Lanka's second largest city. It is located at the heart of the country, in the Central Province. Kandy has two primary markets: one structured and the other spontaneous. Each had its own schedule, and their content was entirely different.



Kandy Municipal Central Market
 Hours: all day, closed at night
 Content: fresh fruits and vegetables,
 meat around the edges, clothing and
 dry goods on the second floor



Hours:
 5-9am: fresh produce
 mid-day: parking
 afternoon: dry goods
 evening: passage from the road
 to the built markets beneath it

Informal Market

Content: fresh fruits and
 vegetables, mostly sold in
 bulk



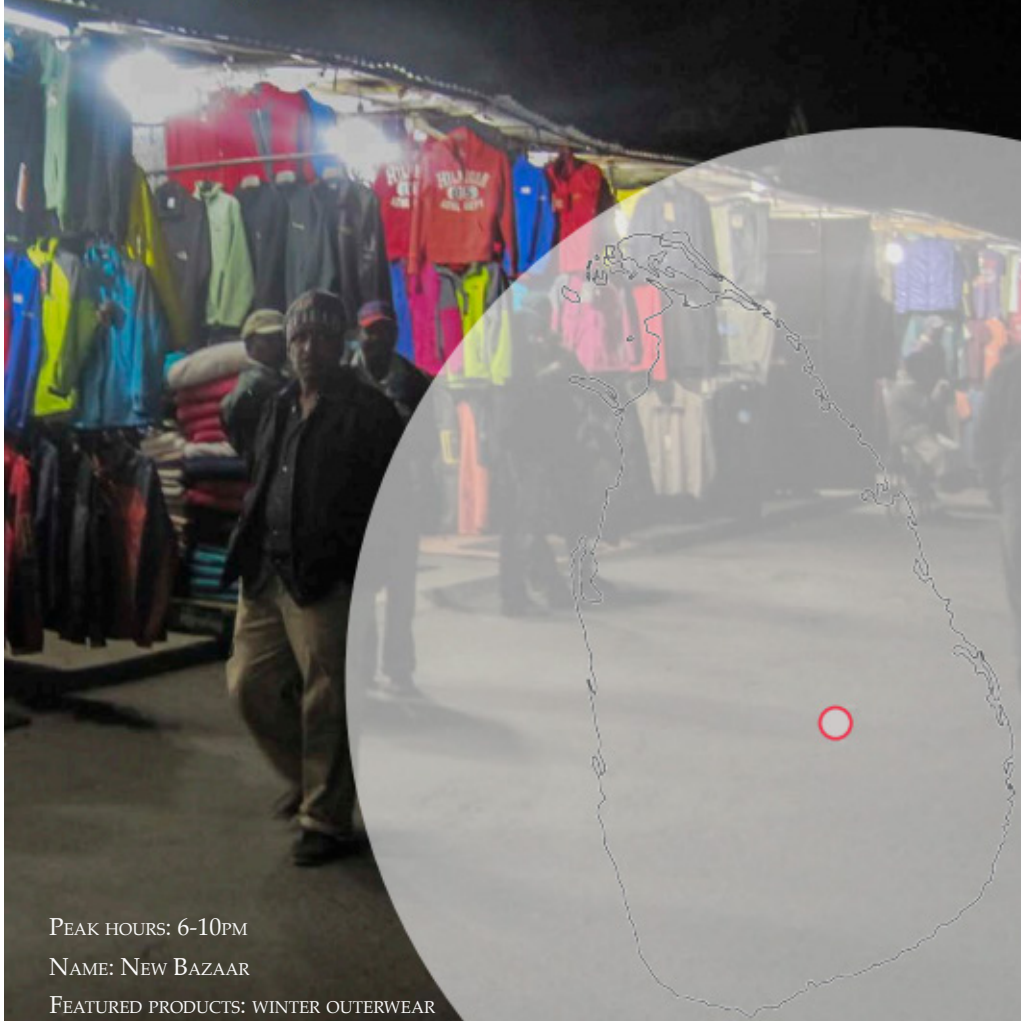
What was notable about the Kandy Municipal Central Market was the ambiguity of its entrances. I noticed this first here, and then began to see this feature in a majority of the other markets we visited. Once inside, the market was large and spacious, with the convenient balconies providing not only a cross-breeze to keep the market cool, but also allowing shop owners to keep an eye on the happenings around the market, on both the ground and top floors.

This market takes place on a parking lot adjacent to a shopping pavillion (seen behind the vendors). Vendors spread their fresh produce on tarps directly on the ground. The market is so temporary that spaces are not even clearly delineated. Even so, there seemed to have been a certain degree of organization. The produce was arranged in rows so that shoppers could maneuver easily from one vendor to the next. As spontaneously as the market sprung, it was all cleaned up and taken away. The space cycled through a series of functions throughout the day, and was ready for a new market to settle in at the start of the next day.



NUWARA ELIYA

In Nuwara Eliya, the night market thrives. Due to its proximity to several manufacturers of outdoor wear, in combination with its high elevation, the markets feature a wide selection of “brand name” sportswear. What was most intriguing about this mountain village is the times of their markets. The markets focused on tourism for their sales, as they attracted foreigners with cheap prices for quality winter gear.



PEAK HOURS: 6-10PM

NAME: NEW BAZAAR

FEATURED PRODUCTS: WINTER OUTERWEAR

Nuwara Eliya’s night market was among the cleanest we visited. Its location in a high elevation, and emphasis on ecotourism, makes for a stronger awareness of garbage collection.



Grains and dry goods were popular at the markets as the cool mountain climate was perfect for preservation of dry goods. It may also be difficult for fresh produce to make its way through the tea plantations and into the small towns that spot the mountains of the Central Province.





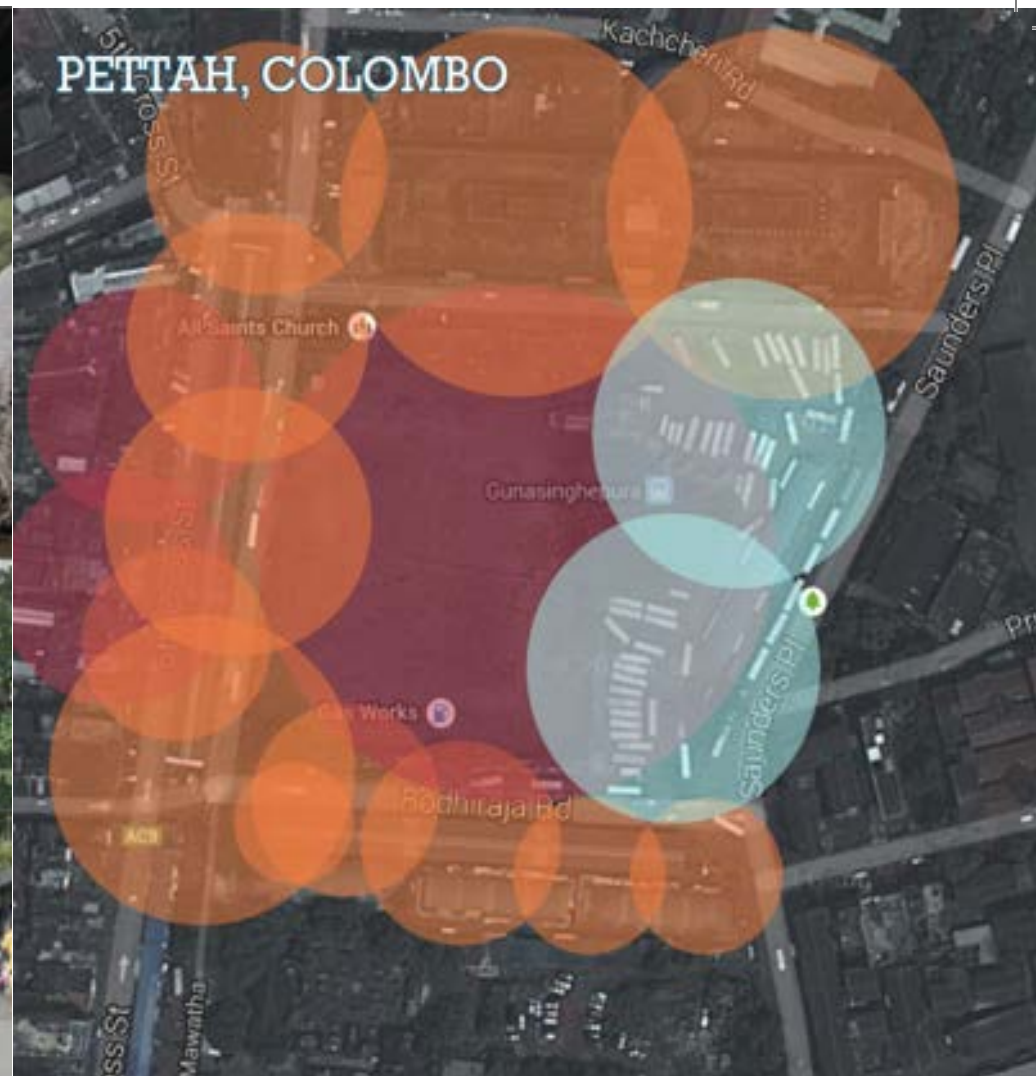
F.O.S.E. MARKET

The F.O.S.E. Market inside the Pettah Market complex was the cleanest market we visited. The floors were spotless and great care was taken to ensure that pathways were always clear. There was the least amount of stray dogs and even the displays in each booth were the most organized.

This could be a result of the organization of the market itself. F.O.S.E. stands for Federation of Self-Employed. Since the market is run by its very vendors, they feel a strong connection to it and make an effort to take care of it.



PETTAH, COLOMBO



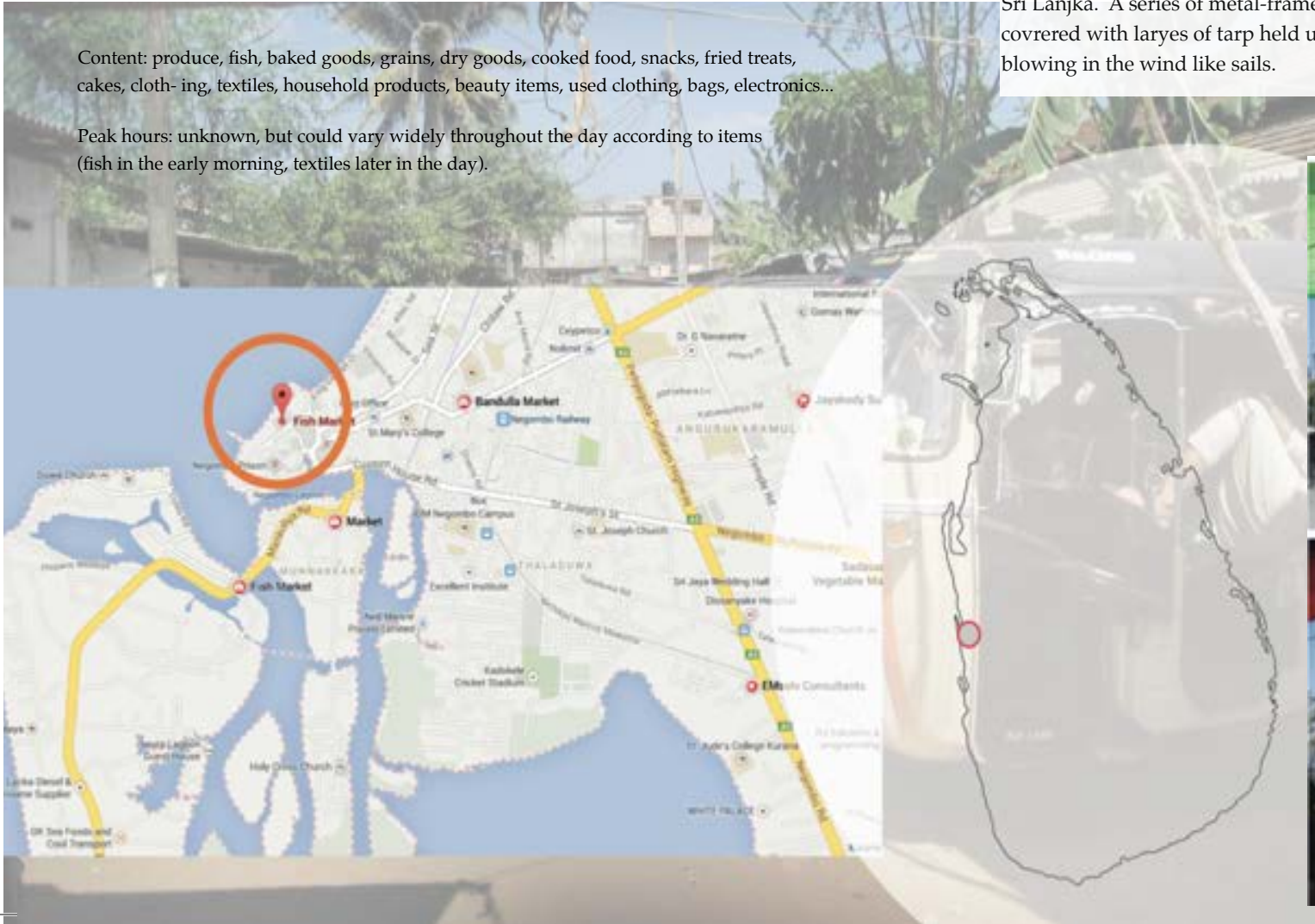
Notice the bus terminal directly inside the market itself. While walking from the stalls into the built structure, we had to veer away from buses making their way through the crowds into the terminal.

NEGOMBO: FISH MARKET AND BEYOND

Content: produce, fish, baked goods, grains, dry goods, cooked food, snacks, fried treats, cakes, cloth- ing, textiles, household products, beauty items, used clothing, bags, electronics...

Peak hours: unknown, but could vary widely throughout the day according to items (fish in the early morning, textiles later in the day).

These pictures illustrate the combination of built structure with temporary shelters that make up the market in Negombo. The old Negombo Fish Market is the largest in the country. While the building itself is less utilized as a market and more as a shelter from the hot sun, the temporary market that has sprung around it is the most impressive we saw in Sri Lanjka. A series of metal-frame shettlers lead onto a sandy stretch covered with laryes of tarp held up by about five feet from the ground, blowing in the wind like sails.



*The Flowering of a Trash Heap:
Urban Revitalization in Medellin, Colombia*

ISAAC MACDONALD

Judy Elena Echevarria is watering orchids. Wiry hair pulled back into a ponytail and decked out in a tank tops and boots, she briefly pauses to focus my attention to the mountain we are standing upon. *Basura*, she exclaims as she points downwards, trash. Judy is one of forty citizen gardeners, *Mujeres de Moravia*, hired by the city to maintain the Morro, a 1.5 million ton mountain of garbage in the center of a former landfill that has been transformed into a community-staffed sustainable flower garden. The 1.4 million dollar project was completed in 2009, and involved coordination between seventeen different entities and a partnership with the city of Barcelona. Their efforts have not gone unnoticed; “Moravia: Flowers For Life” was the main exhibit at the 2014 UESCO Innovative City Conference hosted in Medellin.

As Medellin was industrializing in the 1960’s, Moravia became the unofficial city dumping ground, a title that was made official in 1977. With the trash came the *basueros*, citizens who made their livelihood sifting through the dump and built houses from recovered materials. This informal settlement also became a destination for *desplazados*, individuals displaced from the city or surrounding countryside by wars between various guerilla and military groups. Despite the relocation of the dump in 1984 the population continued to grow.



Source: Medellin Mayor’s Office

In 2004, El Morro was a a toxic home to over 14,000 squatters (above).

Today, the former garbage dump is a community staffed flower garden and the centerpiece of a project of urban revitalization (below).



Photo by Isaac MacDonald

By 2004, the neighborhood of Moravia had a potent combination of toxicity and density, with 14,600 of the 42,000 residents living on El Morro, a 35-meter, 1.5 million ton mountain of trash. Under the leadership of Mayor Fajardo, a coalition of city organizations began working to transform Moravia after declaring the area a “public disaster” in 2006.¹ After first resettling the residents of El Morro into a nearby high-rise building the mound was repurposed into an urban garden.

One of the issues that the project addressed was detoxification of the former dump sites. The National University of Colombia is using the garden as a laboratory for contaminant neutralization, providing extra nutrients to indigenous bacteria that break down toxins and planting species that absorb heavy metals. A recent report by the University estimates that the mountain will be free of toxins within 15 to 20 years.² Even the plants which aren’t absorbing heavy metals are not just for show. The garden is maintained by neighborhood residents, who are paid minimum wage by the city to cultivate the plants and eventually harvest them to be sold.

El Morro is not the only part of Moravia that the government has invested in. The barrio now boasts the Moravia Cultural Development Center, designed by award-winning architect Rogelio Salmona. Further into the neighborhood lies Mama Chila’s Infant Garden, a free kindergarten that provides a safe learning environment for local children. “This used to be a tough place to be” Echevarria continues, “but now it is safe, now other people come to see us.” I realize that I am one of those people she is referring to: an outsider that has come to see the Moravia only after the trash was covered with flowers. She smiles and leads me to see the chickens.

1 Gaviria, Danny. “Moravia: The Story of a Slum on a Hill of Garbage,” 2014. http://www.academia.edu/10623171/Moravia_The_story_of_a_slum_on_a_hill_of_garbage.

2 The UPC Participates in the Transformation of a Giant Dump in Medellín into an Urban Park. Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, January 12, 2010. <http://www.upc.edu/salade-premsa/al-dia/mes-noticies/2010/the-unesco-chair-of-sustainability-at-upc-involved>.



Children relax around a hammock at Mama Chila’s Jardín Infantes
Photo: Isaac MacDonald

Medellin’s global reputation has not always been for having a powerful and innovative municipal government. The Medellín of 1980s and 90s was known for drug-fueled violence that was highly concentrated in the informal settlements like Moravia but eventually pervaded the entire city. These settlements, handmade cinderblock homes sprawling up the steep slopes of the Aburrá Valley, emerged during rapid industrialization as rural migrants traveled to the city in droves.

It is important to dispel the idea that violence was somehow endemic to the peripheral communities or the people that occupied them. Rather, the violence was a result of the same structural issues and political processes that led to the creation of the settlements in the first place. These processes were as broad as the global forces of urbanization and globalization, and as specific as the active exclusion of these new communities by formal political actors, leading to the rise of non-state alternatives.

The most notable of these was the Medellín Cartel, an organized crime syndicate led by the now-notorious Pablo Escobar. At the height of the cartel's power in the 1980s it controlled 60% of the world's cocaine. In 1989 Forbes estimated that Escobar was the 7th richest man in the world, his power gained through a ruthless strategy of bribery and assassination. Violence was used as a political weapon, leveraged to establish political and territorial control. In 1984 over half of the urban jobs in Medellín were in the informal economy, and 3,000 youth were working as hired assassins.³

The cartel and the state became engaged in urban warfare, with Escobar putting a bounty on policemen and bombing the wealthy neighborhood of El Poblado.⁴ By 1991 the city was the murder capital of the world, with a homicide rate of 380 per 100,000 people. For reference, the most dangerous city in the US in 2014 was Detroit with a rate of 44.⁵ As life for residents in Medellín became increasingly dangerous, the effects of the violence went far beyond the death-toll.

Invisible boundaries drawn between competing factions became an essential part of the geography of the city, directing flows of people even more rigidly than the constructed grid of streets or the mountainous topography. Medellín in the 1990s was a fractured city, segregated and enforced by a multiplicity of armed actors vying for political control. Along with the loss of life and decline of physical infrastructure, the existing social structures were eroded by the pervasive violence.

3 Lamb, Robert. "Microdynamics of Illegitimacy and Complex Urban Violence in Medellín, Colombia." Dissertation, UMD, 2010. http://cissmdev.devcloud.acquiasites.com/sites/default/files/papers/lamb_umd_0117e_11062.pdf. 52.

4 Abadinsky, Howard. *Organized Crime*. 9 edition. Belmont, Calif: Cengage Learning, 2009.

5 "Detroit Police Release 2014 Crime Statistics." *Detroit Free Press*. Accessed April 14, 2015. <http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/01/06/detroit-crime-stats/21357935/>.

Escobar's death on a rooftop in 1993 spelled the end of the Cartel, but not the end of the violence. The reduction in violence would happen ten years later under the banner of social urbanism and the Projects of Urban Integration. Unlike Moravia, many of the most marginalized barrios were located high up in the valley and were physically excluded. In 2002 the city began the construction of a metro-cable line that between Acevado, a metrorail station at the bottom of the valley and Santo Domingo, a non-descript informal settlement in the Northeast of the city. This innovative intervention was the government's first step in a process of integration that would catalyze development and redefine the city.

My first visit to Santo Domingo happened to be the Monday of Santa Maria Assunta, a Colombian national holiday. The park was in full festival mode, and the sound of music crackled through outdoor speakers and mixed with the shouts of aspiring footballers, all somewhere between the ambiguous age range of eight and eleven. The smell of *chicharrones*, fried pork rinds, wafted from food carts and blended with a fresh batch of pastries from a nearby *panadería*. Behind the festivities was the backdrop of a citywide panorama, framed by the Biblioteca España, the award-winning library that has helped make the once-invisible neighborhood an icon of Medellín's hillside skyline.

In one corner of the park I came across a line of children waiting to shoot guns. But unlike the territorial battles that waged here only twenty years ago, the projectiles were darts and the targets balloons, their helium heads stretching up towards the sky. In the background was the constant hum of the metro-cable overhead.

The barrio today is a far cry from the Santo Domingo of the 1990s, one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in one of the most dangerous cities in the world. The process of its development has come to symbolize Medellín's renewal and the success of the policies of "social urbanism" and the Projects of Urban Integration (PUIs) ushered in with the election of Sergei Fajardo in 2003.

There is a clear takeaway from the project in Santo Domingo: urban development requires local diagnosing of needs paired with global sourcing of solutions. The local aspect was achieved through collaborative planning with residents early on and throughout the entire process. The urban development authority, *Empresso Desarrollo Urbano (EDU)*, which is a subset of the office of the mayor, ran *talleres de imaginarios*, workshops in which they went into the communities and asked communities to brainstorm how they wanted their community to look. One workshop regarding the design of a park asked:

"How do I imagine my park? What does this place mean to me? Which memories do this place brings to me? What would I like that the park would have? How would I call my park?"⁶

Community leaders were frequently consulted throughout the process, and locals were hired as construction crews. These programs, and the eventual incorporation of citizen suggestions, not only led to solutions that better fit the needs and wants of residents but added legitimacy to the project (and in turn the government) just through the process itself.

Meanwhile, the solutions that were implemented decidedly global, a variety of physical and strategic components drawn from around the world. Participatory budgeting had been pioneered in Brazilian favelas

6 Blanco, Carolina and Hidetsugu Kobayashi (2009). "Urban Transformation in Slum Districts through Public Space Generation and Cable Transportation at Northeastern Area: Medellín, Colombia." *The Journal of International Social Research*, 2/8.

only a few years earlier. The library-parks that were central to the project at Santo Domingo were drawn from similar initiatives in Bogotá. The Cable Propelled Transit technology was first used on ski lifts in the Alps, and was adopted by Medellín for use in an urban setting. Even the idea of targeted spatial interventions had a specific origin: the strategy of "urban acupuncture" that originated in Barcelona and was championed by architect Jamie Lerner in the Brazilian city of Curitiba starting in 1968.⁷ This paring of global solutions with local needs was essential to the success of the PUIs.

Right as the last pylons of the metro cable system were being laid something incredible happened—homicide rates in the city began to drop significantly, and not just in the targeted areas. The city experienced 1,937 homicides in 2003. In 2007 that number was down to 654, a 66% decrease that made headlines in the urban planning and academic community. Referred to as the "Medellín Miracle," this precipitous drop was seen as vindication of the strategies of social urbanism.

Even as the rest of the city was experiencing these rapid declines, homicide rates in the areas of the PUI were falling even faster. A 2012 study found that between 2003 and 2008 the "decline in homicide rates was 66% greater in intervention neighborhoods than control neighborhoods." The change was not only confined to homicides either. Using responses from a community survey on violence called *PREVIVA*; the study found that the decline in resident reports of all types of violence was 75% greater.⁸

7 Lerner, Jaime, et al. *Urban acupuncture*. Washington D.C. Covelo London: Island Press, 2014.

8 Cerdá, Magdalena, Jeffrey D. Morenoff, Ben B. Hansen, Kimberly J. Tessari Hicks, Luis F. Duque, Alexandra Restrepo, and Ana V. Diez-Roux. "Reducing Violence by Transforming Neighborhoods: A Natural Experiment in Medellín, Colombia." *American Journal of Epidemiology*, April 2, 2012, kwr428. doi:10.1093/aje/kwr428.

This was unprecedented; even the most optimistic urban planner could hardly have foreseen such rapid and drastic changes. At the time there were many explanations for the transformation, but few of them could isolate the drivers behind the changes. A report on the metrocabes by the Bartlett Institute in 2011 was the first to comprehensively analyze its effects.⁹

As it turns out, the metrocabes had minimal impact on the material quality of life for most residents, with improvements to mobility and progress in economic development both highly localized. What was significantly altered were the perceptions of the target neighborhoods.

For residents, the government investments have become a source of pride around which to establish community identity. The projects provided a blank slate, an opportunity for a reevaluation of neighborhoods with longstanding negative associations in the city at large. Not only has this shift in perception removed a stigma for residents, but it also has provided an opportunity for non-profit organizations and businesses to enter barrios that were once extremely isolated and hard to access.

There has also been a significant shift in how residents view their relationship with the rest of the city. The profound impact of this shift is revealed even in small changes in the speech patterns of residents, who now refer to a trip from their home to the downtown as “going to the city center” instead of “going to Medellín,” showing in their language how they have come to view themselves as part of the city.¹⁰ For a specific group of people this shift in perception is based on a significant im-

9 Brand, Peter, and Julio Dávalia. *Mobility Innovation at the Urban Margins: Medellín's Metrocabes*. Vol. 15. City, 2013. http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/metrocabes/book/Davila_2013_UrbanMobility_Poverty_Eng.pdf. 74.

10 Brand, Peter, and Julio Dávalia. *Mobility Innovation at the Urban Margins: Medellín's Metrocabes*. Vol. 15. City, 2013. http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/metrocabes/book/Davila_2013_UrbanMobility_Poverty_Eng.pdf. 61.

provement in access or quality of life. However, for most residents it is based more abstractly on these conspicuous investments as symbols of inclusion. Brand & Davila attribute this sensation to the high visibility of the metrocabes as well as the “kinesthetic experience that they offer.”¹¹

This was something I definitely experienced while riding in the cables. While one is sitting in the cable car the eyes and ears become untethered. The sound travels directly up and one floats in a milieu of laughter and music and shouting from the homes below. But the floor of the metro-cable car hides the source of the sound, making the rider unconsciously connect the sounds of a particular space with the much broader view of the city below.



**The Metrocabes provide a unique vantage point from which to view the city.
Photo by Isaac MacDonald**

11 Ibid. 117

The geography of Medellín already creates an urban landscape with striking visual connectivity: from the downtown one can see the settlements sprawling up the sides of the valley and from Santo Domingo one can look out over the vast urban area spread out on the valley floor. But the metrocables crystallize and blend the urban fabric even more intensely. This sharing of the city, this kaleidoscoping of senses is part of why the metrocables work. The shacks of the barrios populares and the high-rises of El Poblado become blurred. The riders are at once engaging with both places while being part of neither. And for an instant it is all the same city.

Judy Echevarria and the other women at Flowers for Moravia are well aware of the problems that persist in their neighborhood. Moravia and Medellín both have a long way to go. Some of the residents displaced from El Morro were moved to apartments in an entirely different part of the city, destroying the community that they had worked to create. The Biblioteca Espana, the icon of education investment in Santo Domingo is currently covered in black sheets after the façade held up poorly to the weather. The drop in homicides dubbed ‘Medellin Miracle’ turned out to be partly due to the control of a drug lord over the illicit economy, and the rate increased following his extradition to the United States.

But one thing is clear: the city is changing for the better. “We still have problems, just like any other place” continues Echevarria “but now we are in charge of our own future. We have a fresh start.” And as we stand together, on a mountain of trash smelling nothing but orchids, freshness is something that’s not too hard to believe in.



**A flower grows up from the former dump, a bright spot in an area that still faces many challenges.
Photo by Isaac MacDonald**

St. Industry Foreal
DANNY SOBOR





Fen(être)

MAYA SORAJBEE



cigarettes in the air at the Sarajevo film festival

EZRA LICHTMAN

it is perplexing
the necessity to have one foot
on this side and one foot on that side
I imagine like mom's a Bosniak and dad's a Serb in '93
and you sleep on different banks of the Miljacka every night
but not to minimize the Siege
just to leave the theater and look for beers
and dancing feels like an affect strobe
like orthostatic hypotension when
you go from horizontal to vertical too quick
like where'd all the blood go?
it's the same leaving bullet hole acne buildings
for smoke curtains and folk music
plum rakia and a celebration song
to remember the bombs
maybe it's simply how we exist with history
but still if you circle from one totalitarian
emotion to the other
the proximity is dizzying

Getting Equity on Track:

The Racial Demographics of the D.C. Streetcar Plan

ANDREW BROWN

The Washington Metrorail efficiently carries Marylanders, Virginians, and Washingtonians between Downtown D.C. and its surrounding suburbs through a 106-mile, hub-and-spoke system. This system, however, does not efficiently address transportation concerns within the city itself. In response to this deficit in service, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) created a plan for an intra-DC transportation system that would aim to adequately serve the needs of residents. After many revisions from its conception in the late-1990s, this proposal evolved into the D.C. Transit Future System Plan, which included 37 miles of proposed streetcar lines serving all eight Wards.¹ This proposal and the funding timelines have since evolved, meaning this paper analyzes a previous iteration.

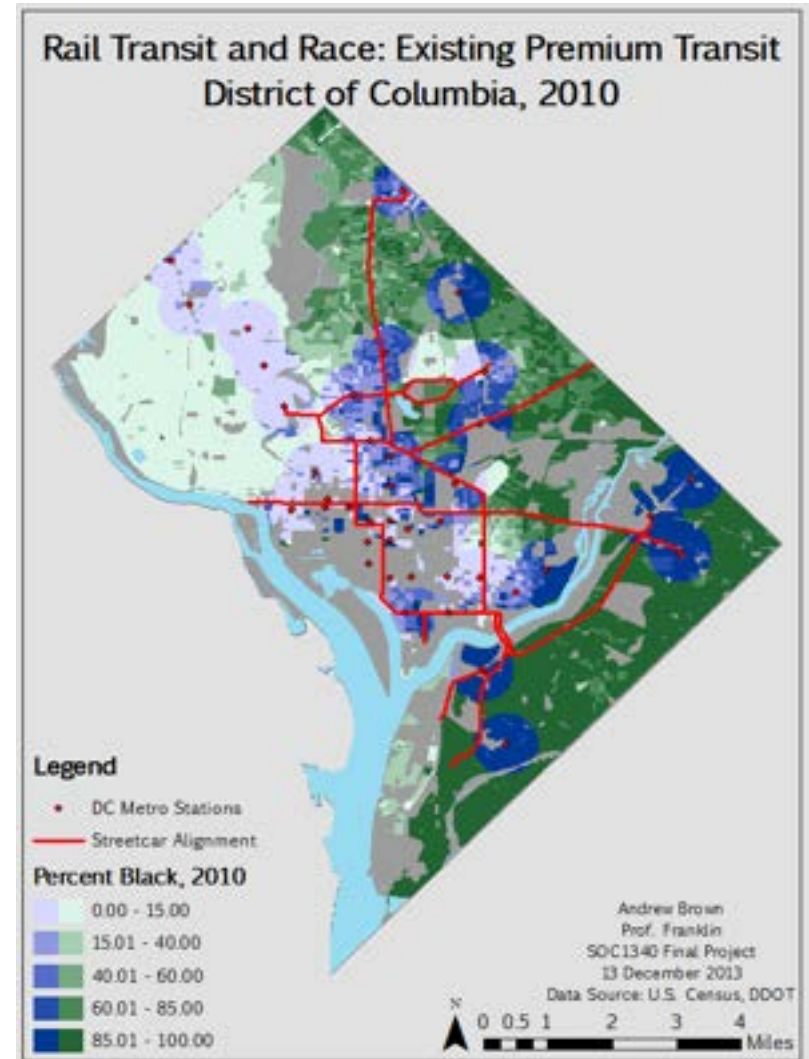
The first objective of the system, according to DDOT, is improved access to “premium transit,” defined as Metrorail, light rail, streetcar, or bus rapid transit. I will address this objective and how it pertains to racial demographics. Firstly, is there a disparity in the race of residents already with access to premium transit in comparison to the District as a whole? If so, will the proposed streetcar system serve to improve or exacerbate this disparity? Finally, will Washington’s history of demographic changes in correlation with transit access endanger any potential mediation in equitable premium transit access?

¹ District Department of Transportation (DDOT), DC Transit Future System Plan (Washington, DC: DDOT, April 2010), <http://dc.gov/DC/DDOT/About+DDOT/Publications/DC+Transit+Future> (accessed 1 December 2013).

Using geographic information systems, this study combines demographic information from populations near current, proposed, and future premium transit lines. Demographic data was drawn from block level data from the U.S. Census from 2000 and 2010. The locations of Metrorail and streetcar lines were retrieved from the District’s Geographic Information System clearinghouse (DCGIS). To estimate which populations are affected by present and future “premium transit access,” I used buffers identical to the DC Office of Planning’s Streetcar Land Use Study document—a half-mile around each Metrorail station and a quarter-mile along streetcar corridors.² These buffers reflect realistic expectations of usage and demand: Metrorail stations serve as nodes for land use and transportation, and streetcars spur development in a linear fashion.

The current premium access (Map A) reflects existing premium transit networks. As the first streetcar line has not opened at the time of this analysis, existing premium transit consists only of Metrorail. The new premium transit (Map B) that will be implemented as part of the D.C. Transit Future System Plan includes new streetcar lines. The total premium transit is the combination of the existing and proposed transportation networks.

² DC Office of Planning



Map A: Existing Premium Transit

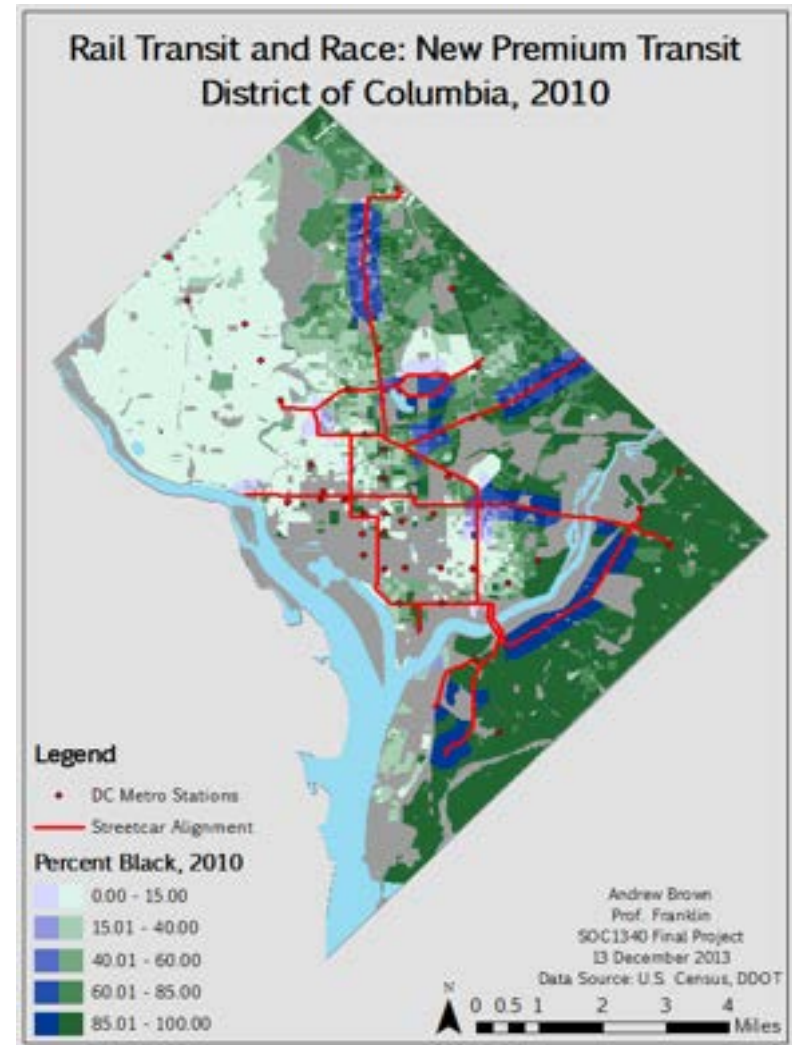
Results

Regarding the first question, a clear disparity exists in transit opportunities divided by race. African-Americans are currently the most underserved racial group in the District, with only 34.26% near premium transit. All other racial groups, White, Asian, Hispanic, and Other, have coverages ranging from 47.61% to 62.97%, and when combined represent 54.56% coverage. As African-Americans make up 50.03% of Washington's population, this disparity of 20.3 percentage points between black and nonblack residents cannot be attributed to small sample size.

However, who lives in areas along the newly proposed streetcar corridors? Map B highlights the areas currently lacking premium transit and potentially receiving it in the plan. A plural majority of residents in these areas, 64.97%, are African-American. The plan will increase coverage of African-American residents by 18.34 percentage points. When combined, nonblack residents will experience an increase in coverage of 9.9 percentage points. The disparity in premium transit access between black and nonblack residents therefore drops from 20.3 percentage points to 9.9, a decrease of 51% upon the D.C. Streetcar's completion.

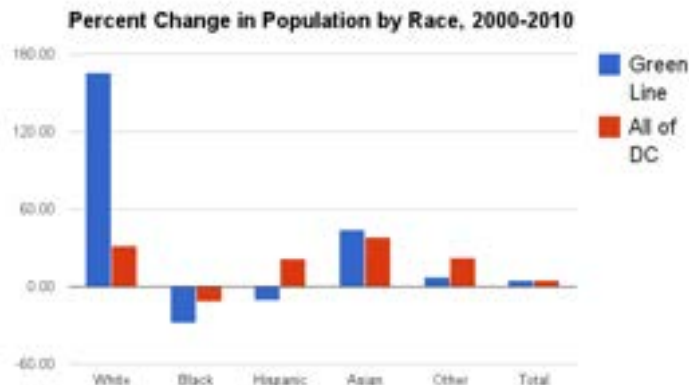
This improvement represents a major step forward in providing equitable access to premium transportation in the District of Columbia. However, how much does potential displacement endanger this objective? Using the same methods of analysis, I looked at demographic trends along the Green Line, a Metrorail line that opened in 1999.³ This region of DC serves as a good proxy to determine a correlation between displacement of racial demographics and transportation. I created a buffer of the area that received premium transit upon completion of the Green Line, identical in process to the first part of this project.

³ Zachary Schrag, *The Great Society Subway: A History of the Washington Metro* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 135.

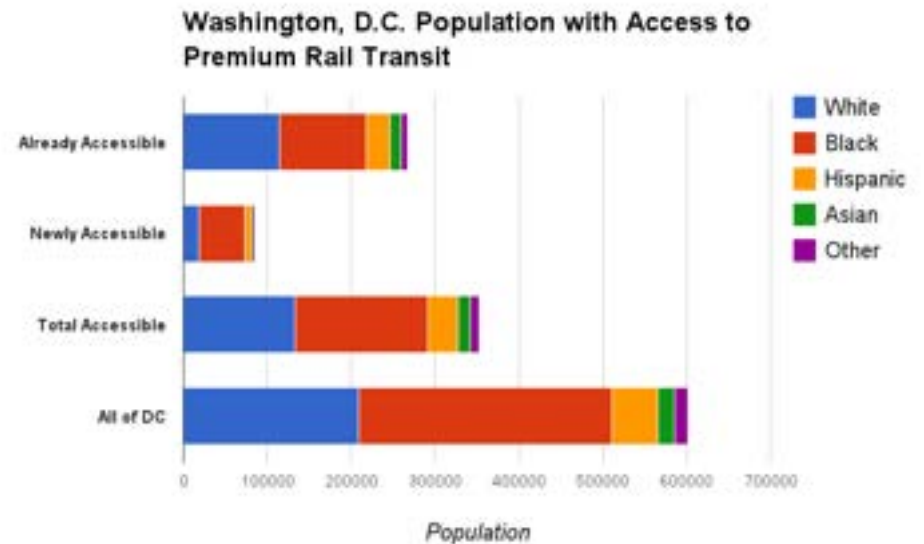


Map B: New Premium Transit

The results support the hypothesis of transportation-related racial displacement. Citywide from 2000 to 2010, the percentage of population that reported as white increased 31.59%, while the African-American population percentage decreased 11.48%. However, the area around the Green Line changed even more intensely. Though the area receiving premium transit in 1999 only increased in population by 4.79%, it became 165.64% more white, 10.51% less Hispanic, and 28.07% less African-American. The numbers represent a significant displacement of African-American and Hispanic residents. It is important to note that while this study shows a strong correlation, more research would be necessary to conclude any causation.



This project only explored the racial components of potential displacement. More variables (including income, car ownership, and educational attainment) could provide a more complete analysis. Other social theories, including spatial mismatch, connect race to transit access, suggesting that public transportation agencies must explore the social parameters of poverty and race to better serve disadvantaged citizens.



Conclusion

There exists a significant disparity in the race of residents who currently have access to premium transit in Washington D.C., specifically a lack of access for African-American residents. The D.C. Streetcar system has the potential to significantly improve the inequity in premium transit access between African-American and non-African-American residents due to the geographic locations of the proposed lines. If the implementation of these plans is accompanied with robust and comprehensive solutions to better manage resultant development patterns, the proposed streetcar system has the potential to significantly improve racial equality in Washington's public transit system.

Origins of the Brown Urban Studies Program

STEVE COWELL

I came to Brown in 1968 with a deep concern for our country's political, economic and racial divides. My sister was a Senior and her husband to be, Chuck Lauster, was there as well. Chuck was close to Ira Magaziner and Elliott Maxell who were two key authors of the 'new curriculum' that was being organized by students. He was also interested in the urban condition and started a student organization called 'Brown Urban Coalition' to facilitate students working on projects in the Providence community. They purchased a van and I, of course, became the first member. He connected with several organizations in the community and I got immediately hooked in to efforts to address the conditions that led to riots in the black community of S. Providence in the Spring and Summer of 1968 after the assassination of MLK.

University-affiliated engagement with urban issues was at the intersection of the two streams of student activism: education reform to strip away fixed majors and community activism to integrate Brown with the surrounding community.

In the Spring of my Freshman year I started doing community organizing as part of Brown Urban Coalition. First, helping the newly formed anti-poverty organization, Progress for Providence, create neighborhood elections for local citizens counsels to address problems in the community. I connected with the black community leader, Buddy George who started the group called the 'Fact Finding Committee (FFC)' to highlight and bring to the political and public awareness the issues and causes

that led to the riots in the black community. We immediately connected; he saw me as a way to secure support from the Brown community and I saw him as a way to learn about poverty and the conditions in the black 'ghetto' as he always referred to it.

I moved into the public housing project in South Providence in the summer of 1969 with the support of Buddy and the FFC and an agreement to help organize the community. We picketed Providence Hospital until they set up a health clinic in the community, went door to door helping tenants get better housing and worked with the FFC and Buddy to organize grants for creation of a neighborhood drop in center and neighborhood-based economic development corporation (early version of a CDC). By the time summer was over, I had learned more about urban poor, racial tensions and the highs and lows of organizational efforts to combat urban challenges than I would ever learn in a classroom. I was determined that this would be the start of an effort throughout my work at Brown to bring education, social justice and equality into a common purpose.

In the spring of 1969, the Brown faculty voted to implement the 'new curriculum,' which created more room for independent study courses and group study courses. The doors were open to new and innovative ideas within the structure of the Brown curriculum. This was the opening of great opportunity to bring forward ideas that had been circulating in my head over the summer. I returned to campus in the Fall with the idea of actively participating in helping enact the 'new curriculum' and using the Brown Urban Coalition to connect other students with the community that surrounded us.

I continued to carry out volunteer activities in the community working with the groups that I had come to meet over the summer. I arranged several programs for Brown students to work as tutors and support for local students in poor communities. I was asked to join and be a member of the Rhode Island Urban Coalition, which was a national organization aimed at addressing urban issues and problems. I was the only young person/student in the group. I met Mel Feldman the summer of '69 in south Providence and he began introducing me to organizations addressing the housing crisis in the city. He was an advisor to a group called Citizens Urban Renewal Enterprise (CURE) that had just started. In the spring of 1970 I went to work part time and then full time in the summer of 1970.

There I took on the task of helping a developer and CURE renovate partially occupied and sub-standard mill housing in Millville RI. This was funded by the newly created HUD program for mixed income housing (221 d3). I created an Independent study and got a faculty advisor to allow me to take course credit and document my experiences renovating housing in a poor community. I worked on this for 6 months (turned out to be one of the most successful housing redevelopment efforts that succeeded in removing the housing and not permanently displacing any of the existing residents) and continued my relationship for well over a year. My relationship with Mel Feldman developed stronger and he was excited about the idea of Brown being more interested and engaged in the Providence community.

Back on campus, I was becoming known for the work that I was doing in the community and the President, Donald Horning, established a student-faculty-administration committee to address the issues between Brown and the city around it. It was called the Community Relations

Committee and he asked me to be the student representative on the committee. My focus was on managing the relationship between Brown and the Fox Point Community. I joined a non-profit housing corporation in Fox Point called Churches Concerned and worked to develop low income housing in the community. I eventually convinced Brown to turn over a property on the edge of campus that they owned on Brook Street to CCI and it is now low/moderate income housing.

I decided in my sophomore year that I would like to use the 'new curriculum' structure that was evolving to create my own major in urban studies. I had taken a course from Prof. Ben Chinitz who had been in the Johnson Administration and was connected to two Sociology professors; one was Professor Jim Vanecko who was interested in Urban sociology. These two professors agreed to co-sponsor an independent major in Urban Studies.

Towards the end of my sophomore year I approached them on the idea of reaching out to other students and faculty to see if we could evolve from independent major for one student to group independent major. This proposal was bolstered by the fact that I was also active in student politics, Cam club and the Ed reform movement, which provided a basis of understanding of the existing system. Several student leaders and friends were also making this happen: Susie Freedman, Josh Posner, Eileen Rudden, and more. I was active in organizing a broader GISP movement to catalyze the new curriculum and this was where the two efforts came together.

Early in my Junior year, 1971, Professors Chinitz and Vanecko and I called a meeting of students interested in creating an informal group major in Urban Studies. The meeting attracted about 70 students (many of whom were involved in Brown Urban Coalition activities or were excited by some of the urban studies related courses being started). There was a newly hired history teacher, Howard Chudacoff, who was starting a course in Urban History which I signed up for and quickly he got interested. Professors Chinitz and Vanecko were active in reaching out to other faculty who might be interested in supporting the idea of a student-faculty created interdisciplinary major in urban studies. I was keeping my colleague in the community, Mel Feldman, informed of my efforts and he reached out to Chinitz and Vanecko about potentially being involved. He signed on to become an Adjunct Professor to teach a course on the urban community and its organization structure to address housing and poverty. This course would be the first piece of a long relationship between Mel Feldman and the Urban Studies program.

This effort got momentum and about 7-8 other students in my class signed up to participate in the independent Urban Studies major. We all agreed to write a senior thesis on an urban theme or issue, and we created a GISP to write and present the thesis to each other and participating faculty. Ben Chinitz had good ties at Foundations through his work in government in the Economic Development Administration and went out and got a grant (Ford Foundation, I believe) to support this effort and eventually expand it in a way to create a more permanent infrastructure.

Our first Senior thesis final presentation was held at a hotel near Newport with the participation of the 6-7 students and at least three faculty, including Chinitz, Vanecko and Chudacoff. This was paid for under the foundation grant secured by Professor Chinitz. That semester is when

the Brown Urban Studies program really pulled together with resources and enthusiasm from both Students and Faculty. It was the first department created by voluntary and joint student-faculty collaboration from the open environment coming from the 'new curriculum'.

I left Brown in 1972 to join Ira and my other Brown friends doing community organizing to change the urban environment and did not stay closely in touch with the Brown campus other than several connections with Vanecko and Chinitz who left after several more years for other work but who laid the groundwork for a permanent Urban Studies program. I lost track of the program until I was showing the daughter of a friend the campus and realized that there was an actual building housing the Urban Studies Program. I was shocked and pleased to see it still strong after almost 35 years (now 45 years). Thanks to all of the students and faculty who continued the idea of the urban environment as a course of study.

Holes

MAYA SORAJBEE





Walking in Warsaw

SHAYNA ZEMA

A cacophony of sounds
I hear some shouting
Like the horns spouting, driving around the palace
While others whisper delicately, almost getting lost
Like Providence spring's new gift of frost
Noises in the bustle of urban streets and buildings
Which have paved the voices into the city

Red bricks on Próżna speak of what once covered them gritty
Their debris silently screaming of the horrors they witnessed
and proudly proclaiming the celebrations that once filled their walls

Square buildings are uniform, in stalls
homogenous with their windows, colors, sizes, and shapes
Yet their story is different than the modern glass enclosure flanking on
the left
and the renovated pre-war structures to their right

The Old Town is anything but old, despite
Its renaissance men, horse-carriages, and details rife
Yet its absence is presence

the empty square is full of life
each cobblestone calling out to the feet that walk upon them
endeavoring to share their thoughts and write them down
tales of a burgher market and town
tales of medieval and modern values and views
and of course tales of Poles and Jews

Space is alive, living and breathing
Entering Plac Grzybowski
I see the plaque of memorialized history
and turn to see a man jumping through the space
snapped into a photo to be preserved in place
standing together at the site of the past
by bringing it into the presence of the present
and thrusting it forward into the future at last

Voices stand together in a paradox
Jewish and Polish & Polish and Jewish
Pre-Soviet, Soviet, and Post-Soviet
Medieval and modern
pre-war and post-war
yet they all chant together in unison for
a cacophony of sorts to explore
whose message
fills me with a sense of belonging
of joy and of curiosity
to learn more
and journey forward to understand the "before" and "after"

Contributors

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