Authors Meet Critics

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Participants:

Barnum, Anthony Justin	Rousseau, Max
Bird, Lawrence	Santos, Rui
Caselli, Davide	Skodra, Julita
Coppola, Alessandro	Tanulku, Basak
He ,Huang	Thompson, James
Kadi, Justin	Vianello, Michele
Lederman, Jacob	Wieditz, Thorben
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Marzorati, Roberta	

Moderators:

Giovanni Torrisi
Yuri Kazepov

<Buckingham, Susan> Hi Giovanni!

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Hello! Welcome to Susan, Rob and to everybody! Today we are going to discuss with Rob Krueger (Worchester Polytechnic Institute, USA) and Susan Buckingham (Brunel University London, UK) their recent article 'Towards a 'Consensual' Urban Politics? Creative Planning, Urban Sustainability and Regional Development'.

<Krueger, Robert> Hi everyone. Thanks for coming...

<Buckingham, Susan> Welcome to everyone, it's great to have this opportunity to discuss our work.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> I think that we can officially begin our discussion today. Our participants can begin to post their questions in the pending list. In the meanwhile I would like to break the ice, asking a meta-scientific question to the authors: why did you decided to write this article together?

<Buckingham, Susan> Rob and I have known each other through work on sustainability and Local Agenda 21 in the UK and USA since around 2000, and in 2005 Rob invited me to Worcester to work with him on sustainability decision making in the city. We were concerned that the sustainability agendas were being co-opted by neo-liberal development processes and wanted to explore this further.

<Krueger, Robert> It was also fortuitous. Sue came to Worcester, there was all this buzz around the Creative City. In fact, Charles Landry was here. We were able to spend time with him and learn about his views. Then, a few weeks later Landry spoke at a Royal Society for the Arts conference in Providence, Rhode Island, USA and we realized that this was something big and needed some attention.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Thanks. Now let us pass to a more content-related question by Anthony Justin, which brings about a very difficult concept to define: sustainability.

<Barnum, Anthony Justin> Your article discusses a consensual urban politics of those who can profit from the use of the sustainable branding of a city, and not actual sustainability or consensual urban politics? If economic developers use these terms as they did in your study, true sustainability and consensual urban politics seem to be undermined. What suggestions do you have for a truly consensual urban politics and for sustainable city development?

<Buckingham, Susan> Our key recommendation is that we start with social justice, so that there is no danger of economic and/or environment preoccupations squeezing this out.

<Barnum, Anthony Justin> How is it possible to start with social justice, when it seems that the only ones involved in the discussion are those who can profit?

<Krueger, Robert> That's a good point, Anthony. The thing is, and what we tried to articulate in the paper, that there was a sense that EVERYONE was invited, participated, and contributed…at least that's what folks tried to convey.

<Buckingham, Susan> Yes, but there is a history of planning which does prioritise social and economic justice, think of the New Deal and post war planning in Europe.

<Barnum, Anthony Justin> It seems that what is conveyed is not the reality. It seems that by using the concepts sustainability and consensual politics that an effort is being made kind of as a means to cover up the economic discussions

<Krueger, Robert> Which is the point of the article. The creative city, urban sustainability discourses, resilience. All those discourses/approaches suggested conceptually that they are inclusive and thus provide a

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'cover' for underlying relations of power. I guess I could also add that the term 'consensual' was ours it was meant to be provocative, not a reality. Elites--planners, developers, etc...--spend a lot of energy trying to focus on the 'new consensus' in urban development politics when really these notions, which are well-grounded conceptually, in practice get undermined.

<Buckingham, Susan> But what was also interesting was the way in which 'consensus' was apparently achieved even when some residents supporting the Blackstone project would not obviously gain from the plan. It raises the question of how projects are marketed and how support can be manipulated.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Very good. A follow up by Anthony:

<Barnum, Anthony Justin> In that case is it possible to have a consensual urban politics when the actors are economic, environmental, and social?

<Buckingham, Susan> It seemed that it was not always clear that actors would be uniquely one thing or the other. They could be economic and environmental at the same time, or at different times. Take the local councillor who was pro social justice and environment, but also wanted a prosperous Worcester. The economic developers were probably the most clear-cut, as profit was an unashamed motive.

<Krueger, Robert> I think this goes back to the original point: social justice, not economic or environmental concerns need to be front and centre the thing that no one loses sight of. And, as Sue said, none of these perspectives are clear-cut in terms of the people who personify them; people are bundles of contradictions.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> From sustainability to community. Jacob Lederman:

< Lederman, Jacob> Thanks very much for your article, which I think does really important work in linking sustainability and creative planning discourses. I wanted to ask about your view on the concept of community more broadly. Several critical scholars have remarked recently how the discourse around community and participation is in fact quite in line with a number of dominant neoliberal logics. According to this view, it has become a useful discursive/political tool for the broader abdication of the state. To what degree do you think that "community planning" fits into the analytical framework you construct here? How present was it in the discussions you observed? In what ways might it be used to disrupt these logics rather than reinforce them?

<Krueger, Robert> Thanks for the feedback. An excellent point. There is work by Helga Leitner and Sarah Elwood that make this point quite well. They argue that community organizations, who are invited into the planning process, are necessarily constrained by the type and flows of knowledge and, therefore, often times, how a debate plays out is a foregone conclusion and supports the neoliberal ideology...

<Buckingham, Susan> Since we wrote and revised the article, we've continued to think about this. You're right, Jacob, community can be misused and in the UK currently the Coalition government is deliberately minimising the role of the state and encouraging 'the community' to take over (without any extra resources). From my reading and research, well-knit communities are well placed to create sustainability, but the problem is that they are often well resourced and homogeneous. Less well-resourced communities, with a high % of disadvantaged residents are less well able to compete for resources. This could fit prevailing political agendas quite well.

<Krueger, Robert> One more thing... I don't think we observed an abdication of the state, but a restructured role of the state. Local authorities in the US do not have the resources to undertake big projects; therefore, they are positioned in a way that makes them local boosters, left to creating a buzz to attract funding by private developers

<Lederman, Jacob> That's interesting. So just a quick follow-up... Empirically speaking, how did the language of sustainability foreclose upon different conceptions of community planning? In other words, was it a matter of a kind of conceptual hegemony such that green spaces can be considered sustainable but not, say, public housing?

<Krueger, Robert> This thinking, especially in second tier cities (in the US) and Worcester, in particular, has been completely digested, or naturalized that it's not even questioned. And what was even more interesting is that because 'public housing' is theoretically on the sustainability agenda those advocates didn't raise significant questions or concerns about housing. They assumed, I believe, that such concerns would be dealt with as a matter of course.

<Buckingham, Susan> One more thing. There was a real sense that there were large swathes of Worcester that did not get any kind of investment or attention. Those neighbourhoods with high % of non-white residents, for example. There was also a bizarre policy of seeking to 'move' what seemed to be an organically vibrant neighbourhood to an area of town that was highlighted for regeneration, which, to our minds, would destroy its very vitality... so this was a kind of anti-community planning.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Let us continue the discussion with a question by Davide Caselli:

<Caselli, Davide > Hello and thanks for your very interesting article, which raised a lot of questions I am trying to address in my PhD research on "urban regeneration programs" in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Milan (Italy). As with "sustainability", "regeneration" too is hard to oppose in principle: who can be against regeneration, especially when it is pursued through "participation of residents"? I find it interesting to put this in relation -as you implicitly do - with the problem of political and social representation of the poor and deprived, which is THE political issue. As a PhD student, I see this also as a "professional" and "scientific" problem for urban sociologists, architects, anthropologists or those who work in urbanism, who find little space to professionally engage outside of this "progressive rhetorical consensus", who kind of turned Paulo Freire in a urban developer consultant. Deprived communities cannot pay social scientists or urbanists to produce alternative knowledge, or to lead a "truly democratic" (if is ever possible) regeneration process, and political parties seem to agree with the neoliberal agenda. We have to found new ways in which engage our knowledge: it seems being "partisan" is the only way to be "objective"...

<Buckingham, Susan> Thanks, Davide. This is a really interesting point... Rob's and my interest in the city (Worcester, or London) involves our own active involvement in local community politics...

<Caselli, Davide> Mine too...

<Buckingham, Susan> We have both been influenced by Freirien notions that people in communities should be involved in decisions that affect their lives, and that universities should use their ample resources to work with communities in this way. Rob has many years' experience of working with communities in Worcester and of placing students with local organisations, as I do in London... Although our (neo-liberal) universities may not agree with this principle, we think it is the only ethical one.

Although it's a minor part of our article - we do reference Mulligan and Nadarajah who advocate for researchers/writers to have a consistent and long term engagement with the communities they/we work with/write about I think it's also an interesting concept to write with and campaign with our partners here, and I do not find that contradictory. There is a relatively new branch of Geography (and no doubt other social sciences), which advocates activist research as an extension of what we do in the academy, and in the rest of our lives. See writers like Paul Chatterton and the late Duncan Fuller, in the UK.

<Krueger, Robert> I agree with all of this. I would also invoke the cyborg metaphor of feminist theorist Donna Haraway. I think her classic book provides important insights into these issues, especially in terms of the construction of knowledge and our responsibility as we use it.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> From sustainability to consensus to participation to (reduced?) opposition, in the next question by Roberta Marzorati.

<Marzorati, Roberta> Hello, and thank you for your article. I found very interesting your criticism of the discourse of sustainability and particularly when you say that this "reduces the capacity for opposition" to the projects. I think there are several concepts/discourses that are used in this same way in the neoliberal city agenda (e.g. "participation": nobody can say to be against it, and in cases like the one of Barcelona, which I have

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studied, this was the tool to create consensus and control dissent around processes of urban transformation). Can you say something more about opposition to the projects in Worcester?

<Krueger, Robert> I think we need to look historically to grapple with the question of opposition in Worcester. Because it's more of a question of the context for these projects and who is behind them.

In the 1970s a neighbourhood group in what's now the 'canal district' tried to do many of the same things that are currently proposed--smaller scale, no canals. This community movement struggled to get their projects on the agenda. Used the same historical references. And were ignored by the power elites in Worcester.

Their goals: community integrity for Worcester's most economically disadvantaged (then) immigrant community. Today: the rhetoric is the same, the historical reference points are the same, but the actors wear suits, not overalls, have trust funds, not food stamps.

My point is that this project emerged in its current incarnation because a broader economic discourse on urban development, a new imperative and new actors who saw an opportunity to take surplus value from an economically disadvantaged area that was not realized a generation ago.

<Buckingham, Susan> In my experience in London, researching LA21, it was clear that local authorities didn't maximise public participation. While they didn't necessarily actively discourage it (as the private London Docklands Development Commission did in the 1980s, by, e.g. arranging meetings at inconvenient times, and then changing them at the last minute), they didn't try, or perhaps didn't really understand (I think this is also the case) how to attract a wide range of participants. This led to countless meetings with small numbers of people representing a narrow range of interests. But, hey, they could tick the box that public participation had been achieved.

<Marzorati, Roberta> So we can say that the discourse "worked": there was no opposition against the projects?

<Krueger, Robert> It's a powerful discourse. The thing is, in the US especially, that the faith in the market is strong.

<Buckingham, Susan> There was opposition - see Connie Lukes response to CitySquare...but these voices are marginal/marginalised.

<Krueger, Robert> While scholars talk of this as a neoliberal project, in the US it is a deeply seated value, especially in property. So, if 'sustainability' is part of the discourse, it is taken on faith that it's rhetoric will be realized in due course. Long answer to your question.

<Marzorati, Roberta> Ok, thank you!

<Krueger, Robert> Thank you.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> "JUST development". What do we mean by that? Theodosis:

<Lefteris, Theodosis > Rob and Susan, thank you very much for this interesting paper that makes a clear-cut case, connecting three prominent tendencies in today's urbanism. It seems that in most cases 'creative urban regeneration' points to retail, entertainment, and services, in your paper exemplified by the CitySquare project. Do you have in mind paradigms or initiatives of 'just development' and branding that point to the regeneration of the productive base of the city?

<Buckingham, Susan> I have a few examples, but not necessarily in the USA. How about Curatiba in Brazil - radically reformed transport links, linked to literacy projects? This is a model of socially just, environmentally sensitive 'just' sustainability. I'll hand over to Rob while I try to think of some more!

<Krueger, Robert> This is a question that requires us to 'scale up' from the city, I think. The points you

mention above--retail, entertainment, and services--are the ancillary sectors that support a region's signature sectors--such as high tech.

<Buckingham, Susan> Linked to Rob's point about 'scaling up', I think that what the sustainability literature is increasingly turning to now, is to question the imperative for economic growth. Do we really need to keep increasing (largely discredited) GDP, or do we want to focus on aspects of life that are less material. See Nef's work on well being, or Tim Jackson's on 'Prosperity Without Growth'. I don't think that there are valid models of this yet - it may happen at the community scale but this usually involves some 'farming out' of unsustainable practices. Cities going for 'zero waste' for example (e.g. San Francisco) don't, I think, really plan to reduce their consumption, or aim for de-growth.

<Krueger, Robert> We need to think more broadly about decroissance or post growth sectors that can provide a new base of economic development without the same material intensity. James Gustav Speth whom I disagree with many things has good blue print for what urban post growth economies might look like.

<Lefteris, Theodosis > Yes, Curitiba seems to be a good example. What I have in mind are the Rustbelt cities and the case of Detroit in particular, since some voices advertise the comeback of the city after Gilbert's "WEBward" initiative... On the other hand, the approach is the same, that is renewal in "designers clothes" and the study of history points to the need for social justice in planning, at least when it comes to the decline of Detroit.

<Krueger, Robert> Right. I think post growth has potential but the social justice perspective needs to be more embedded in it. I am working on this now...

<Buckingham, Susan> I'm intrigued by Detroit and need to learn more about it. There was a fantastic initiative in London in the 1970s - homesteading - which I think was modelled on some US examples...people with low incomes, but the physical wherewithal could apply to 'buy' abandoned houses in the city for a nominal amount (e.g. £100), and put in the 'sweat equity' to transform them into sound homes. This would be an example of a great and just sustainability project now.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Gwyneth Lonergan:

<Lonergan, Gwyneth> Does the endorsement of The Canal district regeneration project by local residents, despite the fact they would not benefit, simply point to the extent to which neo-liberalism has become hegemonic? That is, residents accept that regeneration is necessary, and can't imagine any other possibilities for 'development'? And if so, what does this say about 'consensual urban politics', when only a limited range of development options, all of them in keeping with this neo-liberal hegemony, are presented as 'practical'?

<Krueger, Robert> I am not sure if the label 'neoliberalism' works so effectively here. There is a layer on top of neoliberal discourses. This is the 'creative' and 'sustainability' layer. These discourses were used to ostensibly overcome the contradictions of neoliberal urban development. I agree the options are limited--see my point about Leitner's work above--but the argument is more nuanced than the neoliberal label implies.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Rui Santos.

<Santos, Rui> Thank you for your article. I am wondering, do you think any planning tool or strategy would have the power to challenge consensual discourses of urban sustainability? Are you suggesting that a sort of "advocacy planning" would help developing an agonistic arena or topics related to urban political ecology remain entirely within the scope of urban governance/governmentality?

<Krueger, Robert> Is that antagonistic?

<Santos, Rui> Not quite. It merely allows/legitimises conflict within decision making processes.

<Buckingham, Susan> I think that there are some really good local initiatives, which have the support of local government. But it's hard to think of any which can take place without LG support, for example, Paul Chatterton, who I mentioned earlier, has been involved in setting up a 'model' of cooperative housing in Leeds

which has socially just financing and very high environmental standards. This challenges current building norm, but couldn't be achieved without planning permission... Likewise, earlier innovative 'zero-carbon' and socially just home/work developments (e.g. BedZed in S. London) took a lot of getting off the ground by the radical architect and a social housing association, but could not have been done without local government support. Indeed, a similar project was blocked by a neighbouring council.

<Krueger, Robert> I go back to the point about putting social justice 'front and center' on the agenda. Advocates need to put those issues on the agenda and push that as a starting point.

<Santos, Rui> So, we are led back to local governance; planning, alone, can't do much to reverse this situation.

<Krueger, Robert> From there we can legitimize environmental integrity and economic security. Planning needs to be understood in the context of government/governmentality, yes.

<Buckingham, Susan> Planning in the UK and US seems to have less power these days to challenge short-term economic decisions. So therefore, yes, a wider coalition has to be engaged.

<Santos, Rui> Thank you.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Now a question about deliberative urban democracy by Thorben Wieditz:

<Wieditz, Thorben> Thank you for your article. I kept wondering were you involved in any of the deliberations in Worcester as participants? If so, how can critical scholars make a difference as participating observers given the hegemony of discourses that govern debates and foreclose possibilities?

<Krueger, Robert> I am involved. I will tell you that making change is hard. I am trying to think of anything I have done to make change...What I have done is make people uncomfortable. Calling them out on their faulty logic. Worked with environmental justice organizations and community groups to mount counter positions.
Again, causing discomfort. You can speak up in these meetings... Progress is slow. Building social movements is hard work, especially when one has a family and a day job. I also read and comment on blogs around local issues.

<Buckingham, Susan> I would just say that Paul Chatterton (lecturer in Geography at University of Leeds who has been a founding member of the LILAC collective) has made a practical difference to housing possibilities in Leeds; Bill Dunster (was an architecture lecturer at Kingston University, and initiator/designer of BedZed) has made a big intervention in just and sustainable housing. And quite a number of academics do speak up/out on behalf of communities, work with them on alternative planning briefs, or challenges (Coin Street development in London)... We have to believe in the possibility that we can all make (even a small) difference otherwise we might as well retire!

<Krueger, Robert> Sue is right.

<Buckingham, Susan> And sometimes, the impact of some writing might not be felt for a few years.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Another case study reported by Lawrence Bird and some questions:

<Bird, Lawrence> Thank you very much for this topical study of a city which is, like my own -- Winnipeg, Canada -- a similarly mid-sized city which went through an economic decline toward the end of the 20th century. In many ways these are more interesting than the sexier "global cities" and more relevant as models for urbanism... In my own city, locals have argued that a vibrant arts community (film production, architecture, visual arts) has been one contributor to the diversification of the local economy and hence its recovery. Though as you point out artists need a city to be affordable, and development changes this as it does for other low-income groups. I realize this is not necessarily the same "creative" you're talking about but I'm interested if there's any intersection. In the case of Worcester, did the local arts community play any role in the creative planning of the city? And more generally (and my apologies if this is out of left field), how does the lower-income spectrum of

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what Florida would call the creative class (maybe we need to talk instead about several creative classes, upper and lower?) intersect with the creative process Landry talks about in cities of this size?

<Buckingham, Susan> It's interesting that Worcester planners were trying to recreate an artistic quarter, when a perfectly good (but unrecognised) one already existed!

<Krueger, Robert> The local arts community drove the Landry process. The Worcester Cultural Coalition paid for the Landry visit.

<Buckingham, Susan> One representative of the arts scene was employed by the city to generate discussion around revitalisation, and it was she who invited/organised Charles Landry to run a workshop in the city. Whoops - we overlapped!

<Krueger, Robert> She is also the Executive Director of the Worcester Cultural Coalition.

<Buckingham, Susan> I agree with you, Lawrence, that the 'creative class' (whatever that is) has many different facets... Florida is very wide in his definition. I'm uncomfortable with Florida's definition: it denies creativity to a broad range of people and occupations, not to mention unpaid work. It also pays scant attention to those people who 'serve' those he deems to be creative.

<Krueger, Robert> I think Landry is one of those people who says, "let people vote with their feet". He doesn't set the agenda but seeks to create a forum. In his view, people can choose to participate or not. I can tell you he doesn't get involved in bringing people to his fora.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> James Thompson:

<Thompson, James> I was curious why you chose to omit a broader (if brief) discussion of planning theory or theories of democracy around your discussion of Charles Landry and "creative planning processes". I ask because, when reading your article, I got the feeling like you were holding back from a broader critique of Landry's approach. This seemed to leave you in the position where you were willing to accept it (over Florida's, in particular) as nominatively "democratic" and "inclusive" simply because it claimed to focus on "process". As much as you present "sustainability" and "creative" as contested terms, I was left wanting similar critical engagement with "democratic" and "inclusive", as well, particularly from the perspective of 'what planners do'.

<Buckingham, Susan> Thanks, James - that's a valid critique... We wanted to explore Landry's approach which struck us as both more appropriate and inclusive, but we do also mention that it comes from an economic viewpoint. In an earlier draft of the paper we did criticise this more (especially some of the rather forced ways in which cities market their limited advantages).

<Krueger, Robert> Good point. There's a lot of good work on that issue. I like Patsy Healy's work, in particular.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Now, Huang He:

<He, Huang> Thanks both of you for sharing this great paper with us. It is a paradigm shift, which alters the landscape of urban planning literature. I have two concerns here: first, your paper highlights the role of local states. However, local officials probably fond of "creative class" and new investments. So, how to persuade local officials to shift their mind-set to your new paradigm. My second question is consensus in urban planning may not be achievable via peaceful methods. When subalterns claim their rights and defend their interests via social movements, how can we achieve consensus via creative planning in such situation?

<Buckingham, Susan> Great question Huang. Sometimes I think that if we can engage the disquiet people feel about the way we are governed or planned for, to encourage people to get more involved in local and national government (even if it was voting!) then planning/governance might not be so much in the hands of business... ...The Occupy movements have signalled this to some extent, but it hasn't gone very far since its initial burst...

<Krueger, Robert> In this paper consensus is somewhat of a bad thing, because it's not real consensus. Consensus is about everybody getting some of what they want, but not everything. The problem is that cities are now using environmental, built and natural, aesthetics to promote economic development, both at the cost of social justice and economic security. Our point is to start with social justice and stick to it to see what kinds of economic capacities at the outset seem 'impossible'.

<Torrisi, Giovanni> We now have a question by Alessandro Coppola:

<Coppola, Alessandro> Thank you for very interesting article. I was wondering if you are familiar with the "Community benefit agreement" tool. In some cases progressive collations have been able change specific development plans in the directions that you seem to suggest, meaning a holistic approach to environmental sustainability and social justice. They look a very remarkable experience to me, especially given their ability to fit into the design and practice of neoliberal governance....

<Buckingham, Susan> I'm not familiar with this, Alessandro - do you have any examples? It sounds interesting.

<Krueger, Robert> I, too, am unfamiliar with it.

<Coppola, Alessandro> Yes: community benefit agreements are deals between private developers, grassroots coalitions and city around specific development. There is some literature around it.

<Krueger, Robert> Thank you for bringing this to our attention, Alessandro.

<Buckingham, Susan> Yes, thanks, we'll check it out.

<Coppola, Alessandro> They have been formulated mostly in the US case, in LA and Denver for example. They include environmental and social provisions that are the outcome of grass roots mobilization by diverse coalitions

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Our time today is almost over, but we have the time for the very last question by Max Rousseau:

<Rousseau, Max> Thank you for this wonderful paper, which asks important questions about these "consensual" urban politics... Let me ask you one question: in the 1970's, in a context of dramatic deindustrialization, urban social movements frequently managed to counter top-down development projects in many cities across Europe. These urban social movements often implied a class alliance between the working class and some members of the middle class. Couldn't we say that despite the prolongation of the urban crisis, the difficulty of setting up progressive bottom-up urban development strategies today can be partly explained by the weakening of such class alliances? What do you think of that?

<Buckingham, Susan> I think that's a really interesting point, Max. The Coin Street example in London I cited earlier, (co-operative housing on a prime development site) was the result of a coalition between a local well established, though poor, community; radical planners, a left leaning city hall and a (short-lived) economic downturn which meant that the land was worth a lot less than previously.

<Krueger, Robert> There is some interesting work by Lydia Savage and Jane Wills on gender and unions which could be interesting to you. From an academic perspective, it captures the nuance of why class as an organizing principle is difficult. On a practical note, you are probably right.

<Buckingham, Susan> There are some examples of environmental protests which have been won because of alliances of interests between what might be styled middle class NIMBYs and radical environmental protesters. I think it's much more on an ad hoc basis now - class is weaker in itself, and governments play lots of cards to divide and rule (in the UK, currently the immigration card).

<Rousseau, Max> OK thank you very much for the answer and the example, I have to enquiry about this Coin Street initiative...

<Kazepov, Yuri> Lawrence's question is pending and will be sent to Susan and Rob... Dear Susan and Rob, thanks a lot for your very stimulating answers to the challenging questions.

<Krueger, Robert> Thanks to everyone for their interesting questions and thoughtful comments. I have really enjoyed this. Thank you.

<Buckingham, Susan> Thanks all very much for your stimulating questions and giving us the opportunity to explore ideas.

<Kazepov, Yuri> And thanks to all participants to engage so actively with the authors we really appreciate that a lot. We look forward meeting you online for the next chat on the 24th of April with Ryan Centner. Bye to everybody and thanks to Giovanni for moderating ;-)

<Torrisi, Giovanni> Thanks to you all. It has been a pleasure.

<Pending question>

<Bird, Lawrence> "Just to follow up on my earlier inquiry about the arts -- your response was very encouraging... I try to do similar work here. Do you have any pointers or references on the nuts and bolts of getting art groups to instigate urban change, including urban design?"

<Buckingham, Susan> Many, many years ago I did some graduate research on gentrification in North American cities, and it was clear from that, and from gentrification in London, that artists/craftspeople often move into run down in urban areas to live and work. While not a deliberate move they, being risk prone, in Cybriwsky's term, were considered precursors to more risk neutral/averse occupants and developers (as in Neil Smith's rent gap thesis). Of course, as rents rise, these artists are squeezed out and have to find alternative live/work arrangements. It may well not, therefore, favour them to get involved in instigating or advising urban change for this very reason. More recently, in work I am doing on environmental justice, I have come across two projects in which artists get involved with creating (or hoping to) environmental improvements, that you might be interested in: Artists Project Earth (APE): http://www.apeuk.org/ape-arts, and Cape Farewell, an artist led project to 'respond to the challenge of climate change' http://www.capefarewell.com/about.html.