

Covid, innovative planning, innovative methods and rights to the city - abstracts

- **Roberto E. Barrios** rbarrios@siu.edu (Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, US) - *Will Black Lives finally matter when Black deaths are visible? Race, the revelatory crisis, and the right to the City in New Orleans, Louisiana*

ABSTRACT: In March 2020, the city of New Orleans became one of the epicenters of the COVID 19 pandemic in the Southern United States. Across the state of Louisiana, African American populations were disproportionately affected in terms of morbidity and mortality. These health outcomes were the effect of long-standing discriminatory practices that limited the social and spatial mobility of Black Louisianans; imposing higher levels of poverty, limiting health care access, increasing the prevalence of pre-existing health conditions, and forcing many to seek employment in the low level service sector. For New Orleans City Councilmember Jay H. Banks, these were not a novel situation; instead “[w]hat’s new is the illustration of it. What’s new is that people can see it that couldn’t see it before.” The Councilmember’s words resonate with the claim made by Marshal Sahlins nearly fifty years ago that disasters are revelatory crises; that is, catastrophic events bring to light social fractures along lines of race, class, gender, and ethnicity that are normally obscured by hegemonic discourses of group identity and reciprocity. What is particularly interesting about the case of New Orleans is that, nearly fifteen years before the COVID 19 pandemic, the city had experienced another revelatory crisis that, for many Americans, contested discourses of a post-racial nation. For many, Katrina, like COVID 19, illustrated the stark race-based inequities created by the Southern state’s segregationist practices that endured long after the Civil Rights movement. This paper examines how the revelations of Katrina did not translate into an agenda of racial and environmental justice during the city’s recovery. Instead, expert planners and architects made neoliberal proposals for the city’s recovery that, in effect, treated Black Lives as if they did not matter and denied over 100,000 African Americans their right to the city through the privatization of public housing, health care, and education. Consequently, the paper asks: What are the processes through which revelatory crises like the COVID pandemic can actually lead to transformative change?

- **Joshua Poe** joshuapoe001@gmail.com and Jessica Bellamy <hello@jessicabellamy.design> (Root Cause Research Center, Louisville, KY, US) - Movement Science: Data Storytelling and Counter Mapping

ABSTRACT: *"The first thing that must be understood about how Movement Scientists show up in political battlefields is that we are connectors, first-responders, and pioneers of innovative methods within the field of data science and design. We connect people to essential statistics, resources, writings, databases, impact statements, etc. We are on the frontlines of debate. Here, we are armed with the data points necessary to refute problematic ideology, support community voices, demonstrate root causes, and hold authority figures accountable."* -Jessica Bellamy

The Root Cause Research Center is a policy-focused, grassroots-led institution grounded in data equity, movement science, and abolitionist planning. We are actively building a new system in the American South that provides an alternative to the traditionally hierarchical and classist model of research. We lean into transformative justice by creating community-based alternatives to dehumanizing and inaccessible research institutions that use impacted community members as *test subjects* rather than co-investigators.

Central to the role of scholar-activists in combating systems of oppression is coordinating decision-making power and the means of production for knowledge and data into the hands of communities. Movement Science is research intentionally in service to abolitionist and justice movements. Panelists will share the ways in which digital storytelling and archival research have shaped their approach to Movement Science, abolitionist planning education, engagement, and organizing in Louisville, KY. Panelists’ specific practices of acknowledgment and commemoration of the

government and profession's roles in displacement, dispossession, and erasure during research and project-based learning processes will be discussed, along with their work mapping land ownership, anti-gentrification and anti-eviction efforts in Louisville, Kentucky.

- **Sujayita Bhattacharjee** sujayita100@gmail.com (U. Mumbai) - *Pandemic and work from home: connotations on the lives of the working women of Mumbai Metropolitan Region*

ABSTRACT: The COVID-19 pandemic has led to various challenges across the world. It has forced people to adjust their lifestyles, behaviors, interactions, and work practices in such ways that facilitate staying away from the SARS-COV-2 virus. As a result, in many places, work from home practices has come to be adopted. During the pandemic, the practice of work from home has become quite common in India as well. The study takes the case of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region of India where working from home has become the new norm following the outbreak of the pandemic and the declaring of lockdown in the country, resulting in negotiations of space at homes. Although working from home is an evolving feature in India, its applicability, however, at such enormous levels was never tested before. This has created an opportunity to analyze the different dimensions associated with working from home. Hence, in this study, the perceived notions associated with working from home are questioned in terms of the experiences of the working women of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, as a result of working from home under the pandemic situation. The study is mostly based on primary data, along with which certain secondary sources of data also have been used. The results of the study reveal the benefits and challenges of working from home for the working women of the study area during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Jennifer Pipitone** jennifer.pipitone@mountsaintvincent.edu (College of Mt St Vincent, Bronx, US) and Svetlana Jović (SUNY Old Westbury, US) - *Urban Greenspaces and COVID-19: An Exploration of Park Use and Sense of Belonging in New York City*

ABSTRACT: Public spaces in cities of today are characterized by socio-spatial inequalities that often result in restricted mobility for, and exclusion of, marginalized populations—inequalities that have intensified due to COVID-19. In this exploratory study, we distributed a survey comprised of close- and open-ended questions through convenience sampling in late July¹ with the aim of understanding if and how New Yorkers' (a) use of urban greenspaces and (b) sense of belonging to local parks has shifted since the start of the pandemic. Participants ($N=138$) were racially diverse (53% white; 47% people of color) predominantly female and between 18-44yo with a neighborhood median income of \$67,500.²

In a typical two-week period, participants reported spending more time in parks ($M=3.86$) compared to during NYC's lockdown ($M=3.35$, $p<.01$) and before the pandemic ($M=3.62$). However, we found neighborhood differences: participants in higher income neighborhoods reported spending more time in parks (currently $r=.233$, $p<.01$, pre-pandemic $r=.233$, $p<.01$) and were overall more satisfied with their local parks (currently $r=.288$, $p<.01$; before $r=.308$, $p<.01$) than those in lower income areas. Participants also reported a stronger sense of belonging to local parks/greenspaces ($M=3.39$) compared to before the pandemic ($M=3.26$). This differed by neighborhood, with participants in higher income neighborhoods reporting a stronger sense of belonging (before $r=.276$, $p= <.01$; currently $r=.242$, $p=<.01$).

Overall, our data suggest that urban greenspace use and sense of belonging to local parks has increased in NYC. However, neighborhood differences raise important questions about accessibility, inclusion, and quality of greenspaces in lower income communities. Reflecting on our qualitative data, we conclude by considering what lessons the pandemic can teach us about improving social sustainability in urban greenspaces.

¹ New York City entered the last phase of re-opening on July 20th (without indoor dining)

² The city-wide median income is \$60,762 (in 2018 dollars; US Census Bureau, 2014-2018)

- **Gustavo Toshiaki Lopes Sugahara** g.t.l.sugahara@medisin.uio.no (SERAF/UiO) - *Hacking the Life Course: Ageing in the Smart-City*

ABSTRACT: This proposal explores the governance challenges and opportunities posed to cities in face of the technological and longevity revolutions. The overall research question is as follows: “Will the Smart-City care about an aged society?” The focus is the influence of the demographic change and the emergence of open-ended forms of governance in the making of cities.

In the face of an unprecedented global growth of the older population, technology is often regarded as the silver bullet that will save societies from the “old-age tsunami”. For the public sector, the use of technology can be the only possible alternative for an increasing demand for social services. The industry is reacting accordingly, exploring the business opportunities opened by the growing “silver market”. This perspective plays a dominant role in the interface between technology developers, industry, and the public sector. However, under this framework, important societal changes related to the demographic change and technology are frequently overlooked.

Despite the current lack of a generalized and shared definition about what are Smart-cities, the centrality of information and communications technology can be regarded as the lowest common denominator. New open-ended forms of governance can unleash the longevity dividend. Emergent self-governance structures offer opportunities for new types of organisations, public services and civic engagement (from service delivery to control and accountability) as well as for business innovations.

In this context, it is also important to have in mind that using technology is not per se conditioned by corporate pushed locked-in solutions. Open-ended forms of governance, that encompass peer-to peer (P2P) technologies, open data, and ICT-enabled co-creative forms of policy and service design, offer great opportunities to building new governance platforms for smart cities that integrate technological and social processes.

The following three sub-research questions will be explored in order to illuminate the overall research question: (i) How open-ended forms of e-governance can better contribute to local communities’ participation and a new culture of care?”, (ii) How shared and enabling spaces can affect community work? (iii) How are the technological and longevity revolutions changing the meaning of quality of life and ageing in place? (iv) How the development of open platforms for public policy and service delivery in the context of smart cities can combat ageism and unleash society’s longevity dividend?

- **Erik Berg** (HABITAT) or **Marcin Sliwa** (UiO) – ABSTRACT FORTHCOMING