CHAPTER 13

SHIFTING THE FOCUS TO RESULTS

Urban Social Movements and NGOs

Gina Owens, a leading member of a resident-led committee that advises the Seattle Housing Authority, noticed a peculiar pattern in resident complaints. Concerns about neglect of property and discrimination were suddenly surpassed by one specific grievance: nonrefundable "move in" fees. Owens noticed that the move in fees "were set up to weed out the people who [the landlords] know won't be able to make the grade, whether that be people of color, whether that be people working low end jobs and not making enough money" to pay the move in fee (Tobias, 2017). The move in fees were a new market barrier that made housing unaffordable for a growing number of Seattle residents caught up in a real estate boom, driven by the expansion of technology and retail giant Amazon, that drove up rents 57% between 2012 and 2017 (Tobias, 2017). Seattle's 9.7% rent increase in 2016 was the largest single increase in the United States in 2016 (Pacheco, 2017). The problem of affordable housing and homelessness in Seattle has reached such an extreme point that Amazon is planning to include a 47,000 square foot homeless shelter, large enough for sixty-five families, in its new six-story office building (Wamsley, 2017). Clearly, however, we cannot rely on giant corporations to solve our pressing social problems.

A Washington state-based social movement created an organization targeting the problem created by landlord-added "move in" fees. They surveyed local residents, who stated that the move in fee was the major reason why they couldn't afford to either move out of their current home amidst rent increases or find a suitable home somewhere else. Landlords demanded a nonrefundable move in fee that ranged between $2,000 and $4,000. Another local citizen activist group, Seattle's housing justice movement, pressured the common council to directly tackle the problem of affordable housing. Seattle's left leaning common council, led by Kshama Sawant and Nick Licata, staunch advocates of affordable housing and proponents of statewide rent control policies, helped secure the passage of the Mandatory Affordability Program on October 20, 2014, a comprehensive housing program to fund and

build affordable housing in the city. In short, this important success against landlord greed was the result of an urban social movement propelled forward by actively engaged citizens.

Our previous chapter detailed clearly the way business interests have co-opted government programs at every level aimed at fighting urban problems. Politicians, mainly in the nation's Congress, have also given up on improving the quality of daily life in the built environment ever since the Reagan administration so that supporting government spending for mass transit, affordable housing, repairing the infrastructure, and dealing with our environmental and climate change crises have all been largely ignored. While we wait for positive domestic policy to come out of Washington through the election of a new kind of lawmaker concerned about these domestic issues, we know that there are substantial efforts made by citizens at the local and state levels that address our regional settlement needs. This chapter reviews the most important of these efforts and social movements in order to provide hope for ways to alleviate the current crises in housing, transport, infrastructure, and environment.

Social problems have a definitive spatial component. So do social movements. However, a social movement's grievances have a tendency to obscure the spatial aspects of the very problems the movement is trying to solve. This chapter offers an introduction to how ordinary citizens and activists are trying to solve many of the urban problems we discussed throughout this book. In order to understand what makes citizen activism possible and account for the salient spatial aspects of social movements, we have to think of the way people organize, like the successful Seattle affordability outcome, to obtain positive results. A second part of this chapter discusses how urban citizen movements use already existing legislation or modify it in order to succeed in alleviating problems. In short, here we address hope and activism within our MCMRs as a way of demonstrating that, while urban policy has been hijacked since the 1970s by a governing ideology limiting public programs, there are ways to organize in order to fight for relief from urban social issues.

URBAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social movements occur when social actors collectively act to make claims for protective rights and to challenge the values, social norms, and institutional practices outside of conventional political channels. Social movements create new identities (Taylor and Whittier, 1992), new forms of knowledge (Eyerman and Jamison, 1991), and use a handful of strategies, such as composing oppositional narratives to the dominant ideology of neoliberalism, in order to explain their grievances, situate their claims in cultural frames, and present their physical bodies in a non-threatening manner to attract supporters and secure protections from the state (Goldstone, 2004; Hohle,

2013; Klawiter, 2008; Polletta, 1998; Snow and Bedford, 1988). Elites possess influence through conventional political channels, such as direct access to politicians and other policy makers through well-funded lobbying, and do not have to organize into a social movement to affect government change. Citizen social movements, in contrast, are comprised of residents that organize to change the status quo in order to make government respond to their needs. Social movement scholars have mapped out how people of color, women, labor, and the LGBTQ community have struggled to acquire protective rights and debunk negative stereotypes.

Social movements also include more privileged and middle-class actors collectively challenging laws. At times, these groups fight for better traffic controls in their neighborhoods or to demand improved police protection. The child-rearing middle class concerned with educational quality might organize for more quality programs in public schools. There are also middle-class homeowner movements that oppose social change. These reactionary groups, as they are sometimes called, include the anti-busing movements of the 1970s and the various tax revolt movements that demand cuts in public funding. Since the late 1970s, social movement scholars have identified the necessary conditions for mobilization to occur, specifically access to resources, like money, professional expertise, public relations skills, as well as a favorable political and cultural climate (see McAdam et al., 1996).

The study of urban movements was lost in the development of social movement theory that zeroed in on the question of mobilization while bracketing out a movement's relationship to political orientation (Walder, 2009) and civil society (Cohen and Arato, 1994; Mayer, 2003). In part, this was an unintended consequence of debates between new social movements and political process theory in the 1990s, a debate that took on different profiles between European and American sociologists. New social movements were conceptualized as social movements struggling for the rights of others. However, Calhoun (1993) showed that what was new about new social movements was old. Its major conceptual findings were prominent in nineteenth-century labor movements and identity movements. In turn, Castells's (1983) project of understanding urban social movements was ironically in no man's land, an intellectual inquiry that could not find a home in the study of social movements dominated by the question of mobilization, or in the field of urban sociology, which was dominated by theories of social disorder and social integration (see Castells, 2014). All the while, residents continued to organize against planning boards, fought for affordable housing, and challenged the effects of gentrification producing displacement of less affluent residents from neighborhoods.

A social movement's grievance, style of organization, repertories of action, its issue of who joins and why, is largely determined by its spatial component that is not merely the incorporation of social space as context. For example, we find the importance of social space in anti-military movements on an island in one case (Velez-Velez, 2016), the importance of organizational density in another (Minkoff,

1997), or demands for participation in the public sphere (Calhoun, 1998), and in property tax revolts (Martin, 2008). Although social space continues to matter in all movements, spatial issues alone do not qualify a social movement as an urban social movement.

Three criteria make an urban social movement distinct from a social movement: 1) collective consumption; 2) distinct spatial characteristics; 3) space as part of the protest.

First, Castells (1983) defined as uniquely urban the concept of "collective consumption" to capture how the need for public goods that could not be provided by market solutions alone, such as access to shelter, well-maintained roads, electricity, sewage, and fresh water, required collective action in order to achieve adequate supply from levels of government. Collective consumption movements are triggered by inadequacies in the government provision of public goods, such as subsidized housing shortages, excessively high rents, slumlords violating housing codes, access to quality public education, the need for adequate urban infrastructure—such as the maintenance of roads or public transport—and the need for health care provided to people who cannot afford private doctors or hospitals. Urban social movements protest the way collective consumption services are unevenly disbursed by the state and/or municipal government. For example, blacks and Hispanics in racially segregated neighborhoods demand access to better schools and the end to police brutality. Marginalized residents in rural and urban neighborhoods demand the state clean up the PCBs and other heavy metals that industry dumped in the soil and water. Indeed, Castells (2014) noted that many contemporary social movements are actually urban social movements because "they start with urban issues," such as housing foreclosures in the US and the rejection of urban planning models in Turkey, Brazil, and India. For example, urban social movements developed in the slums of India to target the issue of staying put in relation to real estate developers' interests in removing residents in order to build more expensive housing. Staying in place and preserving slum housing is an issue of collective consumption because of its proximity to the urban labor market. The reason why the slum is potentially valuable to developers is the same reason why it is also valuable to its current residents (Weinstein, 2014).

The second criteria of an urban social movement is the distinct geographical and cultural characteristics of a settlement space. Collection consumption demands and the capacity to mobilize will vary by neighborhood or community. Since space is a reflection of society and not a container of society, political and cultural variability exists between spaces that make some places more likely to form urban social movements rather than others. The quality and type of housing, neighborhood social characteristics, and the demographic makeup of the local population set the conditions for the style of mobilization, the degree of inclusiveness, and the scope of the collective consumption demand. Cultural characteristics include the strength of the social bonds and networks in the community, the symbolic

and affective dimensions of belonging, such as feeling safe while walking the streets, how the city or region's identity shapes a social group's collective identity, and the subsequent attachments to the region that are not easily quantified. On a neighborhood level, there is a difference between an urban ghetto or barrio, a bohemian district, a gentrified area, and a black working-class community. Across the multicentric metro region, there are differences among city neighborhoods, inner ring suburbs, and outer ring suburbs. Differences in cultural mindsets make some urban movements possible while acting as a structural barrier to collective action by people in other locations.

The third dimension of an urban social movement involves exactly how social space becomes a part of public protests. Urban social movements do more than contest the meaning of space. They interweave space and politics to create alternate meanings of an area's importance through the creation of public interests. For example, movements may raise the questions of who has a right to a public space, to be visible in it, to have access to state resources to maintain it, and so on. Urban social movements can be contentious or non-contentious. As we will see below, many environmental movements pressure the state to enforce existing rules on pollution, to clean up toxic waste dumps, or to stop fracking for natural gas. Urban social movements can also be contentious. They often weave the symbolic meaning of civic buildings and statues, or the historical urban legacy, into their oppositional narratives of protest in order to fight the dominant business and market orientation of places as they publicly air their grievances and make claims for the right to receive higher quality public goods from local government.

An urban social movement can be nested within a broader social movement. For example, the Atlanta Project was an urban social movement contained within the broader black civil rights movement. Whereas the civil rights movement associated with Martin Luther King fought to desegregate public life and struggled for rights protecting blacks against various forms of legal discrimination, the Atlanta Project organized around issues related to poor material conditions in the urban black ghetto. In 1965, local black nationalists in the Vine City neighborhood of Atlanta, Georgia began organizing local residents on issues such as the omnipresence of rats, no heat in the buildings, and how slumlords cashed welfare checks in exchange for script that could only be spent at the slumlord's store. Slumlords rented shelter by the family, cramming five families into a six-room house, and evicted at will. The Atlanta Project also protested the city's plans to demolish the black ghetto to make room for downtown development—hotels and a baseball stadium. They protested the issue of police brutality. Their protest tactics included picketing slumlord-owned buildings, leading a rent strike, and forming a tent city to house evicted families—all of these efforts are well-proven tactics used by tenants elsewhere in fights against landlords. Unfortunately, the white liberal business coalition of real estate developers, banks, and local politicians was too much for the

Atlanta Project to overcome. Slumlords demolished buildings rather than bring them up to code, and black families were relocated to another part of the city in the name of urban renewal (see Hohle, 2013:95–100, 2015:120–126).

Sometimes urban social movements are so successful at organizing inhabitants of urban areas and their agendas expand to include a variety of collective consumption issues that government fails to address, such as the fight for affordable housing, better maintenance of neighborhood roads, or improved garbage collection, that they institutionalize themselves into a permanent Non-Governmental Agency, or, NGO. With neoliberal austerity policies active in many countries and with the general neglect of governments to recognize the quality of life needs of the less affluent that is worldwide, NGOs have multiplied globally and are connected with each other by information exchange and internet communication. Permanent and activist NGOs are the extensions of social movements and they are a force to be reckoned with on the global stage. Trading information on tactics, strategies, successes and failures, NGOs of all kinds often meet yearly at international conferences. New York City has an affordable housing NGO, called the AFNY or Affordable New York, that grew out of the consolidation of various coalitions fighting for rent and housing relief. It has another NGO, Transportation Alternatives, that, like similar groups in other countries, continues to fight against reliance on the private automobile and by advocating for better public transportation and the use of nonpolluting bicycle commuting. In particular, NGO activism worldwide has led to successes in environmental battles with global capitalist corporations and these organizations continue the fight as we experience continued effects of climate change. In sum, the dynamic of activism created by local social movements and permanent NGOs with a wider group representation remain a vibrant force of citizen political pressure in many countries.

In sum, collective consumption is an important dimension to the quality of community life and resident organizing for better provision of these public goods is considered the most common form of urban social movement or NGO. There are successes, such as in Seattle, and failures, such as in Atlanta, however, urban social movements and their more institutional variants as NGOs are very common all over the world. They continue to provide opportunities for study by researchers interested in the way average residents of the built environment create organized opposition to the dominant ideology of neoliberalism that enforces fiscal austerity and a neglect of public good needs that are vital to sustaining the daily quality of life, as in the Flint, Michigan water crisis.

The Right to the City

Some urban scholars have skirted Castells's concept of urban social movements in favor of Lefebvre's notion of *the right to the city*. However, there is a significant degree of ambiguity over Lefebvre's term since it was a minor point in his larger theoretical project on the transformation of everyday life by modernism and the ubiquity of urban development. Lefebvre argued that residents' demands of the "right to the city" creates the urban "oeuvre": the "fundamental desire of which play, sexuality, physical activities, such as sport, creative activity, art and knowledge are particular expressions and moments" (Lefebvre, 1996:87). However, David Harvey (2012) used Lefebvre's "right to the city" slogan to capture how the capitalist crisis related to space makes urban areas the sites of rebellion. This view was more wishful thinking than actual fact. The only thing inherent in government policy that provoked citizen movements for Harvey, however, was the relative way an urban location goes about privatizing social space and its exclusionary practices or how local governments support predatory lending by banks. These are certainly important concerns. However, the right to the city approach does not adequately explain the process of citizen mobilization, how organizing can lead to more permanent advocacy programs, like NGOs, nor the variety of these activist movements around the world, as does Castells's more broader perspective. According to Gottdiener, "Whereas Castells studies what exists in the way of political action within the city and tries to explain it, Lefebvre wishes to consider what might occur in the manner of radical political action" (Gottdiener, 1995:147). Lefebvre was interested in promoting political struggles toward the state and property relations (Gottdiener, 1995:149). The focus on mobilization rather than just political action allows us to understand how social groups organize in relation to specific urban problems and grievances, the formation of networks that distinguish an "us" from "them," and the difference between reformist and liberationist movements that leads to an assumption that people join movements for ideological reasons instead of empirical or pragmatic reasons embedded in demands for collective consumption.

Housing Justice

One example of an urban social movement relevant today addresses the issue of housing justice. Such movements have appeared in cities across the United States since the turn of the twentieth century, but did not become common until the 1940s. In response to the increased need for housing as families grew during the World War II years, the federal government passed rent control laws to prevent real estate speculation and curb increases in rental units in American cities. The vast majority of states opted out of continuing their own rent control policies after the 1942 US Emergency Price Act expired in 1950. By that time and spurred by federal housing policy, VA loans, and cheap regional land, capital investment had moved out of the cities and into suburbs. Advocates of housing justice remained silent until after the black civil rights movement in the 1960s. Indeed, Martin

Luther King went to Chicago in 1966 to highlight the increase in urban blight and abusive slumlords in black neighborhoods. Housing rights activists were split on fighting for public housing or subsidized housing, while real estate and political elites fought to limit the expansion of affordable housing. Now, in more recent years, what's different today is how the problem of affordable housing is embedded in the global housing market characterized by the secondary circuit of capitalism: redeveloping a region to be more attractive to global capital profit making and the emphasis of developers on building luxury forms of shelter solely for the greatest monetary returns. The result is widespread real estate speculation and, most especially, exponential increases in rents and the cost of housing units in almost all urban places around the globe.

As we have already noted, despite the apparent stranglehold of neoliberal ideology mandating limited government spending on domestic issues improving the quality of life, there are many ways concerned citizens can fight back. Seattle provides a contemporary example of a housing justice movement trying to secure affordable shelter for the working poor and middle class. The origins of Seattle's housing justice movement lay in its rich social movement history and concerns about affordable housing, particularly homelessness. Seattle is located in King County, Washington, whose homeless population of nearly 11,000 people made them the home to the third largest homeless population in the United States in 2016. An existing social movement field—a network of housing justice organizations across western Washington state—created the conditions for the contemporary movement to bloom. These organizations include the Housing Justice Project, which gives legal support for low-income tenants facing eviction. The Social Justice Fund is a grassroots organization that funds groups looking for solutions to affordable housing. But the most significant social movement organization in the fight for affordable housing is Washington CAN. Washington CAN began in the 1970s as a movement to stop utility companies from cutting off electricity to poor families and against nuclear power (Washingtoncan.org). It is currently the state's largest social movement organization.

The city of Seattle's approach to the affordable housing problem was to shift the cost of paying for the construction of new affordable housing units to the developers. They called this a "Housing Linkage Fee." It is more commonly referred to as "incentive zoning." Incentive zoning refers to altering zoning ordnances that allow for additional stories to the height of a building for an in-lieu fee to fund affordable housing. Participating developers pay an additional fee per square foot in exchange for permission to construct a larger building. Each additional floor of a new condo, office, or apartment building, or a mixed use of all three, is worth millions, so it's a nice horse trade for developers. The "in-lieu" fee money that the government collects is then reinvested back into an affordable housing fund. Seattle began the incentive zoning program in 2001 for commercial buildings, and expanded it to

include multi-family buildings in 2006. Although the initiative wasn't enough to curb Seattle's affordable housing problem, it did provide some relief as prices soared (Seattle City Council, Affordable Housing, seattle.gov). An extension of the original program, the Seattle Mandatory Affordability Program (MAP), expanded the incentive zoning in two meaningful ways. The first was to give the developers the option of paying the in-lieu fee or building affordable housing units in the new building. The second was to expand the program to include all commercial and residential development. The results of the expanded MAP brought in much needed revenue for Seattle's affordable housing program amounting to $6.6 million through incentive zoning in 2013. In 2014, the year they instituted MAP, the revenue increased to $21 million, followed by $35 million in 2015, and $32 million in 2016. Although this led to the construction of 809 new affordable housing units, it is still well below the current and projected need of around 60,000 affordable housing units in King County. Nevertheless, Seattle initiatives demonstrated that, with citizen organizing, local politicians can do something to curb the previous profit making increases in building currently dominating urban development.

Box 13.1

Affordable Housing—What Can Students Do?

Start or join a housing co-operative

- Owned by a non-profit housing corporation/trust, co-ops promote neighborhood engagement and social equality via shared ownership.
- Provides a more stable financial backing which results in lower loan default rates.
- Allows access to property for individuals who would otherwise be forced to rent.

Support political candidates who promote public housing policies

- Public housing increases neighborhood diversity and provides benefits to marginalized communities in particular.
- Housing vouchers allow individuals to pick their neighborhood more freely within the private housing market, both within urban and rural areas.
- Inclusionary zoning pushes developers to make a portion of their rentals affordable to families of modest means.

Know your rights under the Fair Housing Act

continues

continued

- You cannot be denied housing based upon your race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability.
- If you feel you have been treated unfairly, file a fair housing complaint with HUD.

Support your community and its local environment/culture

- Join local organizations that promote environmentally conscious policies, such as urban garden projects and green energy development.
- Support organizations dedicated to promoting racial and economic diversity within your community.
- Participate in local government by attending town meetings, voting in elections, and running for office.

Rent Control Versus Inclusionary Zoning

The reason why Seattle focused on incentive zoning is that the state of Washington does not have rent control. Rent control refers to a regulatory system that places caps on the amount of rent a landlord can collect a month and places caps on how much the landlord can increase the rent year over year. Rent control was a popular way to provide affordable housing in Europe prior to state efforts to build public housing after WWII. France had rent control from 1914 to 1948. New York City has used rent control since the 1942 US Emergency Price Act expired in 1950. The state of New York jointly managed rent control with New York City until 1984, when the state assumed sole responsibility to manage the rent control program. Rent control is a popular policy with residents in expensive housing markets in global cities like New York but is most often opposed by developers. Consequently, it is up to organized citizens to pressure local politicians to pass such regulations and maintain them in practice.

Sociologists and economists differ over the desirability and usefulness of rent control, and rent control's impact on profits and the housing market, mainly because the latter support neoliberal, market solutions to domestic problems. Consequently, in the US, as opposed to elsewhere, economists stress concern with marketplace equilibrium and typically reject policy and regulations that they consider to distort the housing market. Sociologists focus on the social costs the housing market has on human beings, which leads to the question of how market failures create society's social problems, that then have to be solved by spending more taxpayer money. To elaborate, economists study rent control in relation to the efficiency of the housing market and its redistributive effects (Gyourko and Linneman, 1989; Glaeser et al., 2005). For them, rent control creates distortions in the market that may lead to landlords delaying needed repairs on the property. However, these distortions also include incentives for a tenant to stay where they are despite a rise in earnings or the availability of new housing units. Another distortion is placing a cap on landlord profits. In this line of argument, rent control encourages the development of slums with all the social problems that effect implies. At the same time, both economists (Gyourko and Linneman, 1989) and sociologists have found that the impact of rent control on the landlord's or developer's profit exists, but is not significant to the extent that it impairs a landlord's ability to make investments. Sociologists Loic Bonneval and Francois Roberts's (2013) research on landlord strategies and rent control in Lyon, France found that rent control did not significantly reduce the amount of new construction or developer profits. In fact, the rate of return remained quite high, and landlords pursued strategies to safeguard profits. Mobility, however, did remain low. Indeed, the problem of landlords not maintaining their properties exists in all cities, with or without rent control. The rent gap exists in racially segregated housing markets, urban ghettos, and trailer parks, not just for new buildings and gentrified areas. A survey of research on this question reveals that there is nothing about rent control that produces a mutually exclusive negative effect on the housing market that does not exist in housing markets without rent control, with one key exception: the size of landlord profits. Thus, the debate between neoliberal economists praising market solutions to our affordable housing crisis and sociologists concerned about the larger consequences of market failure to meet needed supply resulting in social problems that require further government spending and expensive interventions is an ideological battle that either places landlord profits first (neoliberal economists), or, social values first about the basic right of affordable shelter (the position of this text).

Another way neoliberal housing policy advocates distort the issue of our current crisis involves how they fail to identify the definition of "affordable housing." Luxury apartments or condos are "affordable" to the wealthy. Affluent homeowners find large McMansions in areas outside the inner city affordable, too. According to the government, the measure for domestic spending is based on the Average Median Income, or AMI. Now, housing can cost upwards of 60% of that average, which is grossly excessive. In evaluating so-called "affordable housing" policy, therefore, the critical question to ask is precisely how a given program will help lower the market cost of shelter based on the individual's AMI for the region. This issue must be asked for the long as well as short-term life of the program. New York State and the city have programs in place, in contrast to cities, like Seattle, that attack the issue of affordability from both the supply and demand-sides of the market. That is, although NYC also relies on the market, there are programs offering relief for both landlords and tenants. On the supply-side, the

421-A program, which has been in place since the 1980s, offers significant tax abatement to developers if they include "rent stabilized" units in their buildings. Tax relief can mean millions of dollars to developers and is a powerful incentive. For this program, property developers must apply and cannot proceed with construction unless they are approved, thereby giving NYC some control over where relief for housing costs will be located. On the demand-side, the State of New York offers the Section 8 program that also uses the market. This is a voucher system given to approved renters who then get money, or a voucher, that can be used to offset the cost of a landlord's rent. Both programs offer considerable relief to tenants, however, not everyone needing it will qualify. The potential applicants are chosen by lottery. And, the number of lottery winners picked is woefully inadequate to the overall demand. Nevertheless, New York, and some other states, have tried to take politics out of the equation determining the supply of affordable housing as well as using a precise measurement, the AMI of the region, to evaluate the recommended cost of an individual's shelter. Unfortunately, as in the case of Seattle, although these government programs achieve a certain success, it is most important to note that the total amount of affordable home construction remains quite small and there is still a very critical housing crisis in the US.

Historically, the problem of affordable housing is wrapped up in the real problems of racial discrimination, real estate speculation, and housing bubbles—which have a history of popping up cyclically under capitalism and ending badly for all parties involved, especially taxpayers that are then called upon to bail out real estate connected banks and finance companies. Rent control programs need to be understood as a social welfare government benefit. Welfare states provide citizens' social rights: the right not to starve, to affordable health care, and to be housed. For an urban social movement fighting for the right to be housed, rent relief is a form of collective consumption that views the right to be sheltered as a public good. The issue of rent control as a social welfare benefit allows us to measure its distributive effects. Edward Glaeser and Joseph Gyourko (2018), the leading supply-side economists on housing, reject the whole debate over affordable housing because it conflates poverty with a broken housing market. They are wrong. Affordable housing is an issue of relative poverty. The present-day excessive cost paid for housing exists in so-called "efficient housing markets" that victimize the white working and middle classes because of wage stagnation, and it also discriminates against blacks and Latinos in general because of systemic racism. Systemic racism, how racism works on the institutional level, was built on inheritance and wealth accumulation by individuals or families over time that was originally through land ownership, but, more recently through homeownership in the twentieth century, which for 90% of the US population is the only way they will build wealth (Feagin, 2006).

In sum, a city or metropolitan region can regulate unnecessary costs, like move in fees, or place caps on security deposits, but regulations alone will not address the structural problems of a capitalist housing market that historically always results in the structural outcome of failure to meet the demand for affordable housing in our society. The state can neutralize the presence of supply-side institutional actors, like real estate associations, local developers, planners, as well as global finance, on the cost of housing through various programs, as we have seen. However, policy changes without broader cultural re-evaluations about how we should treat less affluent people will not end contemporary discriminatory market solutions nor the institutional racist lending practices of the real estate industry, such as in the subprime market or in the prime market where blacks have historically paid higher interest rates (Williams et al., 2005). State regulations cannot ensure that local landlords and housing court judges will treat marginalized groups with dignity and respect, as well as ensuring that local cities and suburbs provide access to other collective consumption services like good schools. Combining rent relief measures with other collective consumption strategies such as investments in public transportation to connect job markets with other residential housing markets across the multicentric metro region can take pressure off the failure of the market to solve our housing crisis without sacrificing wetlands or handing over our cities to developers. When affordable housing is shifted to land tracts in poor, declining, or already segregated neighborhoods, the result is segregated housing. Thus, the housing justice movement needs to keep the pressure on government and politicians to ensure that affordable housing is built in *all areas*, and that the state invests in other uplifting social programs such as adequate and affordable public transportation, education, and medical care, so that today's affordable housing projects do not end up as tomorrow's ghettos. Thus, there is a monumental need today for citizen activism that fights the current neoliberal ideology restricting government social programs and returns our society back to the humane level it once was when domestic spending was considered more important than such national budget items as runaway military spending or massive debt inducing tax cuts for the wealthy, as is the case now.

Homelessness and Rapid Rehousing

In the 1990s, urban myths swirled around Rudy Giuliani's plan to reduce homelessness in New York City. One myth was that the Giuliani administration was buying one-way bus tickets to send the homeless to Yonkers, Albany, and even Hartford, Connecticut. In reality he used racist policing practices like zero tolerance to send them to jail. Former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg's administration did pay for more than 550 one-way tickets to send the homeless out of New York to an out of town or out of state family member. In September of 2017, the city of Los Angeles, the homeless capital of the United States, announced that they were literally going to put the homeless in shipping containers. It was not to ship the

homeless north to San Francisco or West to Phoenix. Rather, the shipping containers would be part of a housing complex for the homeless. The shipping containers in question are the large metal containers used to ship commodities across the globe on massive freighters. Rising rents and land values in America's coastal cities, combined with the state's public disinvestment in spending for domestic well-being programs, has led to creative, or some might say desperate, solutions to house the homeless that is a much greater problem in the US than most people realize, especially in the Sun Belt and northwest.

Current strategies to fight homelessness rely on a combination of homeless shelters, motels, and a housing voucher system. Although the homeless shelters are supposed to shelter people on an emergency basis, families are spending a significant amount of time in shelters. Accurate counts of the homeless in cities are difficult to achieve. However, in 2014, 53,615 people were counted as homeless each night in New York City, including 12,724 families. The average length of time a family stayed in a homeless shelter in NYC was 518 days. The shortage of beds in shelters led states to placing homeless families in motels. Housing families in motels is expensive and not a suitable place to raise a child. Many motel rooms are not equipped with kitchens. It's expensive and unhealthy to eat out or live off of frozen precooked meals cooked in microwaves. Housing voucher systems simply drive up the cost of rental units, making the problem of affordable housing, rent for everyone and homelessness worse. Once again we see that a neoliberal solution, namely vouchers, uses the market, which mainly serves to enrich owners of property and does nothing to fix the social problem, especially when the program does nothing to regulate landlord profit making and maintenance of buildings at the same time that vouchers financed by taxpayers are used.

In lieu of the limitations of existing strategies to solve the problem of homelessness, Richard Schweid (2016) studied the effectiveness of a strategy called rapid rehousing. Rapid rehousing is a homeless policy with the singular goal of finding shelter for homeless people. States have replaced social work caseworkers with housing locators, whose knowledge of the local housing market and relationships with landlords can still be problematic. However, Fairfax, Virginia, cut the average stay at shelters from three months to three to five days with this strategy. Portland, Oregon, also used rapid rehousing strategies and kept 85% of participants housed a year after they entered the program. Rapid rehousing is a public–private strategy that uses public funds to pay private rents. It requires an inventory of low rent and subsidized housing—the type of affordable housing that is disappearing in cities across the United States. On a purely economic level, state investment into public housing and affordable housing units is the ideal way to put a roof over everyone's head. But it doesn't deal with issues of poor education for children that have to move regularly, domestic abuse, addiction, or mental illness—other social problems that cause homelessness.

Our currently dominant anti-government domestic spending ideology gives the impression that building low-income housing projects does not work. It is true that there are some well-known instances, such as the Pruitt-Igoe complex in St. Louis or the Cabrini-Green project in Chicago that fell into such personal and physical chaos they had to be torn down. Yet, since the 1950s and 1960s, many other cities have had success with lower density subsidized housing. Keep in mind that the public housing programs started in the 1950s, and, yet, a significant supply of public housing remains and is viable more than sixty years later in many American cities. For example, the New York City Housing Authority provides subsidized shelter to over 300,000 people in Manhattan that is about 10% of the total population for that borough. To be sure, people must go through a rigorous vetting process to be eligible for the program and there are abuses, such as individuals violating their contracts by subletting apartments to non-needy others in Manhattan, but, overall, this lower density approach works. Of course, the affordable housing situation in the US is so very bad that subsidized government programs are only part of the solution. But, here too, there is some good news. With the substantial market demand that exists, enterprising non-profit corporations have entered the scene and have become affordable housing developers in their own right, such as the company, Banana Kelly, that builds apartments in the Bronx or the recently formed 5th Avenue Committee in Brooklyn that builds subsidized housing specifically for seniors. In short, what is missing from America is not the inability to build viable low-income or affordable housing for people, but, simply, the iron hold of neoliberal ideology on domestic public spending that, with a variety of subsidized and non-profit providers using a mix of methods, there is absolutely no reason why the United States should contain large numbers of homeless people or, for that matter, a significant percentage of our population paying an excessive amount of their salaries for shelter that, at times, amounts to over half of their entire income, nor, should we tolerate neoliberal market solutions, like a voucher system, that does nothing to regulate how much profit landlords make from our taxpayer-supported programs.

The Right to Tenure and Shelter Poverty—The Global Housing Crisis

The issue of affordable housing is a problem of both developed and developing nations. Urban social movements in the developing world, especially in the rapidly urbanizing mega regions, are struggling for the right to tenure, or the right to stay where they are. For the global poor, the right to tenure includes the legality of their settlement spaces, namely, the shantytowns of ersatz housing built illegally outside the major cities, the financial means to erect safe structures, access to public resources like electricity and water, and the right to remain in the housing they already occupy. Urban social movements in developing nations are wholly

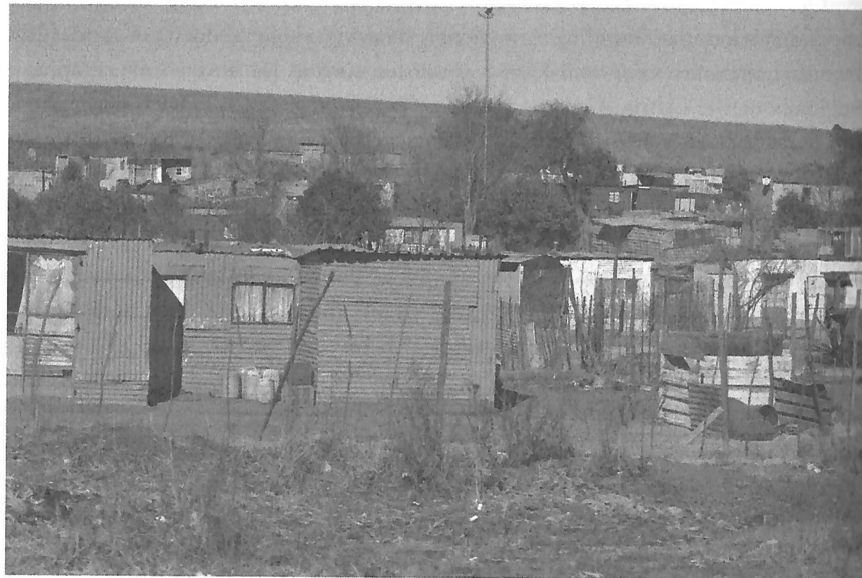

FIGURE 13.1 Houses or shacks in a cluster in a poverty stricken area made out of steel, bricks, windows an informal settlement in Africa.

dependent on a sympathetic state to tackle the problem of shelter poverty. Therefore, when not forthcoming, in some cases, sweeps of shantytowns by police and the military to clear out government designated areas for other uses, have often resulted in violence.

In countries with a sympathetic government not enthralled with the neoliberal belief in cutting domestic spending, urban social movements work well in cooperation with political elites and planners. For example, in eThekwini, South Africa, the city formerly known as Durban, urban social movements struggled with the issue of shelter poverty: inadequate access to safe housing, tenure, and public services in informal settlement spaces (Mitlan and Mogaladi, 2013) (Figure 13.1). Concerned resident mobilization developed around the relationship between local social movement organizations and the state-wide program to build housing in post-apartheid South Africa. On the one hand, South African cities do not have the resources or autonomy to set their own housing policy (Heller and Evans, 2010). On the other hand, the legacy of apartheid secluded blacks into living in informal settlement spaces on the periphery of industrial facilities and urban markets. South Africa instituted a program to build 3 million homes in 1994, but subsequent neoliberal interests seizing on this opportunity to make profits from the needs of the poor and segregated population redirected this effort to the global capital market that started corporate mega projects in 2004. The original 1994 plan relied on giving public finance

and state subsidies to an individual or family based on their ability to purchase a home in a formal settlement space. Not surprisingly, many black South Africans did not possess the economic capital to take advantage of this program. As part of South Africa's 2004 Breaking New Ground Program, money was set aside to upgrade informal settlement spaces. However, this money was not just given to the poor or directed into public housing. Urban social movements were forced to organize and raise funds necessary to enable the slum dwellers to participate in the new globalized building campaign. Clearly, by taking the initiative away from the public program in the first place, an inadequate supply of affordable housing resulted.

Nevertheless, two South African social movement organizations involved in the fight to build adequate shelter in this location did achieve success by using techniques of successful housing social movements elsewhere, "FedUp" and "Abahlali baseMjondolo" (see Mitlan and Mogaladi, 2013). FedUp was active between 1996 and 2000. They organized women. They focused on collective savings, showing women how to pool their money to buy and spend as a collective. One consequence of this strategy was that it gave women political power to negotiate access to further housing subsidies, as well as have input on the design of housing and land uses. The extent that FedUp was successful is found in how the state deregulated the housing program to weaken local political influence. Abahlali baseMjondolo fought against residential displacement within the informal settlement spaces. Urban planning that accompanied the globally directed corporate mega projects made informal settlement spaces valuable, as they typically resided in close proximity to the megaproject markets. Abahlali baseMjondolo used a combination of social movement strategies popular in the west: they filed lawsuits and held demonstrations. They boycotted elections because their members knew that they received nothing for their loyalty to the political party. They also used strategies that were unique to the spatial aspects of their movement: they illegally connected homes to water and electrical lines. Thus, these South African affordable housing social movements achieved some success, despite the odds, and the megaproject was forced to contain shelter for low-income people despite their drive to maximize profits.

The housing movement in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Uniao de Movimentos de Moradia (UMM) also worked with a sympathetic government to secure housing for the poor. The UMM formed in 1987 and is part of the Worker's Party (PT), a political coalition, known locally as a social movement party, that formed in opposition to the Brazilian military dictatorship that controlled Brazil from 1964 to 1985. When the PT became Brazil's ruling political party in 2003, and held on to federal control until 2016, it gave the UMM access to state resources. Earle (2013) argued that the UMM's work with the state did not diminish the UMM's autonomy or co-opt the movement. The UMM used a variety of spatial protest strategies: they occupied and

claimed abandoned buildings for the people and helped local residents in the *favelas* (slums) construct housing units and secure access to water and electricity (Figure 13.2). The more well-known strategy used by Brazilian urban social movements is participatory budgeting and policy councils (Souza, 2001; Wampler, 2007). Brazil's 1988 constitution created mechanisms for local grassroots movements to take part in the decision-making process. Participatory budgeting means that ordinary citizens get to decide where to spend part of the municipal budget. This includes local citizens drafting a spending proposal and sending it to elected officials or having community members vote on what to spend public funds. Once local residents won the right to participate in the budgeting process, they immediately called for more spending on collective consumption needs, such as low-income housing, street paving and the maintenance of local roads, public education, and community-wide sanitation.

In sum, despite the dominance of neoliberal austerity ideology with its anti-government spending rhetoric, community social movements in both the developed and developing world have now assembled a repertoire of various activist strategies that attack the need for more affordable housing, better conditions in shantytowns, supplying collective consumption public works, and, even better education and health care for the domestic population. Working with the local government can secure rent control and participatory budgeting rights in municipalities, including resident input where affordable housing should be built and the needed

FIGURE 13.2 Shacks in the *favelas*, a poor neighborhood in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

amenities to accommodate individuals and families throughout the life course. In a sense, it has been research into urban social movements or NGOs and the free exchange of information at international conferences supported by these activist organizations plus networking through the internet over these many years that has resulted in knowledge being shared about fighting neoliberal domestic policies in both the developed and developing world.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The development of multicentric regions impacts the natural environment. However, unregulated growth and the unprecedented scale of human development has resulted in global effects such as the widening hole in the ozone layer, global climate change, increasingly fierce hurricanes and typhoons around the world, acid rain, the increasing extinction of plant and animal species, melting glaciers leading to rising sea levels, and the increasing threats to fresh drinking water. In response, environmentalists have called for a new ordering of global priorities that would seek out environmentally enhancing methods of industrial production, green technologies, and environmentally friendly settlement spaces (Gore, 1992; Naess, 1989). This means redefining the relationship between humans and the built environment on this planet.

The above concerns have been part of the environmental movement in the United States for some time. In the classical phase of activism, which began in the 1800s, Americans sought to protect large areas of the country from development and endangered species from destruction. Naturalists such as John Muir (1838–1914), who won protection for places like Yosemite and led the fight to establish the national parks system, and organizations such as the Audubon Society, which has been at the forefront of the fight to save native birds and other wildlife, are examples of the classical phase of environmentalism (Bullard, 1990). In the twentieth century, the mature phase of activism attacked the unbridled nature of industrialization in the United States. Concerned citizens fought for regulatory agencies, the passage of environmental statutes, and the establishment of industrial standards for the control of pollutants. In 1970, the US Government formed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA serves as the public's advocate and coordinates research on environmental issues. The EPA was granted powers to regulate mileage standards for automobiles, thereby leading to the production of fuel-efficient engines and the hybrid cars that are so popular today. Unfortunately, with the election of the current Trump administration, anti-environment political elites have stripped the EPA of its regulatory powers and/or have refused to enforce environmental regulations. In fact, Trump and his allies trumpeted their desire to "gut" the EPA, and they continue to do so today.

The Love Canal Neighborhood in Niagara Falls, New York was the first environmental urban social movement. Until the late 1970s, Niagara Falls was best

known as the home of its namesake, for the world's first hydroelectric power plant built by Nicolas Tesla and George Westinghouse, and the home of international chemical factories, such as Hooker Electrochemical, Carborundum, Olin-Mathieson, Union Carbide, and DuPont, that fueled Niagara Falls's industrial and urban expansion in the first half of the twentieth century. The influx of workers created a demand for housing, which Niagara Falls filled by annexing the nearby village of Lasalle, and acquiring the right to Love Canal from Hooker Chemical. Love Canal was named after William Love, who sought to build a canal that would connect the Niagara River to a planned community ironically named Model City on the shores of Lake Ontario. The problem was that Hooker had used the canal to dump toxic chemical waste—over 21,000 tons of caustics, alkalis, fatty acids, and chlorinated hydrocarbons. Hooker capped the canal with clay because their engineers thought it was impenetrable to water. Developers built houses on top of the canal, and sold the houses to working-class factory workers. The city also built a school on top of the clay cap (Figure 13.3). Over time, ground water leaked into the canal and into people's basements, into the school, and the baseball field behind the school. The school canceled baseball games because the chemicals ate through the kids' canvas shoes. Parents told their children not to throw chunks of clay and dirt into the chemical pools to make them explode, or as the kids liked to say, to make them pop. The city advised residents to fill the various holes in their yard with dirt or concrete. Unfortunately the residents of Love Canal could not avoid breathing contaminated air or drinking contaminated water. Consequently, rates of cancer and other life threatening diseases rose dramatically in this community.

Love Canal was an unlikely place for an environmental urban social movement because it was not a liberal hotbed of environmental activism. Most of the residents were conservative and did not want to rock the boat. The same chemical companies that gave the men their livelihood were killing their families. Instead, the Love Canal movement was organized and led by women, by moms with endangered children who pressured politicians, worked with the media, and collected their own data on the increased rates of cancer, epilepsy, and asthma in the neighborhood. They formed the Love Canal Homeowners Association (LCHA) and worked with the Ecumenical Task Force (ETF) to centralize their social movement activities. The LCHA was an urban social movement: social space defined the problem, the scale of organization, and it demanded "green" collective consumption. The state relocated 239 families in August 1978, and another 700 families in 1980. The former residents of Love Canal continue to experience higher than average rates of cancer and epilepsy. The city of Niagara Falls never shed the stigma of being a toxic waste dump, and combined with deindustrialization, has left Niagara Falls a desolate place to live for its 30,000 or so remaining residents. Yet, the story of Love Canal shows that the only way for local residents to fight for environmental safety and regulations for safe waste disposal is mobilizing through citizen activism against

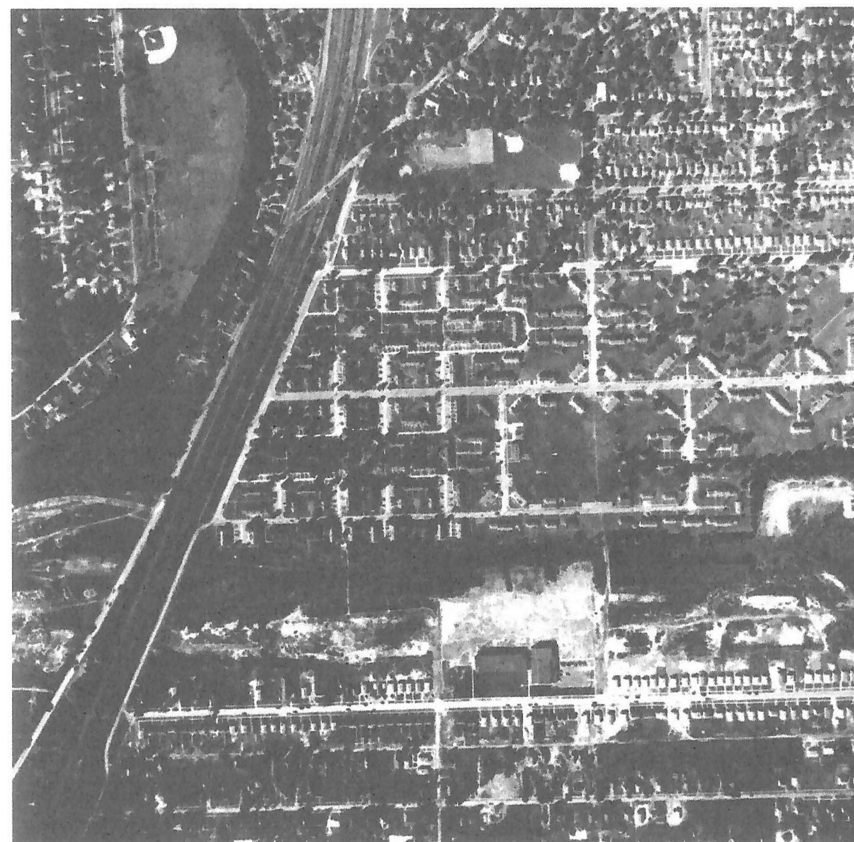

FIGURE 13.3 1956 aerial photograph of Love Canal showing a school and houses built over and near a landfill. Niagara Falls, New York.

uncaring global corporations and by forming urban social movements (See Levine, 1982).

The environmental movement has for the most part shed its grassroots style of organizing, opting to work through national advocacy groups like the Sierra Club and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The advocacy group has some obvious advantages over the grassroots social movement. Because NGOs are more permanent and work within an institutional structure their advantages include access to a larger donor pool to hire paid professionals, including community organizers, lawyers, and grant writers, and, the lobbying of Congress on behalf of the environment that counters the billions of dollars spent by corporations in influencing politicians to preserve their own profit making. However, often NGO advantages are offset by their loss of the social bonds inherent in the spatial component of grassroots mobilization

which must also be nurtured in order to keep activism alive. Thus, many localities have used the link between social space and the environment to reinvigorate local civil society. One example of this is the rise of environmental stewardship: social and ecological movements that tie residents' desires for civic engagement with social space (Fisher et al., 2015). Examples of environmental stewardship include community gardens, the preservation of open space as farms are sold off by purchasing them, such as the actions of the Nature Conservancy, and active local programs for environmental "nature" walks. In another example, a large group of concerned citizens, called Buffalo Niagara River Keepers, formed to clean up the Niagara River by removing invasive plant species, planting native plants, and cleaning up garbage in the famous waterway. Although much different than the LCHA (Love Canal) in scope, the shared environmental concerns of the greater Niagara region tie these two spatially defined environmental movements together.

Today's environmental threats are not limited to the problems of industrial pollutants and contaminated soil. The long-term effect of carbon emission that is responsible for global climate change ends up creating its own effects on human settlement spaces. Rising waters threaten coastal cities. Since the year 2000, Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Sandy, Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Florence, British Petroleum's oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the meltdown of the nuclear power plant in Fukushima, Japan, and the chemical spill in West Virginia have all brought this issue into public consciousness and debates. The erratic weather that brings tornados and droughts to various regions of the country is forcing urban planners and citizens to rethink the design and production of settlement spaces. Some cities are taking matters into their own hands by agreeing to honor the Paris Climate Accord goal of reducing carbon emissions even after President Trump took the shocking stance of withdrawing the United States from this universally fought for agreement while most conservationists firmly believe that our time is running out to avoid immense climate driven calamities. Consequently, the absolutely critical movement to protect the environment remains one of the most active both here in America and in the rest of the world as the effects of a changing and warming climate continue to reshape life on Mother Earth.

RACIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS: BLACK LIVES MATTER

Patrisse Cullors, Opal Tometis, and Alicia Garza formed Black Lives Matter after Florida courts acquitted George Zimmerman in the murder of Travon Martin in 2012. The movement challenged both systemic police brutality and murder of young black men, as well as the male- and church-dominated black civil rights organizations that silenced black women and black queer voices. Black Lives Matter is not a single organization. It is a decentralized network of local affiliates.

They've engaged in coalition building with other social justice groups, and allow anti-racist white activists to participate as long as whites refrain from speaking on behalf of the movement. The decentralized structure allows for multiple voices to address specific instances of racial discrimination. For example, the Black Lives Matter chapter in Seattle successfully stopped the construction of a $149.2 million police station in the north precinct (Feit 2016; Pacheco, 2017). It was going to be a 105,000 square foot facility. It was dubbed the bunker. They are currently fighting the construction of a youth detention center in King County. The issue they raise is a familiar one about collective consumption needs. They ask: is this the best use of public resources, whether to spend public money on the "penal industrial complex" designed to imprison marginalized black residents versus spending money on housing, education, or social services designed to help marginalized black residents?

Their question cuts to the heart of the social problem dilemma in America. Should we continue to spend public taxpayer money on building more prisons and policing segregated ghettos, or, should we fund social programs for job training, education, and counseling, for example, that hold the promise of supporting disadvantaged young people to live productive lives?

The Black Lives Matter movement and style of protest has a deeply sociospatial aspect to it: they challenge privileged white-dominated private spaces. Elite whites have historically set aside areas in the built environment that are exclusive spaces for white people (Hohle, 2018). The racial imbalance between mainly white outer areas and mainly minority inner city areas were partially produced by the *Milliken* court decision stating that busing to achieve segregation could not cross municipal boundaries. In other words, black kids were not going to be bussed to the white suburbs and vice versa. However, black suburbanization of the inner ring suburbs and Latino suburbanization in the Sun Belt became a material and symbolic violation of white-private spaces that more recently caused racial tensions to increase in formerly white communities. Consequently, many of the high-profile police murders and protests were in predominantly black suburbs and mixed race urban neighborhoods policed by an almost all white police force. For example, a white police officer murdered Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis. A police officer used an assault rifle and shot Jordan Edwards in the back of the head in Balch Springs, Texas, a suburb of Dallas. Tamir Rice was murdered in a majority white neighborhood in Cleveland, Ohio. The violent white police response of the 2010s in the black suburbs mirrors the police violence of the black ghettos in the late 1960s in that it is increasingly triggered by racial integration into formerly white spaces. Additionally, Black Lives Matter activists' used protest tactics like obstructing roads and blocking the entranceway into highway tunnels (Figure 13.4). A Seattle Black Lives Matter chapter prevented a Christmas tree lighting ceremony from happening at a local mall on Black Friday.

FIGURE 13.4 Washington—December 13: Protesters march against police shootings and racism during a rally in Washington, DC, on December 13, 2014.

A black woman interrupted a Bernie Sanders speech in 2015 when she walked up on to the stage, stood behind the podium, took the microphone, and spoke about mass imprisonment and gentrification—a drastic change in the subject matter of Sanders's speech on preserving Medicaid and Medicare.

Black Lives Matter has challenged America's collective memory and collective consciousness embedded in social space. Racist monuments and flags celebrating the confederacy have dotted the urban landscapes across the country. While this is especially true in the south, confederate monuments and markers also existed in New York City. Monuments capture what Emile Durkheim (1912/1995) called totems—the material and symbolic markers that help define a community's collective consciousness, collective memory, and identity. Monuments are located in urban squares and in front of civic buildings. Confederate flags and statues mark social spaces as white spaces and reaffirm the racist social structure. Communities inspired by Black Lives Matter have torn down confederate totems as a rejection of white supremacy and to start the healing process of creating a more racially inclusive civic identity.

Now, in response, White struggles to defend and reclaim white-private spaces have extended beyond support for the police. For example, a survey revealed that the police actually became more popular with whites after Ferguson in 2015 (Williams, 2017). Racist whites countered the #blacklivesmatter hashtag with a

#bluelivesmatter hashtag to show their support for white supremacy and police brutality. White supremacist groups, a collection of neo-nazis and other white pride groups, have organized public rallies and demonstrations. The most memorable white supremacist rally was in Charlottesville, Virginia. White men, dressed in khaki pants, white polo shirts and holding tiki torches marched to a statue of Thomas Jefferson on the University of Virginia. Some whites came armed. One white supremacist drove his Dodge Challenger car into a crowd of anti-racist protesters, killing a young woman and injuring nineteen others. Since then little has been done at the national level to discourage such confrontations and, as a result, the US is becoming more racially divided again after decades of civil progress.

URBAN PUBLIC HEALTH

Addressing urban problems like affordable housing, pollution, police brutality and violence have a ripple effect into the domain of solving public health problems. For example, consider the personal issue of trauma. On the one hand, trauma is felt at the individual level. A psychological condition such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) occurs when an individual is subjected to a traumatic event, such as sexual assault or war. Trauma is also a public health condition that captures the lasting effects of a sustained unwanted social condition or the impact of a hurtful effect. Entire communities can experience collective trauma by continuous living in unsafe and unsanitary housing. Communities marked by violence can also experience collective trauma (see Alexander et al., 2004). Collective trauma affects social groups and entire communities when it erodes existing social bonds between the community, creating trust issues, and encouraging social isolation, which makes it difficult to collectively mobilize and make demands for collective consumption. Thus, some public health problems can be addressed indirectly by dealing with the salient issues of home location or available and affordable medical or dental care.

Unsurprisingly, poor people end up disproportionately dealing with issues of obesity, hypertension, and type II diabetes. Because poor people are concentrated in specific segregated areas lacking medical or dental services, many public health issues associated with nutrition are ultimately urban problems. To improve public health and fight obesity-related diseases, activists have emphasized urban farming and created the "slow food movement". The slow food movement encourages people to eat locally grown food and locally raised livestock. Slow food would affect the way we farm, raise animals, and the way that we process and transport food. Corn is a federally subsidized water-intensive crop that has little nutritional value, and is grown more to produce ethanol or feed for livestock than for eating. Further, urban farming attempts to reduce the distance between fields and kitchen tables, and brings together nature, society, and our health in a

relation. However, in a global economy, it is difficult to imagine how all of our food could ever be grown close to home. One solution is quite promising. Inner cities have high apartment buildings with large flat roofs. Recently, activists have used them to grow food by layering the covering with rich dirt and by practicing agronomy. The "Green Roof" movement has taken root in cities that are sympathetic to enabling this use of building roof space, such as in Brooklyn, NYC. Considering the large number of buildings that have green roof potential and the interest in growing local food this way, the movement may grow if government regulations allow it. Furthermore, this use of roof space that would otherwise remain unused, has also been deemed viable for the installation of solar panels in order to save energy. New York also has a program called Property Assessed Clean Energy, that gives tax relief to owners of buildings for solar panel installations. In short, while effective change for the better may seem hopeless to some people looking at our urbanized MCMRs, time and again activists have found ways of working with government and property owners to make a positive difference in bringing innovative thinking to bear on our social problems. No doubt, these and other examples will continue in the future.

In recent years, activists have addressed another public health issue. They have struggled to redefine addiction as a health instead of a criminal problem. Social workers and community health workers draw from the Harm Reduction Model (HRM) to fight the growing problem of heroin and opioid addiction. HRM emphasizes creating safe spaces for addicts to use drugs. Safe spaces are designated places or districts where existing drug laws are suspended. Progressive cities like Vancouver were one of the first to develop a comprehensive public health approach to addiction when they set up supervised injection sites in the city, in effect, using urban planning to create harm reduction zones. The reason why social workers use safe spaces to supervise addicts is to prevent accidental overdoses and to prevent users from sharing needles. The social and economic costs of HIV and emergency services are significantly higher than the preventative costs of injection sites. Perhaps more importantly, social workers use safe spaces to reach addicts and get them to treatment facilities.

Urban public health issues require state interventions and public investment, especially in marginalized areas. Public investment is also necessary to replace aging sanitation and water infrastructure. Aging pipes crack. Lead pipes poison the water. Sewage treatment facilities become overwhelmed in rainstorms and dump raw sewage into our lakes, rivers, and oceans. Local grassroots movements can't improve public health on their own and will need to work with the state to ensure that they address urban health care problems. We have seen above that, in both the developed and developing world, sympathetic governments can join with citizen social movements to affect positive changes in our built environments. The promise is there. Unfortunately, our present society is dominated by a forty year

ideology brainwashing people into believing in the neoliberal approach attacking government domestic spending, imposing austerity through fiscal cutbacks and bolstering the belief in privatization that, in the end, favors the more affluent who can afford to fix their personal and environmental problems by spending their own money without the need for civic responsibility.

SUMMARY

There's an old saying that you can't fight city hall. That's only partly true. You can't fight city hall alone. But you can when you work with others. Ordinary citizens have to collectively mobilize to fight for their right to obtain collective needs from government. They must also organize to fight for the rights of others who may not have the resources and capacity to do so. In this chapter we saw how contemporary urban social movements can improve our environments, our public health, and our basic needs for public goods by working with local government rather than in opposition to it. Urban social movements are defined by their collective consumption needs, by their distinct spatial characteristics of the neighborhood, and how social space is woven into the protests. Affordable housing, public health concerns, and cleaning up contaminated soil require public investment *and* the willingness of the state to redistribute resources and enforce existing laws. The very affluent prefer privatism and the spending of their money on their own issues while supporting limited government that cuts taxes and spending. We will not tip the balance in favor of the less privileged majority without a concerted and sustained political fight over more civic minded public policy. For students interested in social activism or working toward creating social change through agencies like neighborhood legal services, Green Roofs, transportation alternatives, safe place public health programs, neighborhood control of crime, and so on, it is imperative to listen to the voices of marginalized communities on what they need and how inequality can strip one of his or her dignity, where real feelings of powerlessness are converted into pessimism and political inaction.

The topic of urban social movements allows us to reconsider broader theoretical questions, such as what constitutes inclusion and exclusion, dignity, and belonging in the multicentric metro region. The inclusion/exclusion dynamic is both material and symbolic. On the material axis, the concentration of extreme wealth within municipal boundaries can exclude others through the uneven distribution of collective consumption services. On the symbolic axis, the question of dignity and belonging captures how one feels attached to and is a part of the community. In the debates over inclusion and belonging, urban social movements reverse the dominance of the privileged few and their political ideology of neoliberalism over our government by struggling to belong to the conversation, to have a place to call home, and, most importantly, to have a say in the makeup and planning of the

built environment. The degree that residents can exercise their right to collective consumption is dependent on their capacity to mobilize. This depends on their spatial and symbolic position within the multicentric region. When we consider how social space impacts the representation of a social group, either positively or negatively, it becomes foolish to extract the role of social space from the fight against inequality.

STUDY QUESTIONS

- List and describe the three features that define an urban social movement.
- Think of an urban social problem where you live. What is the main collective consumption issue of the urban social problem? Who are the main social actors and organizations, if any, that are trying to address the problem?
- Explain the difference between inclusionary zoning and rent control as solutions to the urban social problem of affordable housing.
- What the strengths and limitations of rapid rehousing strategies to address the problem of homelessness? Are there parts of the homeless population that cannot be helped by rapid rehousing? Why?
- Compare and contrast the issues and demands of urban social movements in Brazil and South Africa to the urban social movement in Seattle, Washington. Is there such a thing as a universal collective consumption demand common to all urban social movements across the globe?
- Use the sociospatial approach to explain why environmental and urban public health problems are not randomly distributed throughout the multicentric metropolitan region.

CONCLUSION

We are past the point in human history of talking about how we live in an emerging urban world. The majority of human beings across the planet now live in urban areas. As we have shown throughout the book, the sociospatial perspective is more relevant now than ever. Urbanists began to call for a "new urban sociology" rooted in the work of Henri Lefebvre in the 1970s. Even then it was apparent that the urban form had changed. The language of the ecological approach that created dualities between the city and country (or urban versus rural) and city versus suburb is no longer meaningful for a settlement space comprised of the multicentric metropolitan region. For its time, the Chicago School captured a moment and form of urbanization in America during its industrial period. But, as we saw in earlier chapters, urban areas in Asia, Latin America, and many parts of Europe never followed Burgess's model of ecological expansion. Here, in the US, our cities and suburbs have evolved into vast urbanized areas that are regional in scale and multicentered in composition.

Our sociospatial approach applies Henri Lefebvre's theory of urban space's production that asserts a close relationship between historical stages of growth in the system of capitalism with changes occurring in urban settlement patterns. As we have seen, there is a strong correlation between the two. The stage of mercantilism and imperialism was linked to the building of colonial harbor cities. Industrial, competitive capitalism helped produce the factory town. Monopoly capitalism followed industrialization with the stage of corporate economic control that was correlated to the metropolis with its gleaming high-rise corporate headquarters, the dispersal of factories through horizontally integrated business, and the flourishing of art, music, and white-collar employment that exploded middle-class numbers in our nation. Finally, global capitalism is based on transnational corporations owned by a mix of American and/or foreign interests that took away the foundation of manufacturing and, using international labor sourcing, moved to production facilities in locations offering the cheapest possible cost, while opening up commercial banking and, the rapid electronic transfer of funds worldwide.