
In recent years a number of geographers have begun to think about, study, and write on questions concerning “race” (for example, Hoelscher 2003; Delaney 1998; Jackson 1987). One area that has increasingly come to the attention of researchers and instructors in geography is the need to develop critical race pedagogy (Tyner 2003). A book that begins to meet that need is Manning Marable’s *The Great Wells of Democracy: The Meaning of Race in American Life*. Marable’s book provides an important tool for introducing, contextualizing and thinking about the African American experience in the post-Civil Rights era. While this book is not overtly spatial, it does provide a starting point from which to think about questions concerning race. More to the point, Marable’s thoughtful and well-written book deserves wide treatment in geographic circles and would prove to be a useful text in upper-division undergraduate and graduate courses.

Marable begins his book by arguing that “in the post-civil rights era, the strategies of ‘state-based’ integration and ‘race-based’ separatism have reached a dead end; a creative synthesis must be constructed, informed by the ongoing protests and leadership of the truly disadvantaged” (p xv). In other words, those of us who conduct research on race (and civil rights activists) must reframe our arguments into ones that push for reforms that increase the ability of the social under-classes to assume a greater role in determining “society’s future” (p xvi). This premise has broad implications for researchers who work on the question of race, and for critical geographies and qualitative methodologies in general. Moreover, it is upon this foundation that the author develops his arguments in three subsequent book sections. The first large section “The American Dilemma” deals with what the author terms a short history of structural racism and provides a quick-hitting, useful, if at times perfunctory, review of race in America. Marable traces the roots of American racism from the colonial period through the Civil War up until the present day. By utilizing many sources and examples, the author develops a useful context for understanding the idea of “race” particularly as experienced by African Americans. The second section, “The Retreat from Equality”, covers a wide group of topics in greater detail than the previous section. Marable writes about the politics of election reform, race and education, race and the prison industrial complex, and as he calls it “The Death of the Talented Tenth” (p 165). It builds upon the historical framework given in the first section and relates how recent political decisions have affected Black–White relations. Particularly provocative were the chapters that dealt with the disenfranchisement of the poor through voter irregularities and the laws that ban former felons from voting. The final section, “Reconstructing Racial Politics”
posits Marable’s vision of political activism that addresses what he sees as the plight of all people in the United States. What was most interesting in this section is his analysis of racism and post 9/11 America, a period in which he documents the use of racial stereotypes and perceptions that have been deployed to fight the “war of terror.”

What struck me most forcefully about this book was the way Marble reduced the complex arguments such as race as a social construction, and White male privilege, and presents them in a way that is accessible to most upper-division students. For example, his chapter “Race and educational inequality”, found in the second section, offers a unique perspective on affirmative action programs, the role that race should play in admission polices, and the challenge faced by institutions of higher learning resulting from neo-conservative and neo-liberal political policies. This chapter is one that university-level students could readily identify with and would provide a useful springboard to in-class discussion. This section further highlights another strength of Marable’s writing and this book in general: he is equally critical of conservatives, liberals, Whites, and African Americans. This too serves as a useful tool for stimulating interest and controversy both key for promoting meaningful discussions on race and racism.

One drawback to Marable’s approach, however, is the tendency in this work to make some over-generalizations. This is problematic because, as social scientists have asserted, the concept of “race” is multifaceted (Anderson 2002; Holloway 2000) and at times it is easy to fall into the trap of sacrificing the intricacy of race and its multiple meanings in an effort to achieve clarity of vision. Marable makes this mistake in certain segments of this book. An example is Marable’s assertion that his book is an “attempt to examine counter-hegemonic, oppositional forces to structural racism” (p 324). Yet for the most part, other people of color (outside of African Americans and Whites) are left at the margins of his discussion and are only focused upon in any detail in the second half of his book. Clearly Marable’s focus is on the experience of African Americans in White America; but as we well know, race in America is much more than a “Black–White issue”. However it would be unfair to state that Marable leaves all other groups on the sidelines. He does make an attempt to connect the issues faced by African Americans with other “peoples of color”, but these efforts are too sporadic to be seen as anything more than a token attempt to relate his work to broader discourses about race.

Overall I found this to be a highly accessible book which would make a great addition to cultural geography classes and would also be useful for researchers who are thinking about doing research on the issues faced by African Americans in the United States.

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JOSHUA F J INWOOD  
Department of Geography  
The University of Georgia  
Athens, GA  
USA  
jinwood@uga.edu


Recalling the words of the D:Ream song adopted by New Labour in the run up to the 1997 election, Martin Powell asks “have things got any better?” In the years following Tony Blair’s election to power, the welfare state has been restructured. A crisis brought about by rising unemployment has seen an increased number of people dependent on state support, with a diminished workforce responsible for funding state benefits through income taxation. Keen to transform this situation, New Labour has rapidly embarked on a series of welfare reforms, intending to modernise social welfare through the adoption and implementation of ‘Third Way’ policy principles. However, the project of gauging and appraising the effects of such changes has received relatively little empirical attention.

For this reason, the reviewed book sets out to evaluate the welfare policies of the first term of the New Labour government (1997–2001). Comprising twelve chapters, it sets out not only to evaluate social policy, but also to locate such assessment within a wider template of consideration that may allow a theoretical (as well as practical) engagement with contemporary debates surrounding British welfare reform. Adopting a two-tiered approach to policy review, this book differentiates between intrinsic and extrinsic policy evaluation in order to combine the examination of the government’s progress in terms of its own stated aims with a “third party” view that attempts to look beyond such targets to evaluate the political economy of New Labour as a whole. As Powell states, this book is therefore concerned with the evaluation of policy, rather than the evaluation for policy, and thus has useful insights for researchers across the broad spectrum of social science disciplines.

Indeed, the policy explorations within this book have the potential to impact upon the way in which human behaviour is understood in relation to the processes of policy making and, in turn, improve the way in which future social issues are conceptualised and politically addressed. Through a distinct focus on the interplay of programme formation and (uneven) outcomes, the context-structured nature of decision making is revealed, while the dynamics of policy transfer and inertia are framed by the perceived scalar and spatial embeddedness of political institutions. The effect of this seemingly effortless move from the minutiae of policy formation and implementation to the bigger picture of welfare reform and the restructuring of New Labour’s political economy is a policy
analysis that is at once “shallow” and “deep”, concerned that is with both impact evaluation and the critical appraisal of state evolution.

Martin Powell reflects upon this “dual purpose” in his introductory chapter, which is in effect a detailed commentary on the book as a whole. Developing an argument for a combined intrinsic and extrinsic method of evaluation as a means of bridging the philosophical and empirical divide within the social sciences, he suggests that while there is a rapidly growing literature that examines the changes New Labour has made to social policy, this book is somewhat unique in providing an explicit empirical evaluation of these changes and thus forwarding a clear verdict to the question of “Did things get any better?” Indeed, he suggests, as the broadly positive line of intrinsic evaluation that is taken by many of the contributors is to some extent invalidated by the negative assessment of extrinsic evaluation that is developed throughout the chapters, the revealed “sins of omission and commission” are invaluable in providing breadth and depth to the existing accounts of fulfilled pledges, as well as detail to the previously forwarded theories of the state.

From here, the book is developed through the intrinsic evaluation of cross-cutting policy areas such as social justice, accountability, independent welfare provision and family policy in Chapters 2–5, and extrinsic evaluation of more individual service areas such as housing, health, education, social care, social security and criminal justice in Chapters 6–11. Finally, a conclusion based on the examination of the early part of New Labour’s second term is used to update the picture and allow speculation about the evolving shape of the welfare state in the UK.

The focus on the government’s stated aims and objectives in documents such as the Election Manifesto is thus initially grounded in the equality agenda of New Labour’s “Third Way” approach. In Chapter 2, Powell develops his introductory comments to suggest that in the first term of 1997–2001 there was an implementation deficit, whereby the government was stronger on policy formation and planning than on implementation and delivery, which led to very few changes happening on the ground, despite the proclamations of new principles in social policy papers. Similarly, in Chapter 3, John Rouse and George Smith highlight a number of tensions in the “improved” accountability of New Labour government to suggest a further gap between rhetoric and reform. As such, the political agenda of democratic renewal, in aiming to deliver a new relationship between citizens and the state, is seen to be hindered by the maintenance of uniformity in programme delivery, the continued management of policy through centralised power structures and the increased bureaucracy of newly introduced democratic bodies.

In Chapters 4 and 5, this intrinsic evaluation is extended through a focus on the blurring of boundaries between public and private state service providers in Edward Brunsdon and Margaret May’s analysis of independent welfare provision (Chapter 4) and between rights and responsibilities of state service receivers in Jane Millar and Tess Ridge’s family policy examination (Chapter 5). Both focus attention on the vision behind social policy reform, as well as the instigation and implications of subsequent programme modifications. The frictions identified are used to subject New Labour strategy to both critical and moral thought, yet the overall questions remain as to whether such welfare reforms are consistent over time, internally coherent and implementable.

Following on from these examinations of social policy reform and its implications, Brian Lund focuses on housing policy in Chapter 6 as a means of speculating
about parts of the system which New Labour policy fails to address. Starting from the Conservatives’ disengagement from the strident market philosophies of the late 1980s, he examines the reasons behind the positing of local authorities as “strategic enablers” of housing policies, as well as the “recommodification” of housing programmes within a social inclusion agenda that is based upon urban and regional renewal efforts. Mobilising a historical viewpoint, he provides an extrinsic analysis of the quality of welfare provided by the present government through a comparison with the programmes and policies of the previous government.

Subsequent contributions by Calum Paton (Chapter 7), Rajani Naidoo and Yolande Muschamp (Chapter 8), and Mark Baldwin (Chapter 9) explore reform within the NHS, education system, and social care network, respectively. As each focuses on the practicalities of access to services, as well as the function of such provision(s), they provide an empirical foundation for assessing the extent of change to the structural causes of social disadvantage, the existence of which is implied by the theoretical outlook of the book as a whole. Following on, Martin Hewitt adds further evidence to such claims in his evaluation of social security measures in Chapter 11.

In studying New Labour’s trinity of work, welfare and assets, Hewitt questions whether the broad shift from material distribution and equality to the less tangible goal of social inclusion within policy can be said to support poor, “socially excluded” groups or in fact subject them to further disadvantage through an associated redefinition of welfare and citizenship. Through a focus on both economic and non-economic phenomena of change, he looks at the introduction of welfare-to-work, asset-based welfare and reformulated pensions provisions to indicate further an uneven, if not contradictory, picture of social policy measures. This view is further developed by Sarah Charman and Stephen P Savage in their discussion of crime and the strategies for enforcing law, order and social control (Chapter 12). They suggest that community safety measures based on crime prevention and early intervention, along with the reduction of contributing factors such as unemployment and poor education, provide an unevenly interconnected patchwork of control rather than an all-encompassing integration of policy intervention.

As a whole, this book is coherently written and has a good balance of theory and empirical research. It offers the reader an informative account of New Labour’s welfare state restructuring, and further provides a model for conducting other social policy projects. In questioning the parameters, presumptions and premises of post-1997 welfare reforms, in addition to their stated outcomes, it goes beyond a simple evaluation of ‘did things get any better?’ to outline the complexities of ‘what?’ ‘when?’ ‘where?’ ‘why?’ ‘how?’ and ‘for whom?’. In supplying a number of different responses to such probes, it reveals the problems of monitoring progress and evaluating success, in the context of reconstructive political measures that are constantly evolving.

JULIE MACLEAVY
Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences
University of Wales, Aberystwyth
Dyfed
UK
email: aam99@aber.ac.uk

In the acknowledgments to his book, Philip Steinberg reports that the advisor for his dissertation, which presumably provided a significant portion of the publication's material, initially reacted to his proposal to research and write on territoriability and the sea by thinking “Oh no!” My reaction to the request from this journal to review the book was similar.

Steinberg’s book is a strong antidote to such a response, one that—on my part and undoubtedly on that of many others—seems informed by a hitherto unconsidered assumption that the sea is a socially empty space. The author effectively, methodically, and interestingly illustrates that, just as in the case of land, the space of the world’s oceans is socially constructed, and thus reflects and reproduces power relations.

Going back to Strabo and, much more recently, Ellen Churchill Semple, prominent geographers have argued for the importance of studying the ocean as social space, not merely as a resource for land-based societies. Nevertheless, geographers have paid little heed to these calls. Employing what he calls a territorial political economy approach and concentrating on the ocean’s varied and often contradictory uses, regulations, and representations, Steinberg seeks to fill the resulting void.

The ambitious substance of *The Social Construction of the Ocean* is an overview of the modern era, which Steinberg dates from roughly 1450 to the present. By means of a complex, multi-layered and nuanced historical narrative, he contends “that each period of capitalism, besides having a particular spatiality on land, has had a complementary—if not contrapuntal—spatiality at sea” (pp 4–6). In narrow economic terms alone, this sea spatiality has a profound effect on human society. Citing a 1997 study, Steinberg reports that the world’s oceans provide humanity with resources worth $21 trillion, whereas the land furnishes resources valued at $12 trillion.

Views and practices toward the sea are varied and have long been so. Steinberg develops and explores three constructions of ocean space from the pre-modern era, but that have continued to inform socio-spatial practices towards the seas through the present. The first, associated with the Indian Ocean, perceives ocean space not as territory that can be bounded and controlled, but as distance, a featureless void and a dangerous expanse traversed for reasons of trade. Social space thus ends at the coast. The ocean is not open for imperial domination.

Steinberg connects the second construction to Micronesia, which, in contrast to the pre-modern Indian Ocean societies, perceives the ocean as territory, as the space of society, and as a provider of resources—a principal one being connections between distinct realms into which the ocean is divided. These realms are imbued with a “sense of place”.

The third ocean construction is that of the Mediterranean, the societies of which did not perceive the sea as a possession in a land-like-territorial sense. Rather, the peoples of the Mediterranean constructed the ocean as a space in which states could legitimately exercise power to pursue their interests—from protecting their resources (including sea lanes) to exercising control over lands and peoples geographically distant from the center. This third construction has had significant influence on the production of ocean space in the modern era.
That said, competing idealizations of ocean space have characterized the evolution of capitalism, which, for Steinberg, seems to be the keystone of modernity. The industrial capitalist era, he argues, saw Indian Ocean-style perceptions and practices put into place. This then-emergent ocean space was imagined—a la Newton and Descartes—as an empty, frictionless surface. Power was thus employed to eliminate obstacles to freedom of movement. At the same time, the Mediterranean model was “scaled up” to the global—through the establishment of a weak regime of law (weak so as not to limit the Indian Ocean and capitalist notion of an obstacle-free transportation surface for commerce), the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea being perhaps the most well-known example—as the notion of Stewardship expanded to encompass the resources of ocean space of the world as a whole. In addition, similar to the Micronesian paradigm, coastal areas have been constructed as arenas of state power and possession.

Although some argue that the growing speed of commodity flows and the intensifying spread of capitalist social relations have made space less important in the so-called post-modern or post-Fordist era—indeed, some have written of “the end of geography”—Steinberg rejects such analyses on land and sea. While appreciating the profound significance of such developments, he perceives them as a continuation of the space-capital dialectic. This dialectic reflects and produces contradictions, ones—just as in contemporary capitalism’s social institutions—that are more pronounced today than ever due to the very nature of the modern world in which the activities associated with the three ocean paradigms take place more intensively than they did previously, and in a less geographically restrictive manner. In other words, the practices are not limited to distinct areas any more, but overlap geographically—in addition to socially.

Steinberg does not pretend to have a crystal ball to predict the process by which these contradictions will be resolved, but, based on his reading of historical geography, he suggests some possibilities. In doing so, he rejects the notion that ocean space, a realm seemingly on the margins of society, is an inappropriate location for trying to imagine and produce alternative modes of seeing and being. Drawing on post-modern insights, he argues that margins are important loci of struggle and social transformation as they serve as to tie together and define the inside and outside. And, second, drawing on Lefebvre, Steinberg asserts that all the spaces—given that they are social constructions and that the construction process is (increasingly) multifaceted and therefore dialectical—are sites of contention and hence of struggles for social change. Thus its contradictions (in terms of competing visions and practices) are growing. Rising economic mobility and the advancing power of technology to exploit previously inaccessible resources also make it likely that struggles over the governance of ocean space will only intensify. Combined with the power of nature itself—the sea being a prime example—these developments mean that change is inevitable in the ongoing construction of ocean space, thereby presenting opportunities for progressive forces.

The Social Construction of the Ocean, though clearly and carefully written, is not an easy read given the intricacy and multifaceted nature of Steinberg’s analysis. It is also, at times, somewhat dense. But more importantly, it is a very rich work, one that is theoretically sophisticated and that draws on diverse intellectual strands while showing a deep appreciation for interdisciplinarity. It is a book that students of cultural, political, historical and economic geography—in
addition to international relations—will benefit greatly from reading and engaging.

JOSEPH NEVINS  
Department of Geology and Geography  
Vassar College  
Poughkeepsie, NY  
USA  
jonevins@vassar.edu


Don Mitchell’s new book is, as one might expect, a very fine piece of scholarship. Eloquent, principled, and strident, it makes a case for the importance of public space in securing social justice in US cities. The book is certain to be read widely by academics and may well become quite popular beyond the academy. As I was reading my library copy at a local café, a dean at the School of Public Affairs sitting across from me surreptitiously copied down the book’s title; two days later my copy was recalled. Several non-academics approached me while I was reading to express interest in the title and talk about the idea of the right to the city. Ironically, though the title evidently attracts wide interest, it also points to one of the book’s principle shortcomings: it points to, but does not quite deliver, a radical rethinking of urban politics.

The book is a combination of new material and revised work from older articles. One gets the impression that the book is Mitchell’s attempt to read his previous work on public space and homelessness in light of the increasingly popular right to the city idea. The book opens with a penetrating discussion of the relationship between public space and social justice. Mitchell makes clear that the book is primarily about public space. Arguing against “those who see order as properly trumping rights in urban space”, he contends that the “right to the city must be at the heart of any vision of a progressive, democratic, and just world” (p 6). He defines the right to the city narrowly here, to mean the right to access public space in the city: “struggles over who has access to public space, and who is excluded, define the ‘right to the city’”. The key idea in the opening chapter is that the right to public space (Mitchell’s right to the city) must be constantly reproduced through struggle; it should therefore be seen as a political practice as much as an idea or a physical space.

Chapter 2 explores the history of legal struggles over the right to gather and speak in public spaces, touching on struggles over unionization, World War I, and abortion. Here the argument is that the right to speak and resist has everything to do with the right to control and be present in public spaces. That argument is extended in Chapters 3 and 4 with a discussion of public space in Berkeley. Here those who know Mitchell’s previous work will find familiar ground. Again the argument is that critical to the student protest movement of the 1960s and the homeless advocacy of the 1980s was the ability to speak in and control public spaces such as the UC campus and “People’s Park”. Mitchell sees public spaces as critical “staging grounds” or “protest platforms” (pp 104–105) on which groups can become visible and press their claims. Chapter 5 and 6 turn more fully to
what Mitchell calls his “real interest”: the fate of homeless people. Here the analysis concentrates on laws to limit their presence and freedoms. The argument is that neoliberal urban reform has worked to “sanitize” public space by making acts of basic survival nearly impossible for homeless people to perform. It is hard to overstate the value of this work, especially Chapters 5 and 6, in providing a careful and detailed analysis of neoliberal policies in American cities and how they have redefined urban public space in very reactionary ways. In the tradition of Mike Davis’ well-known “Fortress LA”, Mitchell details incisively how neoliberal urban policies are the enemy of a progressive, just, and democratic city. The case against urban neoliberalism has rarely been made more eloquently. It is indeed “polemical, stirring, and angry” as Andy Merrifield says on the back of the book, but it is also meticulous in its research and argument.

Against the neoliberal threat, Mitchell argues for a more open and democratic public space through which people can resist neoliberalism. Mitchell organizes this alternative by using the idea of the right to the city. In doing so, he joins a growing literature that uses the term in a range of contexts. Among planners, activists, academics, and NGOs the phrase has become increasingly popular, and many exciting new ideas have been raised (eg Buroni 1998; Daniel 2001; United Nations Center for Human Settlements 2001). However, what is almost always missing in this body of work is a detailed explication of just what is meant by the term. Little is said about what it entails, who should hold it, how it differs from current rights, and how it might change the city. The right to the city is clearly assumed to be a bold new vision that will lead to a more progressive, democratic, and just city, but just what the vision is and how it will produce those results remains entirely unclear.

Mitchell’s book is far better on this score. He draws many specifics from Henri Lefebvre’s (1968, 1996) formulation of the right to the city. Lefebvre offers a radical (if flawed) vision that entirely upends the social relationships that currently govern urban politics. He argues that urban inhabitants, rather than capital interests and the state, should take a direct and central role in making the decisions that produce urban space. Because Lefebvre (1991) maintains that space is implicated in all elements of social life, the right to control the decisions that produce urban space implies the right to determine the full scope of everyday life in the city. Lefebvre’s right to the city thus envisions a thoroughgoing democratization of urban politics. He insists that decision-making about urban space should be guided by the principle that use value should always trump exchange value— that above all other considerations urban space should be produced to meet the everyday needs of those who inhabit it.

In his theoretical discussion of the right to the city, Mitchell (pp 18–21) develops some of these ideas, especially the importance of inhabitance and of protecting the use value of space. What is less well developed in Mitchell’s relatively brief formulation is the importance of decision-making structures. Mitchell focuses far more on the right to inhabit already-existing space and far less on the question of who makes the decisions that produce that space (and therefore everyday life) in the first place. I don’t mean that Mitchell thinks decision-making structures are unimportant theoretically. Although he does not stress their importance, he does point to them in several places (eg pp 9, 32, 222). I mean rather that the particular right to the city that emerges from the
book—driven by the concerns of the case studies—is mostly about the importance of access to already-existing space and much less about the right to control its production. Thus the discussion of union organizing in Chapter 2 is about the right to assemble in urban space in order to achieve the political goal of unionization. In Chapters 3 and 4 Mitchell stresses, in his “staging ground” argument, that the Berkeley struggles were about the importance of securing a particular space in order to make a protest visible and heard (pp 105, 149). In Chapters 5 and 6 the right to the city for homeless people is primarily about the right to be physically present in urban public space in order to carry out the tasks of daily survival. Rarely in these cases do we see the right to the city defined as the right to participate meaningfully in the decisions that produce urban space. The struggles are mostly over who can use existing spaces and how, not over who makes the decisions that produce them. While Lefebvre sees the production of urban space as the very stuff of urban politics, Mitchell’s cases present urban space as a platform or stage on which urban politics takes place. He advocates greater rights to be present and to use existing urban space as a stage on which to act, and he challenges the right of neoliberal policy to limit such action. Lefebvre’s right to the city, by contrast, not only champions the right to act in existing urban space, it also involves the right to determine how that space is produced. Lefebvre interrogates and rethinks the decision-making structures that produce the city, and so introduces a much more radical democratization of the city than does Mitchell.

From Mitchell’s theoretical discussion of the right to the city, we can safely infer that he intends to offer a radical new imagining of urban politics. But ultimately the book delivers a less adventurous vision for the right to the city, one that is concerned first to challenge the more cruel elements of neoliberalism. While this concern is crucial, it tends to limit the right to the city to the most pressing current struggles. The front-line concerns of the case studies demand tactical thinking, and in the details of these struggles the wider strategic vision of Lefebvre’s ideas tends to get lost. Mitchell understands that the right to speak in public or piss in an alley are very limited rights (pp 209, 232). But under the assault of neoliberalism, even these mean rights must continually be struggled for. Of course the right to the city must include such basic rights. But from within the cases where basic rights are on the chopping block, it is difficult to see and articulate what else might be included: not just the right to speak in public space, but to decide the geography of public space; not just the right to be housed, but to decide the geography of affordable housing. To reiterate, Mitchell is not necessarily arguing explicitly for a more limited right to the city. Rather the book in fact offers a less robust right to the city because Mitchell’s empirical case studies constrain his freedom to articulate a wider notion of the right to the city. In contrasting Mitchell’s right to the city to Lefebvre’s, I don’t mean to suggest that we must adhere to an orthodox Lefebvrian formulation. I think that while Lefebvre’s vision is stimulating, it is also problematic (Purcell 2002). I point to Lefebvre as only one example of how we might imagine a more radical right to the city. Again, it is not that Mitchell is unaware of or opposed to a more radical vision. It is more that he is unsuccessful in fully developing how visionary radical theory might articulate with everyday struggles against oppression. This is by no means a reflection on Mitchell’s quality as a scholar. He is not the first to struggle...
with such a task. Mitchell’s right to the city is a principled and eloquent resistance to the worst elements of neoliberal policies. And perhaps at this point that is what is most important. But my concern is that a focus on basic rights gives too much ground to neoliberalism. If we focus too much on the everyday struggles (speaking, sitting, or urinating on sidewalks) we can fail to imagine a compelling and comprehensive alternative to neoliberal cities. Maybe we should see a whole-cloth reimagining of urban politics not as the end point of the ongoing fight against neoliberalism, but as a necessary starting point. Perhaps the most important weapon in the struggle is a radical vision that reimagines entirely the foundations of neoliberal policy. And perhaps it is the particular responsibility of radical academics, who are not bound by the need to produce policy that is feasible in the current urban political context, to imagine such radical alternatives as fully as possible. While it is certainly our responsibility to take action to oppose neoliberal cities in any way we can, perhaps equally critical is our responsibility to advocate radically alternative logics that challenge foundational neoliberal assumptions, assumptions that have increasingly become, frighteningly, the received wisdom on which urban political decisions are made.

Endnote
1 Obviously use value and exchange value are not mutually exclusive. They often intersect in complex ways in particular times and places. However, in everyday urban politics they regularly come into conflict, and Lefebvre’s point is that, where they do, use value should always precede exchange value under the right to the city.

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MARK PURCELL
Department of Urban Design & Planning
University of Washington
Seattle, WA
USA
mipurcell@u.washington.edu