

Burayidi, Michael A. Editor.

Cities and the Politics of Difference: Multiculturalism and Diversity in Urban Planning.
University of Toronto Press, 2015.

424 pages.

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Cities and the Politics of Difference provides an ethical and pragmatic discussion of the changing characteristics of urban communities in the twenty-first century—particularly in light of demographic changes of resident populations, advances in communication technology, the prominence of a global free market system, and social attitudes towards diversity. Editor Michael A. Burayidi introduces the publication by affirming that the globalization and diversification of cities has critical implications for planning practice that extend beyond economic and social issues, but also influence the design, purposing, and regulation of the urban built environment.

Burayidi's introductory discussion situates the collection of essays within broader theoretical and practice-oriented discussions of equity and diversity issues in planning. Burayidi asserts the field of planning must acknowledge social diversity and cultural differences as central to its practice in order to be a relevant and effective in current urban environments. Understanding the implications of diversity is most important to municipal practice. It can be difficult for practitioners to respond to growing diversity in resident populations, he explains, because the notion of difference at odds with planning rhetoric such as "serving the public interest" and equal treatment. However, Burayidi contends that a multicultural approach is needed in planning due to normative practices and cultural beliefs that support discriminatory treatment.

The book proposes multiculturalism as a framework to describe the current state of urban communities, as well an approach to planning and policymaking in the twenty-first century. Burayidi defines multicultural planning as a "continuous adjustment of planning practices to ensure parity in access to and the effective delivery of planning services to those ethnic, cultural, and demographic groups that have been traditionally marginalized or discriminated against by the planning process." Consequently, multicultural urban policy must recognize cultural differences, support the full participation and protection of marginalized citizen groups, proactively address effects of racism and social and economic disadvantage, and reflect diverse native born and immigrant cultures when establishing an identity for a place.

Burayidi's conceptualization of multicultural planning sets the stage for a collection of essays that provide theoretical reflection on the current state of the field and prescriptive solutions for practice. The book is organized into five sections: (1) multiculturalism in democratic society, (2) planning for sexual minority groups and Native Americans, (3) strategies for proactively support immigrant populations, (4) implications of physical design for diversity, and (5) cultural competency in planning education, training, and practice.

A number of the authors articulate the need for multicultural planning to urge practitioners to focus on the complex needs of resident populations and assert the need for diversity-oriented discussions to extend beyond issues of race, culture, and ethnicity. Petra Doan positions the LGBT community as currently an underrepresented stakeholder group and demonstrates the complex implications of planning practice for sexual minorities living in and outside of LGBT neighbourhoods and to different segments of this population. Doan provides guidance for planners to address the needs of a spectrum of non-normative population as part of their work. Nicholas C. Zaferatos offers a related discussion of Native Americans, describing how an increased attention of professional planners to tribal planning could help support further autonomy for these groups. Other chapters focus on cities that implement efforts to recognize non-native populations by supporting resettlement efforts and promote "immigrant-friendly" communities.

In addition to advocating for recognition for underrepresented stakeholder groups and proposing new substantive issues, contributing authors consider how a multicultural framework relates to training/education and methods for engaging citizens in the planning process. The unifying theme of these discussion purports for an increased cultural competency within the field. Kelly Main and James Rojas discuss limitations of outreach and participatory methods heavily reliant on verbal communication, creating divides between practitioner and

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citizen and native and foreign language and discuss alternative methods, such as Photovoice and Placeit that deemphasize language and focus on visual communication. Siddhartha Sen, Mukesh Kumar, and Sheri L. Smith describe the educational philosophy of planning programs at three historically Black colleges and universities to demonstrate opportunities to cultivate a multicultural focus as part of professional training.

Cities and the Politics of Difference is relevant to a number of audiences, increasing its contribution to the field. It is well balanced, providing both an ethical reflection of the recognition of diversity in research and disciplinary thought and practical support for practitioners.

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Li, Na

Kensington Market: Collective Memory, Public History, and Toronto's Urban Landscape
Toronto, London and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2014.

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At the centre of Na Li's *Kensington Market* is the provocative idea that collective memory both shapes, and is shaped by, the urban environment. Li confronts this notion as an urban planner, and animates it as a practical and methodological problématique by asking, how can collective memory be accessed and incorporated into planning theory and practice? Taking the reader through an empirically rich historical tour of the unique Kensington Market neighborhood in Toronto, she develops and deploys an innovative methodological response to bringing collective memory into the planning process—the Culturally Sensitive Narrative Approach (CSNA).

Li's CSNA is a call for planners, policy-makers, architectural designers and others to situate their practice within the specific historical context of the neighbourhoods they work in. For Li, community history is something to be experienced through the built urban form, the history of buildings, and the collective stories neighbours tell about those spaces. In order to operationalize this—to access and enter into the historical context of a given community—Li's CSNA leans on the techniques of oral history. She readily admits that canvassing local residents for oral histories, as part of the planning process, is a tricky and time-consuming proposition. Yet she nevertheless insists on it. As she puts it, “we need to spend a great deal of time in the field, with humility and diligence, and allow residents to tell their own stories at their own pace and in their own terms” (7).

Li recognizes that this approach to planning—or any approach, for that matter—is never politically benign. The danger in curating histories and operationalizing them through urban planning practice is that marginalized stories and experiences could be lost and familiar power relations reproduced. Thus Li urges diligent CSNA practitioners to be reflexive, and to ask of themselves, “Whose past and whose memory are we trying to interpret and preserve? Which version of history are we choosing to remember or neglect?” (6).

The middle three chapters of Li's tidy monograph put into operation aspects of the CSNA summarized in the introductory chapter. Li's approach comes alive against the vibrant backdrop of the ever-changing Kensington Market neighborhood. Li weaves together a historical narrative of the area while adeptly drawing on archived textual material, participant observation, and interviews. What emerges is a very readable book with a wide appeal—likely of interest to urban planners, urban historians, urban anthropologists, and faculty and students from cognate disciplines.

As a work of scholarship, the book makes two primary contributions. First, it adds to the body of work focused on excavating the history of the venerated and idiosyncratic Kensington Market neighborhood. Second, Li's work makes a methodological intervention into the urban planning discipline. Li's *Kensington Market* largely succeeds on both counts. However, in the latter respect, her anthropologically-inflected approach is not beyond scrutiny. In her defense, Li makes clear that her CSNA is a qualitative approach, focused on “the intangible, the