

whereas their Toronto counterparts were newcomers who overwhelmed by their sheer number the pre-existing community. As semi-literate peasants from the Mezzogiorno, the latter had few options outside of hometown and kinship networks for inserting themselves in the new society: ethnicity was for the vast majority of them a necessity, the only tool they had. By contrast, in Philadelphia and in other major US centres of Italian immigration, it is a minority which continued to live in the ethnic enclave. The majority opted for ethnically mixed neighbourhoods and inter-marriage. In other words, ethnicity was one option among many, dictated perhaps by one's socio-economic status, although this question is left unexplored. Consequently, what it meant to be Italian was necessarily different for recently arrived immigrants than for the children and grandchildren of immigrants. The question then arises: is it the same phenomenon that is being examined across time? Although *Staying Italian* argues that it is, the answer does not appear to be so straightforward.

Be that as it may, this book fills an important void in the field of North American immigration and ethnicity where publications on the post-war period are few and far between. The author has established his thorough mastery of the existing literature in this area and in urban studies. He has contributed as well to the ongoing discussion of ethnicity in North America.

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D. Bradford Hunt, *Blueprint for Disaster: The Unraveling of Chicago Public Housing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. x + 392 pp. 28 halftones. 4 line drawings. 1 table. \$35.00.
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D. Bradford Hunt's *Blueprint for Disaster: The Unraveling of Chicago Public Housing* explores the long and complicated corrosion of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) and its housing projects, which has resulted in the demolition of many of its high rises and displacement of tens of thousands of residents at the start of the twenty-first century. Examining CHA records and US federal legislative history, Hunt addresses the question, 'what went wrong with public housing in Chicago?' Hunt's multi-faceted answer blames federal policies, local politicians and progressive housing reformers for their collective failure to anticipate how their policies could lead to the demise of public housing.

According to Hunt, a dysfunctional relationship between federal and local authorities resulted in an overall failure to tailor public housing to the needs of Chicago's residents. Federal guidelines aimed at cost-cutting, reliance on income-based rents and the increase of moderately priced homes in the suburbs respectively pushed and pulled working-class residents into the private housing market. Chicago's political machine also wreaked havoc on the CHA, allowing alderman to veto CHA clearance and public housing sites, and forcing the CHA to rely on expensive and unnecessary union labour for basic maintenance tasks.

In addition to problems at the federal and local levels, Hunt blames progressive reformers whose well-intentioned efforts often contributed to racial segregation and turmoil in CHA projects. Social reformers such as CHA director Elizabeth Wood, who backed open occupancy and promoted high-quality public housing, also supported slum clearance efforts that had a disproportionate impact on Chicago's black community. These same reformers, concerned with the lack of

housing for large families, incorporated multi-bedroom units into high-rise projects such as the Robert Taylor Homes and Cabrini-Green. Yet, according to Hunt, the high ratio of youths to adults, resulting from these multi-bedroom units, ultimately contributed to these buildings' severe deterioration. Finally, progressive reformers accepted the principle embedded in the 1937 Housing Act that public housing should not interfere with the private housing market. While the market failure approach worked well before World War II and during the post-war housing shortage, Hunt makes it clear that by 1950 it was cheaper to buy a home in the suburbs than it was to construct one unit of public housing in Chicago. Despite the changing nature of the private housing market, there was no corresponding transformation of public housing policy.

Hunt's work reinvigorates the scholarship on public housing, demonstrating that racism, real estate interests, and conservative politicians provide only a partial answer in terms of what 'went wrong'. While there is room for further research on the impact of architectural design, youth to adult ratios, and other causes of social disorder within the housing projects, Hunt illustrates how well-intentioned policies can lead to unintended consequences. In the end Hunt provides a comprehensive history as well as a cautionary tale for the future. As the CHA embarks on its 2000 Plan for Transformation, demolishing projects and clearing land, it must strive to solve complex housing problems that earlier reformers and politicians failed fully to grasp.

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Ali Madanipour (ed.), *Whose Public Space: International Case Studies in Urban Design and Development*. Oxford: Routledge, 2010. 288 pp. Bibliography. £29.99 pbk.
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Ali Madanipour, a prominent urban design scholar from Newcastle University, has developed an impressive research agenda beginning in the early 1990s that aims to evaluate, and argue for the significance of, public space as a vital element of city life. In *Whose Public Space?* Madanipour advances this agenda by bringing together a number of international researchers to evaluate public spaces in different cultural settings with respect to two criteria: accessibility and inclusion. These criteria are set against a backdrop of changes to the historical city resulting from global processes, an increasing influence of the market and decreasing social bonds. In the book, accessibility is conflated with 'public', broadly defined as 'open to people as a whole' and opposite to what is private. Acknowledging growing social diversity in contemporary society, Madanipour places equal emphasis on issues of inclusion, especially within different stages of design, planning, development and management of public space. While I find problematic aspects of Madanipour's universal conception of 'public' and 'space' (as opposed to the socially constructed nature of both), I will reserve this review for more specific concerns.

The first part of the book focuses on traditional city centres, mostly from Newcastle, but also from Taiwan and Nigeria. Here, the cases emphasize increased privatization of public spaces due to greater control by the private sector (Akkar Ercan); the use of planning tools, including public participation, as an instrument of