

Thesis Abstracts

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Thesis Abstracts/Résumés des thèses

Richard Harris. "Class Struggle in the Domain of Social Production: The Political Significance of Residential Segregation in Kingston, 1961-1976." Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Geography, Queen's University, Kingston, 1981.

The residential segregation of classes continues to characterize the city under capitalism. In the city, classes are distributed unevenly and residential areas vary in their class composition. For Marxists, the political significance of this phenomenon is contentious. This thesis examines this political question, both theoretically and in historical terms, through a study of political developments in Kingston, Ontario, between 1961 and 1976.

In theoretical terms, segregation may arise within the domain of social production, the autonomous cultural sphere beyond the capitalist workplace. Pervading this domain, definitively political class struggles develop with the purpose of altering the conditions under which labour power is produced as a class relation. These struggles, often referred to as "community action," define the political significance of residential segregation. This significance, like the struggles themselves, cannot be defined *a priori*. Rather, it is a question for historical investigation.

In Kingston, the character of local political struggles was determined partly by Kingston's relation to its wider national context. Nationally, the period 1961-76 was one of rising incomes and continuing class inequality, of the rediscovery of poverty and urban politics, and of the appearance of an extra-parliamentary New Left as a political alternative to the New Democratic Party. These national developments worked themselves out in Kingston in a particular way. Locally, the existence of a markedly "dual" labour market, of a large number of working and welfare poor, of high tenancy and low vacancy rates, of an active New Left and a distinctive NDP-Waffle group, prompted the development of political activity which was notably militant and radical in character.

As local political struggles developed, often out of particular residential areas, the political significance of segregation promoted ignorance among classes and hence political inactivity; it facilitated political mobilization; it prompted class fragmentation and, paradoxically, the tentative development of a wider class solidarity within the labour force.

Sarah L. Weaver. "Implementation and Monitoring in Planning: The Experience of the Edmonton General Municipal Plan." M.A. Thesis, Department of Geography, University of Alberta, 1981.

The central argument in the thesis is that the comprehensive rational model of public policy-making has led to a misunderstanding of the manner in which a municipal general plan can influence the dynamic urban environment. Because of this, plans in the past have been noted for their ineffectiveness: limited influence upon decision making, or, if implemented, a high frequency of unintended consequences. Rather than a linear, expert-centred planning process, oriented only towards the writing of a planning document, a more process-oriented planning model is proposed.

The model identifies two key components of effective planning: implementation (the translation of policy into action), and monitoring (the process of feedback, learning and amendment of plan policies). A review of relevant literature provides some guidelines for effective implementation and monitoring systems pertaining to the process of preparing a plan, the document itself, the planning organization and continuing planning activities.

The remainder of the thesis is an analysis of an actual planning exercise in terms of these criteria. The author's personal involvement in a review of the 1971 general plan for Edmonton, Alberta, provided detailed and intimate knowledge of the Edmonton planning system, including the events leading up to the preparation of a new plan in 1979.

The analysis demonstrates that, in the two years following the release of the draft plan, little progress has been made in bringing about its implementation or in establishing systems for monitoring its effectiveness – although both were major objectives of the plan exercise. This situation is attributed to a number of deficiencies in the plan preparation process, the plan document, current activities of the Edmonton planning department and the structure of the municipal organization. Despite these observations, there is some reason for optimism, and the thesis concludes by identifying the implications for changes to the planning system, as well as the wider topics of Alberta planning legislation, national urban research and the education of planners.

Anne D.B. Dhanani. "Water Quality and Recreational Use of the River Valleys in Calgary." M.Sc. Thesis, Department of Geography, University of Alberta, 1981.

The river valleys within the city of Calgary are a major resource for outdoor recreation. It is a city policy that recreation should be the primary use of the flood plains and thus the park system in these valleys, which is already quite extensive, is being expanded. However, parts of the flood plains are occupied by industries, municipal works and residential areas, and the quality of river water is degraded by discharge of wastes and runoff. For some years water quality has aroused protests from recreationists who use the rivers, notably fishermen. As the population of the city has grown and the park area in the river valleys been increased, water quality problems have become more significant.

It is the objective of the author of this thesis to determine the impact of water quality on recreational use of the rivers and adjoining land and to assess the constraints that this might impose on plans for future development. To understand the nature of the problem, the literature on the role of rivers and the nature of water pollution in urban areas is reviewed together with information on relationships between water quality and recreation. Further, the administrative and legislative background to water quality control is discussed. The availability of water resources for recreation in the Calgary area is examined and related to demand for those resources in light of current trends in recreation demand and the rapid growth of the city's population. The actual water quality of the Calgary rivers is analysed, and that information is used to assess ways in which water quality imposes (or may in future impose) limits on use of the river valleys for recreation.

It is concluded that there is a significant degradation of river water quality, particularly in the Bow River in southeast Calgary and in Nose Creek. Poor water quality has a negative impact on recreation and limits further recreational development. To improve and expand outdoor recreational opportunities in the river valleys, water quality must be improved. Steps are already being taken to upgrade the quality of effluent discharged into the Bow River from the municipal sewage treatment plants, but the considerable increase in volume of discharge will par-

tially offset improvements. Also the rapid urbanization of the rivers' watersheds will make water quality degradation by urban runoff, already significant, an increasing problem unless a large-scale effort to control this source of pollution is undertaken.

Jean-Pierre Lebourgeois. "The Effects of the Mill Woods Land Bank on Land and Housing Prices in Edmonton." M.A. Thesis, Department of Geography, University of Alberta, 1981.

The City of Edmonton, in 1969, undertook a large-scale land-banking project in the southeastern district known as Mill Woods. The primary purpose of the project, as it was first formulated, was to reduce housing prices in Edmonton, by injecting a large amount of relatively cheap land into the market, thus forcing the price of land down. In land economic theory, however, it is recognized that a public land bank can be successful in attaining this particular objective (the price objective) only if the land supply for housing is being restricted through the use of oligopolistic or monopolistic powers. Furthermore, several economic, marketing and planning conditions have to be met before a publicly owned land bank can effectively reduce housing and land prices. These conditions were examined to assess the degree to which the Mill Woods land bank was capable of affecting housing prices in Edmonton. It was concluded that oligopolistic and monopolistic powers have not been a major force in the Edmonton land development industry. In addition, it was found that the public authorities who were responsible for the Mill Woods project were unfamiliar with the theoretical constructions and economic conditions that are necessary for a land bank to succeed in its price objective. This, in turn, resulted in a lack of clearly defined goals, objectives and policy guidelines, leading to marketing and pricing policies that were different from those needed to operate a land-banking project on a long-run, break-even basis. The marketing and pricing strategies also reflected a shift in emphasis from the project's primary economic objective to a secondary social objective that resulted in a disproportionate amount of low-income housing being built in Mill Woods.