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How Women Saved the City, by Daphne Spain. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 2001. 320 pages. $34.95 (hardback).
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In her book *How Women Saved the City*, Daphne Spain tells a story that has not received the attention it deserves. Using a variety of historical materials, she illustrates the significant contributions of women volunteers and the organizations they sustained to American urban structure and culture between the Civil War and World War I. These organizations created hundreds of physical spaces where newcomers to the rapidly growing urban areas could be quickly assimilated. They included boarding houses and hotels, vocational schools, settlement houses, public baths, and playgrounds. These were "redemptive places" that addressed some of the major public health problems of the day and the main challenges to social order.

Spain discovered early in her investigation that all the organizations sponsoring the creation of redemptive places had a strong religious foundation. A major inspiration was the Social Gospel theology that defined poverty as a public issue requiring institutional reform. The tenets of "municipal housekeeping" also strongly influenced the work of these organizations. To establish their credentials for civic involvement, advocates of municipal housekeeping emphasized women's responsibility for keeping the city as clean and well functioning as their own homes. Although these organizations were apolitical, Spain argues they accomplished very real political ends by shaping public discourse through the built environment. Their agenda encompassed food inspection, factory safety, clean air, and marriage- and birth-licensing bureaus.

In her book, she focuses on four such organizations: the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the College Settlements Association (CSA), the Salvation Army, and the National Colored Women's Association (NCWA). All four represent national collective efforts that occupied physical spaces in cities. They have extensive building programs that had a significant impact on urban structure. Her interest in race and class relations led her to focus solely on Protestant organizations.

Spain argues there were four main groups of newcomers to the city that presented a challenge to social order. Women seeking their fortune independently of their family were often accused of moral impurity. European immigrants and black migrants from the rural South polluted the city by challenging what it meant to be American; many of them were also physically unclean because they lacked access to water. Women volunteers were also suspect because of their choice to spend time away from home. In redemptive places, problems associated with race relations, immigration, and women's status were worked out.

Spain argues that the settlement movement provided a historical bridge between a generation of women whose access to the public sphere was through evangelical voluntary work and the generation that enjoyed the right to vote and direct access to the public political sphere. These movements were intimately tied to the women's suffrage movement. Voluntary work helped prepare women, both white and black, for the rights and responsibilities of voting. Racial tensions in the society at large, however, were not totally overcome. Spain finds that efforts to better the conditions for blacks often resulted in segregated facilities.

Using photos, maps, newspaper articles, and written records, *How Women Saved the City* answers the question of where women fit into urban history by pointing to the places they built. Historical maps are included to show the importance of redemptive places at the national, local, and neighborhood levels. Several chapters in the book are devoted to more detailed discussions of the creation and evolution of redemptive places in particular cities. Big cities like New York, the cultural and financial capital; and Chicago, the birthplace of the skyscraper, are discussed, as are smaller cities such as Cleveland, Ohio; Washington, D.C.; Hampton, Virginia; Atlanta, Georgia; Baltimore; and Philadelphia. A full chapter is devoted to Boston, which is unique in the number of sites where women were taught to convert housekeeping skills into marketable wage labor. It was also a pioneer in the playground and public bath movements. Three of the four organizations featured in the book began in Boston.

Spain's chapter on Chicago, "Men Build Chicago's Skyline, Women Redeem the City," would make an excellent companion piece for the Chicago chapters in Witold Rybczynski's (1995) cultural history *City Life*. Like many urban historians, Rybczynski focuses on the skyscrapers and monumental

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buildings but misses the redemptive places. Spain's discussion of the race and women's issues surrounding Chicago's World Columbian Exposition is particularly interesting. Women's participation at the exposition depended almost entirely on their husbands' reputation. Blacks were noticeably absent in the Columbian Exposition, which was a major factor in the creation of the NCWA.

The audience for this book is interdisciplinary. It bridges the gap between the spatial (designers, geographers, urban planners) and aspatial (sociologists) disciplines and builds on many excellent histories. As such, it would be an effective complement to the more standard urban history texts used in courses.

Spain's book would also be an excellent choice for courses in gender and development focusing on the rapidly growing urban areas of the developing world. One of the book's major contributions is to draw attention to a dimension of women's work that has been well recognized in the gender and development literature (Moser 1989) but not elsewhere: community management. Spain argues that the capitalism and growth model of economic development would not have been successful without the work of women volunteers in voluntary organizations, just as it would not have succeeded without the unpaid work of women in the home. This has important implications for economic development in the developing world today.

Spain's book provides invaluable insights into the historical context in which women's voluntary organizations evolved in North America and into how they empowered women at the time. They suggest avenues that might be explored in cities of the developing world today. What are the redemptive places, both formal and informal? Because Spain relied on historical records, she focused on formal organizations and physical spaces. She was not able to take into consideration the work of informal associations. These are likely to figure prominently in the developing country context. What are the main population subgroups that threaten social order in developing cities, and how might their needs be met in a way that empowers both them and those providing the services? Who are the current or potential volunteers? What impact can voluntary associations have, given the much larger numbers of people involved in developing cities today and the much more rapid rate of urbanization?

Spain leaves the reader with explicit questions addressing the situation in cities in developed countries today. Many of the services once available only through redemptive places are now provided by the public sector for all citizens, not just for the poor. Yet we are seeing a retreat from responsibility by the public sector amid calls for streamlining and "downsizing" government. Who are the new volunteers? Women are no longer the reserve army of volunteers they once were. Will they be replaced by aging baby boomers? And does the city still need saving? Spain clearly thinks so. She suggests that history tell us there is an important role for volunteers motivated by religious faith. She cautions, however, that the pluralism and diversity that characterizes today's cities may make the top-down models used by the four organizations featured here less effective.

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Planning in Postmodern Times, by Philip Allmendinger. London: Routledge. 2001. 280 pages. $74.99 (hardback), $32.95 (paperback)

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In *Planning in Postmodern Times,* Philip Allmendinger seeks to reimagine the direction planning should take in our ostensibly postmodern era. This rethinking is much needed in the sense that planning, as compared to other, related disciplines such as architecture or geography, has been so suspiciously silent in the heated debate on the implications of postmodernity that proponents of a postmodern consciousness in planning have accused planning theory of "apathy" on the issue (Dear 2000, 299). While there are many articles in planning literature that have speculated on the implications of postmodernity for planning (and most are discussed throughout the book), thorough work on the subject is rare and usually comes from other related disciplines (e.g., from geography, such as Soja 1989, 2000; Harvey 1990; and Dear 2000; or from urban design, including Ellin 1996; Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee 1998). As such, Allmendinger's book fills this void in an insightful and exhaustive manner. To appreciate the value of Allmendinger's book, the reader must first be acquainted

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with his particular definition of postmodernity. The term *postmodernity* (and its sister term *postmodernism*) is so controversial and malleable that it may mean anything to anybody. Is it an architectural style, a broader style in the arts, a new epoch, an intellectual paradigm, a socioeconomic condition, a new form of culture, a type of social theory, or, finally, a poor invention on behalf of academia for something that hardly exists? Each of these definitions has its proponents, and Allmendinger addresses most of them. His notion of postmodernity is a broad one: postmodernity represents "different" if not entirely new times (p. 91) in which a number of deep and related structural changes are occurring simultaneously. These changes include a shift from Fordist, industry-based, organized-in-strict-vertical-hierarchies capitalism toward capitalism of flexible specialization, decentralized production, and flatter hierarchies; the decline of traditional modern institutions (e.g., the trade unions or the nation-state); the demise of national and class-based politics; and the rise in culture of individualistic modes of thought challenging modern intellectual assumptions of linear scientific progress and espousing an intellectual logic that accepts relativism of truth and pluralism of opinion. Only after understanding this broad notion of postmodernity can the reader appreciate the larger point of Allmendinger's work. He argues for an alternative approach to planning—a combination of postmodern thinking and other social theories—not merely because of its novelty or intellectual appeal but because it is the only way for planning to remain relevant. For Allmendinger, the crucial step is not to endlessly debate whether contemporary society should appropriately be labeled *postmodern* but, instead, to more broadly recognize that we live in times distinctively different than the pre-1960s world, requiring planners to adjust to the changing intellectual undercurrents or risk being left behind. This is what makes the book relevant.

One of the greatest assets of the book is the astounding comprehensiveness of the literature review. There is hardly an important postmodern text that has been omitted. The book is, as the author confesses, theory-heavy. For some audiences, this may pose a drawback, and more pragmatic readers might hesitate to read it at all. However, it is precisely the theory-heavy analysis and its conscientiously drawn connections to broader theories in the social sciences that give intellectual strength to the latter chapters of the book where Allmendinger provides concrete proposals for what paths planning should take in postmodern times.

Based on the literature review in the first few chapters, Allmendinger builds his own framework for what the postmodern times are about. His particular emphasis is on postmodern times as times of a different attitude—an attitude that celebrates the diversity of competing choices: "If the postmodern means anything, for me, it is about choice," he argues (p. 256). Within this framework, he analyzes the current state of planning practice and concludes, conversely to some other authors keen on postmodernity, that planning has never been entirely modernist (technocratic, rational) but has always carried elements of both modernity and postmodernity; and that it has always been more political, flexible, and open (that is, postmodern) than is often assumed. Occasionally, his effort to balance modernist and postmodernist impulses leads to contradictions, but it is perhaps harder to construct a wholly consistent argument outside the logic of modernism.

Allmendinger pays particular attention to those planning theorists who have come to dominate the debate on the future direction for planning, and this is precisely where the book gets interesting. Based chiefly but not exclusively on British and American planning experiences, Allmendinger identifies four influential procedural planning models: collaborative, pragmatic, neoliberal, and postmodern (as prescribed by other authors). He is concerned with the extent to which these paradigms are up to date with postmodern intellectual developments based on their relationship to four criteria that frame the postmodern sensibility: rationality and power, consensus and difference, inclusion and exclusion, and totality and fragmentation (p. 121). For Allmendinger, a model that efficiently reflects postmodern sensibility would be one that deconstructs embedded power relations, welcomes opinions of difference, strives toward their inclusion, and accepts fragmentation of interests.

Allmendinger's critical analysis of these four planning models may attract controversy. He gives relatively high marks on some and low marks on others. His most scathing critique is reserved for collaborative planning of the type advocated by Patsy Healey (1997), which he identifies as strongly promodernist (a negative label in the sense that it means outdated) in its overarching emphasis on the search for consensus—a notion closely related to the very modernist monolithic and utopian notion of the common public good. This position will surely raise some eyebrows, and readers will struggle to reconcile Allmendinger's solid critique with the commonly held view of collaborative planning as the most "progressive" contemporary planning model.

The culmination of the book comes in Allmendinger's prescription for an alternative planning suitable for the postmodern era. Although his model openly builds on what he finds valuable in existing planning models, Allmendinger's contribution provides both an original synthesis and a specific set of prescriptions. He identifies specific principles for a rethought form of planning (in the British context but translatable to the United States). Allmendinger argues for a very decentralized, locally determined, and flexible approach;

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active encouragement of greater public participation; and greater transparency of the mechanisms and processes of planning through an enhanced Freedom of Information Act. He even questions the presumptive legitimacy of any permanent form of land use planning: planners should instead justify their role in front of the public and put land use alternatives—and even the very need for land use planning itself—up for a public referendum on a regular basis (pp. 227-56). Allmendinger further illustrates these principles through a discussion of concrete hypothetical planning situations.

In summary, while some of Allmendinger's suggestions may be controversial, he offers a critical perspective of the contemporary state of planning, grounded in broader social theory, and creative proposals for planning's future that will make this book a welcome addition to the planner's library. The reader should remember, however, that the book is primarily about procedural planning theory—especially on land use rather than economic development process—rather than the substantive consequences of postmodernism for urban design or land use patterns.

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