



Introducing
Just Sustainabilities
Policy, Planning and Practice



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Just Sustainabilities
Policy, Planning and Practice

Spatial Justice

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uep Urban + Environmental Policy + Planning

Tufts
UNIVERSITY

Cities@Tufts



@julianagyeman #justsustainabilities

Land recognition

I am presenting on the traditional territory of the Wôpanâak (Wampanoag) and Massa-adchu-es-et (Massachusetts) people. I pay my respects to their Elders, their past, present and future, and commit to a principle of respect and care as part of this meeting.



Three overarching thoughts on urban planning:

“managing our co-existence in shared space” (Healey, 1997).

“[This] speaks with equal clarity about environmental, transport, housing and other conflicts, reminding us that, whether we like it or not, we do share space on the planet with others who in many ways are not like us, and we need to find ways of co-existing in these spaces, from the next-door neighbor to the street, neighborhood, city and region”
(Sandercock 2000).

What is the relationship between belonging and becoming?

Are we urban planners as good at fostering belonging (recognition, reconciliation, difference, diversity, inclusion) as we are at developing prescriptions for what our cities can become (smart, sharing, resilient, sustainable etc)?

Just sustainabilities, ‘humane-scaled’ as opposed to solely ‘human scaled’ planning, helps us think through BOTH, together.

Spatial Justice



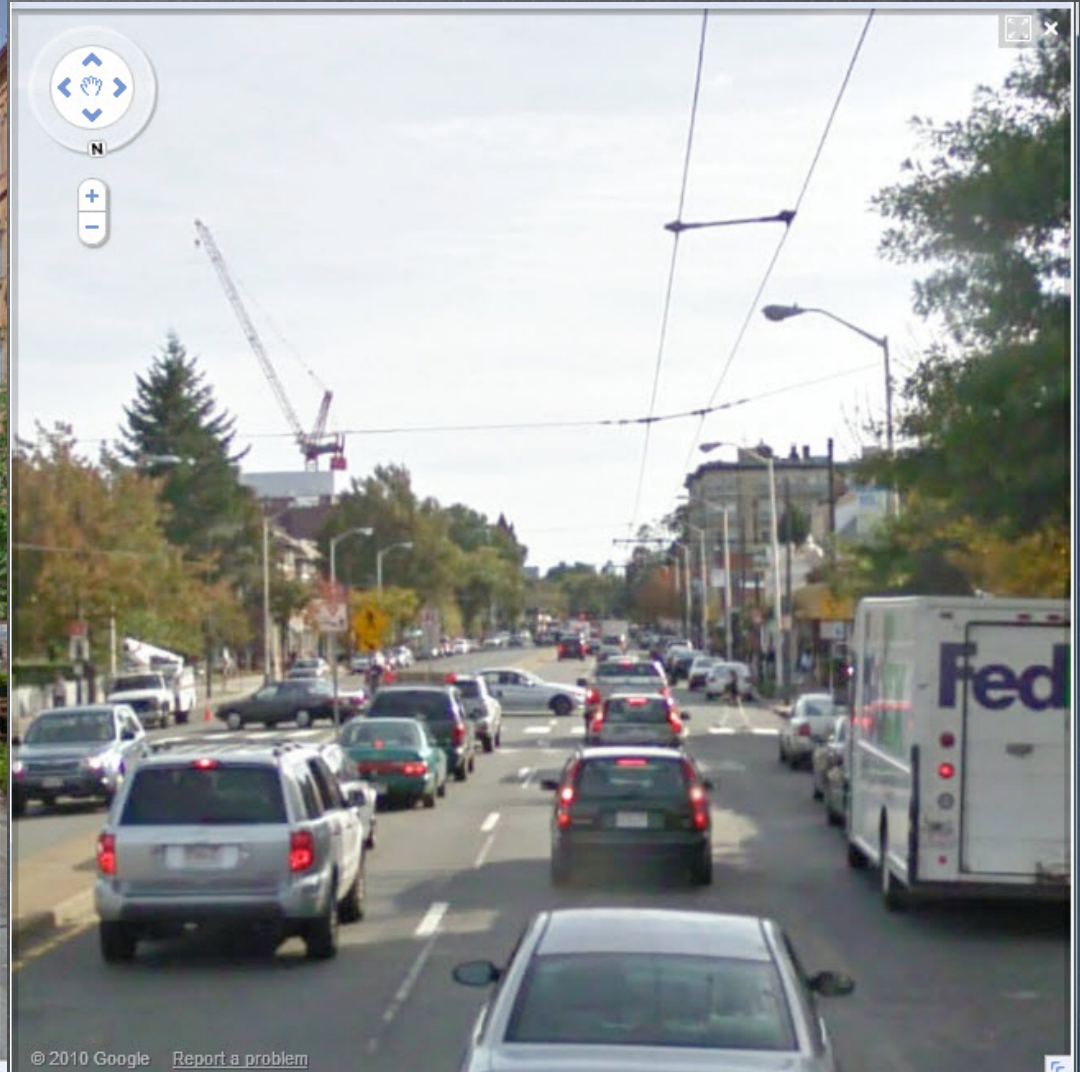
“Just as social justice requires that life chances are not distributed along class lines, spatial justice requires that they are not distributed geographically” (David Lammy, British Member of Parliament 2004)



Spatial justice: Rethinking urban streets

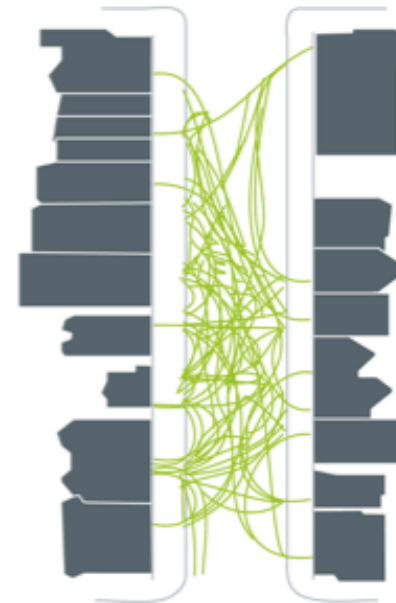
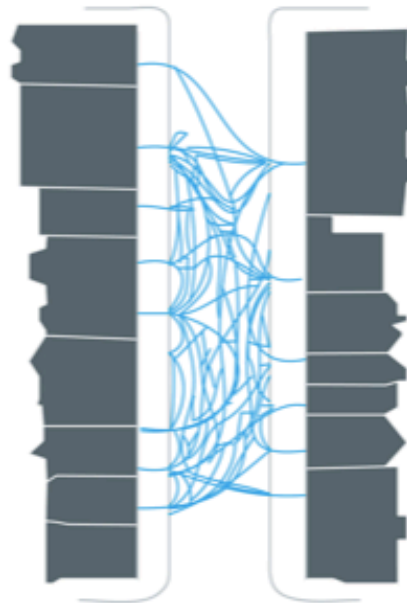
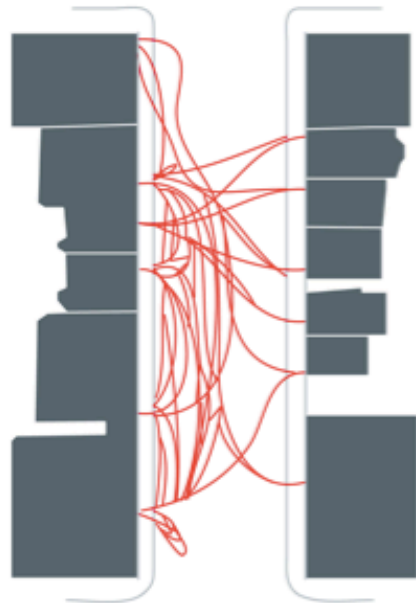
Södra Vägen, Gothenburg, Sweden

Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge, MA



The street is our most commonly used public space. It has been democratized on Södra Vägen but not on Massachusetts Avenue. What does this say to adults, children who use these streets daily and become acculturated to spatial justice on Södra Vägen or spatial injustice on Massachusetts Avenue?

Street Traffic and Social Interaction



Heavy traffic

16,000 vehicles / day
1,900 vehicles / peak hour

0.9 friends per person
3.1 acquaintances per person



Medium traffic

8,000 vehicles / day
550 vehicles / peak hour

1.3 friends per person
4.1 acquaintances per person



Light traffic

200 vehicles / day
200 vehicles / peak hour

3.0 friends per person
6.3 acquaintances per person



Good news from NYC



Spatial (in)justice: hostile and defensive architecture

“those seemingly decorative “anti-homeless” spikes installed on the exterior ledges of buildings, benches with metal armrests set close together to prevent anyone from lying down, even classical music piped through outdoor speakers to deter teenagers from congregating in front of convenience stores” Arieff 2017





**Removing urban highways can
improve neighborhoods blighted
by decades of racist policies**

Spatial justice: The Cosmopolitan Canopy

“numerous heterogeneous and densely populated bounded public spaces within cities.... offer a respite from this wariness, settings where a diversity of people can feel comfortable enough to relax their guard and go about their business more casually. A prime such location is Philadelphia's Reading Terminal Market. In this relatively busy, quasi-public setting, under a virtual *cosmopolitan canopy*, people are encouraged to treat others with a certain level of civility or at least simply to behave themselves.”

Anderson 2004

THE COSMOPOLITAN CANOPY



RACE AND CIVILITY
IN EVERYDAY LIFE
ELIJAH ANDERSON

AUTHOR OF CODE OF THE STREET



THE COSMOPOLITAN CANOPY

RACE AND CIVILITY IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Is there a role for planning/planners and urban designers in creating Cosmopolitan Canopies?

Solution to spatial injustice? 'Complete Streets'?

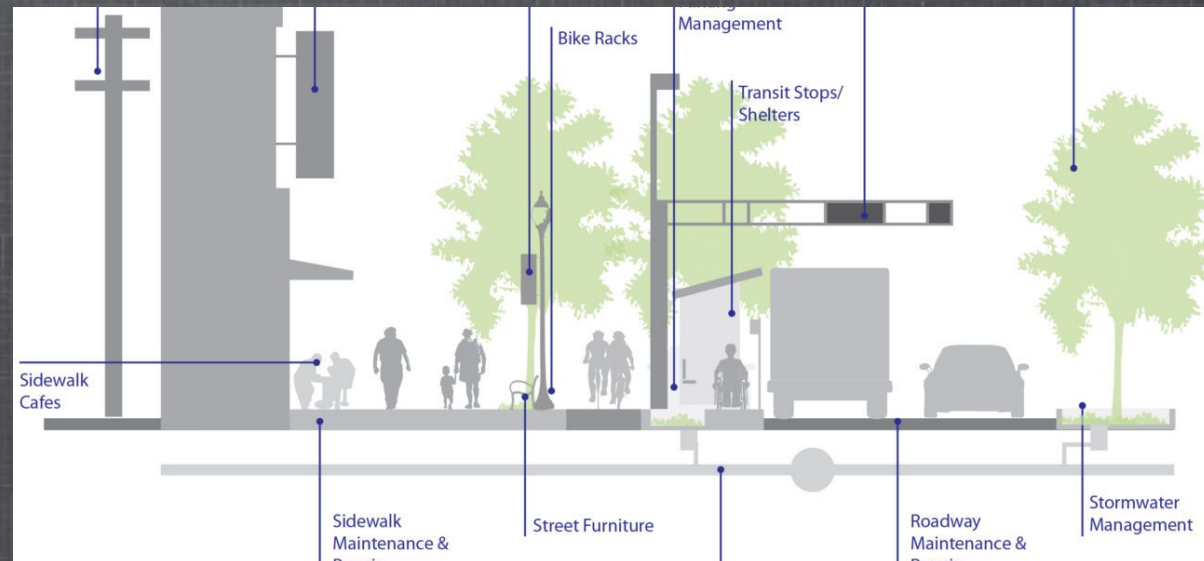
Can the current 'Complete Streets' discourse, design manuals, policies and other regulatory structures reverse the inequalities that car-centric planning exacerbated or created anew, or will it result in enhanced livability only for the most privileged residents of cities?



What is a 'Complete Street'?

Street as social construct and physical space

Massey (1995) sees places (*and streets are places*) as having no fixed meaning; rather, they are “*constantly shifting articulations of social relations through time.*” Yet much of the current physically-focused Complete Streets rhetoric *disconnects streets from their significant social, structural, symbolic, discursive, and historical realities.*



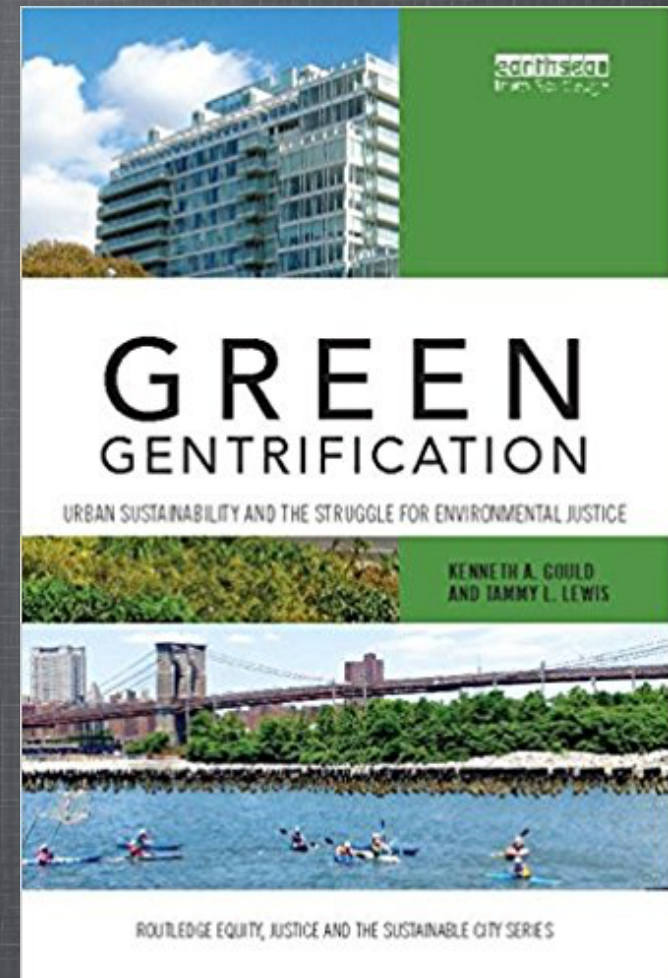
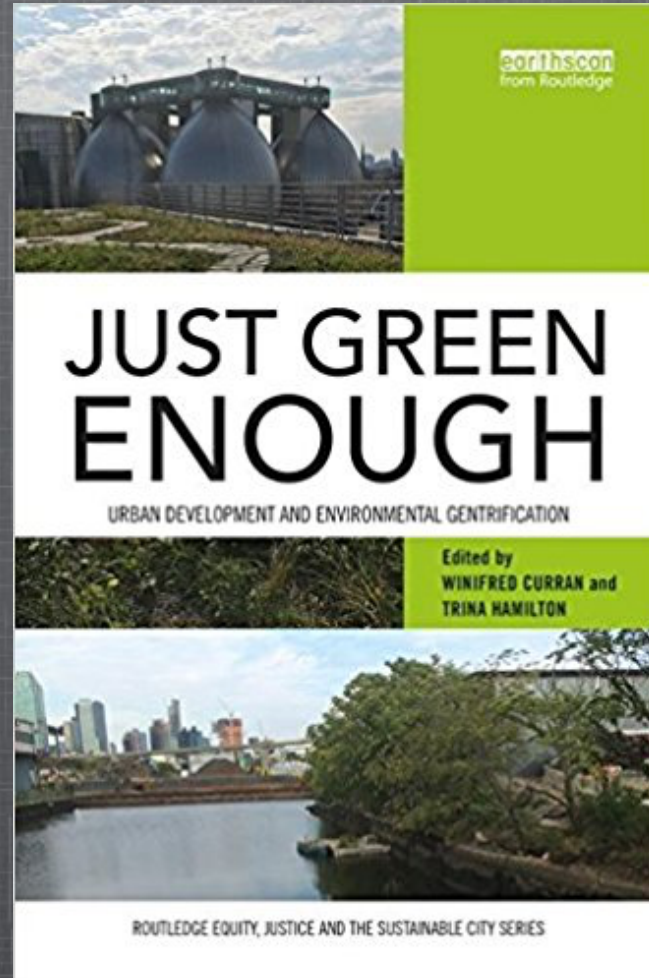
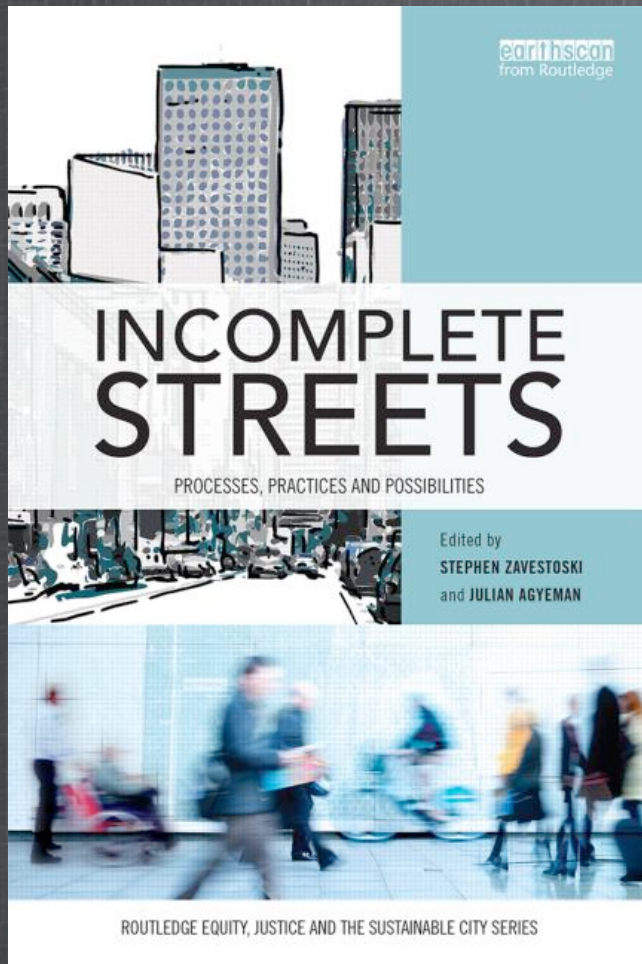
Complete Streets: The strange case of LA.

From tacos or bacon-wrapped hotdogs. ...these mobile meals create hotspots of social interactions in a city that too often lacks public life.”



“Can streets in a heavily immigrant metropolis, however multi-modal the distribution of lane space, be said to be “complete” if they fail to include the livelihoods and economic survival of vendors; the smells, sights and tastes of homelands; and places for people to pause, shop and eat?”

Complete Streets, 'greenlining' and Gentrification?

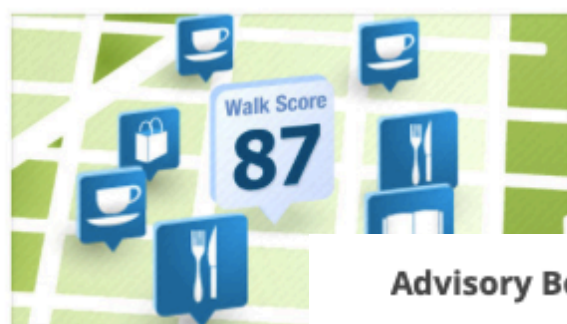


There are important missing narratives in the Complete Streets movement, discourse and practice. In the absence of these narratives such policies, plans and efforts are *systematically reproducing many of the urban spatial and social inequalities and injustices* that have characterized our cities for the last century or more.

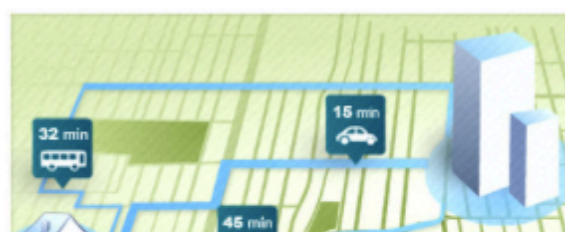
Live Where You Love



Great Nearby Places



Improve Your Commute



Fits Your Lifestyle



Advisory Board

The Walk Score [advisory board](#) includes urban planning, environmental and technical experts from institutions such as The Sightline Institute and The Brookings Institution.

Walk Score is now a part of [Redfin](#) and was originally incubated at [Front Seat](#).

Spatial justice: Rethinking urban parks

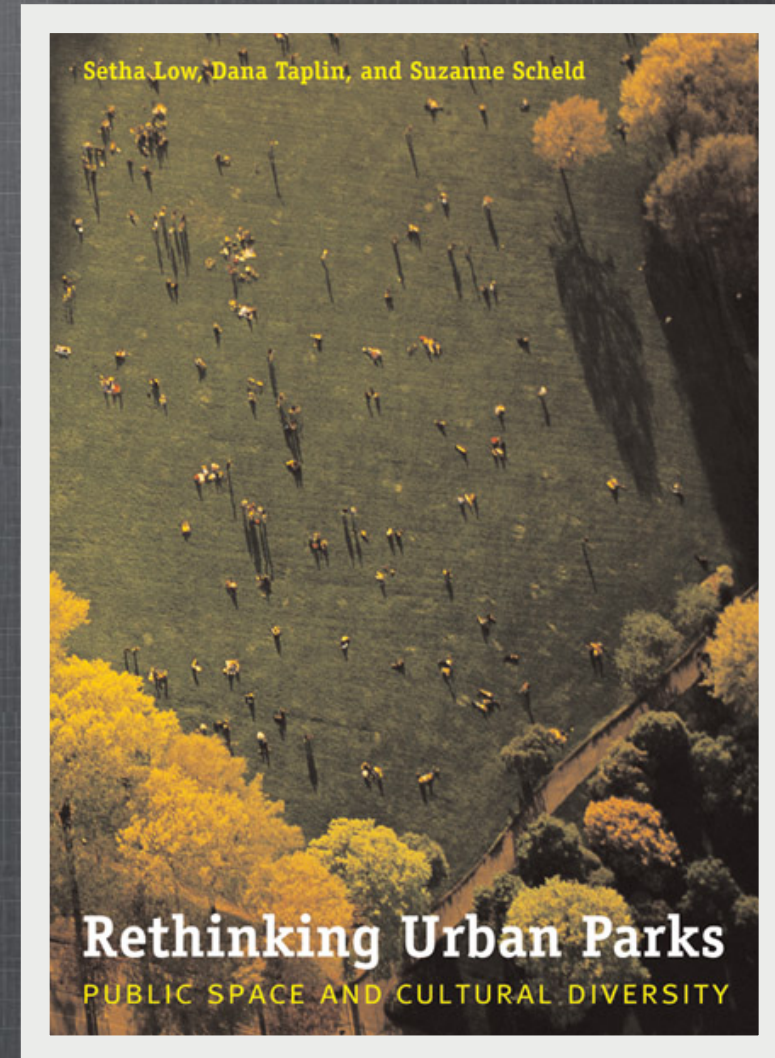
“In this new century, we are facing a different kind of threat to public space-not one of disuse, but of patterns of design and management that exclude some people and reduce social and cultural diversity”.

(Low, Taplin and Scheld 2005)

“contact theory posits that....interracial interactions that occur in leisure settings have the potential to be more genuine and sincere compared with the more obligatory interactions that take place in formal settings”

(Shinew, Glover and Parry 2004)

In the 1980s, environmentalists in Bristol, UK, persuaded the local Parks Department to create wildflower meadows. These are environmentally sound, but are they socially just?



Spatial justice:

Immigrant Engagement in Public Open Space

“The lack of engagement of more recent immigrants in “friends of the park” organizations and other environmental groups of today has led to concerns that while Olmsted’s vision continues to resonate with a great many Bostonians it may not resonate with the majority of those who will decide Boston’s future.” (Lanfer and Taylor 2004)



Engagement, belonging: Landscape links?

“Families gravitate toward Herter Park because, for many, the landscape reminds them of home. Extended family gatherings on riverbanks are popular in Central America, and the trees along the shore remind many immigrants of the all-day Sunday picnics they enjoyed in El Salvador or Guatemala” (Lanfer and Taylor 2004)

“I think one of the reasons that that place...is so popular with us, Latinos, is because of the willows. Willows in Guatemala are very common. They grow beside rivers. People like Herter Park because it looks like home.”

— Guatemalan-American, Allston, Boston.



Engagement, belonging: 'Designing in' Encounter? Superkilen Park, Nørrebro, Copenhagen



Engagement, belonging: We need 'deep ethnographies'

#refugeeswelcome in parks: a resource book

- ideas for refugee integration and wellbeing
- how parks and urban public space can be more welcoming to refugees and asylum seekers



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Articles

Ethnographic understandings of ethnically diverse neighbourhoods to inform urban design practice

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Department of Landscape

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TRANSNATIONAL URBAN OUTDOORS RESEARCH GROUP

TUO is the Transnational Urban Outdoors research group based in the Department of Landscape at the University of Sheffield. We are a group of academic researchers who have trained and practiced in landscape architecture and urban design, and also currently teach on professionally accredited courses.



Thank you!

