MITOCW | 15. City Form and Process

JULIAN BEINART: We're going to deal with three major topics between now and the end of the semester. The first one is today's. And that is what is the relationship between the way a city is made and its form. Is there a relationship between the way a city is made and the form that it takes?

Next week, we will start with an examination of the relationship between social structure and spatial structure. I'll do case studies for a number of cities next week, probably Jerusalem and Johannesburg. After that, we will look at contemporary form models selectively until the end of the semester.

What would be nice would be if you could use the material that we've done, which I suppose is a kind of a history, as a reference to some of the questions that we're going to be asking of current events. Today I'm going to spend a bit of time talking about the process by which the World Trade Center in New York was replaced by the Freedom Tower. I don't know if any of you know this story-- in broad terms, perhaps not in detail.

In one of the pieces of reading, you will find a comment by Margaret Crawford who used to teach urban design at Harvard when the article questions whether, after Robert Moses, there's a process by which New York is still going to produce great things. She says, "The story of democracy is one of constant improvement. To look for perfect answers is the wrong way of looking at it."

So if she's correct, the important thing is that the result of a struggle to produce a certain form is contingent and, most importantly, to be oriented towards the conditions of the struggle and the education and learning that takes place even if the product isn't perfect. That argument would mean that the society is constantly in a state of change and is much more likely to be associated with the model of buildings which can change at the same rate as society wishes to change, the Russians being very intrigued by this relationship.

Am I being far-fetched? Do you imagine that Melnikov's project for the Pravda building which has three rotating cores has something to do with the speed at which decisions are made and communicated to the public? It's a bit far-fetched.

We don't perhaps engage in the relationship between social process and form making in as direct a relationship as that. But some people looking at is Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill's Freedom Tower, which, by the way, is 1,776 feet high, 1776 being an important date in American history, tries to connect the imperial quality of a building by its height.

The Burj Khalifa in Dubai is taller. It's over 2,000. And I don't think there's any attempt in that society to link its height to a particular event in Islam. But we play games.

I've listed nine ideas about the relationship between form and social process. And I'm only going to spend our time on a few of them. I want to talk about the concept of relying on a super figure and using the case of Robert Moses in New York. Anybody read Robert Caro's book? OK. Well, so we use ignorance as all of us.

In the case of making decisions, I will use the example of the process by which the World Trade Center was replaced in some detail, the various five stages of its procedure. You are free to take part in this discussion. I'd like to hear your opinion as to some of the assertions I'm going to make.

Briefly, I'm going to deal also with the concept of educating citizens. If you see form and people as two items, you can argue that if you change people, you change their way of understanding the form of places. And the number of projects that I want to look at very briefly with you, which focus on changing the nature of people, rather than to-- you'll again look back to last Tuesday's class.

One of the great concepts of the young Soviet urbanists after 1918 was that they had a new clientele who could be shaped to live up to the qualities of the Soviet society which was newly being formed. One of the problems of the industrial city was the fact that the client structure was so fossilized.

There had been a number of attemps to use urbanism to try to educate people and to change this quotient, this relationship. I'm not going to spend a lot of time on redressing social imbalance. I'll just mention it and give an example of it from Boston and spend less time on confronting the system as a way of changing the society and its form.

Kevin Lynch argues that the real issue in the contemporary city, and he's really talking about the American city, is that they are a host of agent families, industrial firms, city agencies, developers, investors, regulatory and subsidizing agencies, and so on and so on and so on, who produce a process which at best is fragmented, plural and bargaining.

The public in this case has a number of ways of acting, typically. First of all, they are public works. The public may build infrastructure and buildings at will. It can do so in an uncontested manner. He doesn't have to deal with the market.

In some societies, as in great-- well, not in Great Britain. In some societies, or certainly in Soviet Russia, all land was belonged to the state and private ownership of land only became a slower-- I think it's now about 50% of total urban land.

The public can engage with the private sector in many kinds of relationships. These relationships have modified and been exhausted almost in the range. They range from the classic Seagram Building in New York, which traded off, which the public ceded floor area ratio increases in return for setting back the building to provide public space.

There are many more current trade-off off situations. There are many in Boston. The one that I'm thinking of is the new hotel on the waterfront-- I forget its name-- which has a terrace which runs up against the public garden. The trade-off is that the city has allowed the hotel to use the terrace for the service of alcohol and so on, in return of which the private firm maintains the garden.

There's a lot of maintenance switches. If you look after my house while I'm going on holiday, I will pick up your mail when you come back. This really operates more extensively on a smaller scale as do most urban design decisions in current urbanism.

The third thing that the public sector can do is create the incentives. The building of most of downtown office building in Boston was created by 121(d) legislation, which gave tax breaks for the building of new office buildings.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

JULIAN BEINART: No, no, no. There was no building of a new office building in Boston during the '50s and '60s, and this comes late John Hancock building. The first John Hancock building probably dates from about 1960 or so. They are older buildings, but the spate of new office development was promoted largely by this public sector deciding that one of the ways to incentivize private market activity was to use the tax system.

The public sector has enormous power in playing around with the tax system, because it's a negative system of cost. You lose what-- I don't want to go into the economic detail. It's complicated. And there are a lot of theories about whether it's good or bad. But this is just an example of where it was used to build a skyline for a city which had no particular attraction to office development.

At times, the city-- and I'm using Boston, because there are a lot of local examples, rather than San Francisco, which is used the trade-off of public-private relationships quite remarkably in rebuilding the waterfront. And there's a building on the river which houses factories for making pillows. It's between-- I don't know what the bridge is called, and the other bridge. It's where you come off the freeway. It's next to where Harvard's Business School starts. You know the building. It looks like I don't know what. I mean I can't describe it.

You could say that this could be the argument. The public sector says, we cannot afford to lose jobs. These properties are within the municipality of Boston, not of Cambridge. It pays us to yield a site to a corporation, a site which it prefers because of the publicity that it gets, in order to stop it from leaving Boston and going to another city, where it may equally prosper or prosper even more.

So if the policy is that the river is a sacrosanct public entity which provides enormous benefit to the city, hidden and real, it should not sacrifice its land on the river for purposes which are not closely associated with human activity. Not factories. You don't put factories on a modern river, but you put factories on a modern river in order to keep those jobs.

This is the kind of complicated way in which the city is made. I think it's a very silly, stupid decision of short term. There's no body authority which maintains the rights of the river. There are grassroot organizations which are friends of the river and try to protect the river from pollution, and so on. But the river is not taken up by the city and then used as a sacrosanct commodity, even economic commodity. It's willing to trade off all kinds of short-term benefits, keeping Biotene-- I don't know if it's Biotene. I don't know what the company is, the drug company that-- anyway, let's move on.

The public has two other propositions in its power. It can regulate activity. It can write bylaws. Those are both for protection and for the possibility of incremental change. For instance, it could tax land, which was-- at the moment, parking lots in the downtown are used as investment centers, waiting for the market to reach a point where you could capitalize on the land fully.

In Johannesburg, you tax the value of land at a higher rate than only land itself. You assume the potential of building as a function of the cost of the land, or the value of the land, not the cost of the land. And so the public here intervenes by making sure that land doesn't lie fallow for too long. So the public can speed up development or slow it down.

Kevin Lynch, in the *Place Utopia,* talks about different speeds of development. This would be one of the tools. An interesting thesis which looked at urban agriculture in Brooklyn argued that urban agriculture was one of the modalities of land use which could easily-- which was very flexible. It could either remain agriculture and produce goods, or it could give way to more dense development without having to replace buildings.

I want to go on. The last function that the public has in this game is education and marketing. In Italian towns in the early Renaissance, towns produced books which are called praise books, which set out to advertise their town. There's a nice little book written by an Italian woman on these books, and there's a parallel literature in Islam called the Fada'il books. I think there are three Fada'il books about Jerusalem, which set out systematically what the attractions are of the city. It's like "I Love New York" or a version of making the public possibility that the city has into a marketing device.

So the public has an enormous number of powers. And I'm assuming the society is a market society, as I'm assuming that most of the propositions which I'm going to be examining will be propositions in a democracy in which power will be distributed through systematically, and people will be able to take part in various processes to influence the way the public and the market act.

We'll examine this in the World Trade Center story. We'll look at what the New York Times, what role the New York Times played, what role CNN played. But we'll get to that in a minute. I'm not going to talk about the planning technology of decision making. It's arcane and complicated and doesn't deal with physical form. It idealizes certain techniques in decision making, and thank you very much. It's not of great interest to me.

What we've come to realize-- and I think Kevin Lynch put it well-- we have a city building process which is complex and plural, marked by conflict, cross purposes, bargaining, and whose outcome, while often inequitable or wanted, seems as uncontrollable as a glacier. He argues this contentious argument, a highly-decentralized decision process in which the immediate uses of a place make the decisions about its form is an accepted ideal, both because it reinforces the user's sense of competence, and because it is more likely to result in a well-fitted environment.

This is probably true of us from-- this probably true when the scale of the proposition is small and diminishes in utility as the proposition gets bigger. Who would you ask to make a decision, to influence a decision on whether Route 495 should be widened? Do you do a poll? You can do a poll. What utility, what would you base your results on?

There are users who are not capable of taking part in the poll. There are users who are too young, and are only going to be of age once the proposition is completed. There are handicapped people, and so on, and so on. The utility of user participation in general, then, is spatially conditioned.

we have one street in Cambridge which needs repair, I think it would be a good idea to talk to the people who live on that street and ask them what needs, what priorities, what problems do they have? Are there too many dogs on the street? Are there too many holes which are not repaired on the street? It makes an assumption about the unique knowledge that people have about their own situation, which professionals don't have, only have to a limited extent. And so buying into this unique knowledge is an enormous asset.

I mentioned that in the New Towns Committee in London did a broadcast in 1946 asking people what a good size for a town would be. That is the sort of nonsense use of participation. But active participation on a small scale has become almost professionally mandated in the change of an American city. Some people would argue that it frustrates development. I think development has built itself into a position to take account of it. The fees for user participation in the big-dig project equal the fees for urban design.

So the shape of the road, which is largely mandated by engineering concerns, you can't say it should be painted red, or green, or yellow, the real crude rules, about which you will understand, about maintaining the perceptual quality of automobiles at 50 miles per hour. But the right to terminate, to exit the expressway into Watertown-- or, no, it doesn't go into Watertown-- into Chelsea requires, probably, a bargaining arrangement whereby Chelsea is given a new library by the federal funds that come in to pay for the project in order to buy the right for the road to connect at that point.

So public participation, which we'll see a number of examples of in the slides I will show you, probably as a summary, is a fundamental aspect of democracy. It requires an educated-- not educated, but transparent-- population. People are educated in different ways. Formal education doesn't necessarily mean that you're sensitive to your own environment.

You're probably so overlaid by questions as to how much your property is worth, and whether if a Black person buys a property on the same street, your property is going to be devalued. These are important questions. The major model by which urbanism is being transacted and taught has been that the great improvements in cities have come about when great, powerful figures, super figures are in control.

Robert Moses is a great American example. In over 40 years, he built $28 billion worth of projects, the largest city builder in America's history. I handed out to you a couple of things. The first pages are some notes I made from *Ramparts* in March, 1975, when Robert Caro's book on Moses was just published. *Ramparts* was a left-wing, radical journal, and it asked these six people, those names on the left, what they thought about, what they thought the problem with Moses was. And I tried to list them in my own handwriting, what I think.

One of the interesting ones is the last one. The second-last man, Temco, says that Moses didn't understand architecture, therefore he made bad decisions. Berman follows up by saying, Moses actually did understand architecture. Look at Sigfried Giedion's book *Space, Time, and Architecture.* The flyleaf has one of Moses's elevated highway intersections on its cover.

Gideon talks about the similarities between Baroque form and highway curvatures. He talks about the great Borromini building in Rome, the two churches, which is not [ITALIAN], the other one. It's near the pantheon. Forgive me, I can't remember. My memory is gone.

Gideon makes a claim that we should, you can well understand Moses's reaction to that claim, that he was actually doing things which were being appreciated by one of the great philosophers of modern architecture. But these are tendentious comments. Let's look at Moses's record.

The argument is that a good city is a city of grand design, large public works. It's important to have a large figure who can superintend over all the bureaucratic complexities and barriers of city form. Moses, the masses are incapable or unwilling to act. If allowed to intervene, no single product could ever be delivered. You cannot have the changes you need in cities without conflict, hurting some people. Moses is quoted as saying "you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs."

But Moses moved over 100,000 people out of their houses in East Tremont, in the East Tremont. 500,000 people were displaced. This was a neighborhood of Blacks, Irish, and Jews. He wished to build the Cross Bronx Expressway. He used a private company to relocate people. The company had four offices far away from the neighborhood, and never had regular hours. When an available new apartment was to be looked at, there were four floors of people already on the staircase. Comparable price was never achieved. Demolition, even when people didn't wish to move out, demolition started, and subsequent vandalism was used to increase the working, the moving out, the speed by which people moved out.

This is the sordid side of the grand master. Moses had charisma. The book starts with him at Yale as a brilliant student, ideal, wanting to dedicate his life to public service, to helping the lower classes. But he was strong. He was a very good swimmer. But he was a nasty man. In the book, he doesn't help his brother who needs help. All of these things paint a picture of a flawed master, a kind of a Beethoven who, if you look too carefully, doesn't ever wash his clothes.

One of the interesting things about Moses was not only the scope of his work. He built 600 miles of highway. He built the Verrazzano Bridge. He built a number of bridges. He built a number of centers in Manhattan, the United Nations, the Colosseum, Lincoln Center, all the products of his reign.

He was, for reasons which I don't quite understand, convinced that automobile transportation was inexorably the solution to the American city. For instance, the Long Island Expressway cost $500 million, or $500 billion. $500 million, I think, $500 million at the time. He could have added 4 feet for mass transit. This would have cost 20% more. He didn't. Or he could have purchased land and kept it in escrow for further transit for something like $20 million more, but he didn't. How did he achieve this power in a democracy, is perhaps one of the more interesting things. How do you achieve such power?

AUDIENCE: How do you achieve such power in a city that portrays itself to be very sophisticated?

JULIAN BEINART: Well, it is sophisticated in many respects. There's some of the most wonderful restaurants in the world, and great opera companies, and so on. Now, I think the interesting thing that one learns from looking at this case carefully is that he used the public authority system to build power. Moses was never elected to office in the 40 years.

At his peak, he wasn't challenged seriously by any governor of the New York State*New York Times* in its private memorandum claims that he could not be criticized in the newspaper without special documentation. But he gained his power from taking over and gaining power in the public authority, which possesses not only the powers of a large corporation, but some of the powers of a sovereign state. It has the power of eminent domain that permits the seizure of private property, and the power to establish and reinforce rules and regulations.

The public authority has two other vital characteristics. It's controlled by a board of directors, which can be as small as one member, and they can issue bonds. Haussmann understood this. Haussmann used his understanding of physical economics in order to transform Paris.

In 1960, he was the sole member of the Henry Hudson Parkway Authority, one of three members of the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority, Commissioner of the New York City Parks Department, City Construction Coordinator, a member of the City Planning Commission, Chairman of the Mayor's Slum Clearance Committee, Head of the City Office of Civil Defense, a member of the New York City Youth Board, President of Long Island State-- oh, god, it just goes on-- president of the Jones Beach State Parkway Authority, the Long Island Parkway Authority, chairman of the New York State Tunnel Authority.

Having power in so many domains, which allows you to reticulate decisions which individual entities can't assume. If I'm on one board, and I want a highway to move through a park, I can use the connected power system, or the contiguous power system. He also used, he also had a great-- with power comes the capacity in this country, and probably anywhere in the world, to assume wealth. He got big gifts from the Rockefellers for the building of the United Nations property, and so on, and so on.

The question is, what kind of city did he leave New York in, and would we have been worse off, had there been no figure like Moses? In our field, we should be able to answer these questions. But there's so many variables. Nobody probably will ever be able to assume the power through the public corporation system as Moses did.

We have a completely different set of environmental issues. We have all kinds of different public groups, issues of youth, issues of gender, issues of race, all trends in the importance of a super figure right now. Look at what Mayor Bloomberg is spending his time doing. There's no Federal Highway construction program. So he's not building any highways, at lease none that I'm-- Manhattan, it's impossible to move through Manhattan, because they're building subway-- renewing the gas system and building the Second Avenue Subway.

So when, in the history of a town, do you need somebody who can assume total power? Who'd be able to answer this question? In a democracy, you do so when the society is threatened absolutely. Remember Foucault's rules for what happened when the plague occurred?

One of the problems of the project of environmentalism is that the actual symbols of environmental degradation are not impacting people sufficiently, not in this country, not in New York. And in a democracy, people will tend to be lazy about a great deal of things which they will suspend until some-- Hurricane Sandy hasn't probably caused much of a change in maintaining flood control land, and probably will never result in major infrastructural changes.

It means that the only way that you're going to be able to get all of this done is probably through waiting for an emergency situation, when the cost of repairing the conditions are 5,000 times higher. It's a bleak prospect. It's easy enough to criticize Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs, as legions of liberals have done, but it's worth speculating about the state of our business in a democracy.

What do you think? Have you thought about Robert Moses ever? Well, what did you think of him? You must have some thoughts. You must know something about the man. You have the greatest urban builder in this country's history, not a trivial figure. Are we likely to have people like that again?

AUDIENCE: Even if we put more mechanisms and checks and balances, the reality is that there are people have the capability of achieving a lot of power and influence and just drive context.

JULIAN BEINART: Yeah.

AUDIENCE: And in fact, oftentimes, the population in different places and different cultures do like that, whether if it's proper or not. So there is a part of the population that actually is pleased with the notion of somebody taking charge.

JULIAN BEINART: Sure. We are all lazy.

AUDIENCE: Yeah. We're all lazy.

JULIAN BEINART: And to the extent that I can trade off my concerns about my health to my doctor, who, if he's kind, he behaves like a psychoanalyst and relieves me of worry, I will do nothing about eating my pills at the right time, because he-- I've found that going to see a doctor and saying that I train at a health club twice a week immediately makes me feel-- makes them feel good about me. Anyway, that's a bit of an aside.

The interesting thing is not to, I think, focus on these extremes, to imagine cities as building themselves over a long period of time and being much more engaged in the proper process by which things happen. You know, Moses's work is monumental. So is Napoleon's for the Champs-Élysées and Haussmann for the Boulevard de l'Opéra in Paris.

Over a period of time, another generation has grown up. Monuments, when we deal with memory in monuments, one of-- I forget his name-- Robert Musil, the French critic, says monuments are amongst the most forgettable of items we produce. You drive through France, and you stop for coffee in the afternoon in a small town, and you're sitting in the square, and you look at the monument of a man on a bronze horse. He fought in the Battle of Algiers in god alone knows when. No small child in the town pays any notion to him except that there's a monument there.

So it is often with cities. We ingest the new very quickly. We assign it to a category of the past. Certain aspects of the past can create value by being so much of the past.

AUDIENCE: How much political process is there? How much are they momentarily lost in social memory? And people forget about the guy whose monument was dedicated to, but how much, in the end, those monuments become fixtures in the city and remain in time?

JULIAN BEINART: Yes. The one in the central square in this little French city that I'm talking about will never again much leverage in that town or anywhere. It's just a gift because this man was born there, and so on, and so on. Let's delay talking about memory seriously when we, in a few weeks' time, deal with Maurice Halbwachs' book *The Collective Memory* and the whole idea of monuments, and temporary monuments, and permanence, and temporariness, and so on.

Let's just talk briefly about the World Trade Center. There are a number of actors which started the game. There's the governor, Mr. Pataki, who controls the lease, the sea port authority they gave to Mr. Silverstein, the developer, whose towers were destroyed by some nasty airplanes. There's the mayor of the city. There are the victims' families.

See, if we put them on a diagram together, they all wish to interact in the creation of something which, both as utility, as real estate, but has nourishment for loss. It's a tough combination. The mayor and the governor get together and form a Lower Manhattan Development Corporation which has-- and it's another public corporation.

It seems to me that in New York particularly, things are so divided that public corporations for almost every single item can be created, and Moses took a lot of advantage of that. The first thing this the LMDC does is it hires a firm of planners and architects to make six different models of the site as what they call placeholders. This is just to describe to the world what you can build on the site.

The response to this is very negative. People say, this is completely classless. It's unemotional. It's got no guts. It doesn't mean anything. It's just a banal disposition of space. The LMDC, the *New York Times* attacks this procedure and publishes, you can see in the piece I gave you, a little extract from its publication, "Don't Rebuild, Reimagine."

It proposes a new high road on the West side which links down to Battery Park. It gets Zaha Hadid and Peter Eisenman to design funny-shaped housing on the road. It has Rafael Vinoly doing the new subway station. The LMDC have got to do something, so they decide to do something called an innovative design study. This is not a design competition. They're going to pay selected architects flat fee of $40,000 each.

The seven teams that take place each paid about $500,000 out of their own pockets, just to take part. There were very few limitations or rules set up for the computation. On December the 18th, 2002, the seven teams were asked to make a public presentation broadcast live on television, as well as set up an exhibition at the World Financial Center Winter Garden. The exhibit was up for a month and drew 100,000 spectators.

CNN, the *New York Post* did polls showing a strong preference for Lord Foster, Libeskind, and the Think Team's projects. So much for public participation. I haven't got time to go into the three projects. Foster proposed two enormously tall towers linked together. They were called the Kissing Towers project, really quite a silly project, because when you build so much square feet, you need to build separately. If you build two towers with this massive square footage, the chances of you selling enough square footage at a fast enough rate to fill the whole building would be very difficult. So buildings are generally targeted in size, and this is 776 feet high.

Anyway, the Think Team's group proposed a megastructure. Their scheme was called not the kissing towers, but the cultural center. It would be the tallest building in the world, of course. There would be a great hall 30 stories above the ground level covering 13 acres of open space. A stainless steel system would hold these towers up in place. There was a certain transparency. They claimed that the scheme resembled the Eiffel Tower, which is very difficult to understand.

Then there was Daniel Libeskind, a Polish born Jew whose parents died in the Holocaust. He made his presentation at the Winter Garden by relating his vision of the Statue of Liberty when he immigrated to New York. Norman Foster used a video of a little girl in a red dress as an important part of his presentation. All of this has been written about. There are books about this story, all about the kind of commodification of the six weeks after the Winter Garden.

Two were chosen, Libeskind and Think. The final committee preferred the Think scheme. The New York Times preferred the Think scheme. And Rafael Vinoly, the head of the team, went to bed on the Thursday night assuming that him project had won. He got a phone call at breakfast the next morning to say that the governor had preferred Libeskind's scheme, and the governor had greater power than the mayor, and so Libeskind was chosen.

Before the catastrophe, Silverstein, the real estate developer, had already hired SOM to build a new building for him. SOM coyly didn't take part in the competition. He emerged politically as the great force, David Childs of the SOM produced what he called the Freedom Tower. They asked that Libeskind was given 49% of the commission, they pushed him out. And we now have the 1,776-foot high Freedom Tower as a result of this complex interrelationship between the media.

The mourning relatives got the result of a competition of a memorial space. Calatrava was chosen to do the train station, and that's where it stands at the moment. What's it going to matter in 25 years time? Nobody will know this story. We are only rehearsing this story to put you in a position of being critical of ways in which it could be done better.

This is a completely bungled, amateurish kind of claptrap operation, the problem of choosing major monuments. The Eiffel Tower occurred through the genius of an undistinguished French structural engineer. The Ferris wheel came from an undistinguished betting computation. No, the Eiffel Tower wasn't a competition, sorry. The Ferris wheel for Chicago.

The Statue of Liberty was a donation by the French government to America, not even an American product. And every baseball game starts with the singing of the National Anthem, god alone knows why. And the foreign-born Statue of Liberty is still the single evidence of American democracy in physical form. Where does it leave us theorists?

You work on the stochastic opportunity that competitions have, that a young Asian immigrant to the United States will come up with a brilliant solution to the Vietnam War competition, putting the names of all the people who died on the facade so that generations of children will be able to recognize their family name against the simple embodiment of a single monument. Maybe that's what the human species is all about, all we can do. I don't know.

I'm not empowered by the story that I've just told you. It seems to me to have all kinds of-- I don't know if Robert Moses would have done better, had he been in power. After all, perhaps the form doesn't matter that much.

I keep on remembering what Khrushchev said, looking back on Stalin's attempt to build the Lomonosov well, not attempt-- he's building the Lomonosov University decorated to hell and looking like a large cathedral set of buildings, and so on, filled with decorative systems. Khrushchev said, if we'd have built simple buildings, we could have employed, we could have housed 300,000 more students. Let's forget about all of this monumental nonsense.

I'm asking questions which are very difficult to answer. I'm sorry. That's not what I'm here for. I'm supposed to tell you what to do. All I can point out is that society doesn't know what it wants to do. And maybe in a democracy, that's all that matters, that you're always alive to opportunities, and you do the best you can. And if you believe in perfection, stop being a member of society. Become a hermit.

But the failures of democracy are only tolerable if they are temporary, I suppose. The arguments about gun control in this country are insane. The evidence is violently against it. 90% of the population wants some background checks on guns. At the same time, we're going to probably move towards national legislation in favor of same-sex marriages, which 25 years ago in this democracy would have sounded insane. So I'm arguing that there may be some relief for us in assuming that we are only elements in the democratic system. And provided we maintain the democratic system, we can use our imagination as best we can to fulfill our obligations of giving form to societal needs.

I'm just going to mention very briefly, because we've got to look at pictures, another way of dealing in a Democratic society is redressing social imbalances. That's what's commonly known as-- what's the term now? Anyway, it argues that in a democratic society, groups have equal access, don't have equal access to support systems.

So the case where this form of planning really originally starts in [? Lupo's ?] book, very good book, the story is very well-explained. The highway system 495, 128, a proposition exists for building an inner-belt highway through Cambridge to make linkages of all kinds towards the main roads, expressways towards the west and the south, and the north, of course.

The question of where this inner belt should run is at issue. One of the candidates is the rail line just running next to MIT. MIT objects. It makes a foolish decision to hire an Irish lawyer, who in court, in the hearing says that MIT cannot stand having automobiles so close, because it's got its sensitive laboratories, the magnet laboratory which is helping our troops in Vietnam, when MIT has claimed that it has nothing to do with the Vietnam War at all. So MIT is embarrassed publicly and loses.

One of our colleagues here, Bob Goodman, on the faculty, goes out and forms a group, takes a bunch of professionals with him, and they form a group-- advocacy planning is the term I was looking for-- advocating the rights of the people in Cambridge Port who don't want the highway at all. Finally, they win, and there's no highway built, and Cambridge is a different city altogether than what would have been with a tunnel-- not a tunnel-- cutting the Earth, running through either next to MIT or-- so what has taken place?

A professional has given support to a group who don't normally have professional support in a situation of public contention. The other group deals with the education of people. There's a whole variety of types. There's political education, the project of Giancarlo de Carlo for steelworkers in Terni in Southern-- not Southern Italy, Middle Italy-- where he's asked to design workers' housing.

He has these public meetings and designs certain types of housing. When the people complain that he's giving them too much space, he says, you're stupid. You should argue for more space. If you're wealthy, all of you don't have to get up at the same time to use the bathroom. You need two bathrooms per family if you're poor. He goes on and on, and the people take this up. He designs this situation and gets away with it.

There's information giving, telling people about the city. A good city is one in which people are well-informed. Patrick Geddes' Outlook Tower, the IBA in Berlin, Media City, city of benign consumerism, Signs and Lights project, Yellow Pages, opening up the city's resources. The visible city is the idea the city is a schoolroom. Let's look at some of these.

This is a project in Terni. I'm just going to run through these early ones. The project in Terni, the housing which was built. You can argue against the use of concrete in this form, fixed, when an environment of greater flexibility. These are some other examples of small town. This is in York, Pennsylvania, the redevelopment of, the renewal of a rundown town square, people being shown drawings and asked to learn about the place and give their opinion next.

Bologna, Red Bologna, suburban housing and the redevelopment of parts of the center of the city. Next. The redevelopment proposals forced by people argue for maintaining the facade, existing facade of the buildings, the housing, but putting it into a new typology of larger space behind. So you get this idea of almost the exact counterpart of this original street, but in depth increased. Next.

Pittsburgh, an attempt to build a model of the neighborhood that's going to be renewed in an attempt to actually have people participate spatially and physically in the space. Next. This is an Italian hill town in the Abruzzo.

This is an architect, Belgian architect by the name of Kroll, building for Leuven University, in which he imitates the individual anarchy of each builder of the house in the left in an attempt to choose a system of formal randomness to give his facade a particular quality. This is a student dormitory like any student dormitory in the world. That's a town that's built up by a process of adjustment and change over time. Next.

Robert Moses and three presidents. Major figures are always large, and they're always photographed to make them seem larger. I wonder who's a small dictator. Next.

These are from Caro's book. This is a proposition showing a dotted line for the Long Island Expressway. And the actual route that's chosen is contoured by it missing all of the property, almost all of the property in large holdings by wealthy people. Next.

I haven't got time to go into detail. That's Moses's proposal to build a bridge, and his depiction of the bridge in public in the upper two diagrams, where the lower diagram, in fact, shows its impact on the city more dramatically. Next.

This is an MIT-- we're talking about education now-- this isn't an MIT project called Signs and Lights which says one of the things we can do is create much more intelligence in the built formal environment. The project on the right argues for the coloring of the road surface to provide, to indicate that you can travel at different speeds. Next.

A project in Genoa, in Italy, in which a neighborhood is cleared, and only the fossils, the essential elements of the neighborhood are maintained, giving the people an understanding of what they've got to work with. On the basis of their understanding, they precipitate reactions, create changes, produce changes, which are on the right. Next.

Cedric Price's work in England, the idea of building places where people can-- this is prior to social media. This is actually making places in the city-- the one on the right is called the Fun Palace, and the one on the left is called the Interaction Center-- where people randomly could meet each other and partake of joyous activity. Next.

This is a Bedford Stuyvesant New York project, a Ford Foundation study, which is interesting. The project is to insert a new community college in a very poor area, and instead of building a new campus with glass buildings, the form of the building, the inserted buildings, are within the existing framework of the town. All the facilities that are built for the community college are shared by the community. In fact, the curriculum for the community college is set by the needs of the community. The sports facilities up on the top on the left are all partly for the community, partly for the students. Next.

The park in Philadelphia on the left. The city, the school without walls. The city has got enough input, education input in it to serve as a school. Next.

Metro Education Project in Montreal, which argues that you can stop building schools and utilize meetings and connections with people in the city itself. For instance, up there is a meeting with a professor who is a big businessman. And so the subway system becomes a method of utilizing all of the available space which can serve dual mode uses. Next.

Oh, well, you can leave MIT. The extraordinary thing is that this was 20 years ago, probably. I'm trying to read what it says at the top. To leave the white walls gray or paint them white is vandalism. Your environment is changing. Get yourself, get together with it. No one knows better how to create your environment than you do. Does your environment respond to your needs? What a statement of anarchy invitation. This is one of the posters which I photographed at the time.

Next. "Up against the *Wall Street Journal,*" an urban imperialist. This is a time when the form of the city was politically significant to the students in the two universities. Next.

Herrey was MIT's real estate boss. Next.

The university's response, the University and the City, Harvard's University and the City. These are all University reports saying how great things are. Next.

There's a thesis done by Monika Unger called "The Politics of Urbanity" on the history of the attempts in Brussels, after the Manhattan plan, to respond vigorously to the plan. The plan was to internationalize Brussels, with tall buildings, as the center of the European market. And here are posters emanating from the society itself saying no to Carrere, no to Venturi, no to Chernikhov, no to Kroll. Next.

Posters which set out the way in which local neighborhoods should be fixed. A whole set of items like this monthly magazine for the urban struggles, information about the development projects at Brussels, the work of inhabitants' committees, theaters, schools of architecture, cinema, arts museums, all being formed together to form a protest environment with educational material in the form of daily posters on the left. Next.

So all of this stuff is an attempt to influence the form of the city, often stopping negative things from happening.