# The Punto Urban Art Museum in Salem, Massachusetts: A Case for Shared Authority

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**Abstract**

How can art and creative placemaking practice towards social justice? Based in the Point neighborhood of Salem, Massachusetts, North Shore Community Development Coalition's (North Shore CDC) Punto Urban Art Museum (PUAM) is a "social justice art program" that aims to break down socio-economic divides between the Point, a historically immigrant neighborhood, and the rest of Salem, by beautifying the public realm with over 100 murals painted on or adjacent to affordable housing. Responding to a practical problem of low resident engagement in PUAM, however, this thesis proposes *shared authority* to operationalize two dimensions of social justice: material distribution and cultural recognition. Shared authority involves elevating diverse knowledge, perspectives, and lived experiences into the programs, interventions and narratives that create public culture. As engaged scholars with North Shore CDC, we thus ask: *How have PUAM programs shared authority with Point residents?*

This thesis defends shared authority as social justice practice by tracing theory on social justice, art and placemaking, cultural tourism, museum education, and CDCs. Through interviews with program staff and stakeholders, historical research, and a review of public media, we find evidence of the presence and absence of shared authority in PUAM's history. We discuss how shared authority may contest cultural misrecognition and practice towards social justice by allowing positive self-definitions of difference; and explain how a focus on outside recognition may have precluded a more robust shared authority approach. In a moment of PUAM's future planning, and as cities leverage creative placemaking for economic growth and for social change, understanding these promises and pitfalls of creative placemaking is useful knowledge for orienting this practice towards social justice. We conclude with questions and proposals for how PUAM or other creative placemaking programs can share authority in their work.

To celebrate other ways of learning and knowing, and to acknowledge our engaged scholarship approach, we ground our theory with visual storytelling. We use art to communicate theory in an accessible and memorable way, to bridge ideas from literature to conversations and decision-making on the ground.

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**A Note on Crisis**

Beginning in March of 2020, the spread of the coronavirus and COVID-19, the disease that it causes, have drastically disrupted the patterns and quality of life across the globe. With respect to this thesis, social distancing measures have both curtailed our field methods and planned interactions with Point residents. These measures and the uncertainties of our health and safety have additionally strained and distanced our collaboration, and diverted our time to address urgent concerns of personal and collective health, safety, and economic security. But above all, this has been a moment of great uncertainty and challenge for our collaborators at North Shore CDC, and for the residents of the Point Neighborhood. As we write, small business owners in the Point and across the globe are facing closures and reduced revenues. Others are losing their jobs and livelihoods due to shuttered stores, or risking their lives daily to keep our society fed, safe, and cared for amidst the pandemic.

Therefore, writing and creating at this time, particularly within the sheltered purview of academia, has felt like a privileged indulgence. Meanwhile the analysis and recommendations we arrived at feel distant from the urgency of the pandemic, and from impending changes in our world order. While there is no telling what the outcomes of the crisis will bring, nor the ways that the arts, community development, and the Point neighborhood will change and adapt, we must uplift the incredible efforts and solidarity on behalf of North Shore CDC and residents of the Point as they weather this crisis in community. Altogether, these acts have modeled the everyday solidarity and acts of citizenship that we hope will carry forward as we collectively rebuild.

**Acknowledgements**

There is no part of this thesis that could have been written or inspired without the whole-hearted support and passion of the staff of North Shore Community Development Coalition (North Shore CDC). Ever since we began our collaboration with North Shore CDC in the Fall of 2019, we have been inspired and motivated by the hard work and commitment of the staff to serve and advocate for North Shore communities, and to provide opportunities for arts and culture to flourish in Salem's Point neighborhood.

In particular, we would like to thank Shantel Alix, David Valecillos, Yinette Guzman, and Yuko Okabe, from North Shore CDC's community engagement and PUAM Design teams. The spirited conversations and insightful moments we have shared with you all during that Fall laid the cornerstone of our interest in understanding PUAM, and in contributing our research and perspectives in thinking through the program's challenges and opportunities. The coordination support, ideas, and endless passion that we received from all of you into the Spring paved the way for our project, and for that we are endlessly grateful. We would additionally like to thank the leadership of Mickey Northcutt and Leonette Strout of North Shore CDC, for connecting with us throughout our project, and for creating a space for our voice and ideas to land within your organization.

We are also thankful for our talented professors, who have guided this project from its infancy to its completion with such care and attention. To our advisor, Professor Karilyn Crockett at MIT DUSP, thank you for your zeal and sharp eye for keeping our project, and our collaboration, on track. Thank you for helping us "undead" the past as we plan for the future, and to complicate the stories we tell ourselves as we seek to understand our cities and each other. To our reader, Avi Chomsky of Salem State University, we owe our global understanding of Salem, the Point, and dimensions of social justice. We are so grateful for the kindness of her time and expertise in supporting this thesis.

Many thanks to Lily Song of the Harvard Graduate School of Design, who so graciously led the class that introduced us to North Shore CDC and the Point. We also extend our thanks to Professor Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello, North Shore CDC board member and professor at Salem State University for her support of our research, as well as for the deep knowledge and scholarship that she has contributed to uplift the history of the Point neighborhood throughout her career. We are further grateful for the time and expertise that was imparted to us by the artists, practitioners, and community leaders that we spoke to and consulted along the way as we sought to understand, for ourselves, how culture and the arts may contribute to social change.

Finally, we are grateful to our families for lending us a car, enabling frequent trips to the Point for field research; for their willingness to engage in untethered conversations throughout our uncertainty as to what this thesis was all about, and for their unwavering emotional support in the form of encouraging texts, emails, phone calls, care packages, and coolers full of frozen homemade soups, granola, and individually wrapped slices of banana bread.

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## Introduction

As students and practitioners, much of our work has centered on leveraging arts and culture for social change within the field of planning and community development. Through our backgrounds in museum education, community engagement, architecture, and illustration, we both entered this pursuit with our lived experiences witnessing the power of creative and cultural practices to connect communities, and to imagine alternative futures and actions that have the potential to challenge dominant or oppressive ideas that structure our institutions and social norms.

In the Fall of 2019, we were introduced as student collaborators to North Shore Community Development Coalition's (North Shore CDC) Punto Urban Art Museum (PUAM) in Salem, Massachusetts, "a social justice arts program" based in the city's Point neighborhood. A small neighborhood of approximately 4300 residents, the Point is a historically immigrant neighborhood that is home to a predominantly Dominican and Puerto Rican community that has been marginalized in the city's public culture and institutions, as well as stigmatized by Salem's tourists and residents. In response to these exclusions, PUAM aspires to break down what the community has noted as an invisible stigma and socio-economic divide between the Point neighborhood and the rest of Salem. Through public realm beautification, PUAM aims to access Salem's tourist economy, build pride in Point residents, and raise public consciousness about structural inequities and empathy around the immigrant experience. PUAM includes a collection of over 100 murals painted adjacent to or on the walls of North Shore CDC's affordable housing buildings, and provides arts-based programming, such as a neighborhood block party, and neighborhood artwork tours for visitors and schools. PUAM's large-scale murals were painted between 1997 and 2020, by local, national, and international artists, of which North Shore CDC and PUAM administrators select to be largely of Hispanic origin.

Figure 1.1: Murals of PUAM. Source (all): PuntoUrbanArtMuseum.org.

Figure 1.2: Map of the Point and Downtown Salem with mural locations. Graphic by Agustín Cepeda.

We were inspired by PUAM as a case of creative placemaking that brings public realm improvements while mitigating resident displacement through North Shore CDC's affordable housing. Creative placemaking, or the use of arts and culture by different stakeholders in order to shape the physical and social character of a place, has been documented to lead to displacement as public realm improvements lead to rising real estate values (Markusen and Gadwa, 2010; Gadwa Nicodemus, 2013; Bedoya, 2014; Zitcer, 2018; Feldman, 2011; Zukin, 2009). But even though PUAM is exempt from this classic pitfall of creative placemaking, North Shore CDC shared with us a different, practical problem they faced: that they had trouble engaging with residents in some of PUAM's programming. Following a power mapping exercise we conducted with staff, and conversations about North Shore CDC's motivations to conduct an evaluation of PUAM's impact on residents, we encountered more fundamental issues of power and voice that PUAM grappled with in its creative interventions, and began to ask our own questions. Who claims the story of the Point - through art, or through narrative tours, to shape the culture and knowledge about the neighborhood - and for whom is it shaped? How has the CDC steered the

program in collaboration with residents? And what are the implications of low engagement, given PUAM’s goal of advancing social justice?

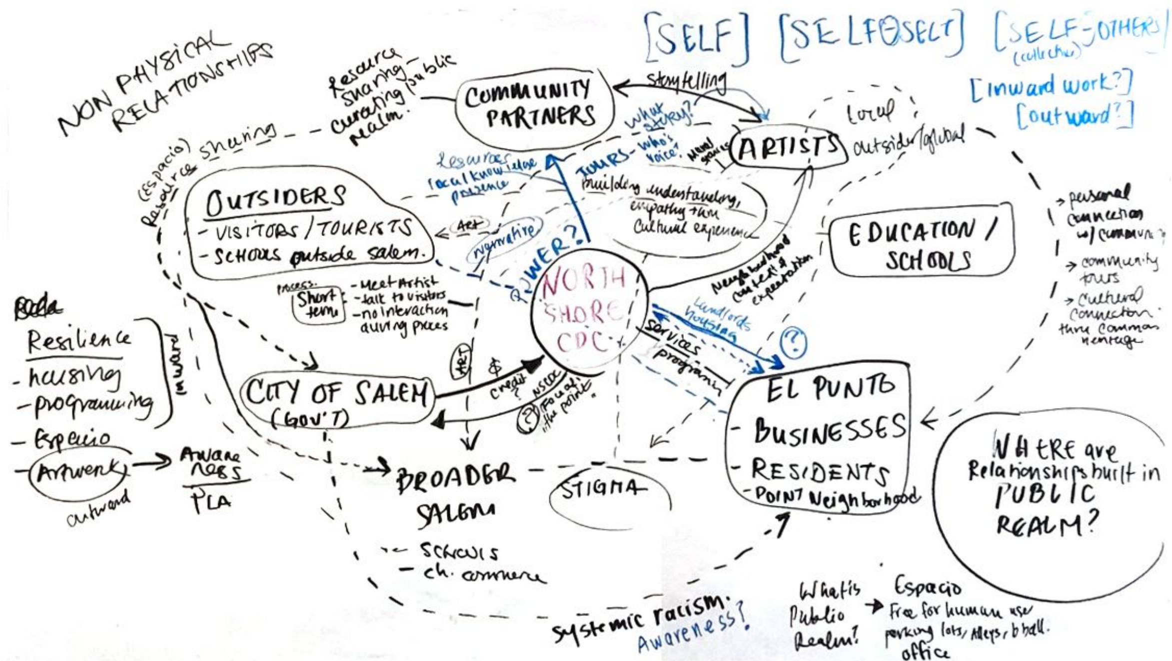



Figure 1.3: Power mapping exercise facilitated by the authors with North Shore CDC in October 2019. Photo by Julia Curbera.

Motivated to better understand these challenges in both practice and theory, this thesis proposes *shared authority* to operationalize two dimensions of social justice: material distribution and cultural recognition (Fraser, 1999). A term hailing from the discipline of history and more recently adopted as an approach to socially engaged museum education practice, shared authority involves elevating diverse knowledge, perspectives, and lived experiences into the programs, interventions and narratives that create public history and public culture (Duclos-Orsello, 2013; Frisch, 1990). We defend shared authority as a key component of social justice practice in creative placemaking in this thesis, itself a piece of engaged scholarship in collaboration with North Shore CDC, in order to ask: *How have PUAM programs shared authority with Point residents - and what are the implications of a lack of shared authority?*

Our answer to this question and defense of shared authority as social justice practice is presented in five distinct chapters, each combining theory, literature review, historical research, and details from interviews with North Shore CDC staff, board members, and PUAM's artists and other stakeholders. Consistent with our engaged scholarship approach, and to celebrate other ways of learning and knowing, we additionally use visual storytelling to ground and expand access to our theoretical arguments. Taking inspiration from PUAM to use art as a bridge, we aim to communicate theory in an accessible and memorable way, to connect ideas from literature with conversations and decision-making on the ground.

As such, this thesis first defends shared authority as a key component of social justice practice, framing social justice as both an issue of material distribution and of cultural recognition (Fraser, 1999; Young, 1989 2011). Through this understanding, we argue that asserting cultural difference is integral to social justice, essential to both distributional justice in accounting for the interaction of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and other non-class identities with political and economic marginalization, and to recognitional justice, to contest stigma and elevate positive self definitions of difference. We then introduce shared authority as an incrementalist approach to practicing social justice through the democratizing of power and authority over cultural production and processes of social change. We follow this theoretical exploration with a chapter reviewing historical causes for distributional and recognitional justice in the Point neighborhood, which PUAM and North Shore CDC respond to in their missions.

From this background and theoretical grounding, we contextualize the role of various actors and neighborhood organizations in the Point, and of North Shore CDC in particular, in working towards social justice, primarily along the lines of redistribution through its housing and economic development activities. We do this by engaging with literature on the practice of community development corporations (CDCs) more broadly in the United States, as North Shore CDC is a case of, to demonstrate both the limitations and opportunities for CDCs to share authority with residents and other neighborhood organizations to work towards social justice.

We then turn to creative placemaking, as PUAM itself is a case of, and defend the importance of shared authority with communities in working towards redistributional and recognitional dimensions of social justice (Bedoya, 2014; Baca, 2001). In our look into PUAM's original murals painted between 1997 and 1999, we assert that the sharing of authority between multiple organizations and neighborhood residents in these mural processes allowed for unique creative capabilities and engagement capacities that the CDC alone lacked, while sharing authority with youth residents of the Point to advance recognitional justice.

Finally, we introduce PUAM in its most recent iteration, which we observe has practiced many instances of shared authority with residents in collaborations between local and global artists during mural interventions and events. At the same time, we introduce literature on creative placemaking and cultural tourism to contextualize a discussion about how the program's concurrent goals of attracting tourist spending and outside attention, may have precluded a more robust shared authority approach to its governance over mural interventions and tour programming, which we find may have resulted in an observed disconnect between residents and the program. To these findings, we offer that this has been a missed opportunity to address key concerns of building local power and a politics of difference that undergird the pursuit of recognitional justice.

By illustrating the promises of shared authority in creative placemaking and cultural tourism, as well as the pitfalls of running such programs without shared authority, we ultimately defend our claim that PUAM should seek to share more authority with residents, and with other local organizations in order to strengthen its social justice mission. In a moment of PUAM's future planning, and as cities leverage creative placemaking for economic growth and social change, understanding the promises and pitfalls of these practices, as well as the opportunities latent in shared authority work, is useful knowledge for orienting this practice towards social justice. We conclude this thesis with an elaboration of our findings in dialogue with PUAM's future plans as we understand them from North Shore CDC, and include a compilation of questions and

proposals to support PUAM or any creative placemaking program to share authority going forward.

## Methodology

*Approach*

We investigate our question and build our argument through a combination of literature review; theoretical investigation; field methods in the Point, including interviews and a survey; archival research on PUAM's longer history; as well as review of public media related to PUAM.

In our review of theory, we first review conceptions of social justice as grounded in a politics of redistribution and in a politics of cultural recognition in order to ground shared authority as a practical and analytical framework for social justice practice, in community development, creative placemaking and cultural tourism. We further review the historical background of the Point to contextualize the claims for social justice in the neighborhood. Finally, we review literature related to community development corporations, creative placemaking, and cultural heritage tourism to contextualize and analyze how sharing of authority is present or limited, both in PUAM and these fields at large.

Following shared authority as a normative framework for social justice practice, our field methods sought to identify different elements of PUAM's eclectic programming, including events, and local and large scale mural making, and how elements of shared authority over cultural programming or production have appeared across these individual programs. Given the emphasis on collaboration, identity, and power in our understanding of shared authority, we sought to understand the following components of PUAM's programming:

1. Actors: Who is implementing and steering PUAM's programming and projects? How does PUAM collaborate and/or share authority with residents, artists, and other organizations?
2. Local Identity: How does PUAM respond to, elevate, or interact with local culture, history, and identity?

3. Local Engagement: Are residents engaged in PUAM's programs? How, and when, are they engaged?

We conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with past and current North Shore CDC staff members, PUAM administrators, and board members who could elaborate on the details of PUAM's program management, history, and interactions with residents. While we determined the scope of our sample group at North Shore CDC, contact with these interviewees was mostly facilitated through our pre-existing relationships with staff at the organization. In understanding current program details, we also reviewed public media sources and documents related to PUAM.

We also engaged artists that have participated in PUAM through several interviews and an open ended survey distributed to artists listed on North Shore CDC's website via email, in order to better understand how artists have engaged with residents, or with the neighborhood's history and identity as part of PUAM. Artists selected for interviews were identified through our background research, or through our conversations with PUAM administrators, as artists who had undertaken significant community engagement efforts during their involvement in PUAM.

Finally, we importantly defend taking a historical view of PUAM's program, given that the PUAM of today includes a collection of murals, events, and experiences tracing back to three murals painted by an artist and local youth between 1997 and 1999 in the Point. Recently preserved and restored in 2015, the experiences of our collaborators at North Shore CDC who also claimed roots in the Point neighborhood highlighted the enduring significance of these murals and their representation of cultural heritage. Therefore, our methods further incorporated historical research, where we reviewed archival footage of local public television segments documenting the 1997 and 1999 murals' community process.

*Analysis*

Data collected from interviews and surveys was divided between ourselves, transcribed using voice transcription software, and loosely coded based on the six categories outlined above. Summaries and quotations from archival footage documents were also recorded and coded for these same themes. Internal North Shore CDC documents, as well as information gathered in our artist survey, was also reviewed and coded for specified categories. In understanding how different aspects of these vectors contribute to shared authority practices, we also sought to identify the following qualities of PUAM programs and practices that surfaced in our data:

Figure 2.1: Elements of shared authority.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Actors** | Residents? + CDC? + artists? + partner organizations? |
| **Goals** | Focus or dialogue with local identity, expression, stories, self-affirmations |
| **Local engagement** | Opportunities to steer or lead creative processes/interventions, program decisions |

*Ethics and Limitations*

Given our collaboration with North Shore CDC that inspired and facilitated this thesis, we note the embedded nature of this research, and the ways in which our approach and methodology has been shaped by local field conditions. Of particular note are the internal relationships within PUAM and North Shore CDC. To ensure ethical treatment and privacy of our interviewees at North Shore CDC, our analysis and discussion centers on discrete programmatic information and narratives directly related to PUAM and the neighborhood, while omitting personal and interpersonal comments made to us by staff in our interviews. Meanwhile, we acknowledge that our approach and understanding of PUAM and the Point neighborhood has been mediated through our involvement with North Shore CDC's staff and affiliates, many of whom are not from the neighborhood, and/or have a vested interest in PUAM's activities. As the onset of social distancing measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Spring of 2020 interrupted building

relationships with other field agents, this is a clear limitation of this study's understanding of shared authority in PUAM's practice.

Another limitation of this study is its lack of measurement and understanding of dollar investments into the Point neighborhood both resulting from PUAM, and those made independently, either through customer spending in small businesses, by North Shore CDC, or by the City of Salem. Our data from interviews with North Shore CDC staff does confirm, anecdotally, that such investments have been made, and this study is not a substitute for a more robust analysis of public and private neighborhood investment which could shed more light on elements of distributional justice as provided by PUAM.

Further, we note how prolific PUAM's murals and interventions have been, and acknowledge that our methodology has only allowed us to understand highlights or anecdotes from these interventions, as well as general trends or observations, which inform the conclusions that we ultimately draw.

Finally, the most important limitation of this study is its lack of access to more robust perspectives from residents, or a wide survey of local business owners, to understand how PUAM has contributed to social justice by creating opportunities for shared authority.. While understanding resident perspectives was central to the definition of our research problem and question, logistical and financial limitations to conducting research with residents caused our interviewing and surveying to focus on PUAM program details and practices as we were able to understand from North Shore CDC, artists, and the community leaders we could make contact with. What's more, the light engagement and field methods we had planned to conduct in order to glean insight into resident and business owner perspectives during the Spring of 2020 was interrupted by social distancing measures enacted during the COVID-19 pandemic. This analysis is therefore not a substitute for a more participatory investigation that seeks to understand resident perspectives on PUAM.

## Theory: Social Justice and Shared Authority

### *Redistribution, Recognition, and a Politics of Difference*

Given PUAM's explicit mission of advancing social justice through art and placemaking, we begin this investigation by grounding what social justice, and the role of culture within it in, means in theory.

The pursuit of social justice has been a theoretical and practical concern for planners and geographers responding to the inequalities that capitalist urban development has created in cities. Marxist geographers such as Lefebvre (1996) and Harvey (2012) and scholars in their tradition (Marcuse, 2009, Purcell, 2002) have defined this pursuit as claiming the "right to the city;" that is, the right to urban life for all to inhabit, create, and share space, and to claim a voice and representation in public life and institutions. Broadly, the call for social justice stems from the fact that these rights are unevenly distributed among geographies and populations by more powerful political and economic actors, leading to inequalities and threats to self-determination, along the lines of class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and other identity categories (Marcuse, 2009; Young, 2011).

Following Fraser (2003) and Sandercock (1999), however, we note a historical distinction made by leftist scholars and movements between material and cultural aims of social justice. Fraser (2003) in particular expounds on the historical tensions between redistributing power and economic resources - or *distributional justice* - and of achieving recognition of cultural difference - *recognitional justice* - as the aims of social justice. Social justice as distributional justice, Fraser notes, has focused on contestations of political and economic structures of capitalism that neglect equitable distribution of power and material resources among the poor and working classes.

While distributional justice, in its own right, is an imperative of social justice that addresses discrepancies in resource and power distribution, Fraser (2003) and Young (1989 2011) both insist on the concurrent importance of asserting the positive recognition of cultural difference as a part of recognitional justice. Independent from issues of maldistribution, misrecognition of cultural and group difference is itself a form of oppression, and as Young notes, might involve "exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, or violence" against members of a minority group. This make cultural recognition a site for justice to be claimed, as Fraser articulates:

> ...it is unjust that some individuals and groups are denied the status of full partners in social interaction simply as a consequence of institutionalized patterns of interpretation and evaluation in whose construction they have not equally participated and that disparage their distinctive characteristics or the distinctive characteristics assigned to them (2003: 29).

Advancing recognitional justice thus involves cultural or symbolic changes which "revalu[e] disrespected identities, valoriz[e] cultural diversity, [and transform] societal patterns of representation interpretation, and communication" (Fraser, 2003: 13) in order to allow the expression of difference by all as full participants in society on their own terms and free from discrimination or imposition of cultural norms by more powerful actors (Young, 1989).

What is more, recognition of cultural difference remains a necessary consideration in achieving distributional justice, given the interaction of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and other non-class identities with class oppression, and with political and economic marginalization (Fraser, 2003; Young, 1989). In the United States in particular, questions of class, labor and resource distribution remain historically informed by the racial hierarchies used to justify African slavery, territorial expropriation from Native Americans, and secondary, low-wage labor markets, together with racialized housing, economic, and wealth building policies, which laid the groundwork for the current racialized economy. As such, black Americans, as well as other racial and ethnic minorities, experience systematic class exploitation, and denial of economic advancement or material wellbeing (Fraser, 2003).

Given this interaction between identity and material wealth, we propose to discuss social justice along these dimensions of distributional and recognitional justice in order to adequately address the discrepancies in power that emerge from each. We note that this approach to social justice goes against the homogenizing universalisms of equal treatment in liberal democracy and the cultural uniformity of class collectivities in purely anti-capitalist projects of political and economic redistribution alike (Young, 1989). What we put forward instead is Young's concept of a *politics of difference* as an ideal for social justice. A politics of difference which both recognizes difference "more fluidly and relationally as the product of social processes" (Young, 2011: 157); equality as the "participation and inclusion of all groups [through]...different treatment for oppressed or disadvantaged groups" (Young, 2011: 158), and positive self definitions of difference as a key component of justice and liberation over assimilation.

*Shared Authority as Social Justice Practice*

While grounded in theory, the analysis of social justice in this thesis, however, centers upon practice - that is, North Shore CDC's work advancing social justice as redistribution and as recognition through PUAM and its housing and economic development investments. In the realm of practice, particularly that of planning and placemaking, social justice work often encounters the limitations of working within structures of the existing market economy (Fainstein, 2005). Given the engaged nature of this scholarship and its practical implications, we seek to operationalize social justice practice within the field of planning, and arrive at shared authority as an evaluative standard and incrementalist approach..

To begin, we note that incrementalism in planning and community development practice, embedded within existing capitalist structures, seeks larger social or political transformation yet falls short of more revolutionary contestation of these structures (Sandercock, 1999; Fainstein, 2005). Planning scholars such as Fainstein (2005) and Sandercock (1999), both put forward theoretical and practical frameworks for this incrementalist change that planners may enact.

Fainstein, in her concept of “non-reformist reforms,” and Sandercock, in her idea of “one thousand tiny empowerments,” encourage practices, programs, and actions that altogether do not enact sweeping, revolutionary change, but rather incrementally shift existing market or social forces towards more just arrangements, rather than affirming their logics.

In achieving these incremental changes, we emphasize, as Sandercock (1999) does, the importance of building community control and power in the interstices of political, economic, and cultural structures that are the root of distributional and recognitional injustice alike. As such, justice-oriented planning goes beyond market correction or inclusion, to build upon the inherent strengths, relationships, histories, and cultures present in a community in order to contest sources of injustice. To illustrate this, we look towards Mel King’s work in Boston’s South End in the 1970s and 80s. King’s long career has focused on building power across minority communities across a city with a stronghold of white power in both government and in its local economy. King has left a long legacy of advancing distributional justice through institution building and collaboration, by building multiracial and multiethnic coalitions to support diverse community development goals, such as providing food security to supporting minority and women owned business owners. (Sandercock, 1999; King, 1999).

Cultural practice more broadly can also be instrumental to these incremental reforms geared towards recognitional and distributional justice. As an ongoing process of meaning making through shared language, stories, imagery, and traditions, culture can reinforce the hold of oppressive systems (Sandercock, 2003; Jackson Lears, 1985); or work to change them through the envisioning of new ideas, social arrangements, and conceptions of the world that might make up a more just society (Freire, 1973; Jackson Lears, 1985; Glassman and Patton, 2014). Sandercock (1999) illustrates this potential through the work of the Municipal Department of Multicultural Affairs (AMKA) in Frankfurt, Germany, and its efforts to increase the visibility and the support available to the city’s growing immigrant community through cultural festivals, forums, media campaigns, increased public services, and improved representation in local government affairs. Over time, these cultural and state interventions facilitated the building of

networks and organizations among immigrant communities, and at the same time heightened the visibility of migrant groups in public culture and public life over time.

Learning from practitioners such as Mel King, as well as from Sandercock (1999) and Young (1989, 2011), we argue that what undergirds such a multicultural, power-conscious, and justice-oriented practice, is the sharing of authority over cultural and knowledge production; and over crafting solutions, programs, and interventions (de Sousa Santos, 2008; Freire, 1973; Sandercock, 1999). A concept originally developed by Michael Frisch in his writing on oral history, we introduce *shared authority* to describe work and partnerships where all parties hold valuable knowledge or lived experience in the making of public history, public culture, and in the crafting of solutions to structural injustices. Reminiscent of Young's politics of difference, shared authority work breaks down traditional notions of expertise, to instead honor and empower those on the margins as key leaders and contributors to social change, in partnership with other allies who bring unique capacities and resources. And once more invoking King, shared authority over justice-oriented planning and community development has empowerment and a politics of difference as its goal:

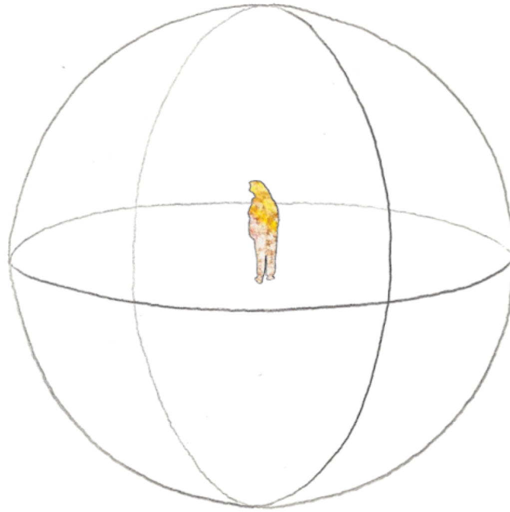
> ...a community becomes more developed as it becomes more diverse, incorporating more cultural and ethnic traditions, and developing the skills and confidence to solve their own problems (quoted in Sandercock, 1999: 131).

We propose to discuss social justice *practice* in creative placemaking and in cultural tourism, along these lines of shared authority, in order to put forward a conception of public culture and community development work as radically democratic processes of defining and claiming identity and building community power. In this sense, we further note an important difference between shared authority and *engagement*. The distinction we make as such stems from the importance of power and voice in shared authority work; that is, the ability to control or influence cultural systems, planning processes, or interventions. Meanwhile, *engagement* is characterized as an invitation to participate in an existing program or initiative. To respect marginalized groups' right to self-determination, they must be able to articulate for themselves

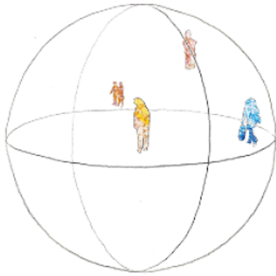
how their difference ought to be celebrated, and deconstruct for themselves the very terms that dominant systems use to stigmatize them. Engagement without shared authority risks arbitrating on the way marginalized groups celebrate their cultural difference or challenge the way they have been stigmatized.While engagement can serve as an onramp to shared authority work, it is not sufficient on its own to constitute shared authority in the absence of the ability to truly co-create and practice self-determination.

As a practical and an evaluative standard for organizations in power to engage in social justice work, we thus defend shared authority. However, we acknowledge that this thesis emphasizes analysis of recognitional justice over distributional justice. We both defend this as consistent with PUAM's mission, which heavily emphasizes notions of recognitional justice through creative interventions and education, but remain aware that our study has limited us from better understanding its distributional effects on the Point neighborhood.

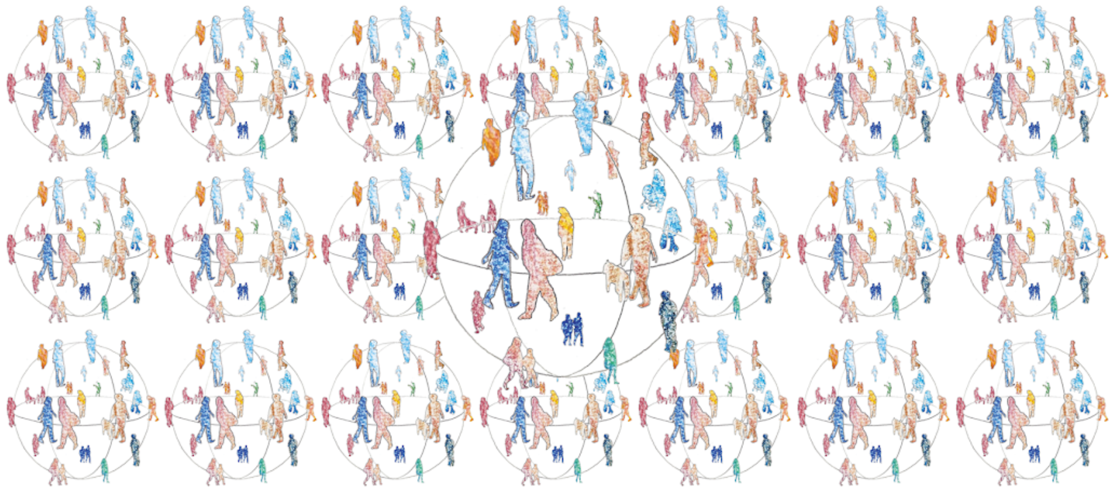
*Theory as Visual Storytelling*



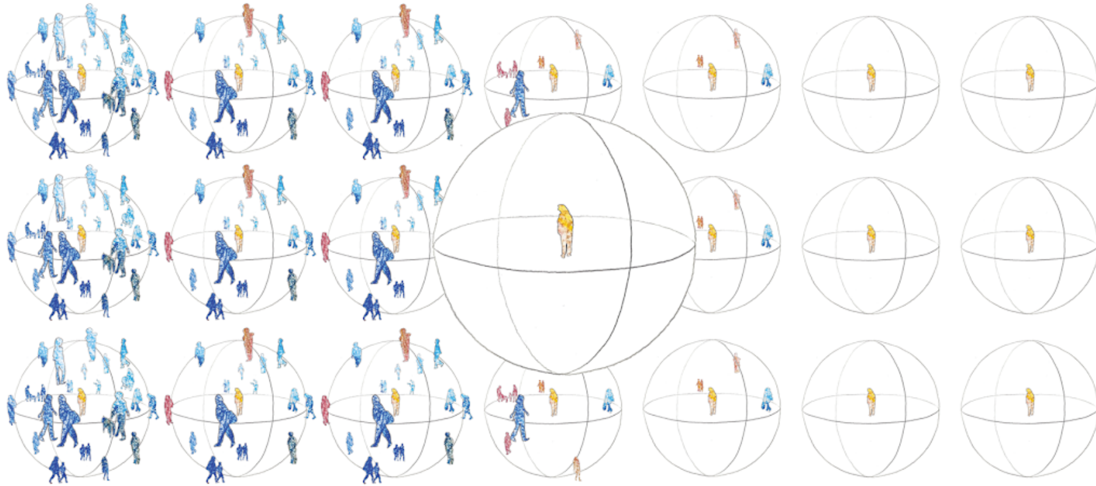
To celebrate other ways of learning and knowing, and to acknowledge our engaged scholarship approach, we ground our theory with visual storytelling. Taking inspiration from PUAM to use art as a bridge, we aim to communicate theory in an accessible and memorable way, to connect ideas from literature with conversations and decision-making on the ground. The following collection of drawings is an excerpt from a slideshow presentation prepared for North Shore CDC.



Planning theorists have defined the pursuit of justice as claiming the "right to the city;" that is, the right to urban life for all to inhabit, create, and share space, and to claim a voice and representation in public life and institutions. These rights are based on fundamental human needs, like the need to enhance the quality of one's own life and those of the wider community that they are part of; the need to imagine alternative futures and pursue the lives one has cause to value; and the need to express cultural difference and define meaning for oneself.

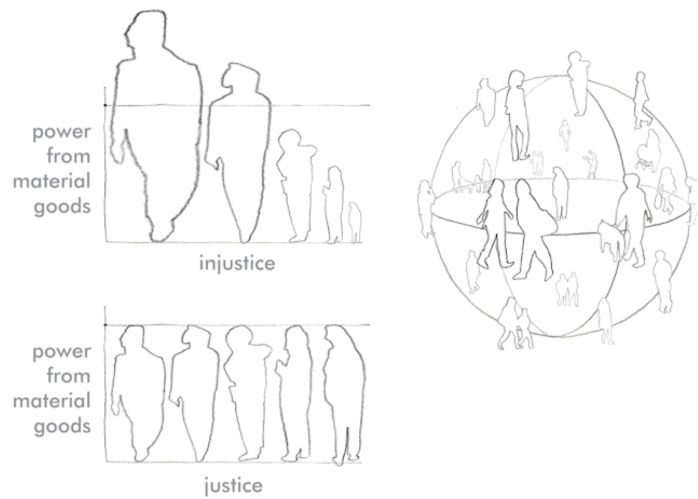


In the just city, everyone will have the ability to meet these needs, through their right to the city. But we don't all have the same right to the city. And so we look to theories of social justice to understand how some people's rights are curtailed, and some people's rights are amplified.

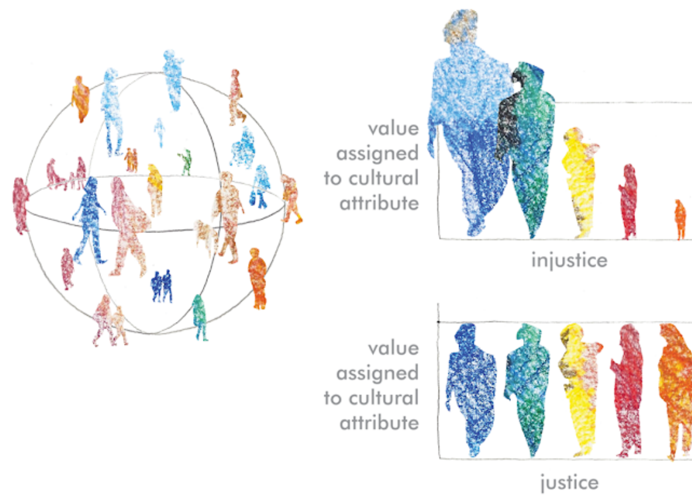


Following Fraser and Sandercock, we distinguish between material and cultural dimensions of social justice. Distributional justice refers to the equitable distribution of material goods and power. Recognitional justice refers to the positive valuation and recognition of cultural difference.

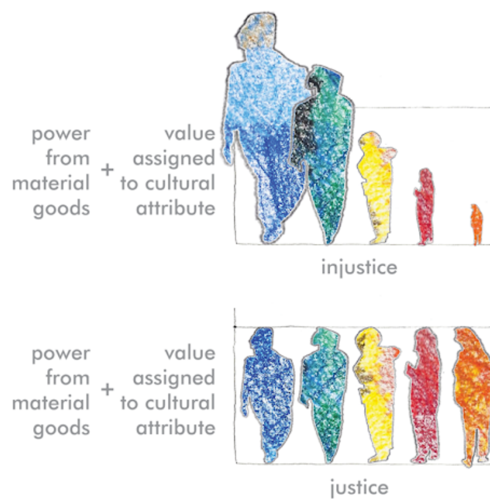
## Material Distribution




Distributional injustice relates to social differentiation as a result of class status in the political-economic structure we have for relating to one another (capitalism). Under capitalism, the working class' share of benefits is unjustly small, and its share of burdens unjustly large. Distributional justice refers to the equitable distribution of these benefits and burdens.




Recognitional injustice relates to social differentiation based on cultural difference, where particular cultural traits like ethnicity, race, gender, or sexuality, receive a status order independent from material goods. Correcting misrecognition requires remedies that "celebrate, not eliminate group differences" and "deconstruct the very terms in which such differences are currently elaborated" (Fraser, 2003).

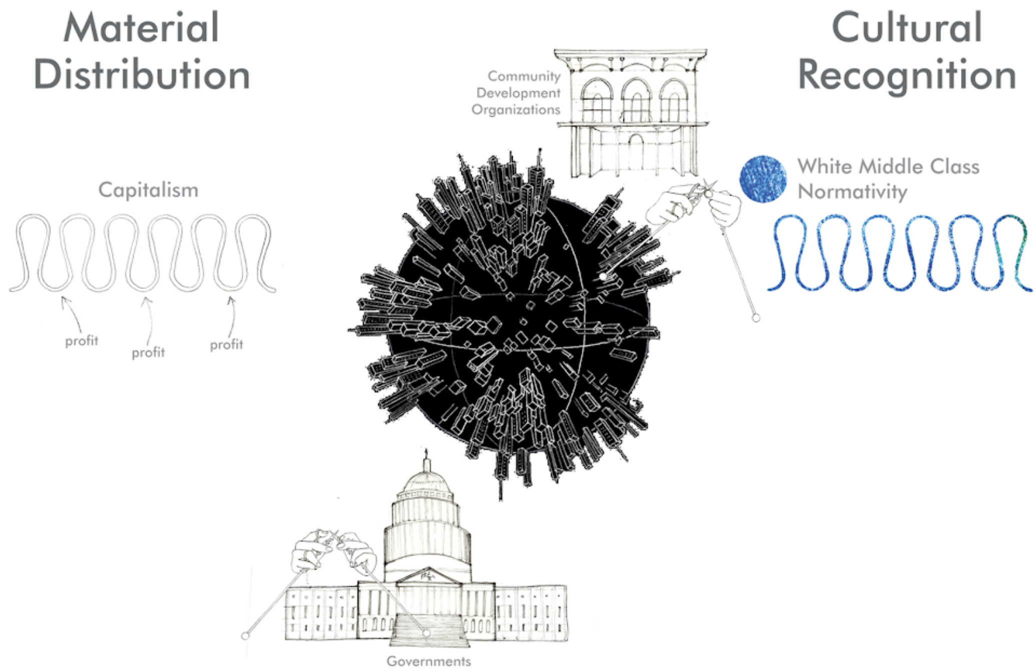



The dimensions of unequal material distribution and misrecognition intersect. In the United States in particular, questions of class, labor and resource distribution remain historically informed by racial hierarchies and discriminatory policies. As such, black Americans, as well as other racial and ethnic minorities, experience disproportionate class exploitation, and denial of economic advancement or material wellbeing. To work towards social justice, we join Fraser in calling for a comprehensive operational framework for correcting both distributional and recognitional injustice in pursuit of a universal right to the city.

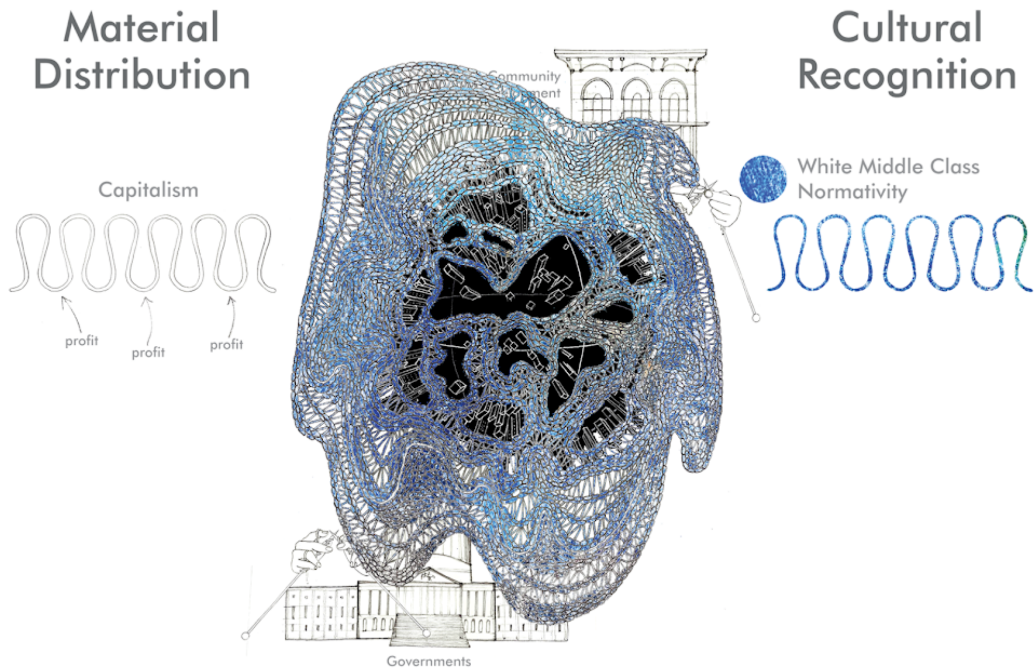
Material Distribution

Cultural Recognition

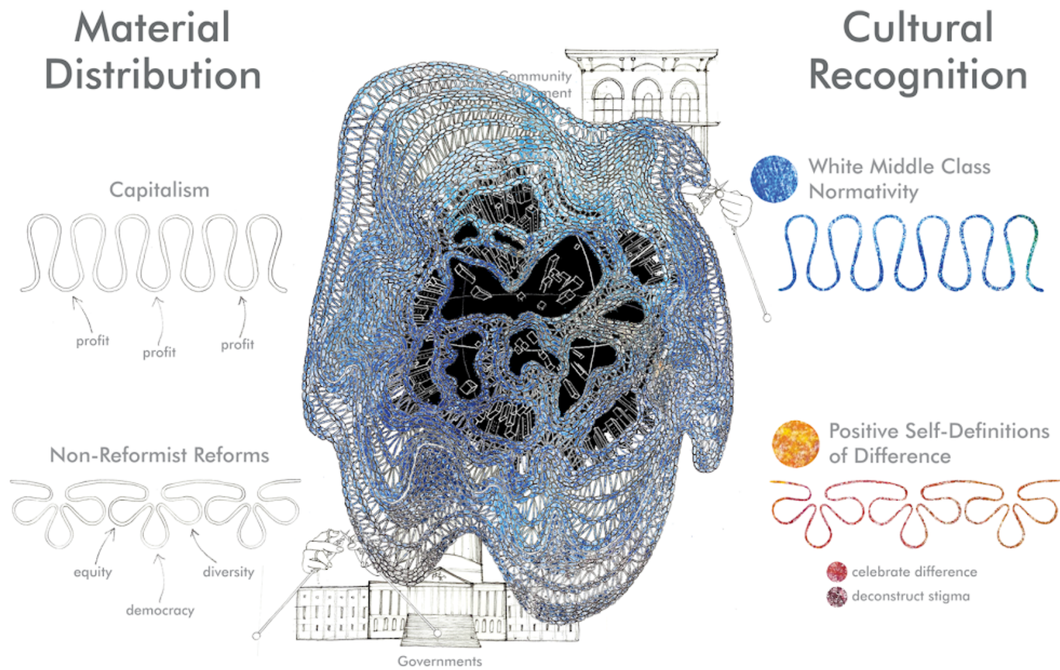
To help visualize the way these dominant structures create gaps in access to rights in our cities, imagine capitalism were a knitting pattern and the color blue represented white middle class normativity.



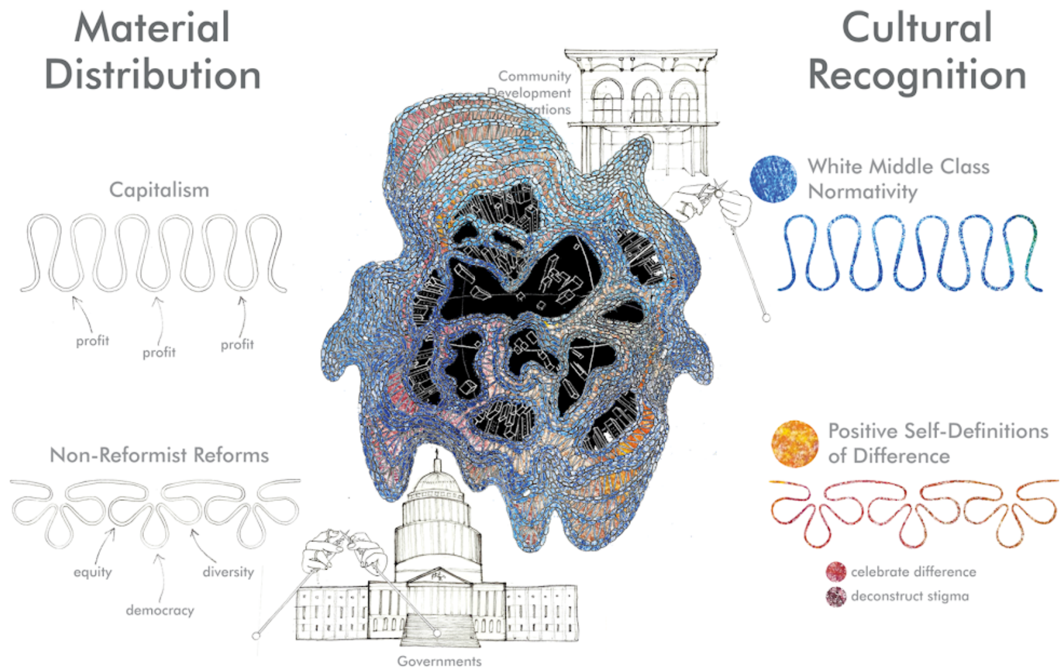

These dominant structures, institutionalized and baked into policy and action by urban practitioners like governments and community development organizations...



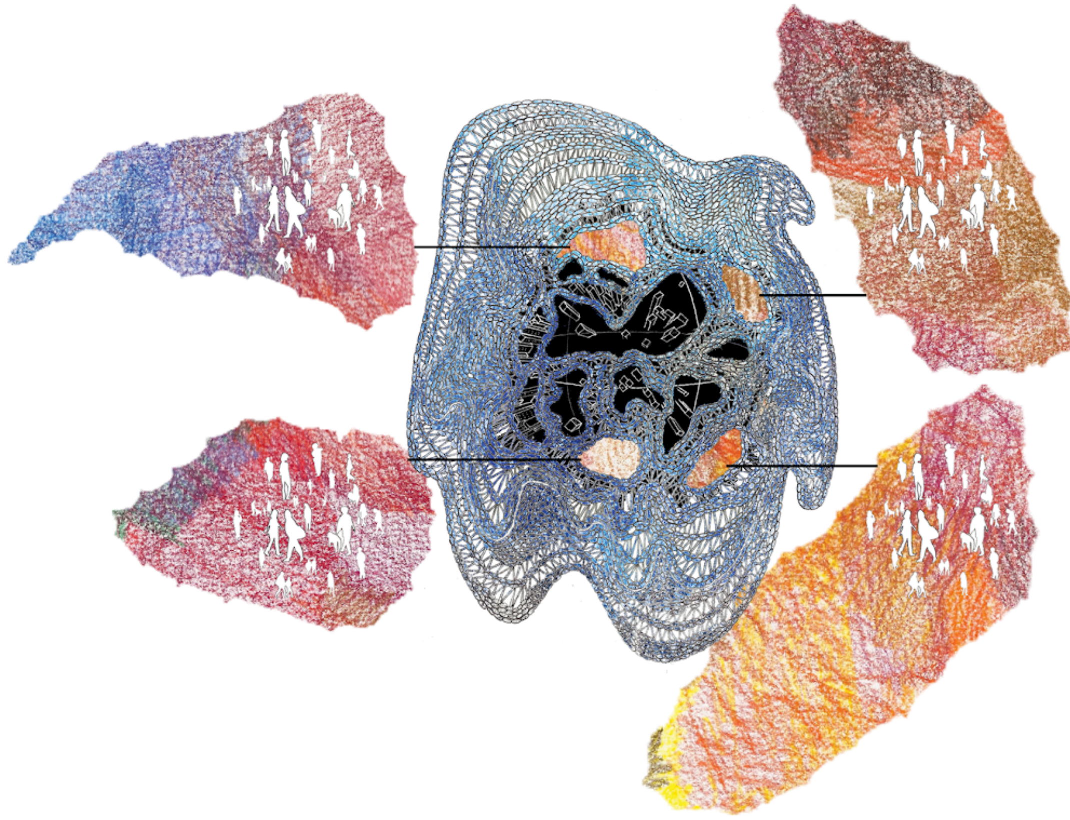

...has led to the bunching of benefits and freedoms around some people, and gaps around others. This leaves many exposed and bereft of the social benefits that accompany material wealth and positive valuation of culture.



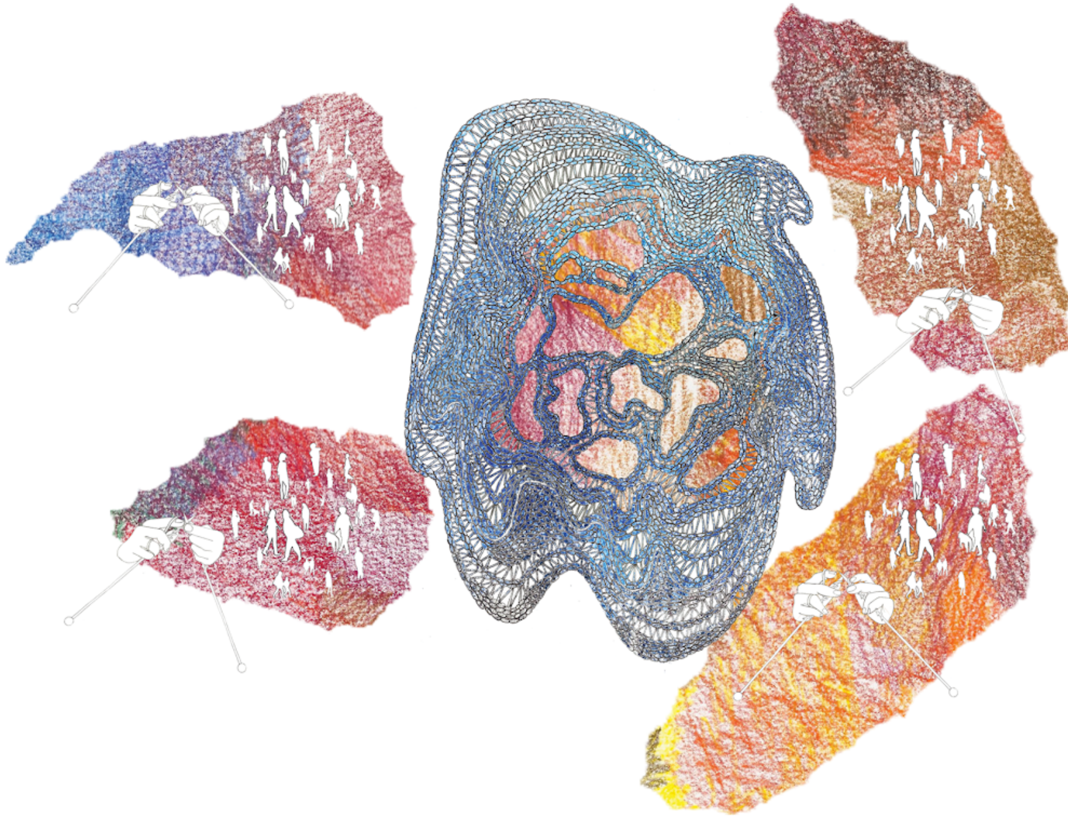

In pursuit of the just city, we follow Fainstein and Sandercock in recommending that urban practitioners prioritize values of equity, democracy and diversity over mainstream economic growth; and follow Fraser and Young in recommending that marginalized cultures celebrate, rather than eliminate group difference, and deconstruct the very terms in which such differences are currently elaborated.




Short of sweeping, revolutionary change, over time these "one thousand  tiny empowerments" would incrementally shift existing market or social forces towards more just arrangements, rather than affirming their logics.

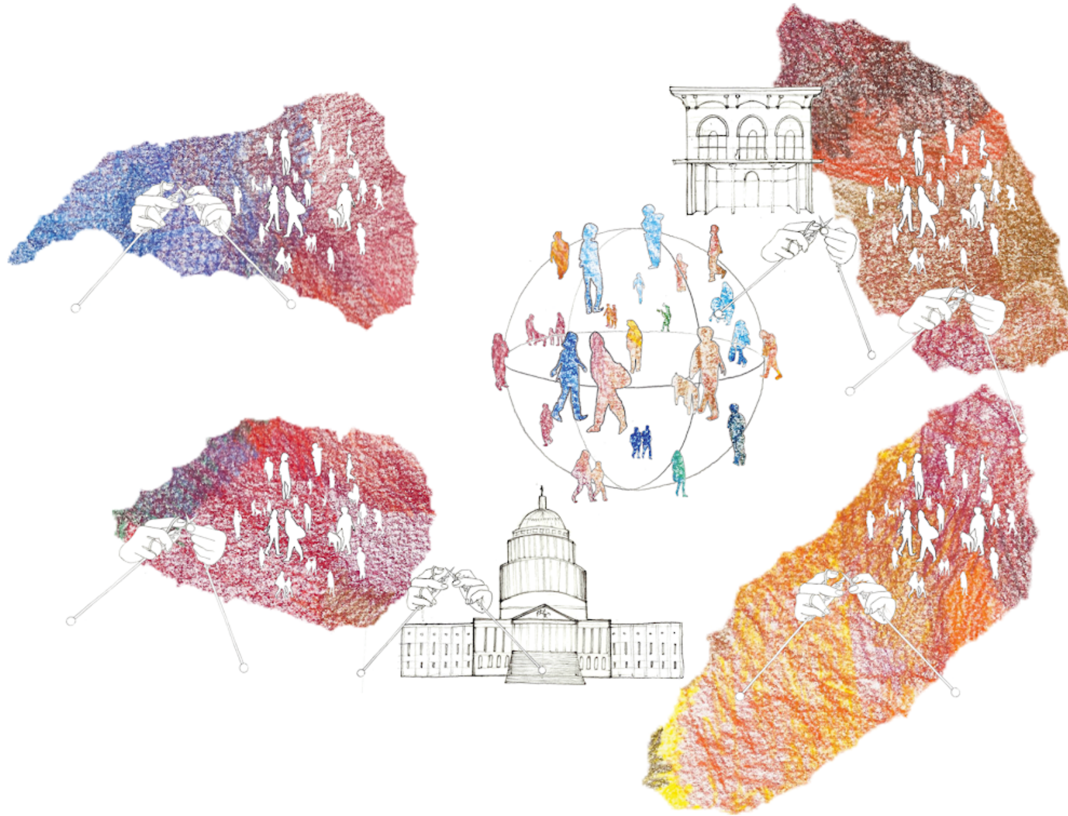


Our culture is shaped by the social context in which we live. While people who benefit from dominant structures feel included, people whose right to the city is constrained by dominant forces are experts in describing the gaps of a system because they have first hand knowledge of being excluded.



By valuing the unique capacities that marginalized groups have developed in the different shapes of their oppressive contexts, we can elevate new systems and life ways that don't repeat the exclusionary logics of dominant cultures and oppressive political economies.

In practice, leveraging culture as an element of social change thus importantly requires empowering and collaborating with those affected by the systems' gaps to be the ones who determine what opportunities they want to pursue and which systems they want to contest. This involves creating programs or partnerships that allow for the sharing of authority over cultural and knowledge production. The concept of shared authority acknowledges all parties to hold valuable knowledge or lived experience in the making of public history, public culture, and shaping solutions to injustice. Shared authority partnerships break down traditional notions of expertise, to instead honor and empower unique voices and identities at the table.



We propose to discuss social justice practice along these lines of shared authority, in order to put forward a conception of public culture and community development work as radically democratic processes of affirming cultural difference and building community power.

**Background: Dimensions of Social Justice in the Point**

We begin our investigation of PUAM and North Shore CDC by applying this theoretical framework for social justice to analyze the local, regional and transnational forces that give cause to claim social justice in the Point neighborhood. Given PUAM's focus on neighborhood and place-based identity, we further review the role of ethnic and cultural identity as a force of belonging and empowerment among residents in the neighborhood throughout history.

*Immigration and Labor, 1850-2020*

With regards to claims for distributional justice, the stratified structure of industrial capitalism, and later neoliberal capitalism, have influenced migration to the Point, and have kept immigrants from pursuing economic advancement (Chomsky, 2008).

Following Salem's incorporation as a settler colonial enterprise in 1626, a large wave of immigration to the city coincided with its industrialization in the 1850s. Migrants from the Massachusetts countryside, black migrants from the United States south, and immigrants from overseas were all willing to work for low wages to improve their economic situations (Chomsky, 2008). These immigrants hailed mainly from French Canada, but many also immigrated from Ireland, Poland, and other parts of Eastern Europe. These new migrants found a home close to the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Mills in the Point neighborhood, today the site of Shetland Industrial Park (SalemStateUniversity.edu). These immigrants largely filled secondary sector labor markets in these manufacturing jobs, which were often hazardous and paid low wages. In response, many immigrants engaged in radical politics and union organizing to demand improved conditions and wages (Chomsky, 2008).

Figure 4.1: Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company factory floor, December 1907. Source: Salem State University Archives, via Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/photos/salemstatearchives/44443745230

Figure 4.2: Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company buildings, December 1907. Source: Salem State University Archives, via Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/photos/salemstatearchives/46210293832

The mid-twentieth century brought sweeping demographic and economic changes in the Point and in Salem, as New England's booming industrial economy began to relocate overseas or to the US south in search of cheaper labor forces. With the onset of this global "race to the bottom," factories and mills located on Salem's harbor near the Point closed, and were converted into an office and industrial park that is seen today. These shifts ushered in a new wave of immigrants from Latin America.

Migration from Latin America to the Point in the 1960s first originated from Puerto Rico, with Dominicans following in the late 1960s. At the cusp of deindustrialization, US industries recruited Puerto Ricans to struggling factories to fill remaining low-wage jobs that would keep them in operation (Chomsky, 2008). Indeed, new immigrants from the Dominican Republic were actively encouraged into remaining jobs by remaining leather factories in Peabody and Salem, and once they arrived in the Point, resident José Alix, an immigrant to the Point in the 1960s, remarked that manufacturers from Shetland Industrial Park "used to come out in the streets here [in the Point] looking for workers" (Chomsky, 2004: 323). Meanwhile, political instability following  the death of Dominican dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo in 1961, as well as the United States's invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965, facilitated Dominican migration to the United States. Dominican migration continued to soar through the 1970s and 80s, following economic instability due to declining coffee and sugar crops (Duany, 2009). Migrants from the Domincan Republic as well as Puerto Rico often arrived in the United States through New York City and Boston, where they settled in neighborhoods like Jamaica Plain and the South End, and The Port in Cambridge. As affordable housing stock dried up in Boston and New York, Dominicans gradually relocated to Salem, and other cities along the North Shore (Chomsky, 2004). Following this trend, the Dominican population in Salem grew from a few dozen in the 1970s, to nearly 4,500 tallied in the 2000 census, and increasing by 42% to 6,465 by the 2010 census (Burge, 2013).

As of 2018, Latinx residents make up 19.5% of Salem's population, with Dominicans and Puerto Ricans representing the largest ethnic concentrations (American Community Survey, 2018 5-year estimates). Recently however, community engagement staff at North Shore CDC have reported the presence of new immigrant groups in the Point, including families from Somalia, Brazil, Cape Verde, and other Latin American countries. Though current American Community Survey Data is not fine grain enough to reflect more specific origins of foreign born populations, we note that, out of a population of approximately 1500 foreign born residents in the census tract that encompasses most of the Point neighborhood, 68.1% are from the Dominican Republic; 15.3% are from Africa (more than half of which claiming origin from what the American Community Survey defines as Eastern Africa); 5.0% from Honduras, 3.3% from Colombia, and 2.2% from Eastern Europe (American Community Survey 2018 5-year estimates.)

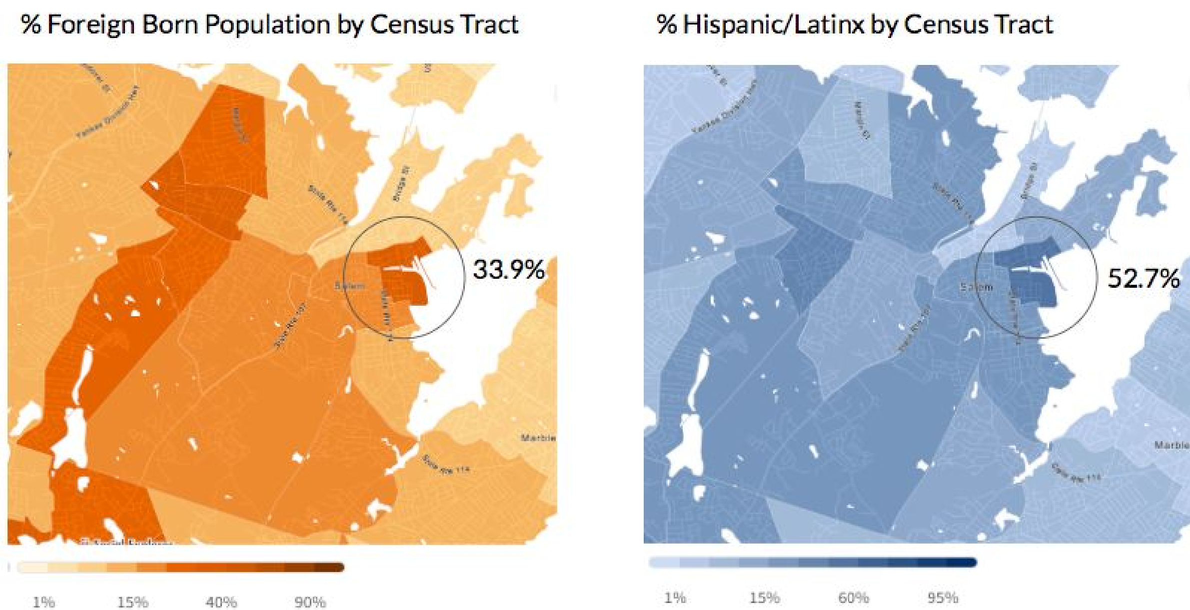



Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4: Percent Foreign Born and Hispanic/Latino population by census tract. Annotations by the authors. Source: Social Explorer / American Community Survey 2018 5-year estimates.

Persistent economic exclusion and marginalization have followed the trajectory of deindustrialization, even as the neoliberalization and deregulation of the US economy facilitated the "Massachusetts Miracle" of growing technology and managerial sectors. While providing

high wage jobs and an economic boom in many parts of the state, it also created a deeply stratified economy dependent on low-wage service industry jobs that many Latinx immigrant families in the Point filled (Horwitz, 2018; Chomsky, 2008). With the retreat of the state from providing social and welfare programs and the weakening of unions nationwide, new immigrants did not benefit from the same safety nets that early twentieth century immigrants did, while anti-union policies in the United States prevented collective bargaining in the workplace (Chomsky, 2004). As a result, wages have stagnated in this secondary sector, and the Latinx[1] poverty rate in Massachusetts in 2018 was recorded at 24.5%, more than twice the state's rate of 10.5% (Horwitz, 2018). In Salem, the Latinx poverty rate is 35.3%, compared to the citywide rate of 15.3% and the white poverty rate at 9.6% (American Community Survey 2017 5-year estimates).

*Racial and Ethnic Politics in Salem*

Local political and spatial marginalization have also shaped the Point and other Latinx migrants to post-industrial Massachusetts. As Latinx migration to dense urban neighborhoods such as the Point heightened, white flight to the city's outer neighborhoods and suburbs accelerated. Llana Barber's *Latino City: Immigration and Urban Crisis in Lawrence Massachusetts, 1945-2000* elaborates on the racial and class hierarchies that Dominican and Puerto Rican immigrants encountered across Massachusetts:

> Pushed to migrate by conditions shaped by US intervention, Dominicans and Puerto Ricans entered not only a racialized US *social* arena, but also a racialized US *spatial* arena, a metropolitan geography that had already been profoundly shaped by the U.S. racial order....Being racialized as nonwhite in a historical moment where white privilege was becoming spatialized in segregated suburban developments had a profound impact on both the Puerto Rican and Dominican diasporas. (Barber, 2015: 5)

[1] In this thesis, we refer to people with roots Latin America as "Latinx," as opposed to the masculine/feminine "Latina"/ "Latino," to preserve gender-neutrality and inclusivity of the term.

Indeed, following such racialized patterns of spatial production and economic investment, Latinx neighborhoods like Lawrence and the Point experienced public and private disinvestment and high rates of absentee landlordism, while former white ethnic immigrants experienced economic ascendency as they were able to take advantage of New Deal social programs and homeownership opportunities in prospering suburbs after World War II (Barber, 2015; Point Vision and Action Plan, 2013; Chomsky, 2008).

Political power and gaining participation in local government processes has additionally been a key site of struggle for Point residents into the twenty-first century. Salem's city council, for one, has only had three Latinx councilors in its history: Claudia Chuber, a Colombian woman, first elected in 2001; Lucy Corchado, a Puerto Rican resident and leader who grew up in the Point, elected in 2003; and Domingo Dominguez, a Dominican councilor at large and former Point business owner elected in 2004.

In more recent history, political empowerment in the Point has unfortunately been undermined by recent accounts of voter discrimination and disenfranchisement in local politics. While more precise public data and accounts of this phenomenon are forthcoming, public accounts in Salem's *Rainbow Times* highlight the experiences of Latinx voters and Salem. Advocacy on behalf of North Shore CDC, the Point Neighborhood Association (PNA) and the Latino Leadership Coalition (LLC), has worked to expand equitable access to polling locations, and prevent voting rights violations for Latinx voters (Givens, 2016).

*Culture, Place, Identity*

Salem's extractive relationship of cultural and economic exchange with Latin America and the Caribbean extends back to its colonial mercantilist economy. Salem merchants were directly involved in the slave trade between Africa and the West Indies, and this relationship adopted a distinctly cultural dimension in the city. The symbol of pineapples, most notably, can be seen on houses in Salem, indicating hospitality and that goods from the West Indies had arrived

(Chomsky, 2004). Following more modern political and economic shifts underlying migration patterns from the region, however, Latinx immigrants in the Point have created a thriving ethnic and cultural community, negotiating ties and loyalties between their homelands and new homes, and cultivating bicultural identities. Strong relationships have persisted over time between the Point and the Dominican cities of Baní and Santiago in particular, as immigrants have brought family members over to the Point, sent back remittances, and commuted back to visit their homelands (Chomsky, 2004).

In the Point, immigrants established culturally relevant businesses and social institutions, including bodegas, restaurants, and at one point, a small club called Club las Antillas on the corner of Palmer and Salem Streets. While this club closed in 1998, it importantly hosted Salem's first Hispanic Festival in 1980 (Chomsky, 2004). Each year, Dominican immigrants and their descendents also gather on February 27 to raise the Dominican flag in celebration of the country's independence. Carmen Ruiz Rios, a Puerto Rican school teacher in Salem Public Schools in the 1990s and 2000s, recounts the experience of living and sharing Dominican and Puerto Rican culture that is unique to the Point in an oral history recorded by Aviva Chomsky in 2006:

> In the summertime you drive by the Point, and you see the culture in its biggest splendor, because that's when they go out on the streets, they're dancing, they're talking to each other, some men are playing dominoes, you go to the parks and you see the kids, it's like a little part of the Dominican Republic or Puerto Rico, right in Salem. That's where they really feel comfortable exposing their own culture. I don't see that happening anywhere else in the city. Only in the Point... (quoted in Chomsky 2008: 175)

The livelihood of the Point's Puerto Rican and Dominican culture lives on today in the customs, institutions and traditions among new immigrants and the next generations alike, creating belonging through shared identity and experiences. Public comments recorded in the 2013 Point Vision and Action Plan overwhelmingly mentioned feelings of pride, identity, and the importance of local cultural businesses and institutions when identifying what they liked the most about the neighborhood, such as: a "sense of community," and "sense of pride;" and

"Spanish language and culture," "Salem El Típico restaurant," and "bodegas." And still today, Shantel Alix, a resident of the Point and immigrant from the Dominican Republic, elaborated on the enduring attachment and identity in the neighborhood in one of our interviews:

> ... what people don't learn...is that [immigrants] actually prefer to live in this neighborhood, because it's a neighborhood that looks like us...Right after we got here, [my father] was like, this is going to be our home. And once we learned what the neighborhood looked like, that's when we realized, yeah, this is great. *We can be here*.

*Struggles for Recognition*

Racial, cultural, and ethnic differences remain sites to claim recognitional justice for Point residents in Salem. For one, language barriers, a strong national identity of Dominican immigrants, and history of conflicts between the United States and the Dominican Republic, have all troubled the meaning of assimilation into the Anglo-American identity for this group (Chomsky, 2004). Meanwhile, stigmatization and misrecognition by local white and Anglo populations has also marked the Latinx immigrant experience in Salem, and throughout post-industrial Massachusetts. As Barber (2015) has remarked, Dominican and Latinx immigrants also entered into racial and class hierarchies in the United States, and have felt both lack of recognition and backlash from Anglo and white residents. In Lawrence in particular, Barber documents the backlash and antagonism of white residents and institutions in Lawrence during a violent uprising in 1984, which highlighted animosity towards Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and other Latinx groups, whom white residents cast as foreign or "othered" scapegoats of the city's economic and industrial decline.

While not quite as extreme, cultural and ethnic divides have been evident in Salem vis a vis perceptions of the Point neighborhood and its residents, as well as a lack of cultural and linguistic recognition of Latinx immigrants by public institutions and public life. Public comments from the 2013 Point Vision and Action Plan under the topic of Civic Engagement, for one, express a lack of city outreach to the "Latino voice" in the neighborhood, and cite the need

for “more bilingual announcements [from] school and city [and] reach out to parents in Spanish” (Point Vision and Action Action Plan, 2013: 70).

Indeed, Ruiz Rios articulates the assimilationist attitudes towards immigrants among Salem’s white and Anglo population:

> I think the message is that “if you’re going to come here, you have to learn about us, and you almost have to forget who you are to become us.” And I think one of the things I always try to teach my students is number one, you have to be very proud of your language and your culture, don’t ever forget it, don’t ever forget who you are, where you come from, where your parents came from, and your culture, And always be proud of that. And sometimes you’re going to encounter a lot of resistance, a lot of it. (Chomsky, 2008: 176-177)

Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello, a Professor at Salem State University and North Shore CDC board member, meanwhile recounts a lack of understanding of Salem’s immigrant community that she gathered from her experience also working with local schools:

> Why did your classmates at Salem High go back to the DR every year for three weeks in the middle of school…the teachers grumble [but] that is exactly what people are going to do is get to be with their family. We were trying to get teachers to understand this so that they could understand the students better, but also really understand the late 20th century immigration history.

Such a lack of cultural recognition or understanding with families who may not be English speakers have historically been a barrier to parent engagement and involvement in school affairs (McGregor, 2010). Notably, an ELL coordinator position for the school system was vacant for about 10 years (Berardino, 2015; Aviva Chomsky, personal conversation). Insufficient bilingual education caused students speaking languages other than English at home to be “treated as needing remediation or lacking in skills and knowledge” (Westlake and Connerty, 2019). It was not until 2019 that comprehensive bilingual education programs in Salem Public Schools received funding at the state level, following the Language Opportunity for Our Kids Act passed

by Massachusetts in 2017, which overrode a state-wide veto on funding such programs in 2002 (Westlake and Connerty, 2019).

Meanwhile, perceptions of the Point as a densely populated place ridden with crime has also been noted by residents throughout the neighborhood's recent history. In 2008, Carmen Ruiz Rios additionally expounds on these perceptions and stigmatization of the Point neighborhood:

> I think there was a lot of resistance from Salem residents from the very beginning. "Oh, you're going to the Point? Why are you going to the Point?" I wouldn't go to the Point ever! And "I'm afraid to drive by the Point at night, and during the daytime, how can you do that?" (quoted in Chomsky, 2008: 175)

These perceptions and stigma were recorded in the recommendations and countless public comments gathered from Point residents in the 2013 Vision and Action Plan (Chomsky, 2008; Point Vision and Action Plan, 2013). Comments related to Civic Engagement in the Point repeatedly mention the disempowering stigma that outsiders harbored towards the Point and its residents due to "stereotypes," not knowing the "history of the Point," and negative perceptions about the neighborhood's environment. As Barber (2015) suggests in the case of Lawrence, however, these sentiments by greater Salem perhaps transcend observations of neighborhood disinvestment, or even physical attributes of neighborhood itself, and point to the creation of racialized and culturally "othered" space in the city. These terms of othering and stigmatization are historically and socially informed by powerful economic, political and social forces, as well as by individual groups who harbor this prejudice, or misrecognition, of cultural value.

## Shared Authority in the CDC Model

Following the claims for recognitional and distributional justice in the Point put forward by PUAM, as well as the structural sources of these injustices, we contextualize the role of various actors and neighborhood organizations in the Point, and of North Shore CDC in particular, in working towards social justice, primarily along the lines of redistribution through its housing and economic development activities. We do this by engaging with literature on the history and structure of community development corporations (CDCs) more broadly in the United States, as North Shore CDC is a case of, to demonstrate both the limitations of engaging in social justice work in this model oriented away from building community control and power, as well as the opportunities for CDCs to share authority in working towards social justice. Further drawing from historical accounts of community organizing and political advocacy efforts in the Point that North Shore CDC has participated in, and acknowledging the power and resources currently amassed by North Shore CDC as a high capacity, regional organization, we advance our argument for North Shore CDC to pursue shared authority partnerships with community residents and other local organizations to promote building community power in pursuit of social justice.

### *The Political Economy of CDCs*

Since their inception in the 1960s, CDCs have been shaped by larger political-economic shifts in the United States. CDCs began as Community Action Programs in the 1960s, which provided direct federal funds to low-income and minority communities in city centers organizing for greater control, empowerment, and self-determination amidst disinvestment and large-scale political and economic shifts of the mid-twentieth century. However, neoliberalization of the US economy in the 1980s caused a decline in federal funding for CDCs, and forced them to rely on outside investment and technical expertise needed to attract private or philanthropic financial resources to sustain their activities. Meanwhile, remaining funds from the federal government to community-based organizations were redirected to local state and government agencies for

further distribution, and replaced by market-based incentive programs for affordable housing and economic development, such as the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC) and Enterprise Zones (DeFilippis, 2004).

North Shore CDC's growth over the past several decades has reflected these changes. Formerly known as Salem Harbor CDC, the organization began in the Point neighborhood in 1978 as a community organizing program, and later began to develop and preserve affordable housing once the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program began in 1986. The CDC's operating and development capacity, however, fluctuated throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, and in 2010, merged with the nearby Beverly Affordable Housing Coalition to form what is now known as North Shore Community Development Coalition, under the leadership of its current CEO Mickey Northcutt (Braudo, 2010).

While still based in the Point neighborhood, North Shore CDC has grown into a regional CDC, providing affordable housing and other social service programs like tax preparation, small business assistance, ESL and citizenship classes, financial literacy and homeownership preparation courses in Salem, Lynn, Beverly, Peabody, Gloucester and Merrimac. In Salem, these services are based out of North Shore CDC's community center, Espacio. The CDC operates with a budget of $3.3 million, one third of which is dedicated to community engagement, and has produced 400 units of affordable housing as of 2019 (NorthShoreCDC.org). Within the Point neighborhood, North Shore CDC owns about 30% of all properties as deed-restricted affordable housing. North Shore CDC also runs the North Shore chapter of YouthBuild, a national youth leadership and workforce development program that trains at-risk youth in civic leadership and construction and healthcare professional trades.

Salem Harbor CDC and North Shore CDC's investments in key affordable housing resources, workforce development, and service provision have been essential to advancing distributional justice in the Point neighborhood. However, we consider what Stoecker (2008) calls the capital-community contradiction that many CDCs face. The capital-community contradiction is

one between a CDC's desire or need to contest existing political and economic configurations that undermine their community's self determination, and the reality of needing to attract capital and resources from the outside. Instead of addressing political questions about building power, community control, and opposing structural oppression, then, CDCs must often focus on technical and financial concerns of fundraising and real estate development to maintain their operations. Growth and success of CDCs depends on commanding these outside resources, but, as both Stoecker (2008) and DeFilippis (2004) observe, this often leads to specialization and professionalization of community development work, and can leave aside community organizing or engagement. What's more, through the decline of government-funded social service programs, CDCs have additionally become what DeFilippis (2004) calls the "shadow state," leading to a service provider-recipient relationship with local communities.

Our fieldwork has reflected this lack of structural support and funding that is available for community organizing, as well as the power and resources that come with the CDC's growth. Indeed, while committing to community engagement as a budget priority, North Shore CDC leadership and staff noted that the availability of specific funding for engaging communities or organizing has trickled out as the CDC model became more focused on housing and economic development. As a process that can be more time and resource intensive than centralized decision making, and that requires establishing proximity and partnerships with neighborhood residents or organizations, shared authority work across all programs or projects spearheaded by CDCs can face significant challenges.

Politics and power also remain imbued in North Shore CDC's work. With its growth and high capacity for land development and neighborhood investment, North Shore CDC has a "seat at the table" with Salem City Hall due to the volume of capital, investment, and programs that they bring to the Point. This, in turn, allows the CDC to conduct essential advocacy work for the neighborhood, such as bringing public investments and improvements.

This kind of advocacy on behalf of North Shore CDC has been instrumental to achieving public investments and improvements in the neighborhood, which local residents may not have the time or organizational capacity to advocate for. Once again notwithstanding the progress and necessary investments made by the CDC, we invoke criticisms from DeFilippis (2004) and Stoecker (2008) to encourage consideration of whether this relative political power in the neighborhood is built *with* residents, rather than them being recipients of the benefits of that power through the CDC's programs, housing, and secured public investments.

*Anchoring on Shared Authority*

While maintaining their essential activities of housing development, service provision, and local business support, it is here that we introduce our argument for shared authority to support North Shore CDC's social justice work along these lines of building community power. This argument follows Stoecker's (2008) recommendations for CDCs to assume the role of allies and technical assistance providers for community-led plans and initiatives, in order to better support a more democratic process of building power and community control as part of social justice. To make this argument, we bring in several highlights of shared authority partnerships from North Shore CDC and Salem Harbor CDC's past advocacy efforts, in order to demonstrate the unique value, capabilities, and even resources, contributed by different allies and local residents, working towards distributional and recognitional justice.

An early account of shared authority and community power building we uncovered in our fieldwork was the takeover of several foreclosed buildings in the Point neighborhood in the early 1990s. While not deed-restricted at the time, these buildings had served as naturally occurring affordable housing for Point renters, and the foreclosure of these properties placed their housing security under threat. In partnership with leaders in the neighborhood, the director of Salem Harbor CDC bought shares in a local bank that had foreclosed the buildings to allow residents and CDC staff to gain access to the bank's shareholder meeting. There, they demanded that the bank not sell the buildings at the auction block. The CDC ultimately was able to buy 11 of these

buildings, bringing 77 apartments into permanent affordability for residents. It was by lending its financial, technical, and organizational support to this effort that the CDC was able to secure vital housing resources away from market reallocation through a community-led initiative.

Shared authority partnerships have also led to significant gains in building community power in the Point through collaborations with organizations that have brought significant organizing capacity. Notably, Salem Harbor CDC once supported a groundswell of organizing and efforts by a coalition of community associations in the Point neighborhood in the late 1990s and early 2000s, which significantly bolstered political power and participation in the Point that made electing Latinx representatives possible. With support of Salem's chapter of Neighbor 2 Neighbor (N2N), a state-wide organization focused on increasing political participation by low-income neighborhoods and communities of color, Salem Harbor CDC embarked on a robust grassroots campaign to support Dominican and foreign-born residents of the Point gain citizenship status after the Dominican Republic allowed for dual citizenship in 1993, and to register all eligible adults to vote in local elections. Between 1997 and 2001, these efforts increased Latinx voter turnout in Salem by 350%, laying the groundwork for the election of Salem's first Latinx city councillors: Claudia Chuber, Lucy Corchado and Domingo Dominguez to the city council.

In these efforts, sharing authority with an organization like N2N was essential, as the organization provided grassroots engagement capacity, as well as more direct political endorsements for Latinx candidates. Given the CDC's nonprofit 501(c)3 status, it was barred from explicitly endorsing political candidates once they were nominated, relegating its role to spreading information about ballot initiatives and registering voters. N2N, in the meantime, was able to more directly endorse candidates through its 501(c)4 status, and lobby on their behalf. While this partnership was not without tension for Salem Harbor CDC organizers, who had to refrain from issuing endorsements while they were on duty, the combination of added capacity and political action in this campaign was able to increase political power and representation in the neighborhood (Haskell, 2004).

In more recent history, North Shore CDC has also contributed to political empowerment in the Point in a similar capacity, by engaging and registering voters, and by partnering with the PNA, the Latino Leadership Coalition in Salem (LLC), and Salem State University to expand equitable access to polling locations, and prevent voting rights violations for Latinx voters. These efforts have all responded to accounts of discrimination and disenfranchisement of Latinx voters in local politics. Specifically, a lack of bilingual poll workers, and practices like requiring identification documents from non-white voters, or denying interpretation services to non-English speakers by existing poll workers. Efforts by North Shore CDC and its collaborators have instituted a poll monitoring program during local election cycles run by students and volunteers (including the authors of this thesis during the Fall of 2019), and strengthening voter engagement and empowerment in Salem's Latinx community.

Finally, as a key actor in the Point's planning and community development efforts, North Shore CDC has also been a lead organization in developing and enacting the goals of the 2013 Point Vision and Action Plan, in collaboration with residents, community-based organizations like the PNA and the LLC, the City of Salem, and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). The Vision and Action Plan process incorporated robust engagement with local residents, both in person and through an online game platform developed by Emerson College's Engagement Lab. Following the recent merger between two lower capacity organizations, this plan anchored North Shore CDC's emerging practice within the goals and the voices of the Point neighborhood. As a key ally and leader in its implementation, North Shore CDC has harnessed its real estate development capabilities, along with political power in City Hall, to advance many of the Plan's key goals, such as the creation of the Point's community center Espacio. Together with the PNA and LLC, North Shore CDC additionally meets monthly with City Hall to discuss coordination and implementation of the goals outlined by the community in the 2013 Vision and Action Plan. The organization is also currently engaged in discussions around community engagement for the next Vision and Action Plan, which will similarly guide its work for the next ten years.

Consistent with our understanding of shared authority as social justice practice focused on equitable partnerships, participation, and building community power, these highlights of North Shore CDC's past work might serve as a model for future practices or collaborations geared towards social change. While both literature and our fieldwork suggest that funding and capacity may be structurally limited for this kind of work, shared authority collaborations with other partners such as N2N, Emerson's Engagement Lab, and local organizations like the PNA and LLC with aligned missions or target communities, can provide new opportunities to access enhanced organizing and engagement capabilities. These collaborations may bring together local residents into programs and efforts centered upon building power and control over material or political concerns that are often left to the discretion of more powerful actors.

**From the Archives: Shared Authority in Creative Placemaking**

In our analysis of North Shore CDC's past shared authority partnerships, we mostly expound on conceptions of social justice related to redistribution. We now turn to frame PUAM as a strategy employed by North Shore CDC to achieve cultural recognition as a form of justice for the neighborhood. We begin this discussion by reviewing a case study of shared authority in creative placemaking from in order to contextualize the potential and model for shared authority in this field. This context then supports our analysis of PUAM's original community murals, painted between 1997-1999 as part of Salem Harbor CDC's Community Vision Project. We conclude this portion by highlighting the ways that shared authority with residents and other organizations throughout this program supported recognitional justice by allowing unique opportunities for participants to express their voices, identities, and lived experiences through various media in public and institutional arenas.

*Framing Shared Authority in Creative Placemaking*

While the exact concept of shared authority has not been applied in existing literature on creative placemaking, we note that creative placemaking interventions can harness such an approach for redistributional and recognitional aims of social justice. We see it at work in artist Judith Baca and the Social and Political Arts Center (SPARC)'s *Great Wall of Los Angeles* (1976-83), which demonstrates a robust, shared authority collaboration between over 400 youth of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, 40 artists and over 40 local historians to paint a revisionist history of Los Angeles centering black, indigenous, and Latinx histories and lived experiences. The project, in part sponsored by an initiative by the Los Angeles City Council, took place over five summers and provided funding and youth apprenticeships.

By sharing authority in its programming, as well as in its narrative expression with a plurality of youth and identities, the *Great Wall of Los Angeles* project was able to, as Reed (2005) notes, knit together a story "of multiple intersections, and the power system at its core" in the making

of the history of Los Angeles. The significance of this act is recounted by artist Judith Baca and scholars alike to have been rooted in the cultural, political and economic marginalization of many of Los Angeles's minority and ethnic communities in public life, as well as in the organizing efforts by these communities to claim their rights to representation and recognition in public culture. Baca recounts:

> This artistic occupation of public space forged a strong visual presence of a people who at that time (late '60's, early '70s) lacked representation in public life, with neither voice in elections, nor elected representatives. No person of Latino descent served on the City Council or on the School Board, despite the fact that in actual numbers we were fast becoming the majority of the population. Parallel to and perhaps growing from this new visual strength, many citizens of emerging Latino communities organized, with very little money and freely given labor, toward the mutual goal of improving the conditions of their communities (2001: 412-413).

*The Great Wall of Los Angeles* practiced towards recognitional justice by celebrating and allowing for a pluralism of positive self-definitions of difference, and deconstructing terms of discrimination by supporting shared authority with community members in the design and execution of painting a revisionist history in an ultra-visible, permanent, public installation. The program additionally provided direct compensation and leadership development for participating youth, practicing distributional justice (Baca, 2001). Yet, as s Marschall (1999) has duly noted, it is difficult to make a definitive claim as to whether or not these murals and creative processes resulted in broader social, political or economic gains. However, the *Great Wall of Los Angeles* demonstrates precedent for incremental change towards social justice through creative placemaking.

Figure 5.1: A portion of the Great Wall of Los Angeles.
Source:https://mojmehrassa.com/2017/12/07/judy-bacas-influence-radically-dictates-an-acute-manifestation-of-history-in-the-great-wall-of-los-angeles/

Figure 5.2: Painting the Great Wall of Los Angeles, 1976-1983. Photo courtesy of SPARC Los Angeles. Source: https://www.kcet.org/history-society/10-monumental-murals-of-los-angeles

*The Community Vision Project, 1997-1999*

The conditions that Baca recounts about the context of *The Great Wall of Los Angeles* strike a familiar chord in the Point, especially before 2001, when still no person of Latinx origin had served on city council. At around this time, Salem Harbor CDC had sponsored the Community Vision Project - which was also referred to as Youth in Action/Jovenes en Accion - which resulted in the painting of three community murals by local youth. In our investigation we interviewed John Ewing, the artist responsible for facilitating the three community murals, and reviewed two archival videos generously digitized and provided for us by Salem Access Television - *Unveiling of the Community Vision Mural Project* (1998) and *Artist Profile feat. Youth in Action* (1999) - which document the mural painting process and unveilings of one of the murals in 1998. Through robust collaboration across different organizations, involvement and creative authority by neighborhood youth, and cross-pollination of creative expression in public spaces and institutions in Salem, the Community Vision Project modeled shared authority work through creative placemaking in the Point.

Not unlike the CDC of today, Salem Harbor CDC had been trying to solve for a lack of local resident participation in their programming, and looked to arts and culture as a way to garner more engagement while also providing young people with leadership skills. After one successful mural was painted in 1997, the program continued with two additional murals in 1998 and 1999, and involved collaborations with Ewing, as well as Salem Access Television and MJC Dance Company, which provided videography classes and equipment for youth, as well as dance instruction. Similar to PUAM today, this project was also cited by Salem Harbor CDC community organizer Maria Hernandez, as well as Ewing and CEO of Salem Harbor CDC Jim Haskell, as a way of dispelling stigma against the neighborhood through its beautification and publicity, but also through the engagement and accomplishments of the youth who participated in the project.

According to Ewing, Salem Harbor CDC had issued a Request for Proposals for an artist to facilitate the mural component, to which he responded and was selected. Salem Harbor CDC was able to give Ewing an apartment in the Point, where he lived for the duration of the program. Living in the Point, Ewing reflected, enabled him to make connections with local residents, businesses, and establish liaisons with neighborhood leaders that allowed him to engage youth in the program. Namely, collaborations with Hernandez, Rosario Ubiera-Minaya, a Point resident and youth coordinator for Salem Access Television at the time, and the previously quoted Salem Public School teacher Carmen Ruiz Rios (then Carmen Katz), were able to facilitate recruitment of local youth into the mural program.

Figure 5.3: *Encuentro de dos culturas*, 1997**.** This first mural was painted as part of the Community Vision Project on a 5 by 12 foot canvas, and is not currently on public display. Source: Still from *The Unveiling of the Community Vision Project*, 1998. Courtesy of Salem Access Television Archives.

The first mural, *Encuentro de dos culturas*, was a five by twelve foot canvas painted in 1997 through a participatory process that would be iterated on in the following two murals of 1998 and 1999. Ewing recounted that youth participants began the mural painting process by interviewing family and community members with cameras provided by Salem Access Television, asking questions about their identities and experiences in the neighborhood. Ewing had brought this kind of process of creative inquiry from his previous work creating participatory murals in Honduras, but noted in our conversation that he had adapted the process to suit the available resources as well as the interests of the community in the Point. As a visiting artist, Ewing noted the sharing of skills, knowledge, and culture throughout this process in Salem Access Television's *Unveiling of the Community Vision Mural Project* in 1998:

> The whole idea is that the kids themselves have the ideas and the experiences, and we want to draw from those ideas, their experiences, their lives in the community. But I have some of the technical abilities that they don't have, so the idea is to share those two things.

The experiences and knowledge of youth, captured by video interviews, workshops, and discussions, became the thematic content of the mural. Hernandez, in an Artist Profile interview on Salem Access Television in 1998, recounts the discussions and roundtables where youth discussed "what they wanted to see, what they wanted to tell people about" through this mural.

Figure 5.4: Youth working on the 1999 mural and other self portraits as part of the Community Vision Project. Source: Stills *Artist Profile feat. Youth in Action*, 1999. Courtesy of Salem Access Television Archives.

In its final form, *Encuentro de dos culturas* ultimately showed the background that the youth participants shared from the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. The canvas is split between a representation of the brick buildings of the Point neighborhood, and a tropical setting meant to represent the Caribbean origins of many of the youth in the neighborhood. An airplane floating in the sky and a large tree painted between these two worlds, however, connects the two visually and thematically, as Hernandez notes in Salem Access Television's *Artist Profile* segment in 1999:

> The tree shows the roots - you can be far away, but the mother, the father, the baby and the grandmother, shows the roots are really deep into the ground. That means that we really care. That it doesn't matter how far you go, even if you come over here, you still belong to your country.

The success of this first mural, both Hernandez and John Ewing note, led to the creation of a second mural in 1998 entitled *Vida en el Punto.* This mural project was supported by a grant

from Massachusetts Cultural Council, and replicated a similar process as *Encuentro de dos culturas*. However, the role of Salem Public School teachers and staff was perhaps more pronounced in this mural. In Salem Access Television's documentation of the unveiling of *Vida en el Punto* in July of 1998, Ewing recounts his collaboration with Katz, and how she would bring him into her classes to meet her students, and who would visit the mural project three times a week to see the project through.

Figure 5.5: *Vida en el Punto,* 1998. Located on Congress Street in the Point. Photo by Agustin Cepeda, 2019.

Through collaborations with the teachers and public schools' staff, *Vida en el Punto* also included a host of historic and cultural figures from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and the Hispanic Caribbean among specific members of the community represented in the mural. Luz Barreto-Longus, a guidance counselor at Salem Public Schools at the time, and youth artist Joel Ortiz elaborate on the different community figures in the mural. The Mirabal Sisters, three women who were killed for protesting the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic, sit inside a living room in a building in the Point, adjacent to community members dining together under an image of the Virgin Mary, where others study their culture back in the Dominican

Republic. Other political leaders, such as Juan Bosch, the president of the Dominican Republic following Trujillo and independence, and Luis Muñoz Marin, the first elected governor of Puerto Rico, also make an appearance in the streets and homes of the Point. Cultural figures and leaders, such as Puerto Rican poet Julia de Burgos, musician and labor leader Jesus Colon, and Dominican singer Juan Luis Guerra are also represented in the mural, as are images of local cultural events such as the neighborhood's Hispanic Festival.

Finally, the largest figures represented in a car in the bottom left of the mural include both neighborhood residents Joel Ortiz, leaders such as Katz, and the face of Gabriel Garcia Márquez. These figures, as well as the car, are noted as a metaphor for driving personal dreams and aspirations through education - a theme which the third and final mural in 1999 additionally expanded upon.

Figure 5.6: The third mural painted as part of the Community Vision Project in 1999. Photo by Julia Curbera, 2019.

Figure 5.7: Youth artist Jeffrey Fernandez and visiting artist John Ewing with Fernandez's self portrait as a "strong man," 1999. Source: Still from *Artist Profile feat. Youth in Action*, 1999. Courtesy of Salem Access Television Archives.

*The Power of Shared Authority*

Through collaboration, shared authority with neighborhood youth, and creating a platform for greater visibility in public spaces and institutions in Salem, the Community Vision Project modeled shared authority in creative placemaking in the Point. The outcome of these mural projects includes positive and enduring self-definitions of Dominican and Puerto Rican identity in the Point.

It was by involving a variety of actors and organizations that each was able to contribute different resources, capabilities and perspectives on the project, while youth participants also possessed authority to both express themselves and their curiosities throughout the process. Through their local connections, Hernandez and Ubiera-Minaya were able to partner with Ewing to facilitate youth programming, while Salem Public School teachers helped develop some of the historical content displayed in *Vida en el Punto*. Meanwhile, Ewing contributed his technical

abilities in painting to teach youth skills for mural making, while also collaborating with Salem Access TV to provide the video investigation component. Salem Access Television was also able to support the publicity of these murals and their stories by filming the unveiling of *Vida en el Punto* in 1998, and through the *Artist Profile* segment featuring Hernandez and youth leader and artist Andres Espinal.

Through sharing of authority, youth residents were also able to lead the Community Vision process and shape components of the program alongside actors who brought technical or organizational capacities like Ewing, Ubiera-Minaya, Katz, Hernandez, or members of Salem Access Television. Youth were not only responsible for gathering thematic and source material for the murals, but also for painting and executing the murals themselves with the support of Ewing, and were able to affect the forms of cultural expression that the Community Vision program as a whole included. In Salem Access Television's *Artist Profile*, Ubiera-Minaya illuminated the way that dance emerged as an important form of cultural expression for youth, which led her and other leaders to incorporate the dance component more formally:

> Dance became a way to express the culture that we have, who we are, what we bring from our different countries...if they are going to do something, it's because it's something they like, something they want to do.

Beyond the high visibility of the Congress Street mural to the broader public, SATV's documentation of the murals' process and unveiling, as well as the video interviews generated during the mural processes, and the original portable canvas mural itself, all carried the stories, voices, and cultural expression of local youth into public institutions in Greater Salem and beyond. Hernandez, in the *Artist Profile*, notes how the canvas mural, *Encuentro de dos culturas,* was used as a banner during community meetings in the Point, and also made appearances in City Hall and other public institutions that, on the whole, lacked representation of the Point's Latinx community:

> When the mural went down to City Hall, they thought it was going to be a smaller one. But when they saw how big it was, and the explanation attached to it, they were very impressed. We gave the youth the opportunity to present it themselves because it's their work, their roots, and their culture.

In addition, Hernandez also reported the involvement and relationships with Salem Public Schools also created a venue for teachers and peers to review youth video interviews generated during the Community Vision project, facilitating cultural visibility and knowledge exchange in an institution that, as Katz mentioned her oral history (Chomsky, 2008), had lacked cultural understanding or supports for Latinx students.

In both process and product, the legacy of the Community Vision Project cemented these public images as part of the neighborhood's collective memory and identity, elevating the cultures, aspirations, and systems of meaning held by new immigrants and following generations. While the first mural, *Encuentro de dos culturas,* was a canvas mural not on public display, *Vida en el Punto* remains on Congress Street in the Point neighborhood, as does the final mural painted in 1999 by Ward Street, and have been recently restored in 2015 by North Shore CDC following interests and demand from residents (Jacques, 2016).

Indeed, Point residents in the past and in the present corroborate the importance of these murals to the Point community today, as they still represent the sense of belonging and aspirations for the Point and its future. In the *Artist Profile,* youth leader Andres Espinal comments:

> It feels great. My kids, when they show their friends, they can go oh, that's my dad!

The final mural painted in 1999, as well as *Vida en el Punto*, were both restored by North Shore CDC in 2016, a testament to their enduring significance. Indeed, one Point resident, in our interview, elaborated on the importance of its portrayal of children growing up, ascending through their educational pursuits, and parents, still connected to their home countries, supporting them and learning to let them go. Once more citing Marschall (1999), it is difficult to

make definitive claims as to whether or not these murals and creative processes resulted in broader social, political, and economic gains.

**PUAM 2015-2020: Between Imaging and Recognition**

Nearly twenty years pass between the Community Vision Project, and the next large-scale iteration of art and creative placemaking in the Point neighborhood in 2015, which would lay the groundwork for the Punto Urban Art Museum that we know today. Similar to the 1997 Community Vision Project, PUAM's central goal was to dispel stigma against the Point neighborhood. Both Salem Harbor CDC and North Shore CDC sought to dispel stigma by leveraging arts and culture programming, but used this strategy to solve for different goals. Whereas in 1997 the goal was to engage youth in order to build community power, PUAM's goal was to beautify the public realm in order to bring in visitors to engage in dialogues about the neighborhood's history and the CDC's work, build pride in residents, and to access Salem's tourist industry as a way of accomplishing local economic development. This strategy intends to bring spending into local businesses and inspire empathy and understanding between Point residents and other Salem residents who might have stigma against the neighborhood.

In this multipronged mission, PUAM joins a regional and statewide trend of arts and culture revitalization efforts. Indeed, MassINC's Gateway Cities Initiative has promoted creative placemaking and the growth of creative industries in post-industrial cities across the state. The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MassMOCA) is perhaps the most renowned case of this, where a former mill converted into a world-renown contemporary art museum has sparked an economic renaissance in its home town of North Adams. Salem's North Shore neighbor, Lynn, is home to Beyond Walls, a program similarly focused on beautification and local business development by bringing in artists to paint the walls of downtown buildings and businesses. An ecosystem of state-wide and regional agencies have been involved in facilitating arts and culture programs through technical assistance and financing to aid economic development in struggling local economies, including the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, MassDevelopment, Massachusetts Cultural Council.

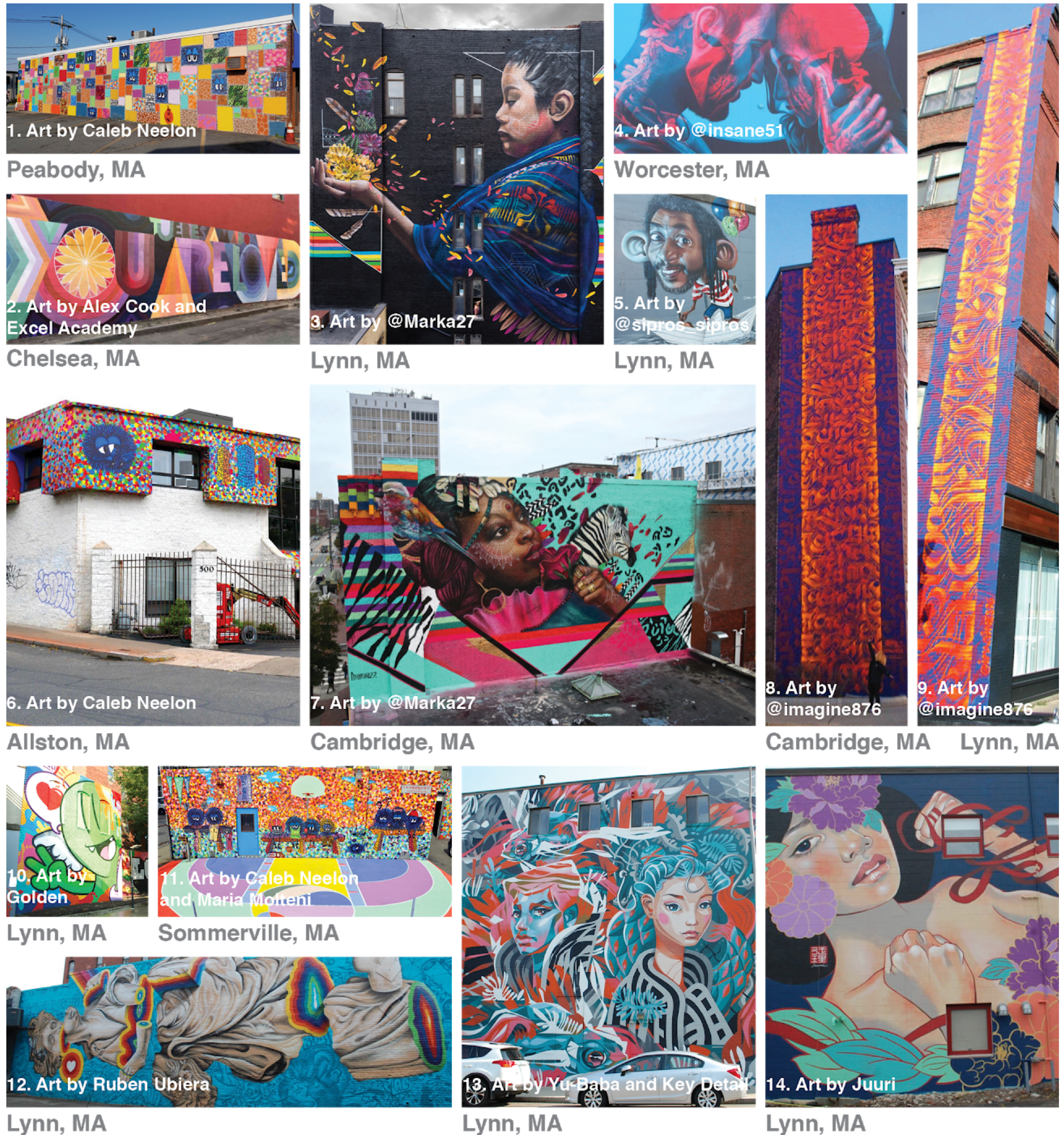



Figure 6.1: A selection of murals across the North Shore of Massachusetts. Sources: (1,6,7) CalebNeelon.com; (2) https://www.wescover.com/p/street-murals-by-you-are-loved-murals-at-4th-street-and-division-street--Prk13U5x5B; (3,7) www.marka27.com; (4) https://boston.cbslocal.com/2018/10/09/mural-worcester-3d-glasses-hanover-theatre/; (5,9,10,12,13,14) www.wbur.org/artery/2018/08/24/beyond-walls-mural-festival-lynn-2018; (8) www.wescover.com/p/murals-by-imagine-at-central-square--PB1m0ANW64

PUAM nevertheless stands out amongst these programs, as it claims its status as a social justice arts program by breaking down socioeconomic and spatial divides, pursuing market inclusion, and bringing public realm and cultural investments into the Point while maintaining housing affordability for local residents.

While we have argued that creative placemaking can be used as a strategy for building towards distributional and recognitional social justice through shared authority partnerships, such as in the case of the *Great Wall of Los Angeles* and John Ewing's murals in the Point in the 1990s, we note that creative placemaking programs can undermine both social justice pursuits when geared towards attracting private investment and visitors from the outside without proper market corrections, as PUAM has acknowledged, but also without shared authority with neighborhood residents. To illustrate this more broadly, we engage scholarship that critiques creative placemaking and cultural tourism (Gadwa Nicodemus, 2013; Bedoya, 2014; McCarthy, 2006; Zukin, 2009; Whyte et al, 2011; Feldman, 2011) to introduce the phenomenon of "place-imaging," where urban environments are remade to suit capital investment and outside consumer tastes, and in the process, risk displacing low income residents and/or precluding more local, democratic cultural expression.

Since PUAM's murals are all painted on or adjacent to affordable housing owned by North Shore CDC, mitigating resident displacement, this literature mostly allows us to consider how the program's pursuit of cultural tourism can potentially be in tension with pursuits of recognitional justice, as we have previously articulated. Specifically, cultural tourism and creative placemaking practices can prioritize outside creative talent, and be motivated to enable the comfort and legibility of urban environments for the tourist class, in the absence of shared authority with local residents that enables the claiming of local stories and identities. Building upon our theoretical grounding and cases of shared authority in creative placemaking, we discuss how PUAM's diverse programming and interventions showcase shared authority and engagement, but also display instances of imaging. Following the framework we have defended tying shared authority to social justice practice, we put forward that when PUAM included

residents and their stories in the design and execution of murals and in the steering of its programming, these instances of shared authority practiced towards greater recognitional justice. At the same time, we discuss how other aspects of the program, such as its concurrent focus on attracting outsider traffic, whether for education or for economic development, may be in tension with a shared authority approach. Finally, we conclude by recommending further research to understand how PUAM's economic gains are equitably distributed.

*Establishing the Punto Urban Art Museum*

From our conversations with North Shore CDC staff and review of public media, PUAM's more recent start in 2015 involves the painting of two crosswalks in the Point neighborhood, on the corners of Peabody Street and Dodge Street adjacent to Lafayette Street. These crosswalks were funded through a small grant, and were led by none other than Rosario Ubiera-Minaya, previously youth coordinator for Salem Access TV during Salem Harbor CDC's Community Vision Project, and now the Chief Program Officer for North Shore CDC, alongside her brother, Ruben Ubiera, who by then had become a famous street artist. This program was driven by a desire to garner more engagement and connection with local residents beyond just their tenants, as well as a response to the lack of crosswalks and other street improvements in the neighborhood. These interventions were seen as a success by staff - both in their beautification of the public realm and in the participation and interaction they garnered from the Point as well as outside visitors who typically would not cross Derby street into the neighborhood.

Figure 6.2: Painting crosswalks on Peabody Street, 2015 Art by Ruben Ubiera. Source: NorthShoreCDC.org.

Figure 6.3: Completed crosswalk on Peabody Street, 2015. Art by Ruben Ubiera. Source: NorthShoreCDC.org.

These crosswalks laid the groundwork for taking action on some of the goals of the 2013 Vision and Action Plan related to addressing stigma, connecting the neighborhood with residents of greater Salem, and inclusion in the tourist industry. These goals aimed to address stigma against the neighborhood, and to connect with residents of greater Salem and the North Shore. Specifically, the Plan laid out the following actions for the Point neighborhood to increase "Neighborhood Pride and Civic Engagement" that influenced the development of PUAM several years later:

> **Vision Element #2: Neighborhood Pride and Civic Engagement:** Point neighborhood residents have pride in the neighborhood and people of all ages have a role in improving the neighborhood and changing misconceptions.
>
> **Action 4: Promote a vibrant and welcoming Point neighborhood to residents and visitors by improving signs, landscaping, and public art to make the Point a more welcoming place.** Improve signage and landscaping at key thoroughfares including Congress and Lafayette streets and install other special markers that symbolize arrival in the Point...Implement the Salem Public Art Master Plan recommendations for the Point neighborhood.
>
> **Action 6: Market the assets of the Point to Salem residents, visitors, and tourists.** Work with Destination Salem, Essex County National Heritage Commission and Historic Salem, Inc. to promote the assets of the Point to visitors. Partners will develop a marketing strategy to promote assets in the Point neighborhoods to other Salem residents, visitors from elsewhere in the North Shore, and tourists and consider instituting art and architecture walking tours (2013: 35).

The crosswalk success illustrated the potential in art to level social and economic divides, and to garner feelings of pride and ownership among residents of the neighborhood. This possibility inspired North Shore CDC to take the walls of their affordable housing properties as canvases for future art projects using surplus funding from their real estate, and in 2017, the Punto Urban Art Museum was officially launched. At its outset, some artists were brought in by Ubiera, but North Shore CDC gradually implemented a more concerted search process for street artists via platforms like Instagram. They also selected artists who were largely of Hispanic origin, and ensured that 50% of street artists represented were women. September of 2017 was also noted by

program officers to have been a particularly intense moment of mural production. Indeed, 30 large scale murals were painted in that month alone by visiting artists.

Figure 6.4: Ruben Ubiera, *Anacaona,* 2017. Mural on Peabody Street representing Rosario Ubiera-Minaya as Anacaona, a Taino princess who led rebellion against Spanish colonists on the island of Hispaniola, which today is divided between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Source: PuntoUrbanArtMuseum.org.

Figure 6.5: Selections of the local artists wall, 2019. Source: PuntoUrbanArtMuseum.org.

North Shore CDC also started a local artist wall in the neighborhood along 25 smaller scale panels located on Peabody Street. Each year, North Shore CDC puts out a call for artists across New England to submit their proposals for a mural on these panels, and selects 25 of them to be painted and featured in the Point for a full year (NorthShoreCDC.org).

In onboarding new artists who came to paint in the neighborhood, North Shore CDC staff reported conducting neighborhood tours; providing a historical narrative of the neighborhood and its history, occasionally bringing up the practice of redlining and other lending discrimination that they claimed kept the Point and many other neighborhoods segregated and/or disinvested; meetings with staff; and “Meet the Artist” events that were held and were open to community members and outsiders alike.

Beyond bringing in artists, PUAM also began to incorporate more public events and opportunities for creative engagement for the community and for visitors. North Shore CDC has held block parties annually since establishing PUAM, which have drawn crowds from Salem and the greater North Shore, and have featured music, food, and arts activities. PUAM also partnered with the Peabody Essex Museum to put on several joint programs, including a creative storytelling event titled IM|MIGRATION led by artist Stephanie Benenson of the local artist collective Harbor Voices, and a participatory basketball court mural facilitated by Boston-based artist Maria Molteni (NorthShoreCDC.org). IM|MIGRATION featured a three-month long process of local resident interviews by Benenson, and a public event that engaged over 100 residents and featured with laser projections and recordings of local oral histories, while Maria Molteni, in partnership with community engagement staff at North Shore CDC, recruited local youth to design and paint a basketball court mural in a formerly vacant lot purchased by North Shore CDC.

Figure 6.6: Stephanie Benenson and Harbor Voices, *IM|MIGRATION*, 2019.

Source: NorthShoreCDC.org.

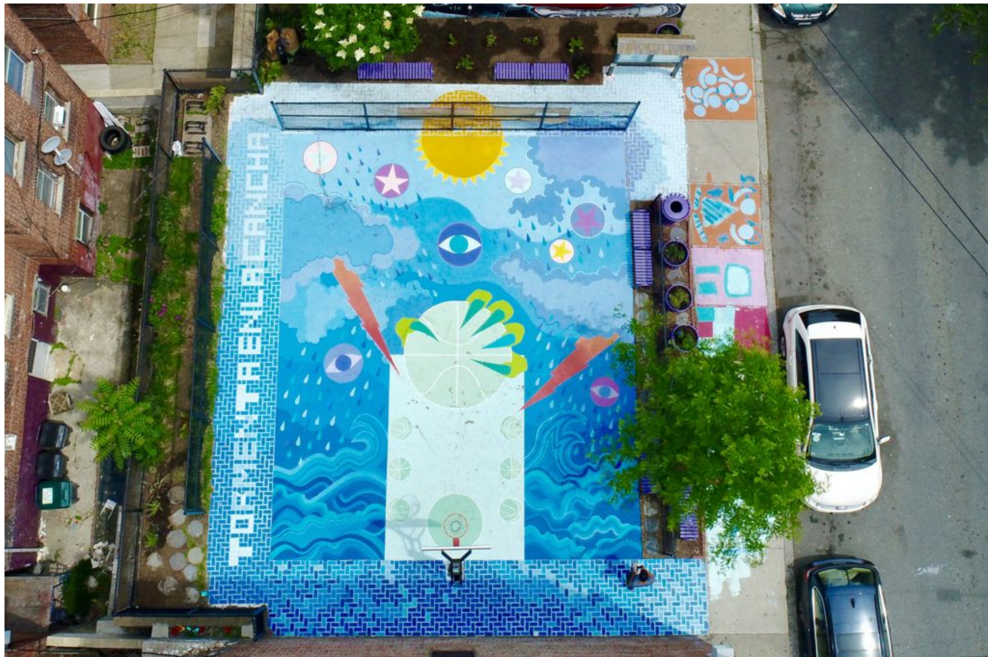



Figure 6.7: Maria Molteni, *Storm the court / Tormenta en la cancha,* 2018.

Source: PuntoUrbanArtMuseum.org.

In addition to these events, North Shore CDC staff also began to lead tours around the neighborhood for visitors and groups from local schools, to spread the word about PUAM's mission, and educate outsiders about the neighborhood's history, with the goal of engendering empathy and understanding for the immigrant experience in Salem. Tours have been led by North Shore CDC staff and PUAM administrators, some of which are residents of the neighborhood, who share their stories and experiences in the neighborhood. Partnerships with schools have additionally provided opportunities for students to engage with the murals, such as through the creation of a short book filled with poetry from students, exploring themes of identity in dialogue with the mural content.

Figure 6.8: Excerpt from PUAM poetry book, 2019. Courtesy of North Shore CDC.

*Engagement and Shared Authority in PUAM*

When PUAM included residents and their stories in the design and execution of murals, we argue that these instances of shared authority practiced towards greater recognitional justice. While our research did not yield a comprehensive review of specific murals or programs , we highlight instances of shared authority in PUAM's creative interventions that we came across in our fieldwork.

Notable instances of shared authority included opportunities to contribute meaningfully to a creative process or to program planning. Maria Molteni's *Tormenta en la cancha* stands out as a more robust instance of shared authority in creation of public culture, given that the artist's collaboration with North Shore CDC's community engagement team allowed for local youth to influence and steer the process of designing and executing the basketball court mural through design workshops. To the degree that they directly involved and expressed local identity and stories while involving and elevating local residents, cases such as Ubiera's crosswalk; IM|MIGRATION; and several mural collaborations that feature community leaders can be noted as instances of shared authority in the creation of public culture through PUAM. Anecdotes from staff about community participation and commitment to painting several of PUAM's murals, such as a mural of an old man by Ruben Ubiera have highlighted organic moments of community building and collaboration within  mural painting processes.

<u>Figure 6.9</u>: Andy Belomo, *El Espíritu de Ella,* 2019. This piece was painted by a local resident artist and features Alicia, a Point resident and leader who worked at the local Social Security Office in Salem.
Source: PuntoUrbanArtMuseum.org.

Figure 6.10: Ruben Ubiera, *The Farmer*, 2017. Source: PuntoUrbanArtMuseum.org.

However, key practical considerations of this kind of shared authority processes and events, such as time, resources, capacity, and partnerships, were noted as a significant barrier. Indeed, Ewing spent time living in residency in the Point, while youth organizers like Hernandez were involved consistently throughout the program. IM|MIGRATION and *Tormenta en la cancha* also involved a heavy lift from North Shore CDC's community engagement staff, youth and adult participants, and the artists. Even today, PUAM project managers and North Shore CDC cited that it could take up to one year to complete robust processes of engagement, partnership building, and education. The fact that PUAM's activities were largely operated by North Shore CDC staff on top of their other programmatic duties was cited as an extra strain on time and

resources, while multiple informants also explained how engagement efforts can be restricted to the projects that can explicitly fund this type of work.

As such, lighter engagement events were perhaps more common than the shared authority processes. The distinction we make between these two terms stems from the definition of shared authority as contingent on power and voice - that is, the ability to control or influence cultural or meaning making processes - while *engagement* is characterized as an invitation or participation in an existing program or initiative. Even while contributing new opportunities to engage in public culture and expression in the neighborhood, engagement is not necessarily sufficient to define a practice or body of work as shared authority in the absence of the ability to truly co-create.

The block party, as well as casual engagement between residents and artists in mural painting and some meet the artist events, can be seen as doors opened for participation and co-creation, as well as new definitions and explorations of place-based identity. A common anecdote that surfaced in our interviews and in conversations with staff was the fact that children in the neighborhood had begun to refer to their homes by the murals that defined their walls, such as "hummingbird building." Collaborations with schools to produce the poetry book additionally used PUAM as a platform to introduce new forms of creative education and engagement.

With a nod towards both distributional and recognitional justice, these creative placemaking and programming interventions have been new investments in the neighborhood's cultural life and public realm, which both the findings of the 2013 Vision and Action Plan, as well as our interviewees and informants from the Point identify as previously lacking. By introducing new artistic capabilities, programming options, and opportunities for creative engagement, these programs and instances of shared authority, and to a lesser extent, engagement, in PUAM allowed for exploration and elevation of local identity, and have resulted in new ways of forging belonging and dialogue in the Point for residents, greater Salem, and for visitors.

*"Place Imaging" in Creative Placemaking and Cultural Tourism*

While we have already argued and observed that creative placemaking interventions can be vehicles for recognitional and perhaps distributional justice, these practices can also undermine these goals when pursuing private investment or promoting cultural tourism in conditions without shared authority with local residents. Given PUAM's emphasis both on building inside "pride" and engaging outside visitors in pursuit of tourist spending or for education, we introduce literature to expand upon these tensions, and how they can undermine distributional and recognitional justice. We specifically note the contradiction between creative placemaking's pursuit of both social and civic outcomes, and economic gains through creating a "place image," or an idea of place that is legible to the tourist class for spending and consumption. This, scholars note, might result in gentrification, displacement, and cultural disconnection that can exclude and undermine community power (McCarthy, 2006; Zukin, 2009).

These outcomes stem from the role of culture in economic growth in the late twentieth and twenty-first century. With the neoliberalization of the economy and flight of productive industries from city centers, cities and planners increasingly sought to attract a highly mobile class of middle class consumers and industries in order to revive local tax bases, which developed into a cultural strategy of branding places for elite consumption. This ascendance of arts and culture into economic development policies across the United States is widely attributed to Richard Florida's 2002 book, *The Rise of the Creative Class.* Richard Florida puts forward the agenda of attracting creative workers and white-collar industries as a means for cities to remain competitive and solvent in a new economy. Florida's work and the arts and culture-driven urban regeneration strategy that it has bolstered have come under fire for their elitist assumptions that talent, culture, and creative capacity must be attracted from outside of lower income or working class communities. As economic growth fuels real estate values, which in turn displace low or moderate income renters as artists and highly-educated workers move in (Kayzar, 2016), this strategy enables gentrification. Instead of facilitating a more equitable distribution of economic

resources to existing residents, this method of urban development can thus serve to exacerbate existing inequalities (Hall & Robertson, 2009; Zukin, 2009; Bedoya, 2014).

A particularly extreme case where creative placemaking as "place imaging" is advanced by powerful capital interests is Miami's Wynwood Walls Arts District, where art moguls and real estate developers purchased formerly industrial spaces to display world-famous street art. This activity, as well as media images circulated of Wynwood Walls, attracted a flood of tourism, private investment, big business, and real estate development to the Wynwood area, and accelerated the gentrification of nearby working class, predominantly Puerto Rican residential neighborhoods (Feldman, 2011). In creating Wynwood as a gentrifiable "place image," Marcos Feldman's dissertation on the Wynwood Arts District notes the shift that CDCs took from organizing to market-accommodating forms of community and economic development. The pragmatic yet accommodationist approach of local nonprofit and community development organizations in Wynwood towards real estate actors, Feldman claims, enabled this practice of place imaging and resulting gentrification while neglecting more substantial "political and economic [change] needed to give [Wynwood] residents more control over their space and place in the city" (Feldman, 2011: 356).

Figure 6.11: Miami's Wynwood Walls Arts District. Photo by Will Graham.
Source: Wynwood Walls via
https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/wynwood-walls-have-shaped-miamis-art-scene

Such conditions for residential displacement are perhaps not of immediate concern for PUAM, given that North Shore CDC has a stronghold on affordable properties in the Point neighborhood.[2] However, we note the program's emphasis on bringing in world-class art and talent as one aspect of neighborhood identity recognition to a broader audience through media or through visitor traffic. Despite contributions to public realm improvements, it is not always clear whether these interventions contribute to recognitional justice or community empowerment. For one, the role of the artist and sponsor organizations in creative placemaking interventions geared towards social justice and social change has been debated by scholars (Marschall, 1999; Zitcer, 2018). Often motivated by personal convictions, artists may arbitrate the cultural expression and

[2] According to staff, North Shore CDC owns about 30% of the housing stock in the Point as deed-restricted affordable housing. However, an important distinction nevertheless exists between deed restricted affordable housing provided by the CDC in the neighborhood, and other housing that is not deed-restricted. While gentrification and displacement has not been reported as a current challenge in the Point by North Shore CDC, nor studied more systematically, potential for displacement of renters in deed-unrestricted housing over time remains an open and pressing consideration that practitioners and researchers should monitor into the future.

authority of local residents in a placemaking project. Given this tendency, Marschall (1999), in her critical investigation of community murals in post-apartheid South Africa, argues for an analytical distinction to be made between community murals that share authority between artists and community members, and more commercial murals created by outside artists or sponsors. When scrutinizing the contributions of these interventions to local empowerment or social change, she argues, these more commercial murals may arbitrate, or bypass, cultural authority and expression of local residents.

What's more, the economic development goals that PUAM touts, such as drawing visitors and foot traffic through local businesses in the Point, is largely motivated by the neighborhood's simultaneous proximity and exclusion from Salem's downtown retail corridor, National Park Service Historic Sites, and cultural institutions like the Peabody Essex Museum, that all contribute to the $100 million generated by tourist traffic each year (Salem.org). The educational tours that PUAM facilitates also rely on an outside audience in order to facilitate dialogue and consciousness around issues of immigration and stigma in the neighborhood. While breaking down cultural and economic divides between the Point and the rest of Salem remains PUAM's goal, we understand various risks to the strategies of placemaking, and educational tourism in contexts lacking more robust collaboration or shared authority with local residents in bringing new interventions into being, and in creating narratives around tours.

Specifically, cultural tourism and urban sociology scholars (Zukin, 2009; Smith & Robinson, 2006; Whyte et al, 2011) illuminate how accommodating dominant consumer tastes in cultural production, in order to promote tourism for economic gain, can risk the erasure of local cultural forms. Cultural heritage tourism areas geared towards economic development like cultural districts and ethnic tourist zones can create images of heritage and diversity that are legible for white or middle class outsiders who may otherwise stigmatize these spaces. Similar to creative placemaking, the market based logics of culture as economic development can walk a fine line between accommodating dominant consumer tastes and simplified conceptions of difference, and providing opportunities for local people to articulate and define the terms by which their

culture is recognized. Even instances of tourism meant to provide education or cultural exchange, as PUAM's educational tours do, require consideration of shared authority with community members, both as ethical practice, and a way to advance greater recognitional justice. In this vein, Whyte et al (2011) introduce the necessity of informed consent, resident participation, and direct local benefits from financially privileged individuals touring low income neighborhoods.

Once more anchoring on shared authority, there is nevertheless room to expand conventional understandings and functionings of cultural heritage for greater community benefit and progress towards recognitional justice. As Robinson and Smith (2006) write, "place, like identity, is also constantly being negotiated...cultures and societies are not passive recipients of tourism, they are also sites of contestation and resistance" (8). As PUAM has aimed to advance through educational tours, cultural tourism can be a venue where historically unheard narratives and critical understandings of the ways unheard voices and experiences of place enter a larger public consciousness. We further support this potential as captured by Multicultural Tours of What's Now (MYTOWN), a Boston-based nonprofit started by Karilyn Crockett and Denise Thomas in 1995 to "[boost] the leadership capacity, communication skills and job readiness of Boston high school students while producing new, resident-authored stories of local and family history" (MyTownStory.tumblr.com). In paying and supporting over 350 youth in developing their own stories of place and history, MYTOWN can be cast as a stride towards recognitional justice in its contestation of dominant narratives about the City which may leave out experiences of youth and its communities of color.

*Instances of Imaging*

As a catalytic moment, the painting of the crosswalk by Ruben Ubiera in 2015 sparked the imaginations of staff as to the power of arts and culture to bring people together across historical, racial, or cultural divides. Other instances, such as IM|MIGRATION, *Tormenta en la cancha*, the local artist wall, and even the program's roots in the participatory community process of the Vision and Action Plan, showcased the potential of shared authority in creative placemaking work to engage and elevate local stories as a way of deconstructing stigma. However, as PUAM progressed, it may have substituted key ingredients of collaboration and shared authority for a more nimble governance structure that allowed for faster mural production and attraction of world-class artists to participate in the program. Balancing community engagement with these goals may have precluded an opportunity to foster more participation and a politics of difference that undergird the pursuit of recognitional justice.

To begin, our fieldwork indicated a potential disconnect between the community and North Shore CDC in steering the program over time. Indeed, one former program officer articulated that "we need more engagement with the community, because whatever we are thinking in the CDC [about PUAM], we're not communicating that." Meanwhile, others noted that interaction with PUAM's artists or programming has also evaded the spaces where people in the neighborhood already gather and spend time, such as ESL classes or other service programs. Even though PUAM was born out of action items that surfaced during the Vision and Action Plan, and despite the fact that it was originally inspired by the Ubieras who themselves had roots in the neighborhood and/or positions within North Shore CDC until 2018, these more recent indications may point towards a need for greater dialogue and participation with members of the Point neighborhood in advancing different aspects of the program.

In bringing many of PUAM's large scale murals into being, authority and governance was similarly centralized within the North Shore CDC, which emphasized attracting world-class talent into the Point. Specifically, visiting artists were selected through a process of Instagram

outreach, and oftentimes, attracting world-class talent meant submitting to these artists' discretion when designing, painting, or engaging with local residents. While as Zitcer (2018) correctly notes, it is often unrealistic to expect all artists to be community conveners or engagers in processes of creative placemaking, it is possible that supporting artist autonomy, status, or aesthetic appeal may have substantially limited the possibilities for interaction, participation, and shared authority with residents, other than invitations to "meet the artist" events (which, one staff member noted, drew more members of the "Instagram community" than local residents) or notifications that the walls of their homes were being painted by a visiting artist.

Through our fieldwork, we find the implications of this kind of practice - lacking substantial shared authority, or even engagement - include a potential disconnection between Point residents, the program's intentions, and the murals themselves. Staff reporting on this disconnect specifically expressed how, on the one hand, there was a richness of talent and depth of meaning in many of the murals and the stories they represented; and on the other, a large gap in communication between that meaning and the people who live among the murals. Several informants additionally pointed out the need to balance murals that include resident participation or ownership with novel and professional outside work. Citing the difference in neighborhood sentiment towards the relatively amateur murals completed by youth during the Community Vision Project as opposed to some of the more professional works, one North Shore CDC staff member notes:

> Somebody was just learning how to do art probably can do [that]....It's not fancy extravagant art, you know, but be very sure that's what people want here..A mural that speaks about them. If we can manage to find a balance of targeting those clients that we want from the outside.

While administrators have stated that artists are onboarded to PUAM with an understanding of neighborhood history and conduct "meet the artist events" for the community, evidence of this disconnect may connote that despite the program's socially-motivated goals and concurrent practices of engagement and shared authority, PUAM as a collection of culture and knowledge has not been fully democratized, and its conceptions of difference and identity are not always

those that the people living among its walls always contributed their voices to in ways that may have been relevant or available to them.

Given these observations, we also raise the limitations of touting the program's participating "artists of Hispanic origin" as true authorities over the neighborhood's identity in conditions lacking more substantial collaboration with local residents. We acknowledge that identities in the Point, as in any neighborhood, are complex, both given the increasing presence of other immigrant groups in the neighborhood who may not be Hispanic or Latinx, and the individual complexities within the Hispanic/Latinx category itself along the lines of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, immigration status, or ability that shape culture and lived experience. While elevating the work of often underrepresented Hispanic/Latinx artists through PUAM should remain a laudable intention, there is opportunity to expand a more pluralistic and complex approach to the identity of the program, and to its claims to neighborhood representation.

In sum, the tension identified between attracting artistic talent from the outside and providing relevant engagement opportunities or content for local residents further alludes to one of the program's central tensions that stems from the Vision and Action Plan's goals: building pride and serving the neighborhood, and creating an "image" for the outside, whether as a platform for education, reconciliation, or an ancillary goal of facilitating greater market inclusion. Balancing an outside gaze in PUAM encounters the cultural dimension of the capital-community contradiction that Stoecker (2008) identifies as endemic to the CDC model of community development, and that critics of creative placemaking and cultural tourism identify as a strategy for creating environments for the tourist or visitor class. While the introduction of art has fostered awareness about the neighborhood's history to outsiders, and provided public realm improvements to support neighborhood pride, there could have been more opportunities for shared authority in the program's flagship interventions that supported positive self-definitions of difference with local community members.

*Tourism and Storytelling*

To the extent that PUAM has created a new image and amenity in the Point, it has been able to insert the neighborhood's immigration history into the dominant narratives of Salem's cultural heritage tourism industry clustered just blocks away. This has occurred through media attention, news articles, circulating Instagram posts, and it's ranking as a top public art destination in Salem on Lonely Planet. Following the Vision and Action Plan goals, neighborhood art visitor tours have been the primary vehicle by which North Shore CDC has sought to educate the greater public about the Point neighborhood, its history and its residents.

However, questions raised both in literature (Whyte et al, 2011; Zukin, 2011) about the ethics of tourism in low income neighborhoods, as well as by staff about educational tours, lead to unresolved ethical questions of this strategy of education and reconciliation, when local residents are not robustly involved as authorities in crafting the story of the neighborhood, and in defining the terms by which they would like to be respected, heard, and recognized.

We first note the issue of storytelling about the neighborhood on tours as a way of educating the broader public. Currently, a combination of resident and non-resident staff members lead tours, each providing different narratives about the neighborhood based on particular life experiences or areas of expertise, ranging from immigration, neighborhood history, affordable housing development, youth development through the CDC's YouthBuild chapter, and public art. While covering a wealth of material about the neighborhood and North Shore CDC's holistic initiatives to support equitable development, a lack of more substantial resident involvement hinders the complexity and wealth of narratives that are able to shine through on these tours. Further, a lack of more substantial shared authority with residents in tour programming is a missed opportunity for residents to self-articulate their identities and lived experiences as they wish to relate to and be recognized by others.

What's more, a lack of resident involvement in tours and other educational activities for outsiders in the neighborhood creates a situation where visitors are learning *about*, rather than learning *with,* people in the neighborhood and their histories in their own spaces. While

spreading awareness about the neighborhood's history, a lack of shared authority with residents themselves over the terms of these activities leaves less room for both meaningful dialogue between groups, or empowerment of residents through ownership of their own stories and identities in the neighborhood.

Finally, we raise the problem of consent and privacy to low income residents as tours traverse their neighborhoods, particularly more intimate spaces such as back alleys where murals are painted. Several staff members in our interviews reported that there had been complaints from residents in this regard, and PUAM has made efforts to notify households prior to these larger events. At the same time, we note concerns both from our interviews and from literature (Whyte et al, 2011) about the ability for residents of North Shore CDC properties or of other properties to both consent and reasonably protect their privacy if they feel so compelled from larger tours, or wandering visitors. Whether or not a broader conversation about these dynamics has been opened to residents was not identified by our research, but we recommend this as a topic of discussion in PUAM's future planning.

In tours, as in the serial mural making, we have thus seen communication and imaging to the outside in tension with shared cultural authority. Structural and practical constraints that North Shore CDC faces in developing more opportunities to engage residents in this programming, however, also define this tension. PUAM currently only has a two person team dedicated solely to its activities, while all other program aspects, such as engagement, come on borrowed time from North Shore CDC's staff. As one former staff member noted, increasing engagement efforts in mural making would likely require overtime from North Shore CDC staff, or additional staff salaries funded by a Community Development Block Grant through the City of Salem. Other senior staff members additionally noted restrictions on grants that support the arts and engagement directly, and the need to pursue small business development funds in order to carry out additional engagement programming. Even funding for North Shore CDC's YouthBuild program carries restrictions directly related to workforce development. Furthermore, following a strategic planning process for PUAM in 2019, many staff members noted that traditional

programming or fundraising methods for CDCs are not well suited to those typical of arts and culture institutions, making embarking on some of these programmatic changes additionally challenging.

Nevertheless, our analysis of shared authority, and the implications of placemaking and cultural tourism in conditions without shared authority, ultimately issues a call to recenter the questions of power and justice that PUAM seeks to address in its mission. Learning from cases of shared authority partnerships, such as the Community Vision Project, *The Great Wall of Los Angeles*, MYTOWN, and from PUAM's interventions like IM|MIGRATION, *Tormenta en la cancha*, and the collaborative work of other visiting artists, there are many opportunities to work towards shared authority through collaborations that add new creative capacities for engagement, local leadership, and programming that North Shore CDC may not be able to embark on on its own due to structural constraints.

**Discussion**

Stemming from a practical problem of low resident engagement in some of PUAM's mural programming, this thesis has sought to understand how PUAM has shared authority with Point residents in creating and steering its interventions. As we conclude our study, we trace the path we took in landing on shared authority as an element of social justice practice; understanding the opportunities and constraints for CDCs to participate in shared authority work; and understanding the instances of shared authority in the history of art and placemaking in the Point. While we elevate evidence of shared authority throughout PUAM's history, it may not have been enough to avoid some of the pitfalls of creative placemaking that are motivated by outside recognition. We end our discussion by once again highlighting the benefits of shared authority in creative placemaking as we have observed them in PUAM and in other case studies, and offer directions for future research for this field of practice.

As engaged scholars, we have defended shared authority as an incrementalist approach to practicing social justice through the sharing of power and cultural authority. We do this by elaborating on theory related to social justice involving both material distribution and as cultural recognition (Fraser, 1999; Young, 1989 2011; Chomsky, 2008), and operationalizing these pursuits through shared authority over creation of public culture, public history, and interventions geared towards social change.

Following this framing, we encounter both the need for both kinds of justice in the Point, together with the limitations of engaging in social justice work by North Shore CDC, and other CDCs, which have been structurally oriented towards market-based models of community economic development. With the support of literature on the promises and pitfalls of the CDC model of community development (Stoecker, 2008; DeFilippis, 2004), and evidence of shared authority partnerships between North Shore CDC and other actors in the Point that have supported diverse local advocacy campaigns, we anchor on shared authority as a guiding practice towards social justice.

We again identify shared authority as a component of success and social impact in our look into a case study of creative placemaking, the *Great Wall of Los Angeles*, and PUAM's original murals painted between 1997 and 1999 as part of the Community Vision Project initiated by North Shore CDC's predecessor, Salem Harbor CDC. In both programs, the sharing of authority between multiple organizations and neighborhood residents in these mural processes both allowed for unique creative capabilities and engagement capacities that each actor lacked on their own, while sharing creative authority with youth residents as a step towards recognitional justice.

PUAM's current day practices of engaging residents with local and global artists during mural interventions and events built upon this legacy, and have created myriad opportunities for shared authority through artist collaborations and programming. The crosswalk mural facilitated by local resident and street artist Ruben Ubiera, together with the community-articulated goals to foster public art and neighborhood tours in the 2013 Vision and Action Plan, were the spark for the program itself. The crosswalk instance in particular revealed the original potential for art to serve as a bridge across social and economic divides that were persistent in Salem. The establishment of PUAM more formally also brought events such as IM|MIGRATION, which engaged 100 residents and provided a platform for telling public oral histories, and opportunities to engage in formal and informal participatory mural making processes, such as those facilitated by Mariella Ajras, Ruben Ubiera, Maria Molteni, and other visiting artists. The program's local artist wall also provided a platform for emerging artists to practie their work, and contribute to PUAM's collection and culture. Finally, public realm improvements and novel cultural resources introduced in the neighborhood have led to recognition of PUAM and the Point from the outside through media coverage, and also have inspired new ways for local residents to identify and establish a sense of place.

At the same time, PUAM's concurrent external focus on bringing in world class art, tourist spending, and outsider traffic, all in service of reducing stigma towards the Point neighborhood,

and breaking down the socio-economic divide between the Point and the rest of Salem, have existed in tension with a more robust shared authority approach to its governance over mural interventions and tour programming. We note that this may have inspired a disconnection between the community and the program, and has been a missed opportunity to harness more ownership and dialogue over cultural production in the neighborhood.

Among these findings, however, we identify several limitations. For one, we focus on understanding PUAM's programming and operations mostly through the lens of available media, historical materials, and from the experiences of North Shore CDC, artists, and PUAM stakeholders, while lacking more substantial input from residents due to time, financial, and logistical constraints following social distancing measures implemented for the COVID-19 pandemic. This leads us to encourage North Shore CDC, or future researchers, to engage in a more participatory investigation of resident perspectives of PUAM's programs and activities grounded in a discussion of social justice. What's more, this study has been limited in its understanding of the extent of distributional justice brought about by PUAM, aside from the anecdotal evidence that we uncovered of increased foot traffic through the neighborhood's local businesses. We thus recommend future research to understand more empirically how investments, both by North Shore CDC, public actors, visitors, or businesses have been distributed. We also note that not all residents are small business owners or workers, and thus we encourage consideration of how direct benefits of increased business spending have, or could be, captured equitably through the neighborhood.

Finally, we do not claim to have conducted an exhaustive review of every mural or tour program process that has been a part of PUAM - rather, we have reviewed anecdotal evidence of general patterns and aspects of the program that our interviews and surveys have yielded. We anticipate that there have been various other instances of shared authority, engagement, or disconnection throughout the program's storied past, and we welcome future discussion and research of these instances from North Shore CDC or others to grow upon, challenge, or complicate the understanding presented in this thesis. Further, we emphasize that while PUAM's practice of

shared authority is the scope of our question and investigation, it is but one of many community programs that North Shore CDC operates. An evaluation of North Shore CDC's contribution to social justice would have to incorporate analysis of all of its operations, of which shared authority is indeed a hallmark. As such, we emphasize and commend that all of North Shore CDC's programming is inspired by its 2013 Vision and Action Plan, which extends authority to the residents of the Point to weigh in on North Shore CDC's priorities for the next decade.

Both the merits of shared authority, as well as the implications of creative placemaking practices without shared authority, however, lead us to reassert our claim that if PUAM should seek opportunities to share more authority with residents and other local organizational partners in its programs and interventions that have been involved in creating the Point's history and culture. This analysis further inspires broader claims for the field of creative placemaking and cultural tourism, which have both taken off across post-industrial Massachusetts, and are often motivated to advance social and civic goals at the same time that they hope to pursue economic growth through attracting capital and notoriety from the outside. Through our theoretical exploration of different aspects of social justice, and our defense of  shared authority partnerships as a tool for advancing it, we urge practitioners to carefully consider and co-create their definitions of social change that underlie these programs. As North Shore CDC has modeled with PUAM and its affordable housing, what provisions for affordability are in place to prevent resident displacement? For whom does a program claim justice or benefit for, and who must it involve as key voices in defining the terms of cultural recognition?

We hope that these questions and tensions that our study has articulated can inspire PUAM, and creative placemaking at large, to think beyond introducing world-class creative talent into a neighborhood as a vehicle for development or recognition, and to explore ways to build local capacity to define and engage in the creation of a public culture that is more diverse, equitable, and democratic. We also hope that our findings can inspire the educational aims of cultural tourism in the Point, and in any neighborhood, to pay mind to the plurality of voices and narratives that exist in a place, as well as more intentional consent, collaboration and dialogue

with local residents in undertaking these efforts. We urge shared authority in this context not only to avoid the pitfalls of cultural tourism, but as a fundamental practice of recognitional justice itself that enables the reclaiming of place-based history and lived experience over more powerful cultural, social, and even economic narratives that have created injustice.

Finally, we emphasize that a shift towards shared authority does not come without a loss. But perhaps even more difficult than finding the available resources of time and funding to invest in slower, more collaborative processes that yield results short of world class art is *believing* that the benefits of shared authority justify the loss of power, resources, and mainstream ideas of artistic or professional expertise that shape creative placemaking and community development work in a market economy. Shared authority offers organizations who wish to practice towards social justice a method for balancing its accumulation of power and resources by sharing it with those oppressed by dominant structures in pursuit of the just world we aspire to, but at what cost? In other words, how much shared authority is enough? Given the dominant structures of culture and capital in which we all live, and given CDC's unique position to provide needed affordable housing and essential social support, at what point does the material cost of investing in shared authority, or even creative placemaking, preclude other kinds of distributional justice through capital improvement gains? How could such an evaluation be made, and by whom?

These are tensions that North Shore CDC acknowledges and aims to learn how to balance, as well as open questions that we as students and professionals sit squarely within. They are fertile grounds for future research in community development and creative placemaking; and lifelong questions which we hope to continue to understand - together with North Shore CDC, and in our professional pursuits in city planning.

**Next Steps for PUAM and North Shore CDC**

The look into the past that this research provides comes at a moment of future planning for North Shore CDC as it prepares to implement a recently completed Arts and Design Strategic Plan 2021-2025; as it embarks on planning the second Vision and Action Plan to gather resident input, charting its course as an organization for the next decade; and as it confronts the new reality of a global pandemic and its role in supporting the Point and other communities it serves. In this moment of projection, we find promising shifts towards greater shared authority, and include this brief addendum to our study in order to consider how its findings may be contextualized in the program's future evolution.

The Arts and Design Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 provides a roadmap for the PUAM's future, which exemplifies a shift towards greater shared authority. For one, the strategic plan outlines a new process for mural selection that allows for greater resident input. A team comprising a curator and an advisory board made up of half Point residents and half international experts make recommendations for future murals that can be validated in a community process. While this selection process allows for more community input than before, we nevertheless urge consideration of whether international focus on professional curation can balance outsider recognition in attracting world class art with elevating local knowledges, perspectives, lived experiences, and narratives that could serve recognitional justice and build community power.

The strategic plan also engages the tension between a focus on outsiders and insiders and its relationship to social justice when it casts PUAM as an instance of "outer work" as opposed to "inner work" in the Point. North Shore CDC defends engaging both audiences in recognition that marginalization of the Point is the result of a larger system of structural injustice that involves outsiders. Attracting outsiders to the Point with professional and eye-catching murals, in theory, breaks the spatial divide by mixing the beneficiaries and the victims of structural injustice. Once combined, the reasoning goes, dialogue about structural injustice can ensue, leading to empathy and understanding of the immigrant experience, and "may even help the visitor understand the

role they unconsciously play in the segregation and stigmatization of the community" (Arts and Design Strategic Plan 2021-2025, 2020). In our research we have not found evidence of such spontaneous dialogue between residents and outsiders leading to greater understanding of structural oppression. However, reflecting on the practical problem that launched this research - of low resident engagement in PUAM programming - and in learning during our research that PUAM Meet the Artist events are better attended by the "Instagram community" than Point residents, we wonder if Point residents are in on the plan. If dialogue between the beneficiaries and victims of structural inequality is one of PUAM's goals, we recommend further research to understand the conditions under which it can be facilitated more intentionally, and the metrics by which empathy and understanding can be measured and validated. This presents a further opportunity for North Shore CDC to practice shared authority, which could manifest in the form of employment for resident leaders to lead this research or future program design.

We found that shared authority with residents is an implicit goal in the early planning stages of North Shore CDC's Vision and Action Plan 2030, a process that will set the course of all of North Shore CDC's operations for the next decade. Indeed, at the time of this writing, a grant application for a Neighborhood Ambassadors program, which would pay local residents to participate in leadership development, has been submitted and is under review. There is also a desire on the part of North Shore CDC for majority resident leadership on an advisory council to the plan, and that these residents represent an intentionally diverse constituency, from small business owners like beauty salons and laundromats, to the Shetland Park office park, to representatives from the Health Center, to the bingo players at Espacio, the community center from which North Shore CDC conducts many of its resident services. And there is also interest in cultivating a new generation of resident leaders. We affirm all of these initiatives and hope that our research can provide a theoretical framing for the relationship between shared authority and social justice, such that these collaborations and instances of shared authority can work towards contesting structural inequality.

However, future planning for the program encounters uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the social distancing measure and great economic and public health needs it has led to. It was on the fourth week of the pandemic shut down that we attended the virtual planning session for the 2030 Vision and Action Plan. With the exception of essential businesses, the Massachusetts economy was frozen, and all non-essential workers were urged to stay home, or wear masks and practice social distancing in public space. Such is still the case at the time of submitting this thesis. Naturally, the conversation led to the implications of social distancing and the uncertainty of future planning and how these conditions affected resident and stakeholders' appetite for long-term planning. The week prior we had also met with North Shore CDC's design team, who explained how all design and engagement efforts had pivoted to communications and outreach to small businesses. Notably, this outreach discovered a local leader in Juana, a hairdresser from the Point, who was able to provide North Shore CDC with contact information for other small business owners in the Point, and who voluntarily posted flyers on their doors to support communications efforts. While these new ties are important for current survival and outreach, they are laying the groundwork for a more collaborative recovery and way of working together, and we uplift this continued investment in nurturing these nascent relationships, and finding ways to make them relevant and meaningful outside of the context of crisis.

Finally, we would like to end this future reflection by thanking North Shore CDC for practicing shared authority with us over the course of the past nine months. Our interest in engaged scholarship stemmed from a core value we share to conduct research with clear implications for a specific cause, and this thesis could not have happened without North Shore CDC opening their doors for this unique collaboration at the intersection of theory and practice. North Shore CDC has consistently and generously shared their time with us in correspondence, sitting for interviews, connecting us with actors in the community, inviting us to events and volunteer opportunities, and sharing internal documents with us that informed our research. We admire and are grateful to North Shore CDC, and hope that our research can support their mission to practice towards social justice.

## Recommendations

We include the following list of ideas and proposals for PUAM's future planning and programs, as well as guiding questions, as informed by our study.

Figure 9.1: Table of key questions, ideas, and proposals for PUAM.

| | Key Questions | Ideas and Proposals |
|---|---|---|
| **Dialogue and future planning** | What does social justice look like in the Point? According to who?<br><br>What are the limitations / barriers in achieving these visions?<br><br>What collaborations can facilitate those barriers? | Local questions campaign about PUAM via social media to understand what people want to know or suggest about the program.<br><br>Facilitate a conversation about what exact social justice goals PUAM, North Shore CDC, and the Point neighborhood would like to pursue, weighing different strategies, barriers, and opportunities. |
| **Alliances** | What other organizations and institutions are working towards social justice?<br><br>What opportunities are there to align missions or share capacities? | Complement educational tours for visitors with workshops and other programming.<br><br>Incorporate art, creative inquiry, and historical education into YouthBuild leadership programs.<br><br>Seek out diverse program partners across fields and disciplines oriented towards social justice mission, or who provide capacity to convene and engage. |
| **Tours** | How are people learning about the Point neighborhood?<br><br>How is the narrative around the neighborhood currently being crafted, and whose voices does it include?<br><br>How might visitors learn with, rather than about, neighborhood residents?<br><br>What is the role of the art in telling the story of the Point neighborhood? How can that story be told more strategically in vi | Paid youth tours with focus on personal narratives and leadership development.<br><br>Smaller group tours followed by volunteer activity.<br><br>Participatory and creative workshop with local residents to craft the story of the Point - narratively, and through space in tour routes, selection of key artworks. |
| **Artists** | What role does the artist take in this project? Are they a convener, engager, educator, contributing a piece of their | Create an RFP for artists to apply and respond to with specific criteria for engagement and collaboration. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | work?<br><br>What are the trade offs for each of these approaches? | Create opportunities for YouthBuild students to act as apprentices, interns, or collaborators with local and visiting artists. |
| **Economic development** | How are resources supporting PUAM directly benefiting community members? | Complement tours with more intentional events or visits to local businesses.<br><br>Provide paid opportunities for residents to participate in PUAM (such as tours, neighborhood ambassadors, steering committee / advisory board, etc). |
| **Digital marketing** | How can PUAM and North Shore CDC's online presence support social justice? | Take a leadership role in clarifying social justice in terms of community empowerment.<br><br>Social media campaign to elevate the stories of local residents, businesses and leaders in dialogue with PUAM's instagram promotion of visitor photos.<br><br>Meme-the-Murals competition/collection, limited to Point residents and youth. |

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