Youth and Cities
Planning with Low-Income Youth and Urban Youth Cultures in New York City and Paris

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Abstract

Are the cities of North America and Europe governed, built, and planned by authorities to encourage youth development or facilitate repression? *Youth and Cities: Planning with Low-Income Youth and Urban Youth Cultures in New York City and Paris* is an investigation into the experience of urban youth by (1) examining the impact of youth policy regimes and neoliberal urbanization processes on the challenges young people face, the opportunities they have and the capacities they can build; and (2) looking at the myriad ways that young people utilize and transform urban space in their everyday lives through their cultural activities, such as hip hop, skateboarding, pick-up basketball and graffiti. Combining empirical research with urban theory, the project seeks to develop a set of conceptual tools for understanding the relationship between youth, the state and the urban environment. Young people are avid users of urban space, yet urban environments and governance practices only variably encourage the development of youth cultural movements. In the context of heightened anxiety about youth violence and growing youth unemployment, a central question behind this project is: what is the potential role of urban planning and design in promoting the wellbeing of young people living in low-income communities? The project’s overall objective is to explore the potential role of urban planning and design in improving youth contexts and outcomes.

Case studies are based on research in Paris and New York City, due to their vibrant youth cultures, high densities, and different governance strategies regarding the spatial practices of urban youth. As such, the two cities represent different physical landscapes and policy environments for young people. In Paris, the state is actively involved in the youth field and so, young people have a richly developed environment of resources. Many young people, however, feel cordoned off to such facilities and so seek greater engagement with the city as a whole. The Paris case shows that the provision of amenities is not tantamount to extending the ‘right to the city’ to young people. Conversely, in New York City, there is still much hesitance towards recognizing youth through the allocation of urban space and as such, young people depend largely on private actors and community organizers for spatial resources. The urban design politics of these landscapes reveal the tension between neoliberal urbanization processes and positive youth development. Spatially, policy in New York City shifted from making cities more habitable for young people to making youth more manageable for cities. Socially, urban policy moved from supporting social programs to facilitating market interests. The goal of reducing youth’s footprint on the built environment – to render them invisible, so to speak – results in landscapes that provide fewer and fewer opportunities for young people to transform and appropriate urban space. In Paris, decades of place-making have entrenched youth space in the city, making it harder for the state to disinvest young people of their spatial resources.

Despite different youth policy regimes and urban landscapes, young people in both cities are avid users of urban space and are captivated by similar cultural movements. Drawing upon ethnographic fieldwork with young hip hop artists and local youth, the project identifies the ways that young people use the built environment to express themselves. By analyzing the visual
cultures of the environments they transform, their use of social media to promote their goals, and the ephemeral ways that they appropriate space, I propose a model of freestyle urbanism. In New York in particular, young people with few spatial resources use and transform leftover spaces such as parking lots, alleyways, and abandoned buildings to meet their needs. These spaces enable a form of urban use and intervention that transforms space spontaneously and ephemerally.
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## Table of Contents

**INTRODUCTION | Planning for Urban Youth** ................................................................. 12

- Main Arguments: The Production of Youth Space ................................................. 15
  - Youth and the State ......................................................................................... 17
  - Youth and the Built Environment ................................................................. 23
- Youth and Urban Planning & Design: Contribution to the Existing Literature ...... 27
  - Youth and Urban Design Research ............................................................... 29
  - Youth and Planning Practice ......................................................................... 32
  - Youth Policy Research .................................................................................... 33
- Case Selection and Research Methods ................................................................... 34
  - Case Selection ................................................................................................. 34
  - Introduction to Cases ....................................................................................... 36
  - Data Collection ................................................................................................. 38
  - Data Analysis .................................................................................................... 43
- Dissertation Structure .......................................................................................... 45

**CHAPTER 2 | The Youth Question: Approaches to Urban Youth** ....................... 49

- The Youth Concept .............................................................................................. 51
- Policy Approaches to Urban Youth ....................................................................... 53
- Youth Research Paradigms .................................................................................. 59
  - Youth Problems .................................................................................................. 59
  - Risk and Resiliency ........................................................................................... 73
  - Positive Youth Development ............................................................................ 79
  - Youth Autonomy ................................................................................................. 84
- Youth Agency: Research on Youth (Sub)cultures and Activism ......................... 88
- Conclusion: Bridging Youth Policy and Urban Contexts .................................... 90

**CHAPTER 3 | New York City’s (In)visible Youth** ............................................... 93

- Growing Up with Neoliberal Urbanization in New York .................................... 99
  - Youth and Keynesian Urbanization: 1940-1960 ........................................... 102
  - Youth and Neoliberal Urbanization: 1970- present .................................... 104
- Youth, Policy and the Built Environment .......................................................... 110
  - Criminalization of Youth Culture .................................................................... 110
The Separation of School from Community ................................................................. 114
Youth and the Built Environment in the Bronx .......................................................... 116

School Environment .................................................................................................. 124
Juvenile Justice Environment .................................................................................... 129
Public Space .................................................................................................................. 135
Residential Environment ............................................................................................. 137
Conclusion ..................................................................................................................... 139

CHAPTER 4 | Freestyle Urbanism in New York City: Appropriations of Urban Space .... 142

Urban Youth Cultures .................................................................................................... 143
Hip Hop Culture: A Primer .......................................................................................... 143
Hip Hop and Gangs ........................................................................................................ 144

Freestyle Urbanism: Appropriations of Public Space for Cultural Practices ............ 146
Block Parties and Social Geographies ........................................................................ 147
Political Reactions to Space ........................................................................................ 150
Urban Sports: Pick-Up Basketball and Parkour .......................................................... 153
Cyphers and Graffiti ..................................................................................................... 155
Crews ............................................................................................................................. 163

Colonizing Creative Space .......................................................................................... 165
Spaces Created by Community Organizers .................................................................. 166

Work ............................................................................................................................... 167

Conclusion: Engaging Youth Culture .......................................................................... 170

CHAPTER 5 | Spatial Governance of Parisian Youth: Engagement or Containment? .... 172

French Government and Urban Development: A Brief Overview ............................ 177
Administrative Organization ......................................................................................... 178
An Introduction to Urban Policy and Planning Processes in France ............................ 180
Growing up with Neoliberalism in Paris ..................................................................... 183
Youth and Dirigisme: 1950-1980 .................................................................................. 185
Youth and the Urban Crisis, 1980-2000 ....................................................................... 189
Youth and Neoliberalism: 1990 - present ..................................................................... 193
Youth, Policy and the Built Environment ..................................................................... 195

Spatial Politics: Making Space for Young People in the City through Place-Making .... 198
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Freestyle Urbanism in Paris: The Politics of Visibility</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban Youth Culture</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French Hip Hop Culture: A Primer</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth Culture and Social Media</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#Identity: Youth and Identity Politics</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freestyle Urbanism: Appropriation of Urban Space for Visibility and Autonomy</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban Sports: Soccer, Skate Culture and Parkour</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Block Parties and Terrain Vague</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Posse</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hip Hop Geographies: Rap and Breakdancing</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hip Hop Geographies: Graffiti</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Planning with Urban Youth Cultures</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case Comparison</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem-based and Asset-based Youth Policy Regimes</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spatial Governance: Exclusion and Containment</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth Culture and Public Policy: Engaging with Urban Youth Cultures</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Critical Commentators: Multiple Pathways of Youth Participation</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hustle and Show: Spatial Appropriation and Cultures of Work</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principles to Guide Planning and Design</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning and Design Strategies</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designing Good Youth Space</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An Example of Good Youth Space</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION | Planning for Urban Youth

Today, the youth population is larger than ever. Adolescents and young adults account for around 30% of the global population and this number will continue to increase until at least 2035, according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA 2014). Most of this population growth is happening in dense urban areas. It is therefore important that urban planners and designers become more actively involved in the youth field and advance the interests of young people. The community of urban scholars and practitioners should protect the rights and needs of young people by supporting their access to public space, by protecting their right to be involved in the production of space, and by providing them with a supportive and high quality urban environment. To do this, scholars and practitioners must be aware of the impact that political and economic regimes have on young people. More importantly, practitioners and scholars need to be more reflective about the impact of their own work on the youth population. What are policies and projects doing for young people, and what are policies and projects doing to them?¹

The research question driving this project is: what is the potential role of urban planning and design in promoting the wellbeing of young people living in low-income communities? To answer this question, I specifically look at cities within the United States and France. I decided to concentrate my research on advanced industrialized cities of Europe and North America; however this challenge is just as present (if not more so) in the cities of South America, Africa, and Asia. Indeed, much of the anticipated global youth population growth will happen in the Global South, with Asia expecting a population increase of 1.4 billion, Africa of 900 million, and Latin America of 200 million (UNFPA 2014). It is my view that cities of the Global South

¹ This question is paraphrased from Kathleen Nolan’s book Police in the Hallways (2011)
experience distinct challenges regarding their growing youth population and as such, I felt ill-equipped to discuss them here. Yet, although analysis of these cities was beyond the scope of this project, I believe that the topic of youth and cities is a global issue and that it is important to better understand the linkages between the Global North and South, especially in the context of population flows (see Tienda and Wilson 2002).

The topic of my dissertation was inspired by the young people I met while doing fieldwork in New York City. I initially intended to write about hip hop since I was interested in street art and urban culture. It wasn’t until I started talking to hip hop artists that I discovered that what I was interested in wasn’t just the art, but the actors. Talking to these creative young people about their dreams, interests and inspirations, and then hearing about their struggles and the many barriers they face in their everyday lives, made me feel that this was a subject I had to investigate. In New York City, despite the seminal role of public space in the development of youth cultural movements, young people face an increasing encroachment on their ability to use public space due to gentrification, harsh policing, and strict regulatory practices in their neighborhoods. In Paris, efforts to promote the social inclusion of marginalized youth have resulted in the institutionalization of youth cultures and the prolific construction of designated socio-cultural facilities for them. Yet, although young people are given space in French cities, it is largely on the state’s terms. This approach has had very contradictory results in the sense that young people are acknowledged, but often feel that their access to space is selective.

The state’s relationship with youth in the United States is problematic insofar as the focus of youth policy is predominantly on addressing the troubles of young people. Moreover, public actors misinterpret youth cultures and so either trivialize or criminalize them. Young people have a complex and significant relationship with their environments and it is the responsibility of
planners and designers to learn how to read their insertions in the urban environment. This can be accomplished by better understanding their cultures and lifestyles, and by looking beyond formal institutional settings for signs of political participation. It is imperative not to focus primarily on problems and anger in research, practice, and policy work. While it is important to learn why young people are choosing to riot, to belong to violent gangs and to participate in drug economies; it is equally important to understand why they choose to participate in non-violent movements, such as hip hop culture, especially when those non-violent youth cultures are perceived as viable and desirable alternatives to violent ones.

American urban planning and design has had relatively little involvement with youth in scholarship and practice; especially in comparison to work done with other vulnerable groups. There are notable exceptions: Kevin Lynch’s *Growing Up in Cities* project surveys the urban characteristics valued by young people in ten sites around the world (Chawla 2001; Lynch 1977); Anne Whiston Spirn’s West Philadelphia Landscape Project explores the potential of youth participation in planning through practice and research (Spirn 2005); UC Berkeley’s Center for Cities and Schools engages questions that link the built environment and public institutions with the development of school-age youth populations; and lastly, the community youth development field has provided much insight into the types of programs and supports that young people need from their communities (Perkins et al. 2003). Much of this research, however, is focused on youth under the age of 18, with a great concentration on pre-teens and young adolescents between the ages of thirteen and fifteen. As such, we know less about the needs and interests of older adolescents and very little about young adults. For this reason, this project focuses on
young people between the ages of 16 and 25. Lastly, past research has not engaged actively with popular youth cultures, such as hip hop, and the ways that they relate to urban space. As such, a major focus of this research is on understanding the relationship between non-violent youth cultures and the urban built environment.

If planners and designers look at the built environment in terms of both the underlying political-economic systems that impact youth and the cultural movements that young people invest in, they will find many opportunities for projects. Site planning, urban design, and architecture can be harnessed and coordinated to make better environments for young people. The task at hand, therefore, is to determine where those opportunities are and to identify the characteristics of good youth space. By investigating the state- and youth-led processes that contribute to the production of youth space, this dissertation works towards an understanding of the systems that shape youth space and the resulting physical landscape. Criteria for good youth space will be discussed at greater length in the conclusion; however, it is my contention that good youth space responds to youth cultural practices and supports positive youth development.

Main Arguments: The Production of Youth Space

To understand how planning and design can most meaningfully intervene in the youth field, it is essential to examine the production of youth space. Youth space is defined here as the environments inhabited by young people in their everyday lives. Such environments include school environments, residential environments, public space, socio-cultural facilities, and juvenile justice environments. Youth space comprises the architecture, landscape, visual cultures,

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As will be discussed in greater length in Chapter 2, demographic definitions of youth are highly variable. For the United Nations the term “youth” refers to those between the ages of 15 and 24; for the OECD “youth” are between the ages of 16 and 24, but sometimes this will be extended to age 30; for the European Union youth are defined as being 15 and 29 years old.
and site-plans of these environments, but also includes the way that they are connected to one another and to the urban area in which they are embedded. The design politics (Vale 1992, 2013) of youth space simultaneously reveal and condition the position that young people hold in society.³ Design politics is a term coined by Lawrence Vale to draw attention to the political values that are embedded in design and development. Such politics work through both symbolism and process, in the sense that the ‘imaging’ of a place and basic design decisions (such as how many units of what size get built in a public housing development) are expressions of power that reveal unstated social values (Vale 2013:31). According to Vale, “design and planning are not epiphenomenal to large urban socioeconomic forces, but instead constitute direct and indirect expressions of these processes” (Vale 2013:32).

Design politics is a useful concept here because it highlights the politics underlying the production of youth space. Moreover, by analyzing the design politics of a space, it is possible to reveal unstated attitudes towards youth that are expressed by architectural features and site choice, but are not explicitly stated in policy. For example, the American trend towards greater security infrastructure in schools and more community-oriented design in juvenile detention facilities is indicative of a highly regulatory attitude towards youth that is not reflected in the emphasis on positive youth development and job-connection in recent public policy efforts. To this end, youth space is created both directly and indirectly by state and non-state actors, in the sense that some places are made specifically for young people (direct place-making) and some places are used by young people but are not specifically intended for them (indirect place-making). To analyze the processes underlying the production of youth space, I focus on two relationships: the relationship between youth and the state, and the relationship between youth

³ I use the term 'society' loosely, to refer to the position of youth as a stakeholder group, vis-à-vis political institutions at multiple scales of government.
and the built environment. It is my contention that states and young people are key actors in the production of youth space.

Youth and the State

This project approaches the state as an actor that can have an effect on political outcomes, policies, social structures and the built environment. To this end, Theda Skocpol defines the state as “an organization through which official collectivities may pursue distinctive goals, realizing them more or less effectively given the availability of state resources in relation to social settings” (Skocpol 1979). I’ve chosen to use this definition because it emphasizes the state’s ability to create and pursue its own goals and policies. While the scale (Brenner 2004) and territoriality (Sassen 2008) of the state have been scrutinized and re-conceptualized in recent years, a point that seems to remain consistent is that the state is a meaningful political actor and plays a seminal role in supporting even neoliberal political-economic systems that are characterized by market deregulation, privatization, and a limited welfare state⁴ (Sassen 2011).

For the purpose of this project, the state is a significant actor because it both enables economic restructuring through spatial interventions and manages the social conflicts that arise from economic restructuring through either compromise or repression. Urban areas are complicit in these transactions; as such, urban design and architecture become either the tools or the physical expression of state-enabled economic and political transformations (Harvey 2010; Scott 1998; Vale 1992). For example, under the influence of neoliberal ideology, market discipline, competition and commodification has been extended to the physical planning and design of urban space; this has pitted civil society interests (especially those of vulnerable populations)

against economic ones. One result has been the gradual diminishment of public space — either through development or strict regulation — in dense urban centers.

Through the analysis of state-led spatial production practices, critical urban theory\(^5\) interrogates the state's role as a place-maker at multiple scales. Spatial production is a term used by Henri Lefebvre to express that space is produced to achieve particular outcomes; for example, space is divided into land parcels to facilitate commodification and public plazas are designed to be easily surveyed for crowd control. Space includes the built environment, natural landscape and the signs and symbols that punctuate the urban fabric. Very often, powerful actors have control over spatial production in cities and so race, gender and class-based inequalities become expressed and embedded in the urban landscape. By approaching urban space is a "site, medium and outcome of historically specific relations of social power," critical urban theory reveals the ways that the physical space of the built environment responds to and conditions state-market-society relationships (Brenner 2009, 198).

This mode of analysis is useful here because it provides a conceptual vocabulary for thinking about the state's role in the production of youth space. Critical questions about spatial production — Who designs space? Who decides how that space is used? Whose needs and values are being prioritized? — highlight the power relations embedded in physical urban space. In the context of youth space, then, the urban environment can be approached as the product of conflicting policy goals and compromises. For example, the creation of green space in neighborhoods with large youth populations, the removal of seating from a public plaza to discourage loitering, and the designation of legal graffiti walls around the city, are all acts of

\(^5\) Critical urban theory encompasses the radical urban theory of scholars working post-1970, including David Harvey, Manuel Castells, and Henri Lefebvre, and scholars influenced by them.
spatial production meant to control or support youth populations. Through my research, I have found that youth development goals often contradict economic development goals as both require urban space and resources. The resulting design politics can take the form of exclusion or containment. For example, aggressive quality-of-life policing instituted in New York City in the 1990s criminalizes uses of public space that are antithetical to business interests (NYPD 1994). These policies antagonize young people — in particular youth of color — by making it more difficult for them to gather, organize and recreate outside of their homes.

Conversely, in the French context, the state often finds itself compelled to make compromises with civil society actors who find themselves at the losing end of economic restructuring. Such compromises take the form of spatial compensation through the provision of special amenities and increased access to public space. For instance, the city-led redevelopment project for Forum les Halles, a shopping center in central Paris which was a popular gathering place for Parisian and suburban youth prior to its renovation, includes a Hip Hop Center in its new site plan. The Hip Hop Center preserves a space for youth activity within the new shopping center, but also moves activity from the street (les Halles was a popular spot for break dancers to practice and perform) to an enclosed area.

The heavy regulation of public space in New York City and the containment of youth activities within designated facilities in Paris are examples of the state’s role in the production of youth space. States use a variety of spatial governance tools to manage the needs and demands of urban youth, particularly as they relate to the dominant political-economic system of the city. Spatial governance strategies reveal how states choose to integrate young people into urban space. Related to spatial governance is the overarching youth policy regime in which young people are embedded. The way that the state approaches youth — as a problem to be solved or an
asset to be cultivated – has a significant impact on the kinds of programs and resources that are accessible to young people in cities.

Spatial Governance

Acts of exclusion and containment represent two ways of governing urban populations by way of their socio-spatial organization. I use the term spatial governance to describe the way that states distribute, program and regulate urban space. There are three mechanisms of spatial governance that are of particular importance to youth populations: (1) management of urban space; (2) access to public space; and (3) distribution of spatial resources. The management of space refers to the strategies that are used to administer urban spaces and youth environments. In New York City and Paris, I observed two different strategies of management: regulation and mediation. In New York City public spaces were heavily regulated by zero-tolerance policing, whereas in Paris, I found that many popular public spaces were managed using social mediation as a first response to potential conflict. Access to public space is distinct (though related) to management because providing young people with access to public space does not solely depend on their ability to use the space, but also their ability to get to it (via transportation) and find it (by knowing what kinds of public spaces are available in the city). It is also influenced by the desire of the public authorities to create spaces where young people want to spend time. Lastly, the distribution of spatial resources refers to how much space young people are actually being allocated in an urban area and whether or not there are neighborhood discrepancies between the quantity and quality of amenities.

Youth Policy Regimes

Spatial governance is influenced by a state’s youth policy regime. The term youth policy regime refers to the interests, institutional structures and goals that determine the way that a state
governs its youth; as such a youth policy regime reveals how young people are approached and treated by public institutions and decision makers. In the United States, youth are approached predominantly through a problem-based lens, in which most public policy efforts are directed towards fixing and preventing perceived problems associated with youth. In France, young people are approached through an asset-based lens, because French républicanisme emphasizes the importance of using public institutions to 'make good French citizens.'

These two approaches influence the form of youth programs and initiatives and as such, have an important impact on the shape, form and distribution of youth space. In France, for example, young people have access to ample socio-cultural amenities because informal education is a central component of civic education. These amenities are specifically intended for young people and so are different from community centers because they are not intended to be shared across age-groups. Therefore, in the 19th arrondissement, a low income neighborhood in Paris, young people experience a landscape where they have easy access to cultural facilities, outdoor park space, and recreational programming. This is a quite different environment from that of South Bronx neighborhoods, which are vibrant and lively but clearly lacking in public investment and publicly-funded youth facilities. Instead, young people are confronted with signs and symbols indicating surveillance, such as signs for the Clean Halls program on residential buildings and New York Police Department video-surveillance cameras.

Non-State Actors: Community Organizations and Corporations

It is also important to recognize the position of non-state actors in the production of youth space. Real estate developers, corporations, community organizers and foundations play a seminal role in shaping the environments that young people inhabit. Corporations and real estate developers often compete (sometimes indirectly) with youth over space as they tend to have
competing goals and interests. Such conflicts occur at multiple scales; from small business owners not wanting groups of young people hanging out in front of their stores to large real estate developers privatizing public spaces that were once the provenance of local youth.

When the state fails to protect youth interests, especially in the competition for urban space, community organizers work actively to support the young people in their communities. Nonprofits provide a wide range of services that typically focus on areas outside of education. This can include: after-school programs (also referred to as ‘out of school time’ initiatives), economic support for families, child abuse and neglect prevention, workforce development, youth crime and justice, homelessness, counseling, and mentorship. Community organizers have a more fundamental role in the United States, as they fill the many gaps left open by insufficient public youth programming. Boys & Girls Clubs of America and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America are two of the largest, national, nonprofit youth organizations in the United States. There are also many locally-based community organizations that target the needs of youth in a specific community. For example, The Point, an organization in the Hunts Point neighborhood of the Bronx, provides creative space and art workshops for young people living in the neighborhood. The Point’s activities are particularly important in the context of funding cuts to school art programs.

Community based organizations are vital resources for young people living in under-resourced communities; especially for those who are unable to access fee-for-service activities, such as sport lessons or tutoring. Milbrey McLaughlin of the John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Communities at Stanford University, has done extensive research on the importance of community based organizations on youth development (McLaughlin, Irby, and Langman 1994; McLaughlin 1999). In Community Counts, she and her research team argue that youth have
insufficient supports in their communities during non-school hours and that young people interpret this "barren" landscape as "adult indifference" (McLaughlin 1999:3). Community-based organizations provide young people with critical resources during non-school hours. Despite the important role they play, many organizations are under-funded (especially local ones, like The Point) and often find themselves having to apply for grants from public institutions and private foundations to maintain their operations. As such, they are not able to be open for as many hours as they would like and sometimes have to cut programs and workshops that they cannot afford.

In France, community organizations (or associations) also have a strong presence; however, they are not compensating for missing services but rather are responding to neighborhood specific interests and needs. In Paris, I worked extensively with the association One, Two, Three ... Rap! This association teaches young people English using hip hop. They listen to American rap, have conversations about hip hop in English, and help participants write English lyrics to perform in small concerts. They worked out of a shared building specifically for associations. Cliché Urbaine was another association I encountered. The association ran photography workshops with young people in the 19th arrondissement. They were located in a small office space near the Mathis metro station, in one of the public housing buildings. In each arrondissement in Paris, there are buildings or sections of public housing buildings set aside for associations. If you start an association, you automatically have access to the shared space.

*Youth and the Built Environment*

Although states are powerful place-makers, it is equally important to look at the ways that young people themselves use and transform the urban environment that has been made for them. How do young people respond to these landscapes? How do they use urban space? Young
people are active users of urban space and insert themselves in the built environment in sometimes unexpected, and often unintended, ways. In Paris and New York City, I observed many different modes of insertion that can be broadly summed up as creative acts of appropriation. They are creative because they involve the transformation of space for an alternative, unplanned use. They are acts of appropriation—rather than acts of claim-making—because they are temporary. In these cases, a space will be appropriated for a particular purpose but demands for ownership will not be asserted. While young people can very often become attached to these places and feel a sense of belonging to them, I found that their activities rarely involved claim-making, and so found ‘appropriation’ to be the more apt label.

Non-Violent Urban Youth Cultures

To understand how youth are involved in the production of youth space, I focused on visible, non-violent urban youth cultures. I chose to look only at non-violent youth cultures because I wanted to get a sense of the opportunities that urban planners and designers miss by overlooking youth cultural movements. Moreover, I observed that often non-violent youth cultures, such as hip hop, are represented as being part of violent cultures. As such, it was important to me to highlight misunderstood non-violent youth cultural movements. I chose to look at visible youth cultures because those are the ones that have a readily observable presence in the urban landscape. While there are also many significant youth cultures, such as gaming, that take place in the home, these activities did not seem as instructive for understanding how young people interact with the built environment and so they were not included in this project.

Visible youth cultures are comprised essentially of urban cultural activities. Urban cultural activities are those that are inspired by and connected to urban public space. They are linked to urban space in the sense that they draw from the built environment itself and from the mix of
people and cultures that are present in urban public space. They are mostly self-taught and so develop and evolve through chance encounters between practitioners enabled by a shared environment. These include urban art practices – graffiti, rap, and break dancing – and urban sports – skateboarding, pick-up basketball, parkour and soccer.

Freestyle Urbanism

Through my observation of how young people use urban space in New York City and Paris, I found that they very often employ a process I call freestyle urbanism. The term freestyle was originally used to denote a contest or a version of a sport in which there are few restrictions on the moves or techniques that competitors employ; in freestyle swimming, for example, the swimmer may swim any style they choose. The term freestyle is also now applied to improvisational artistic practices and competitions. It is very common to hear it used to refer to improvisational rap or breakdancing; in fact, in France, the English word freestyle is the word used to describe a cypher. Freestyle urbanism therefore is an ephemeral use of a space that is appropriated for an activity but is not owned and is not permanently transformed. These acts often happen spontaneously. Freestyle urbanism is creative and innovative in the sense that young people resourcefully manage to use a single space to fulfill diverse needs. Moreover, it is responsive to conditions of the built environment, much in the way that a freestyle rapper might draw upon immediate surroundings for inspiration. For example, in New York City entrepreneurial young people will make use of a single space for a wide variety of activities. The gallery 3rdEye(Sol)ation in Brooklyn was used by many of the young people I met as a concert venue, a gallery, a meeting area for casting calls, and even for fashion shows. It was just a small

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6 For a description of a cypher and other hip hop terms used throughout the document, please refer to Appendix 3 – Glossary of Hip Hop Terms
shop off of Broadway in Brooklyn, but it fulfilled many needs because the owner was responsive
and young people were allowed to program it autonomously.

In New York City, flexible spaces used by young people are privately owned and young
people come across them by luck. For instance, Anthony Marshall, the creator of Lyricist
Lounge, was able to begin his venture because he was given free access to an unused studio
apartment to host the first Lyricist Lounge ‘Open Mic Night’ when he was just 17 years old. In
Paris, on the other hand, I found that spatial appropriations often took place in areas where young
people felt they could gain public exposure and find an audience for their art. The Esplanade du
Trocadero, a prominent plaza space in front of the Eiffel Tower, is one such space that has been
adopted by young breakdancers. Since young people have many socio-cultural facilities at their
disposal, the desire was not just to have space, but to have a space where they would be seen and
celebrated by an audience. As such, they seek out popular and busy public spaces in central Paris
that have enough level ground to accommodate performers and onlookers.

It is important that planners and designers develop greater landscape literacy of the
cultural and leisure activities of young people (Spirn 1998). Landscape literacy is defined by
Anne Whiston Spirn as the ability to “recognize both the problems in a place and its resources, to
understand how they came about, by what means they are sustained and how they are related”
(Spirn 2005:410). After spending time with young people and learning about their lifestyles,
cultural movements and interests, I became more aware of the many ways that they are
misinterpreted and thus misunderstood. Hip hop, for example, is very often linked to gang
activity by public officials and society actors who are not involved with the culture. When
talking to hip hop artists, however, I found that hip hop served as an important alternative to
gang culture. Hip hop journalist Bonz Malone told me that the hip hop movement “smashed
gangs all over New York” because it provided an alternative means of gaining respect (Malone 2013). Or as CW, a young rapper observed, “gangs use our tools [graffiti, rap] but they also use guns …so how come hip hop is a gangsta but the NRA is a political association” (CW 2013)?

Through their activities, cultures and social media posts, young people are constantly evaluating and re-designing their neighborhoods. Part of the task for us as designers is to learn how to look at what they are doing to get a sense of what matters to them and why. As Spirn observes in her work, “to design wisely is to read ongoing dialogues in a place, to distinguish enduring stories from ephemeral ones, and to imagine how to join the conversation” (Spirn 2005:410).

**Youth and Urban Planning & Design: Contribution to the Existing Literature**

Few contributions to urban youth scholarship come from Urban Studies and Planning. This is odd, as young people are avid users of urban space and occupy an increasingly prominent role in cities. As a field whose primary purpose is to regulate the production and use of space, it is imperative that we be aware of the impact of such regulation on vulnerable populations. While planning scholars have devoted much energy to understanding the impact of planning in terms of race, class, gender and sexuality (Manning Thomas and Ritzdorf 1996; Sandercock 2003), youth – especially young adults – have been under-researched and under-theorized. It is here, therefore, where I hope that my research can contribute. Specifically, I’ve framed my project to address issues that are pertinent to physical planning and design.

Within physical planning and design, existing research on youth is focused primarily on youth participation in planning processes. For example, the American Planning Association has almost exclusively concentrated its youth-focused research on participation and published a
report entitled *Youth Participation in Community Planning* on the topic in 1999. Yet, in her review of the literature, Kathryn Frank (2006) found even this scholarship to be relatively small. Moreover, while participation is indeed an important component of youth’s relationship with the city, it is equally important to ask how the urban landscape is experienced by young people, which places matter most to them, and how those places are programmed, planned and designed. Kevin Lynch’s 1977 *Growing Up in Cities* project, along with its 1995 revival led by Louise Chawla, is one of the few projects to tackle the youth question from the perspective of urban design. The study identifies the spatial and design characteristics that are valued by young people and so remains a valuable tool for urban planners and designers. However, the study looks only at young adolescents between the ages of 10 and 15. Projects involving youth in urban design processes, such as the West Philadelphia Landscape Project, work with similar age groups (Spirn 2005). As such, there is still much room within the field for research that focuses on older adolescents and young adults.

In European scholarship and practice, there is more attention devoted to the relationship between young people and urban space. There has been a strong focus on spatial production in Geography in the United Kingdom. *Cool Places: Geographies of Youth Cultures* (1998), an edited volume compiled by Tracey Skelton and Gil Valentine, is a foundational text in this field that engages the geographical boundaries and everyday experiences of youth. *Urban Nightscapes* (2003) by Paul Chatterton and Robert Holland similarly provides a detailed look at the socio-political construction of urban entertainment landscapes. Although this literature does not relate analysis directly to urban planning and design, it is instructive of the processes underlying spatial production as it has spatial production as an object of inquiry.
French urban studies has taken an active interest in the ways that young people use and transform urban space; perhaps because place-based policies are so common in France. In his book *Coeur du Banlieue* (2001), David Lepoutre engages with the codes and rituals of young people living in La Courneuve; as part of his research, he analyzes the ways that these young people make use of public space. Alexis Ferrand is another French sociologist who wrote a book about the spatial practices of young people living in Mantes (Ferrand 2013). The book is based on thesis work done in the 1970s, so it is heavily influenced by structural Marxism. Ferrand argues that the production of space is a form of political intervention in social life and so analyzes the way that young people use public space to understand their relationship with authority. Joël Zaffran has also produced scholarship on the ways that young people in living in the French suburbs insert themselves in urban space (Zaffran 2003). Much of the literature, however, is not translated into English and so is not as widely accessible to American scholars and practitioners. Moreover, even in these accounts, spatial analysis is not always linked to questions that are pertinent to planning and design practice.

**Youth and Urban Design Research**

Kevin Lynch was among the first planning scholars to propose replacing physical design standards with performance standards (i.e., how well people can read and use their cities). In 1968, he began a project that examined how legible the city was for different age groups. The *Growing Up in Cities* project was a ten year project that ran from 1968-1977 and culminated in a book of the same title (Lynch 1977). The project was sponsored by UNESCO; it was the one of the first to question how younger adolescents perceive and respond to urban environments, what they desire in an urban environment, and how urban environments affect their development. Lynch was motivated by the question: "what interchange between people and the environment
encourages them to grow into fully realized persons?” (Lynch 1977). The project involved analysis of sites in Australia, Mexico, Poland and Argentina. Its goal was to suggest public policies for improving the spatial environment and increasing youth participation in urban planning and design. The *Growing Up in Cities* project compiled a comprehensive list of the factors that children and youth use to determine whether a place is desirable. The factors were characterized into six quality indicators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Integration</th>
<th>Young people want to feel a sense of value and belonging in public spaces. It is important that young people feel welcome in their communities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variety of Interesting Settings</td>
<td>Young people desire a range of places where they can meet with friends, shop and run errands, play sports, be away from adult supervision and observe action on the street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Freedom of Movement</td>
<td>Young people want to be able to move easily around the city. Public transportation systems, pedestrian paths, and bike lanes are particularly important for young people who cannot drive and/or do not own a car.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Meeting Places</td>
<td>Young people want niches in the community that they can claim as their own, in which they can socialize. These include plazas, street corners and coffee shops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesive Community Identity</td>
<td>Young people desire places with clear geographic boundaries and places that have a positive identity expressed through festivals and art.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Areas</td>
<td>Young people desire green spaces that are easily accessible to them, where they can meet with their friends and be away from adult supervision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.1 Quality Indicators of Youth Space from *Growing Up in Cities*

A central finding of *Growing Up in Cities* was that having access to un-programmed space is desired by young adolescents, who are constantly looking for ways to establish greater autonomy. As such, the most desired type of space was one that would allow young people to meet and socialize independently. In her own research, landscape architect Patsy Eubanks Owens, similarly found that young people desire public places that allow them personal freedoms and have a lack of authority figures (Owens 1988).

In 1995, Louise Chawla took up the *Growing Up in Cities* project and extended it to a new range of sites, including Johannesburg, South Africa; Bangalore, India; Oakland, California;
and Northampton, England. Chawla revived the project in response to Agenda 21, the programme of action from the United Nation’s Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, where children and youth were identified as major groups that need to be involved in any effort to achieve sustainable development (Chawla 2001). The UN’s commitment to improving the living condition of urban youth was reinforced by the UN’s 1997 Habitat Agenda, that stated in its preamble that “the needs of children and youth, particularly with regards to their living environment, need to be taken fully into account … this is in order to secure the living conditions of children and of youth and to make use of their insight, creativity, and thoughts on the environment (UNCHS, 1997).” The goal of the project was to determine how to increase youth participation in community development projects, with a focus on young people living in low income communities.

Through their research, Chawla and her team found that the features that characterized good environments in the 1970s remained consistent in the 1990s: a feeling of social integration, varied and interesting activity settings, peer gathering places, green areas for play and exploration and a general sense of safety and freedom of movement (Chawla 2001:19). There were also consistencies in the characteristics of unfavorable environments; chief among them social exclusion and stigma, boredom, and fear of harassment. A more recent 2008 study that replicated the Growing Up in Cities research design in three California towns similarly found that adolescents feel that their lives are overregulated and that this makes their environments boring (Passon, Levi, and del Rio 2008). The adolescents interviewed for the project complained that community centers have limited hours and tend to cater to young children and the elderly. Skateboarding was another source of contention since it was very heavily regulated and many use it as a mode of transportation.
In general, negative perceptions of youth, encourage their exclusion from public space. Survey research shows that Americans have historically had negative views of adolescents (Duffet, Johnson, and Farkas 1997; Whitman 2005). The regulation of adolescents has been linked to urban design practices by Patsy Eubanks Owens in her 2002 article “No Teens Allowed: The Exclusion of Adolescents from Public Spaces.” Owens notes that architects and urban designers are frequently asked to design spaces that discourage young people to loiter. For example, seating areas in malls and plazas are commonly designed to discourage lengthy stays, additions are added to sloping retaining walls to discourage skateboarding, and bus routes in San Francisco were redesigned to make it more difficult for teens to stop at the mall after school (Owens 2002). Although more recent research from the MacArthur Foundation also shows that the public believes the juvenile justice system treats low-income youth, African American and Hispanic youth unfairly, this change in attitude does not seem to be reflected in the urban built environment (Models for Change 2007).

**Youth and Planning Practice**

Perhaps unsurprisingly, planning’s role in addressing the unique challenges of urban youth has been minimal in the United States. Kimberley Knowles-Yanez discovered that American planners have little professional knowledge about youth issues and therefore rarely address their needs in planning processes (Knowles-Yanez 2005). Master plans make few references to youth, beyond the identification of facilities, such as schools, and therefore do not take into account the diverse and unique ways that young people interact with their communities (Frank 2006). In policy and research, youth are often linked with children as a stakeholder group, even though young adults and children have very different needs. Youth are a distinct stakeholder group with different needs and interests from children, and so should not be grouped
together with children for planning purposes. For one, safety and protection are key needs for planning for children, whereas autonomy and freedom are more important for youth. The impulse to lump children and youth together in studies, research, and policy, obscures the minimal consideration for youth in planning practice.

In France, place-making has long been used as a youth policy tool and so youth have a more pronounced place in the built environment. Urban planning, however, has only just recently become active in the youth field. In 2012, Paris’ Mission Jeunesse, an interagency coordinating body, commissioned the Atelier Parisien d’Urbanisme, a public consulting agency that advises City Hall on urban projects and prepares requested research reports, to do a study on Parisian youth. In May 2012 the report Les Jeunes à Paris was produced and in then in May 2014, the agency released a follow-up study on youth and public space entitled Les Jeunes à Paris et l’Espace Publique. Although these reports are not linked to projects and the Atelier itself is just a research and consulting agency, it is significant that this research is being done and commissioned by the city.

**Youth Policy Research**

There are very few pieces of scholarship that trace the history and evolution of youth policy in the United States. To be sure, there are excellent contributions from psychology that assess and evaluate the effectiveness of policy, and much excellent work that looks at specific policy fields, such as education, coming from political science and education scholarship. Much of the work that approaches youth policy from a transversal perspective is done by policy think tanks, such as the American Youth Policy Forum and youthpolicy.org, and organizations such as the American League of Cities. My research addresses this under-developed area of scholarship.
Conversely in France, there is a small, yet identifiable, group of academic experts that study youth policy. Sociologist Patricia Loncle has written many excellent books on the history and evolution of youth policy in France. There has also been effort put towards understanding the integration of urban youth cultures in public policy (see: Faure and Garcia 2005; Lafargue de Grangeneuve 2008). The European Union has also taken an active interest in strengthening its knowledge of youth policy and so has commissioned academic reports through the European Commission and the Council of Europe’s Youth Partnership. These reports bring a comparative dimension to youth policy studies and encourage scholarship on European youth policy systems (Williamson 2002).

**Case Selection and Research Methods**

**Case Selection**

This project is based on an international comparative study of New York City and Paris. In both cities, I chose to look at low-income urban areas because this is where young people are most dependent on local resources and public programs. Specifically, I looked at the 19th arrondissement in Paris; the Parisian suburb of La Courneuve; the South Bronx, specifically the neighborhoods of Morrisania, Mott Haven, and Hunts Point; and Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. I selected these areas because they are demographically and socio-economically similar. All have high unemployment, a large immigrant community, a large youth population, and can be considered communities of color. They are also all located to the periphery of the city center, yet are connected to the city through the local subway system.
I selected Paris and New York City to compare because they are both dense cities located in advanced, industrialized nations. They are emblematic cities and are both considered cultural and financial capitals of their respective countries. As such, both have high demand for urban space, especially in central locations, and are subject to gentrification pressures even in their periphery. I picked these sites because I wanted to learn what place is given to young people in cities where there is a high demand for space and high land value. Lastly, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Mayor Bertrand Delanoë served as mayor for nearly overlapping periods, from 2002-2013 and 2001-2014 respectively, giving consistency for comparison. After preliminary research, I discovered that despite having similarly high demand for land, Paris and New York employ different spatial governance strategies and have different approaches to youth space. I therefore thought that a comparative study would be theoretically and empirically fruitful, as the sites are sufficiently similar to permit comparison yet provide a platform for asking why cities choose different spatial governance strategies, how these strategies manifest on the ground through the design and regulation built environment, and what the impact is on youth.
Additionally, I wanted to look at cities with vibrant youth cultures in order to understand how young people themselves respond to their urban environment. Paris and New York both have prominent urban youth cultural movements and so, seemed again like good cases to compare.

**Introduction to Cases**

**New York**

New York City is composed of five boroughs: Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens are connected to one another through a city-wide subway system; Staten Island is accessible via ferry-boat. Manhattan is the focal point of the main road and railway systems and is also the financial and cultural center of the city. It is the smallest and by far the wealthiest borough with the most expensive real estate. Poverty in New York City is therefore concentrated in the surrounding boroughs; though parts of Brooklyn have been quickly gentrifying in recent years. Urban development practices in New York City have been shown to exacerbate inequalities between neighborhoods and boroughs (Fainstein 2010).

**Paris**

Paris is the privileged center within the Ile de France region. The city is surrounded by many small independently governed municipalities (*communes*, in French), which are essentially suburbs. Unlike the United States, most of the suburbs are low-income and are predominantly composed of public housing. The inequality between Paris and its surrounding suburbs has been the topic of much urban research in France; especially since Paris has a very interdependent relationship with its suburbs. For example, most minimum-wage employees in the service sector,
work in Paris but live in the suburbs. As such, many of the suburbs that border Paris, including La Courneuve, are connected to the city through its metro system.

Paris itself is composed of 20 arrondissements that are arranged in a circular pattern around the Seine River. When talking about places in the city, locals are just as likely to refer to a neighborhood, such as the Marais, as they are the number of its arrondissement. The center of the city is made up of the 1st to 9th arrondissements. The city's most important cultural monuments, such as Notre Dame Cathedral and the Louvre, are within these neighborhoods; as is its most expensive real estate. For example, the average cost of a one bedroom apartment in the 6th arrondissement is around €1 million. The 10th to 20th arrondissements are not as exclusive, though most are considered to be hip and trendy neighborhoods (if not posh ones) and so are also quite expensive. The average one bedroom in the 10th costs around €500,000. There are really only two that are considered 'distressed': the 19th and the 18th arrondissements. These neighborhoods are clustered in the north-east of the city and are the site of recent urban redevelopment efforts. The 18th and the 19th are also Security Priority Zones, which means that they are part of a national program that funds extra security in high crime neighborhoods.
Data Collection

The data collection for this study is based on 12 months of fieldwork in Paris and New York, and on various data sources. I used a mixed-methods approach for this study, as I found that the interdisciplinary nature of the investigation required methods from both the social sciences and the humanities. I conducted interviews with 32 participants in New York and 29 participants in Paris. I also had many informal conversations with my interviewees and with actors I met through my interviewees in more informal settings. I engaged in participant observation in all of my sites and did an ethnographic study in New York. In both sites I collected policy documents and reports for my analysis of youth policy regimes and collected photographs from Instagram to buttress my analysis of youth cultures. Lastly, I used photography and GIS mapping to analyse spatial relationships on both sites. Using these multiple sources of data allowed me to achieve construct validity and triangulation (Yin 2009).

Interviews

During my fieldwork, I conducted semi-structured interviews with local elected officials, community organizers, architects and planners, and youth workers in each city. I developed interview questions designed to help me understand the position of young people in society, with an emphasis on their access to, and use of, urban space. I asked questions about how organizations and state institutions approach local youth; the spaces that young people choose to inhabit; and the spaces in which they are unwelcome. In Paris, where there is a more active place-making agenda in the youth field, I additionally asked questions about what kinds of socio-cultural spaces are provided for young people and why. In New York, many of my questions were more focused on determining what kinds of spaces were missing. These interviews gave me
a sense of what kinds of challenges urban youth are facing and the nature of public policy responses.

I also conducted semi-structured interviews and had many unstructured conversations with local young hip hop artists and local youth in each city. I asked them similar questions about the urban environment they inhabit and whether they feel that there is space for them to express themselves creatively in the city. I also asked them more general questions about the cultures that they are invested in and why those cultures were important. I chose to focus my attention on hip hop artists because hip hop was the most visible youth culture in my sites of investigation in both cities. My goal here was to understand how young people themselves feel about the urban environment, as I did not want to rely solely on the interpretation of community organizers and public officials.

All interviewees were chosen using a snowball sampling technique and I recorded interviews when given permission. I selected public officials based on the relevance of their department to youth and/or city planning. I sought out community organizers who had a strong visual presence in their communities and asked them to connect me with local youth workers. Many of the young people I met, I encountered on the street. I would see them doing some artistic activity – often rapping – and I would approach them and ask if I could ask some questions about hip hop. They always obliged. Some conversations led to a more formal interview. Sometimes, I would also be approached by young people and in those instances I would have a conversation with them and if we had a good rapport I would ask them for an interview. In a few cases, I was invited by the young people I met to an event or a party. I would go to these events and take the opportunity to have informal conversations with other guests. On
those occasions, I was able to meet young people who were not strongly embedded in hip hop
culture.

_Ethnography and Participant Observation_

My interviews were accompanied by participant observation in both sites. I began by
walking around my sites to determine where young people spend time; how they were using
urban space; and to identify the ways that they claim urban space (e.g. through graffiti). I also
observed events and activities organized by young people, such as cyphers, open mic nights and
fashion shows. Lastly, I attended events organized by community/youth organizers in the area.

In New York, my participant observation of youth and youth spaces in the South Bronx
was accompanied by an ethnographic study of youth culture in Brownsville and Bedford-
Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. I had meant to limit my analysis to just the South Bronx, as I had done
the majority of my early research there; however, I met a key informant in Bedford-Stuyvesant,
who introduced me to a community of young people living in Brownsville and Bedford-
Stuyvesant (one or two were from Canarsie and some went to school in Flatbush). Since this was
an excellent insider’s view into the lives of young people living in the city, I extended my
research site and used Instagram and interviews with young people living in the South Bronx to
triangulate my findings from the Brooklyn ethnography and test whether they were
generalizable. Since the neighborhoods I surveyed in the South Bronx share similar demographic
and socio-economic features to those in Brownsville and Bedford-Stuyvesant, I felt that they
were sufficiently comparable to amend my original research design (see Table 1.2). I choose to
use ethnography to investigate youth cultures because I wanted a more thorough understanding
of youth cultural practices than I could get through interviews and participant observation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>South Bronx</th>
<th>Bedford-Stuyvesant</th>
<th>Brownsville</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poverty Rate</strong></td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subsidized/Public Housing Stock</strong></td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployment Rate</strong></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnic Composition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%White</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%Black</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%Hispanic</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2 Characteristics of the South Bronx, Bedford-Stuyvesant and Brownsville

I did not do an ethnographic study in Paris and La Courneuve, as I was not able to tap into a group of young people in the same way that I did in New York. I went to events and spoke with young hip hop artists in Paris, but we did not hang out with the same frequency, and so they never became close informants. Spending time with the young people I did get to know in Paris was more formal and meetings were almost always organized around an interview. As such, I relied more heavily on interviews, participant observation, and the informal conversations I had with young people at events.

**Public Policy Reports and Statistical Data**

To understand youth policy systems in Paris and New York, I read through numerous policy documents and reports. This was particularly helpful when I could not get a meeting with someone in a relevant department. My review of the documents also gave me a sense of the way that youth culture is seen by policymakers in both of my sites. I occasionally used newspaper articles; however this was primarily to gain insight on what elected officials thought about youth or a particular youth-related policy.

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77 Data from NYU Furman Center
**Instagram**

I used a large-n analysis of Instagram photographs to triangulate my findings in the youth culture realm. Instagram is an online photo-sharing and social networking service that enables its users to share photographs with followers (that is, people within their network) and the universe of Instagram users. As of September 2013, Instagram has 150 million users worldwide. According to the Pew Research Center, 43% of Instagram members are within the 18-29 demographic and there isn’t significant variation based on race and gender (Duggan 2013). Since Instagram allows users to caption and comment on posted photographs, I thought that this would be a good source for data triangulation (Stake 1995; Yin 2009). There are two ways to caption a photograph on Instagram: one is a regular written caption, the second is with a hashtag (#) that acts as a thematic bucket for images. For example, in images of family, friends, or moments of success, the tag #blessed is often used to set a tone for the photograph. Due to the many ways in which photographs can be tagged, captioned and commented upon, researchers can make informed guesses as to the intended message or meaning of the image posted.

For New York, I used snowball sampling to select Instagram accounts to include in my analysis. Starting with the accounts of young people I had met through my fieldwork, I branched out through their networks, selecting members who had commented on or liked a photograph they had posted. I went through the photographs of 50 Instagram members, 25 in Brooklyn and 25 in the Bronx. I also looked through the photographs of 5 accounts belonging to a crew or collective, rather than an individual. In total, I sorted through around 1000 photographs.

For Paris, I used stratified sampling to select the Instagram accounts to include in my analysis. I used a different sampling technique because smartphone usage is rare in France due to high costs and so very few adolescents and young adults actually have smartphones. None of the
young people that I interviewed or conversed with had smartphones, so when I took to Instagram, I had to start with a neighborhood word search to find Instagram users who were active on my sites. I used #19eme and #lacourneuve to find two groups of users, and then selected accounts to analyze using the same process I employed in New York. Due to low user numbers, I looked at only 25 accounts belonging to young people I presume were living in my research sites. I had 15 accounts from the 19th arrondissement and 10 accounts from La Courneuve. It is important to note that since the young people who had the phones were very likely using stolen phones (cell phone theft is very high in France), I do not believe that I have a representative sample.

Photography and Mapping

Lastly, I used mapping and photography for the spatial analysis of my sites. I used GIS software to map spatial relationships in New York and drew upon relevant maps created by the planning agency in Paris (spatial data is not openly available in Paris, as it is in New York) to determine spatial relationships at the urban scale. At the neighborhood and architectural scale, I used photography to gain insight into land use, urban form, visual culture and spatial regulation on my sites. Following Anne Whiston Spirn’s techniques for visual analysis, I examined my photographs systematically and identified important patterns in each of these domains (Spirn 2014).

Data Analysis

I analysed my data using grounded theory. Grounded theory involves coding text systematically to identify overarching themes (Corbin and Strauss 2007). My data analysis was based on interviews, policy documents, and my field notes. I transcribed fifty percent of my interviews and took detailed notes (transcribing only essential quotes) on the remaining fifty
percent after listening to the recordings multiple times. I fully transcribed the interviews that seemed most essential to my study. Additionally, during each interview and participant observation I took extensive notes and photographs, which constituted my field notes. I also kept a journal of first impressions, reflections and ideas throughout the course of my fieldwork. Although I did not include my journal entries in my text-coding, I used the journal to help me define code categories in my second round of coding.

Grounded theory analysis often consists of multiple rounds of coding. The first round works from the raw data to discover the themes and patterns that are used for the code book, and the second round uses the code book to analyze the data sources in a more focused way. In my first round of coding, I used three pre-determined categories that reflected the main themes of my investigation: built environment, youth culture, and youth policy. From there, I created codes within each category through textual and visual analysis of my data. This first round of coding allowed me to sort and synthesize my data, and see which concepts and ideas were most significant and most frequent. I was then able to devise the codebook that I used in my second round of analysis. I developed codes around regulation, public space, hip hop, problem-based policy, and asset-based policy; these reflected my theoretical assumptions and preliminary findings. I also found unexpected concepts, such as work, entrepreneurialism, visibility, crews, and politics. This grounded theory helped me to understand the relationship between the regulation of the built environment, youth cultural expression and norms of a youth policy regime.

I did a separate round of coding for the Instagram photographs that I collected in New York City and Paris. For this analysis, I didn’t use any pre-determined categories for my first round of coding. I coded the photographs thematically, based on image content and caption
content. After the first round of coding, I sorted my many codes into the categories and codes that were most significant. These codes were used as the codebook for the second round of analysis. See Appendix 4 for a more detailed description of the coding process for the New York City Instagram photographs.

In parallel, I used process tracing techniques to analyse the evolution of the youth policy regimes in my sites. Process-tracing involves mapping out the sequence of events that produce a particular outcome (Mahoney 2004). Problems can arise with process-based analysis because the researcher cannot know for sure whether associations they’ve discovered are causal or spurious (Lieberson 1985). Identifying mechanisms that link cause and effect, however, can help hedge this limitation (Mahoney 2004). Using this technique, I was able to craft mini-theories on the influence of youth policies on the built environment and on the creation/management of youth spaces. Process-tracing was particularly useful for the US case, where comprehensive accounts of youth policy evolution were very difficult to find. Where they did exist, they tended to be focused on only one branch of policy, such as education policy.

**Dissertation Structure**

Integrating youth interests into urban policy and planning requires meaningful engagement with the vast scholarship on youth, specifically those discussions that contextualize the relationship between young people and the state. Many of the challenges and opportunities experienced by urban youth are shaped by the policies invoked to support, contain, or empower them. Whether policy will work for or against youth depends on whether or not young people are approached as societal problems or assets. The second chapter, *The Youth Question: Approaches to Urban Youth* reviews the schools of thought that have defined the tools, categories, and
concepts used to classify and analyze young people. This chapter serves the dual role of building the argument, while also providing planners and designers interested in integrating youth more actively into their work with a current state of the field in terms of the research that is influencing practice.

The third chapter, *The (In)visible Youth of New York City*, explores the contradictory policy landscape in which the goals of policies regulating the built environment are often in conflict with those intended to improve youths' quality of life. This contradiction is particularly pertinent for low income youth of color who have few spatial resources to begin with and whose recreational cultures have become the target of regulatory animosity and, in some cases, have been criminalized so as to enable others to “reclaim the public spaces of New York.” The criminalization of youth culture, coupled with the separation of key youth-based institutions from the community, has eroded the spaces in which young people can feel a sense of ownership and belonging. The result is a severe lack of space for young people in New York. To this end, I critique the impact of a heavily regulated built environment and a youth policy regime that criminalizes black youth culture on the young people who use those cultures as a key tool of expression, creativity and political participation.

While it is important to study and acknowledge the struggle of disadvantaged youth, it is equally important to celebrate their resilience, their potential and their value. By exploring the myriad ways that youth respond, react and adapt to challenges through cultural expression, it is possible to better understand them as sophisticated civil society actors. The fourth chapter, *Freestyle Urbanism in New York: Insertions in the Built Environment*, draws upon ethnographic fieldwork with young hip hop artists in New York City to identify the ways that young people use the built environment to express themselves. By analyzing the visual cultures of the
environments they transform, their use of social media to promote their goals, and the ephemeral ways that they appropriate space, I propose a model of freestyle urbanism. Young people with few spatial resources use and transform leftover spaces such as parking lots, alleyways, and abandoned buildings to meet their needs. These spaces enable a form of urban use and intervention that transforms space spontaneously and ephemerally.

In Paris, the youth sector has been historically invested in creating spaces for young people and as such has set a precedent that youth deserve priority status in the urban imaginary. This means that young people living in Paris have a wide range of spatial resources where they can express themselves creatively, physically and intellectually. By privileging the needs of urban youth in planning and design, Paris has created system of socio-spatial environments that provide a meaningful setting for youth development; at the same time, persistent inequality between Paris and its surrounding suburbs and the heavy institutional presence in youth cultural movements raises questions about whether public amenities are meant to celebrate urban youth or contain them. The fifth chapter, Spatial Governance in Paris: Empowerment or Containment, explores the governance and design strategies employed in Paris, such as mediation (instead of regulation) of public spaces, and assesses their impact on urban youth and the development of urban youth cultures. In the sixth chapter, Freestyle Urbanism in Paris: The Politics of Visibility, I look at the many ways that French youth appropriate space. I found that due to the many socio-cultural amenities they have at their disposal, French youth do not appropriate space to compensate for insufficient spatial resources; rather they do so when they desire visibility and/or when they seek greater autonomy from state institutions.

The concluding chapter, Youth + Cities: Effective Planning, Governance and Design Tactics for Promoting Youth Interests in Urban Settings provides practice-oriented strategies for
integrating youth interests into urban planning and design practices. The chapter reviews typologies of successful design and governance strategies, including social mediation, autonomous cultural programming, and spatial networks of support services. Planning needs to more actively advocate for the interests of urban youth; methods for doing so go beyond youth participation. Design, physical planning and spatial governance can be harnessed to make better cities for young people. If planners look beyond dominant problem-based and asset-based approaches to youth, we can provide youth with greater access to the city and can coordinate with disparate policy silos to coordinate and make spaces that are connected to one another through thoughtful place-making.
To integrate youth interests into urban policy and planning requires engagement with the vast scholarship on youth, specifically those discussions that contextualize the relationship between young people and the state. Many of the challenges and opportunities experienced by urban youth are shaped by the policies invoked to support, contain, or empower them. Whether policy will work for or against youth depends on whether or not young people are approached as societal problems or assets. The issues most germane to urban policy and planning, therefore, center on the ideological frameworks for youth that influence policy content. As Patricia Loncle has observed, the categories used by public policy to define youth reveal the place that is given to young people in a society (Loncle 2012:24). This chapter will review the schools of thought that have defined the tools, categories, and concepts used to classify and analyze young people. I have distilled this literature to the four topics that seem most salient: (1) youth problems; (2) risk and resiliency; (3) youth development; and (4) youth autonomy. These topics represent the research paradigms that have most impacted policymaking in the United States and France. Analysis of these research traditions reveals our vast knowledge of youth, while highlighting the ideological blind spots in youth policy that may result in the marginalization of urban youth populations.

American youth policies neglect the relationship between young people and urban space, whereas in France, place-making is a central component of youth policy. As such, young people in France have more spatial resources, but are also subject to territorial stigma and containment strategies in which their activities are meant to take place within a designated geography. Due to the lack of planning for youth interests in American cities, spaces used and valued by young
people have few advocates and protections and as such, youth interests easily become lost in planning and design processes. Much of the writing reviewed here does not address how young people use urban space; this is due in part to the tendency of American and Western European research traditions to approach young people as subjects of research and/or policy clients, rather than social and political agents. Research on youth (sub)cultures and activism have had less of an impact on policy conceptions of youth, yet provide an essential conceptual vocabulary for thinking about young people as civil society actors (or agents) rather than just policy clients (or subjects). This literature sheds light on how young people respond to external structural forces through their cultural practices and as such, adds a necessary dimension to a discussion of urban youth.

Youth research is highly interdisciplinary; although its strongest grounding is in psychology and sociology, there is also substantial work from anthropology (Bucholtz 2002), cultural studies (Rose 2008), and geography (Holloway and Valentine 2000; Skelton and Valentine 1998). The theories of developmental psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner (1977) are widely credited with breaking down barriers between sociological and psychological youth research (Dornbusch 1989; Furstenberg 2000). Bronfenbrenner argued that human development could not be understood independent of the entire ecological system in which growth occurs. By calling attention to the importance of context to the study of youth, Bronfenbrenner set the stage for connecting the personal troubles of individual biography with public issues of social structure (MacDonald 1997). The literature is so extensive and diverse that much has been left out of this review – in particular those studies that deal with identity formation and peer and family relationships. Moreover, as my analysis is limited to the context of capitalist urbanization in two
wealthy, formally democratic, Western countries, this chapter also excludes much of the rich scholarship that is examines urban youth in developing countries.

The Youth Concept

Youth constitutes a distinct and significant category of people; yet there is still considerable disagreement over who exactly belongs to the category of youth. Despite seeming symmetry with biological age – significant physical and psychological changes do occur as people mature – youth is a social category, not a demographic one. It refers to a life stage that spans adolescence and early adulthood and is therefore defined by socio-cultural factors rather than biological ones. Sociology has provided the theoretical foundations for the youth concept by questioning the social meaning and functionality of different age groups (Parsons, etc). For example, E.B. Reuter (1937) posited the basis of adolescent disorder as cultural rather than biological; he suggested that it was only in industrial societies that young people faced an adjustment problem and so it was important for sociology to explore how young people fit into emerging social structures.

The concept of youth emerged as a way of expressing the transition that occurs when an individual leaves school and becomes an adult, in socioeconomic terms. To many scholars, then, youth is specific to modern industrial societies which have conferred social visibility on youth through their institutions (IARD 2001). Industrialization and urbanization processes, as well as the evolution of institutions such as schooling, housing, social services and legal status have shaped the social context through which individuals transition from childhood to adulthood, and as such have formalized and extended the transition period between childhood and adulthood (Furstenberg 2000). The meaning of youth therefore is largely defined by social processes (Jones 2009:4).
Despite being widely accepted as a social category, youth is still very often defined using demographic markers, especially in the context of policies that need to identify who is and is not eligible for particular services and programs. To this end, the term can encompass an age range from 12-30. The fluidity of the youth concept allows policy to adapt meaningfully to changes in social structures that either prolong or accelerate transitions to adulthood. Today, the increasingly slow march towards autonomy means that youth very often stretches to 30. This flexibility can help prevent individuals from aging-out of services and programs before they are ready; for example, much work has been devoted into examining the effects of aging-out of foster care at the age of 18 as many contemporary young people receive support from their families through their mid-twenties. However, variation in age criteria for services and responsibilities can result in underserved populations and confusion regarding rights and access to rights, especially in the context of different and conflicting statuses. In the juvenile justice realm, for example, young people age out of juvenile status at different ages. In the United States, status is determined by individual states (not by the nation) and young people can age out as early as 15, as is the case in New York State; although most in most states it is 18. In France, juvenile status is national and is set at age 18. Since juveniles do not have permanent records, maintaining juvenile status is significant and aging out of the juvenile justice system early can have long term impacts of future employability.

The ambiguous demographic definition of youth also makes this cohort difficult to measure statistically. This is particularly tricky when making comparisons between cities, states and countries – and even across policy programs. Contradictory age brackets of statistical reporting and service provision means that comparative research is often conducted with inconsistent empirical data, as researchers have to work with inconsistent age groupings. To
return to the example of juvenile justice, comparing juvenile detention statistics between Paris and New York is difficult because there is a wider age range for juveniles in France than in New York and it there is no public data that specifies number of offenders by age (i.e., 10% are 19; 5% are 20, etc.) for adult prison populations.

**Policy Approaches to Urban Youth**

Youth policies are policies that are put in place explicitly to address the needs, rights, and obligations of young people; in short, they are those that have youth as a client. In terms of practice, however, youth policy remains variable and contested in terms of its range and its depth (Williamson 2002). Since it spans numerous public policy sectors – including health, education and justice – youth policy often lacks a clear mandate and so is often subject to inconsistencies and contradictions in its approach to young people. This is especially the case when a state lacks a comprehensive national youth policy that provides a common lens/agenda through which new and existing policies can be evaluated. Examples of youth policies include: poverty reduction policies with youth as a direct beneficiary; education policy; adolescent sexual and reproductive health strategies; employment strategies; rights frameworks, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; and juvenile justice policies.

![Figure 2.1 Spectrum of Youth Policy Paradigms](image)

**Figure 2.1** Spectrum of Youth Policy Paradigms
Most youth policies lie somewhere along a spectrum between problem-based and asset-based approaches (Fig., 2.1) and will be geared towards either a particular identity group or a particular territorial location. Policies can be either targeted or universal in nature; however, problem-based approaches tend to be targeted whereas asset-based approaches tend to be universal. Problem- and Asset- refer to opposing ideological frameworks for young people. A problem-based approach assumes that youth constitutes either a dangerous or vulnerable class that society must attend to; whereas an asset-based approach assumes that young people are potential resources for society down the line. The problem-based approach addresses the challenges young people face, as well as the perceived threat they pose to public order; as such, a wide variety of policy implications are subsumed within the problem-based approach. When youth are seen as a problem, policy will be aimed at punishment, prevention or protection; when they are seen as a resource, policy will be aimed at supporting and guiding them towards autonomy or civic engagement. One or other approach will occupy a dominant position in public policy based on the state’s institutional structure, prevailing ideological frameworks, and political-economic structure.

Neither the United States nor France has a national youth policy that offers a common policy agenda for young people; rather, the provision of supports and services for youth are shared between different governmental departments (e.g., education and justice) at different scales. In France, there is a Ministry of Youth, but this department is primarily responsible for leisure, popular education and social cohesion, and as such, does not set an agenda that is shared with other departments, such as the Ministry of Education. The Ministry therefore does not provide a coordinating role that a shared national policy would. In both countries, municipal and regional governing bodies also participate in setting the youth policy agenda; however in the
United States, state and cities have a much more central role than in France. As noted previously, in the US, individual states determine educational curriculum and the age at which a young person is no longer treated as a minor by the justice system. Even though decentralization policies in France have transferred many duties to communes and departments, such as cultural and housing policies aimed at providing young people with recreational resources and subsidized housing, the national government still has a dominant influence on the way that young people are treated by public policy. Since 2000, however, communes and departments have taken a more proactive role in serving youth more directly within their policy domains, which might be signaling a shift in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Problem-Based</strong></th>
<th><strong>Asset-Based</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Targeted-Population</strong></td>
<td>Policies aimed at correcting the existing problems, or preventing the potential problems, of a defined population group. Such policies can include prevention programs that target at-risk youth and correctional programs for juvenile offenders.</td>
<td>Policies aimed at extending opportunities and supports to a defined population group. These are typically used to correct structural inequalities, such as affirmative action programs in the United States. In France, they commonly take the form of specialized facilities, such as a youth center or art workshop. <strong>Opportunity focused</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Targeted-Territorial</strong></td>
<td>Policies aimed at correcting problems that are particularly prevalent in a defined area – often a neighborhood but also particular institutions, such as schools. These include programs that identify high crime areas for extra policing and surveillance. New York’s Impact Schools Initiative and Security Priority Zones in France are examples.</td>
<td>Policies aimed at building assets and providing supports within a defined area. These are often used in under-developed or disinvested neighborhoods that require extra public funding in order to have comparable facilities with more affluent areas. Community block grants in the United States and priority neighborhood policies in France are examples of these policies. <strong>Capability focused</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universal</strong></td>
<td>Policies aimed at preventing or correcting the problems of a universal population (e.g. all youth, as opposed to young men of color). Anti-drug prevention programs, such as D.A.R.E in the United States, are an example of such policies.</td>
<td>Policies aimed at providing supports and development programs to a universal population. All youth are eligible to participate in such programs. These include formal and informal education. <strong>Capability focused</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1 Typology of Problem- and Asset-based Youth Policies
In terms of policy content, different institutional architectures and political cultures in France and the United States have led to substantial differences in the kinds of policies they promote. American youth policies tend to be problem-focused and targeted at specific populations. The neoliberal emphasis on corporate interest and individual responsibility inherent in current American political thought, coupled with the budgetary limits of a deeply embedded liberal welfare state, promote programs that are aimed at correcting perceived failures in areas only where government intervention is deemed necessary. Targeted policies are cheaper than universal ones, and so fit more easily into budgets than initiatives aimed at promoting wellness among a universal youth population. Additionally, there is considerable political and funding pressure for initiatives to demonstrate effects in a short time frame – such pressures tend to favor programs that can be evaluated using scientific research methods (Benson and Saito 2001:142). Since there is no federal youth budget, money being spent on youth is fragmented and uneven across states and cities. “No longer seen as a social investment or the central element of an increasingly embattled social contract, youth are now viewed as either consumers, on the one hand, or as troubling, reckless, and dangerous persons on the other” (Giroux 2009:3).

Alternatively, French youth policy runs along two parallel tracks, one that emphasizes a universal asset-based approach and another that targets problem-based approaches at specific territories rather than a specified population. Universal policies persist in France despite the costs thanks to the presence of a strong, centralized welfare state which makes such policy possible to implement. Moreover, universal asset-based policies are in keeping with French Republicanism, or républicanisme, which continues to exercise significant influence on French political thought. A central tenet of républicanisme is that French citizens need to be ‘made’ by the state, through institutions such as universal education. The social construction of desirable French citizens
remains a central underlying component of youth policy, as many programs are meant to shape the citizens and workers that the state hopes to have in the future. As such, the major policy goals of French youth policy are the promotion of autonomy, social inclusion and citizenship (Loncle, Becquet, and Van de Velde 2012).

Additionally, the influence of structural-Marxism on French sociology and strong ties between sociologists and state-sponsored policy research institutes means that even youth problems are embedded in a structural analysis which assumes some degree of state/societal responsibility for negative outcomes. The youth riots, for example, are widely understood as a product of post-industrial class conflict and so many policies that developed in response to the riots were aimed at promoting social inclusion through cultural outreach and professional training programs. It is important to note, however, that in France poverty, inequality and delinquency are discussed primarily through territorial categories (Tissot 2007). Therefore, targeted problem-based youth policies may be masked by urban policies and initiatives that seek to intervene in ‘problem neighborhoods’ rather than address ‘problem populations.’ For example, the youth riots and the poor social conditions of the suburbs were problematized by media and politicians using a narrative that posited the emergence of American-esque ghettos in France (Wacquant 2008:141).

A central difference between French and American youth policy is the American emphasis on target-populations and the French emphasis on target-territories. The implication of these differences is that stigmatization attaches itself in different ways and discourse about racial discrimination gets downplayed in French policy. Race has a central role in American politics; in France, however, républicanisme assumes that the only relationship that matters is a civic one, and so policy (even census counting) is never based on racial or ethnic categories. As such,
policies aimed at correcting social inequalities experienced by disadvantaged groups (such as young immigrant youth living in the suburbs) target disadvantaged territories rather than distinct populations. In the United States, efforts to correct chronic disadvantage due to structurally embedded racism often takes the form of policy that singles out a particular group based on ethnicity, race, and/or gender. For example, New York City’s Young Men’s Initiative and the Obama Administration’s recent initiative My Brother’s Keeper Task Force seek to provide opportunities to boys and young men of color.

Lastly, although both French and American policies aim to be evidence-based, in the sense that policy is meaningfully linked with research, different kinds of data are influential in the two countries. In the United States, there is a clear preference for data that has been produced using scientific research methods. Development psychology, therefore, has had a dominant influence over youth policy and programs and organizations tend to receive more funding than community-based initiatives, because they are more easily evaluated using classic experimental research design. There are also more scientifically accepted indicators for problem-behaviors, making it easier to test and evaluate policies that target problems rather than assets. In France, both psychology and sociology have a strong influence over policy in the youth field. Scientific data is important, to be sure; however sociology also has a strong presence in public research organizations. In France, publicly funded research centers independently produce reports that serve as resources for elected officials. The kind of data and research methodology employed within these research organizations is both qualitative and quantitative and so produces a more diverse array of evidence than can be procured through scientific testing. The Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l’Éducation Populaire (National Institute of Youth and Population Education), for example, is the leading national research center for youth policy in France.
Research efforts there are concentrated on social and health indicators, as well as lifestyle trends and leisure activities.

**Youth Research Paradigms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Paradigm</th>
<th>Policy Rationale</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>American Programs</th>
<th>French Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth Problems</td>
<td>Violent Youth; Jeunesse-Menace</td>
<td>Punishment, Reform,</td>
<td>Zero-Tolerance Policing Incarceration Surveillance in schools</td>
<td>Incarceration Social Mediation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk and Resilience</td>
<td>At-Risk Youth; Vulnerable Youth; Jeunes en Difficulté</td>
<td>Prevention, Resilience, Social Support</td>
<td>Public Health Community-Action Programs Anti-Gang Initiatives</td>
<td>Priority Neighborhoods Education Priority Zones Prevention Clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Development</td>
<td>Youth with Potential; Jeunes comme Resource</td>
<td>Civic engagement, Positive development, Social Insertion</td>
<td>Community Centers Community Learning Centers Beacon Schools</td>
<td>Centres d'Animation Espaces Jeunes Maisons Jeunes Youth Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Autonomy</td>
<td>Disconnected Youth; NEETS</td>
<td>Professional Insertion</td>
<td>Young Men's Initiative AmeriCorps Youth Build Summer Employment programs</td>
<td>Antennes Jeunes Missions Locales EU Youth Priority Youth Housing Programs Kiosques Jeunes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2 Research Paradigms and Related Policies in the United States and France

**Youth Problems**

So-called ‘deficit models of youth’ emphasize a) the challenges that young people face, and b) the potential threat that young people pose to society. Problems are mostly thought of in terms of individual deficiencies: risky and anti-social behavior, criminal activity, and poor attitudes to schooling (France 2007). In the United States, the vast majority of articles and studies of youth are focused on deviations from societal norms, otherwise known as ‘problem behavior.’ In his review of the leading American journals on adolescence, Frank Furstenberg observed that that at least half of all articles were principally about youthful misbehavior and
maladjustment (Furstenberg 2000). This appears to remain a substantive component of academic research within psychology (Lerner and Steinberg 2009). Adolescence has long been linked with ‘storm and stress’ in developmental psychology (Hall 1905) and therefore there is much interest in understanding different forms of deviance, why young people choose to participate in deviant behavior, and the various impacts of deviant behavior on development. Four topics have dominated studies of problem behavior: delinquency, substance abuse, unprotected sex, and school failure. Research has shown that many of these problems co-occur and are thought to be developmental – that is, problems experienced by young adults are often preceded by school failure in early or late childhood (Dryfoos 1990; Navarro et al. 1996). Relatively, the notion of youth as an ‘oppositional culture’ has also been highly influential; in his book, The Adolescent Society, James Coleman portrays adolescent peer groups as in a constant struggle to remain separate and distinct from adults (Coleman 1961).

The problem-focused literature has had a great impact on policymaking in the US. This is due perhaps to the preference for population-based targeted policies and general moral panic and malaise towards young people, especially youth of color who are often subject to more punitive relationships with state institutions and authorities (Poe-Yamagata and Jones 2007). The predominance of problem-based policies has a great impact on youth of color, as young people trapped in chronic poverty tend to be most vulnerable to the challenges and negative outcomes identified by the problem-focused literature. Decades of structural racism and discrimination in the United States have embedded racial disparities in American society, making it very difficult for low income youth of color to realize their potential (Sharkey 2013). The impression that youth themselves constitute a risk to society was buoyed by growing rates of criminalization that

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8 Many developmental psychology studies discuss adolescents, rather than youth, as it is a more clearly defined population.
accompanied the growth of the ‘prison industrial complex’ and the crack-cocaine epidemic that plagued inner-city neighborhoods in the 1980s and 1990s (Giroux 2009).

Since the problems of youth command the bulk of scholarly attention in American youth research, they continue to exert a significant influence over the design and organization of youth-based institutions: “there is an integral link between development of a discourse of youth as a problem and the establishment of many levels of institutions and processes for the monitoring, processing and surveillance of young people” (Wyn and White 1997:22). There is a robust critical literature that addresses the focus on youth problems (and indeed the very notion of ‘youth problems’). This scholarship contends that for disadvantaged young people, particularly ethnic minorities, the emphasis on punitive policies exacerbates problems of inequality, poverty and racism. They argue that rather than approaching youth unemployment as a product of youth delinquency, it is important to understand how youth exclusionary systems affect youth in chronically disadvantaged neighborhoods (Akom, Ginwright, and Cammarota 2008).

In France, youth problems are also a topic of concern and there is currently interest in school failure and the health ramifications of risky behavior, such as drug abuse and unprotected sex. Through my review of the literature I’ve found that these issues do not receive the same amount of attention as they do in the United States. Central to research on the problems of youth are social problems, in particular those pertaining to disaffection and violence in the French suburbs. This creates a distinction between problem behaviors that represent a public health concern (such as drug abuse) and those that involve a failure to connect to central institutions and labor markets. Research and policy on the social difficulties faced by youth are typically rooted in a dialogue on social exclusion; that is, they are concerned primarily with better integrating young people into those institutions – political, economic, and cultural – from which they feel
excluded. There is therefore a tension inherent in problem-based youth policies between the desire to preserve public order and to promote social inclusion. Initial responses to violence in the suburbs in the 1980s promoted rehabilitative programs that sought to provide low income youth with summer activities (Dubet, Jazouli, and Lapeyronnie 1985). However more recent studies of policy approaches to suburban youth suggest that a gradual shift towards criminalization (Loncle 2003; Mucchielli 2011). This was especially true during the November 2005 riots, when Nicholas Sarkozy was Minister of the Interior.9

**Delinquency**

The term delinquency is applied to a wide range of antisocial behaviors, from “acting out” in early childhood to violent and illegal behaviors, such as robbery and assault; studies of youth delinquency tend to be more focused on illegal activity and antisocial behavior, such as truancy, that is likely to lead to illegal activity. Youth delinquency and criminality have been linked with a number of behavioral characteristics in the literature; namely aggression and low IQ (Séguin et al. 1995; Tremblay and LeMarquand 2001). The influence of family structure and peer influence have received tremendous attention in developmental psychology. For example, poor parenting, home discord and child maltreatment have been strongly linked with delinquency (Wasserman and Seracini 2001). In his Cambridge Study, David Farrington found that having a convicted parent or older sibling, was a strong predictor of juvenile convictions (Farrington et al. 2001) and in her classic study, Joan McCord found that half of the abused boys she surveyed would be convicted for crimes, become alcoholics or die before the age of 35 (McCord 1983).

Psychology has been late to look at the impact of community factors on delinquency; it wasn’t until the 1990s that interest began to pick up among American scholars. Consequently,

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9 In France, the Minister of the Interior is in charge of national security, including interior security and civil defense. Sarkozy served in this position from May 2005 – March 2007.
research on the effect of neighborhood factors on delinquency has been grounded primarily in
sociology. The Chicago school was instrumental establishing theoretical links between juvenile
delinquency and the urban environment by exploring the connection between youth gangs and
disinvested neighborhoods (Thrasher 1927) as well as youth violence as a mode of adaptation to
social disorganization in the urban environment (Shaw and McKay 1940) and the formation of
micro-cultures (Whyte 1943). These theories linked the ills of the urban environment with social
problems; the social disorganization thesis posits that disinvestment in community leads to the
erosion of community and family values by creating alternative normative structures that reward
delinquent behavior and so encourage crime. Shaw and McKay’s influential book *Juvenile
Delinquency and Urban Areas* (1947) suggests that ecological factors — specifically poverty,
population turnover and racial heterogeneity in urban areas — would increase the likelihood of
juvenile delinquency.

Although these theories have been much expounded upon and critiqued, they laid the
groundwork for thinking about juvenile delinquency in the context of environmental factors and
not just associating it with psychological shortcomings. Later studies would focus more on
socialization models that influence delinquent behavior. For example, Cloward and Ohlin’s
*Delinquency and Opportunity* (1963) proposed that the norms of gangs and delinquent
subcultures act as driving forces behind delinquent behavior. Such ideas have been taken up even
in more contemporary scholarship. For example, Martín Sanchez-Jankowski has written about
gangs as rational responses to restricted and discriminatory economic systems in the United
States (Sanchez-Jankowski 1991); Elijah Anderson has reported on street repertoires that
encourage delinquent behaviors (Anderson 1999); and Sudhir Venkatesh has studied the role of
gangs in providing a governance structure the otherwise neglected Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago (Venkatesh 2002).

Drawing influence from the American literature, French sociology became actively engaged with the question of juvenile delinquency in the aftermath of the so-called ‘crisis of the banlieue’; up until the late 70s and early 80s, research on urban youth was relatively underdeveloped (Kokoreff 1996). Earlier work was concentrated on the moral imperative of society to guide young people to productive adult lives; concerns over *les blousons noirs*, a term used to describe groups of young rockers, was linked with moral worry about rock and roll culture; it was not until the riots in the 1980s that youth violence became a widespread concern. Some critical texts emerged in the late 1970s that described the conditions of marginalized youth (Mury and De Gaulejac 1977) and the social forms of marginality (Fossé-Poliak and Mauger 1991).

The advent of rioting in the suburbs in the early 80s, however, captured scholarly attention and much energy was subsequently devoted to understanding urban violence and what was motivating young people to loot and vandalize public buildings and private property. The concept of *la galère* was particularly influential in the beginning of this scholarship. Dubet’s now classic book, posits a mix of anger and political ambivalence among suburban youth; the concept of *la galère* captures the lack of a political motive for crime, violence, or delinquent acts; as such, the youth of the banlieue were distinguished from working-class youth, who were perceived to have political motives. The youth of the suburbs (known in French as ‘*jeunes de la cité* or *banlieusards*) became a class/object of sociological inquiry, much like the urban youth gangs that were the focus of much of the American literature. Interest in the attitudes, feelings and exclusions of these young people became the topic of many sociological investigations in the
1990s and 2000s, particularly surrounding the cross-national eruption of riots in 2005 (Bouamama 1992; Dikeç 2007; Jazouli 1992; Lepoutre 2001). Although there have been numerous riots in French suburbs since 2005, none have spread as quickly or as broadly as the riots in 2005. What made the 2005 riots so significant was the fact that they weren’t concentrated in a single suburb (as they usually are). Below is a list of some of the more large-scale riots in France in the past 30 years (Table 2.3). This is not an exhaustive list, however, it shows that rioting has been a relatively persistent phenomenon since the 1980s and has become more concentrated in the Paris region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Vaulx-en-Velin (northern suburb of Lyon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Vaulx-en-Velin (northern suburb of Lyon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Sartrouville (eastern suburb outside of Paris)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mureaux, Val-Fourré, et Mantes-la-Jolie (eastern suburbs of Paris)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Multiple public housing developments and small cities in Essonne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Tarterêts (public housing development in the department of Essonne)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Nanterre (eastern Paris suburb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Châteauroux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Lyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Bobigny (northern Paris suburb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Clichy-sous-Bois (spread to 247 towns over the course of three weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Villiers-le-Bel (northern Paris suburb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Montreuil (eastern suburb area of Paris)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Trappes (southern Paris suburb)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.3 Urban riots in France, 1980-2014. Data compiled by author from Le Monde.

Policy responses to delinquency in the United States and France have involved a mix of punitive and rehabilitative programs. Incarceration is the most severe response to youth crime and is used in both countries; however, it is used more widely in the United States, where
incarceration rates are the highest among OECD countries (Fig. 2.2). ‘Juvenile,’ or *mineur* in French, is a legal category that applies to anyone who is under the statutory age of the majority; that is, the age at which a person is recognized by law to be an adult, which in France is 18. Juveniles have a separate justice system because they are legally recognized as being different from adults and in need of different sorts of protections from the justice system. Therefore, a distinguishing feature of the Juvenile Justice System is that rehabilitation, rather than punishment, is supposed to be its primary goal.\(^\text{10}\)

![Figure 2.2 Juvenile Incarceration rate per 100,000 youth population](image)

Youth incarceration in the United States has historically taken a tough approach to young offenders. Although there was a move towards the development of more community-based alternatives to incarceration in the 1960s, in the mid-1970s, concern over rising crime rates motivated demand for the reinstitution of punitive responses to juvenile crime. Between 1975

\(^\text{10}\) In the United States, states decide how long a youth may remain under the supervision of the juvenile justice system. In most states, youth age out of the system at 18, however, many states allow youth to remain within the juvenile system until 21. In the juvenile system, criminal records often remain confidential.

\(^\text{11}\) Table from: "No Place for Kids," Annie E. Casey Foundation (2011).
and 1990, nearly every state passed laws making it easier to try juveniles in adult court and 31 states expanded sentencing options (Bernard 1992). The French response to juvenile crime has remained more (purposively) nuanced and contradictory. The policy response to the first instances of youth rioting in the 1980s came from a newly elected Left government that was anxious to promote soft inclusive policies. In 1982, for example, the government launched an initiative in response to the youth riots in les Minguettes called Operation Hot Summer (operation anti-été chaud, in French). The program sought to provide summer activities and vacations for young people living in ‘hot’ (i.e. violent) neighborhoods that would help prevent the recurrence of rioting.

The Bonnemaison Report on delinquency was published in the same year and is one of the foundational texts on urban youth policy. The report was concerned particularly with youth and immigrants as particularly marginalized groups and strongly cautioned against a problem-based approach to youth. At the same time, police brutality towards suburban youth is a persistent reality in France that has been the trigger of rioting for the past 30 years. Although friendlier policing practices had been introduced through the implementation of neighborhood policing (police de proximité) in 1998, the program was ended soon after in 2003 and more repressive policing was implemented nation-wide (Mohammed and Mucchielli 2006; Mucchielli 2011).

Substance Abuse and Teen Pregnancy

Underage drinking and early sexual behaviour are known as ‘status offenses,’ since the behaviour would be considered appropriate at an older age and is only treated as problematic because it is being conducted by adolescents (Dornbusch 1989: 250). Adolescents have become more sexually active at younger ages; although the proportion of American adolescents who are
sexually active has decreased in recent years, one fourth of all youth report having had intercourse by 15 (Klein 2005). Since younger women are less likely to use contraception, the younger the age that women will enter into sexual relations, the higher the risk for pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Moreover, young mothers tend to suffer several disadvantages, including reduced educational achievement, lower job status, lower incomes, and in some cases, long-term welfare dependency. Interest in adolescent pregnancy peaked in the late 1980s when teenage pregnancy rates were around 55 births per 1000 women (age 15-19); this research has been focused primarily on young women, so less is known about the role of young men in sexuality and pregnancy behaviour (Dryfoos 1990: 63). Schools now play a primary role in sex education; although such programs do not affect the level of sexual activity, comprehensive sex education programs have led to significant reductions in unprotected sex (Kirby 1984; Kohler, Manhart, and Lafferty 2008). Rates of teen pregnancy are substantially lower in France and therefore the issue has not received the same extent of attention and is more the provenance of public health researchers.

Early onset drinking is also very common amongst adolescents; many studies have been conducted to better understand why young people drink and which factors most heavily influence drinking motives. In their study of adolescent drinking, Bernstein et al. differentiate between youth who drink to ‘chill’ and drink to ‘cope’ (Bernstein et al. 2011). The chillers drink for fun with peers; they describe drinking as part of having a good time, but do not rely on drinking to have fun. In contrast, the young people who drink to cope described drinking as a response to the stress and problems of their everyday lives. This point is stressed by much of the French literature on drinking, where ‘problem behavior’ is defined as being problematic in terms of degree (i.e. repeated behaviour v. experimentation or ‘fête’). This may be because binge-
drinking in the France wasn’t considered a problem in France until recently; in fact, the French term for binge-drinking, *beuverie express*, wasn’t coined until 2013 (Le Monde 2013). In January 2013, Maud Pousset, the director of the French Monitoring Centre for Drug Addiction (*Observatoire Français de la Drogue et de la Toxicomanie*) stated that “it is no longer possible to assume that binge-drinking only happens in the United Kingdom, as there is evidence that it also now exists in France” (quoted in Le Monde 2013).

Drug abuse is a much more serious policy concern in both countries, as the drug trade is illegal in both contexts. The American ‘War on Drugs’ had profound implications for young people – especially youth of color – as strict searches and arrest standards meant that many young people ended up getting arrested for possession of small amounts of marijuana. In the United States, it has been treated as a criminal issue more so than a public health issue and so drug programs tend to dovetail with anti-gang initiatives, which can obscure the public health goals in favor of public safety ones.

In France, drug abuse receives the most attention in the literature on substance abuse and the government has also waged a ‘Fight Against Drugs’ (*lutte contre la drogue*). The rise of drug consumption in the 1990s and early 2000s has attracted a lot of attention to the effects of substance abuse on car accidents, school failure and poor health. The policy approach, however, has waffled between a focus on addiction and a focus on dealing and distribution. The public health sector complains that by shifting priorities to repression in 2007, the government has taken necessary money away from addiction programs (Costes et al. 2012). Criticism has been levelled against abstinence-based approaches that are concerned with the ‘first usage,’ as French researchers emphasize the difference between experimentation and regular usage (Beck, Legleye, and Spilka 2005). Jean-Michel Costes, who served as the director of the French Monitoring
Centre for Drug Addiction from 1995 to 2011, noted that it is more important to address regular usage than to prevent the ‘first usage’ as many young people will try marijuana as an act of rebellion or peer solidarity (Clavreul 2012). Rather, the Monitoring Centre suggests that policies target the ‘addictive environment’ of young people. For example, the Center released a report in March 2014 on the types of public spaces where young people consume alcohol in Paris (Cadet-Taïrou and Dambélé 2014).

School Failure and Dropping Out
American researchers have approached low achievement in school as both a problem in itself and as a predictor for substance abuse, delinquency and early sexual intercourse. According to Joy Dryfoos, school failure is a process rather than a single risk event: “low achievement results from an array of forces, many of which are outside of the control of the child … the quality of the school is a major factor, as are the actual classroom practices and attitudes of the teacher” (Dryfoos 1990: 79). Students who fare poorly in school leave unprepared for college or for work, and so continue to face barriers to success and autonomy, despite having a high school degree. Student-based reform and high-stakes testing related to the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act, and more recently with Common Core Standards, has changed many schools’ academic policies and practices (Allensworth 2004; Miller, Ross, and Sturgis 2005). There is some research that suggests that the combination of high stakes testing may be increasing the likelihood that low-performing students will drop out of school; this is particularly the case when raised standards and tests are put into place without the accompaniment of supports, such as tutoring, that students may need to meet new standards (Miller et al. 2005). However, due to a lack of empirical evidence, it is difficult to draw conclusive links, as many programs do not include rigorous program evaluations and collect little long-term follow-up data (Hammond et al. 2007).
In France, low school achievement became a concern in the 1970s, following the 1972 Joxe Report, which revealed a substantive achievement gap between lower and upper income students, suggesting that the French educational system was catering to an elite bourgeoisie. This concern emerged largely as policymakers became aware that students leaving school with only a brevet\textsuperscript{12} diploma were having difficulty finding employment. The policy response to low school achievement was linked primarily to concerns over the growing youth unemployment rate; so, rather than changing school structure and/or curriculum, internships, co-opts and technical study were introduced as alternative educational pathways (Bernard 2013). In the 1980s, attempts to democratise the school system resulted in the implementation of the educational priority zones (\textit{zones d'éducation prioritaire}, or ZEPs, in French), in which under-resourced schools were given extra funding. This program emerged in response to the discovery that low school achievement seemed concentrated in low income communities and so gave a socio-cultural edge to education policy. Priority education zones were another initiative that was more concerned about correcting social exclusion than improving the academic experience (Bonnéry 2004).

Low school achievement is strongly linked with dropping out of school entirely; indeed, poor academic performance is one of the most consistent predictors of dropping out (Alexander, Entwisle, and Kabbani 2001; Battin-Pearson et al. 2000; Ensminger and Slusarcick 1991). Much research in the United States has been devoted to the motivations and impacts of dropping out, but there is no standard definition used by policymakers and schools. Although school completion rates have been steadily improving, research from the \textit{Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk} shows that approximately 1000 US high schools have only

\textsuperscript{12} The Brevet is a a national diploma given to students at the end of 3ème, which is the equivalent of 9th grade in the United States
a 50% rate of graduation.\textsuperscript{13} Young people who drop out of school have fewer job prospects, are more likely to become welfare dependent, and are much more likely to be involved in criminal activity later in life (Alpert and Dunham 1986). In their 1992 study of a New York state prison, Stephens and Repa found that 79% of convicted male felons were high school dropouts (Stephens and Repa 1992). Black and Latino youth are overrepresented in this category. Concern over students dropping out, or \textit{la décrochage scolaire}, is relatively recent in France. French scholarship on the topic emerged only around 2000 (Tanon 2001) and it didn’t become a central component of the policy vernacular until the mid-2000s, building gradually upon scientific research done in the United States (Bernard 2013).

American researchers have found that individual, family, school and community factors play an influential role in affecting dropout rates; these are often characterized as ‘push and pull’ factors. Push factors can be addressed within the school whereas pull factors are often external and need to be addressed at the community level (Rumberger 2011). For example, early adult responsibilities – like raising a child or having a job to help support one’s family – are linked with early school leaving. Drop outs are consistently more likely to list push than pull factors when asked why they left school; however pull factors are becoming more prevalent. In a 2005 survey, 32% left to get a job to make money, 22% left to care for a family member and 26% became a parent. Research on community factors influencing dropout rates conclude that impoverished communities with large immigrant or ethnic minority populations tend to have high percentages of youth leaving school early (Rumberger 2011).

In France, researchers have drawn upon American research on push and pull factors to identify factors that may make young people more likely to leave school early, but there is a
stronger emphasis understanding the impact of school/teaching environment on low academic achievement than other external factors. Researchers have found that in the French context, the first signs that a student will leave school emerge during collège¹⁴, when students unprepared for the transition to a more rigorous academic environment face new difficulties overcoming academic challenges (Bautier 2003) The heavy emphasis on testing and larger classrooms prove difficult for students struggling to keep up with the work. Qualitative research on young dropouts suggest that difficulty fitting in and feelings of academic inadequacy were the strongest reasons for dropping out (Hugon 2010). This is a topic of interest for American researchers as well, who have also devoted much effort to understanding which classroom arrangements produce the best academic outcomes. Large school size has also been linked to higher dropout rates; especially in low income communities. A study at Johns Hopkins coined the term ‘dropout factories’ to describe the 2000 large, urban, low-income high schools that produce most of the dropouts in the US (Balfanz and Legters 2004; Lehr et al. 2004). Internal school policies regarding standardized testing and discipline can also have an effect on a student’s decision to leave school. Surveys have found that a common reason given by dropouts for leaving school concern lack of relevant and interesting courses; especially that coursework seems unrelated to work (Bridgeland, Dilulio, and Morison 2006; Lehr et al. 2004).

**Risk and Resiliency**

**Risk**

Many young people live in high stress environments and lack the supports that would allow them to cope with the challenges that such an environment presents. In both the United States and France, risk approaches borrow from the public health field, where effort is put into

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¹⁴ Collège is equivalent to junior high school in the United States, but lasts for four years and so begins at the US equivalent of 6th grade and lasts until the equivalent of 9th grade.
understanding the cause of problem behavior and possible methods of prevention (Peretti-Watel 2002). In both countries, the idea that individuals most likely to participate in deviant behaviors can be identified – and thus targeted for prevention – has led to a broad range of programs affecting almost every government agency that count youth as a client; the paradigm, however, has had a stronger impact on US policy and is more heavily connected to public health concerns (such as drug abuse) in France. Much research therefore is focused on identifying risk factors that lead to the problem behaviors discussed above; David Farrington calls this the ‘risk factor paradigm’ where the idea is to “identify the key risk factors for offending and tool prevention methods designed to counteract them” (Farrington 2000: 1). The risk and resiliency approach has had a significant impact on defining policy clients. For example, New York City’s recent Young Men’s Initiative is “focusing on changing the behavior of the young people at the highest-risk of becoming perpetrators” (Banks and Oliviera 2011: 14).

In the United States, the study of risk prevention came to prominence in the 1980s and is largely the domain of behavioral psychology. The study of risk factors acknowledges the importance of contextual factors in the development trajectories of young people. Rather than relying solely on psychological factors to explain participation in negative behavior, risk studies tend to consider the universe of potential causes. In fact, in its 1993 report, the National Academy of Science’s Panel on High Risk Youth recommended moving attention away from the personal attributes of adolescents and their families and toward the contexts and environments that influence outcomes: families, neighborhoods, schools, health and welfare systems, employment and training programs, and the justice system. For example, in an early study of juvenile delinquency, West and Farrington posited that the most potent risk factors for delinquent
behavior were low family income, large family size, parent criminality, and poor parenting (West and Farrington 1973).

Yet although poverty and racism remain among the dominant risk factors, very few interventions are aimed at correcting structural inequalities. In this regard, external protective factors, such as after school activities and involvement in community organizations, are particularly important in low income neighborhoods (Garmezy 1993). Research suggests that it is important that policies build on supports that already exist in communities – it is therefore important to understand and take account of already-existing sources of support in neighborhoods. For example, in a 1979 study, Rutter et al. proposed that the school is an important external protective factor for disadvantaged youth coming from unstable families. More importantly, success in school provides positive development for kids and doesn’t need to be associated with academic success – success in sports programs, music, art, and other non-academic activities can have similar positive effects on a young person’s development (Rutter, 1984).

The concept of risk has been manifested in French policy in two ways. The French prevention programs that resemble those used in the United States are those aimed at risky conduct (conduites à risque) which refers to “actions that, when done repeatedly, cause harm to an individual, physically, psychologically or socially.” These programs also align with problem behaviors, with substance abuse, reckless driving, delinquency (especially theft) being top priorities. Prevention programs conducted by the regional youth ministry (Directions Régionales de la Jeunesse, des Sports et de la Cohésion Sociale) seek to link prevention with popular education/leisure programs as a line of first response for young people who need support. The concept of at-risk youth is also conceived as ‘vulnerability,’ in the sense of being at high risk for
negative socio-economic outcomes. Here, youth are seen as needing protection from society rather than from themselves. Policies aimed at vulnerable young people, therefore, tend to be focused on social integration. Since the 1970s, when new segments of the population were found to be in a vulnerable situation due to the effects of socio-economic restricting, a policy of ‘social insertion’ came to the fore as a means of addressing growing youth unemployment rates and better integrating young people into society. Social integration programs and policies will be discussed in greater depth in the following section on Youth Autonomy.

Resiliency
The concept of resilience came from the observation that not all children succumb to risks – this observation led to the idea that there are protective factors as well as risk factors and that policy could address. Although research on resiliency began as early as the 1950s in the field of psychology, it did not become incorporated into mainstream literature and policymaking until the 1990s. Resiliency studies are predominantly American and are interested in the traits that made children and young adults better able to cope with adverse conditions – the focus on assets in individuals and systems instead of deficits was thought to have particular significance for education (Howard, Dryden, and Johnson 1999: 309). Resiliency is defined by Masten, Best, and Garmezy as “the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances” (Masten, Best, and Garmezy 1990).

Much research is focused on how resiliency can lead to positive outcomes for youth and children. There are three dominant models: (1) compensatory models that identify factors that will neutralize the negative consequences of exposure to risk; (2) challenge models that treat stressors as potential enhancers of adaptation; and (3) protective factor models that test how protective factors moderate the effect of a risk on the predicted outcome. The protective factor
model is the most studied of the three. Protective factors range from personal traits of the individual child to family and community factors that help to shield young people from negative influences. Individual psychological characteristics that are believed to allow children to cope with stress include adaptability, belief in their own self-efficacy, and a repertoire of social problem-solving skills (Rutter 1985). Social and economic factors include family dynamics, parenting quality, quality relationships with non-family adults (Werner, 1993; Furstenburg, 1999) and neighborhood effects, such as exposure and access to quality educational and recreational facilities, such as churches, sports teams, Boys and Girls clubs (Smokowski, 1998).

Like risk factors, protective factors are believed to be cumulative. Despite interest in resiliency, research into negative trajectories still tend to overemphasize risk – especially in the context of minority-majority low income neighborhoods (Bernstein et al. 2011). For example, a study investigating the effects of race, neighborhood and social context on drug use focused primarily on negative geographies – that is, distance from needle exchange points – rather than the protective factors and resources that might have otherwise characterized the neighborhood under investigation (Fuller et al. 2005). More recent studies (Bernstein et al. 2011; Resnick 2000) have advocated for an approach that integrates protective and risk factors – and so pays attention to the feedback loops between them.

Risk and resiliency approaches are not without critics. Prevention paradigms have been critiqued for continuing to emphasize problems over assets. According to Michelle Fine, “a severe deficit is evident when failure, crime, violence, gang membership, drug abuse and teen parenthood become important terms in which society articulates the potential of for poor and working class young men of color” (Fine, 1995). Similarly, Joby Gardner points out that through these programs, “failure, gang membership, drug abuse, crime, truancy, violence, and
remediation – whether their prevention, treatment or measurement – become part of the mandate and raison d'être of institutions of the state” (Gardner 2010). Mike Tapia has observed that risk models can also lead to disproportionate negative interactions between police and groups that are overrepresented within juvenile offenders (Tapia 2011).

Rutter (1990) has critiqued the approach on the grounds that resilience studies simply provide a more optimistic frame of risk factors – that protective factors are merely antonyms of risk factors (Rutter, 1990: 183). The concept of risk itself has been critiqued for not capturing the true motives of young people for engaging in problem behavior. In his book Nurturing Resilience within Troubled Youth (2004), Michael Ungar critiques resiliency scholarship by proposing that dominant notions of resilience are social constructions. Ungar finds that many young people explain behaviors such as gang affiliations and drug and alcohol use, as part of strategic narratives that bring them respect and independence. From a practice perspective, many of the didactic curricula that are so popular in the fields of substance abuse prevention and sex education have little or no impact (Steinberg 2008).

The D.A.R.E (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program is a high-profile example of a program that continues to be used despite overwhelming evidence that classroom-based prevention curriculum has little effect on behavior (Dryfoos 1990; Steinberg 2008). Developmental psychologist Laurence Steinberg argues that the factors that lead adolescents to engage in risky behavior are social and emotional, not cognitive. As such, he suggests that "efforts to prevent or minimize adolescent risk-taking should focus on changing the context in which risky activity takes place rather than mainly attempting, as current practice does, to change what adolescents know and the ways they think" (Steinberg 2008:81).
Positive Youth Development

Youth development is an American research paradigm that became popular in the 1990s. Although French policymakers and researchers engage with topics of study that could easily fall within the parameters of the youth development paradigm, the French approach is distinct in the sense that it is strongly linked to social and professional insertion, whereas the American model is more focused on youth’s personal wellbeing as the end-goal. Discussion of the French approach to youth development, therefore, will follow in a separate section on Youth Autonomy.

American research on youth development seeks to understand the intellectual, emotional, social, and physical growth processes of young people, and to identify practices and environments that support these processes in positive ways. According to The Youth Development Handbook, the concept of youth development describes three things: a process of growth, a philosophical framework for social development, and an approach to youth services (Hamilton, Hamilton, and Pittman 2003). Youth development studies developed out of research on resiliency, as scholars became evermore critical of the dominance of problem-based approaches to youth and started looking for those factors that youth need to succeed (Benson and Pittman 2001). What distinguishes youth development research from work on resiliency, is that youth development approaches are interested in fostering developmental assets, whereas resiliency research is focused on mitigating negative outcomes (Greenberg 1996; Hahn, Leavitt, and Aaron 1994; Weissberg and Caplan 1998). As Karen Pittman memorably remarked, "problem-free is not fully prepared." In other words, "a non-pregnant, non-dropout, non-gang-affiliated, non-drug-abusing youth is not necessarily one who is prepared to live a satisfying, productive adult life (Costello et al. 2001:191).
In 2002, the National Academy of Sciences published a report called *Community Programs that Promote Youth Development* that identifies the domains in which development happens (cognitive, emotional, social, and physical) and the outcomes that best predict success in adulthood. However, there are fewer known indicators of ‘positive behavior’ with a proven relationship to wellbeing (such as participating in extra-curricular activities or volunteering at a community organization). In order to achieve these outcomes, the report has identified criteria for evaluating policies that seek to promote youth development:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired Outcomes</th>
<th>Policy Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Good health habits</td>
<td>Fosters resilience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good health risk management skills</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intellectual Development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of life skills</td>
<td>Promotes cognitive competence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of vocational skills</td>
<td>Fosters self-efficacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>School success</td>
<td>Provides recognition for positive behaviour</td>
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<td>Rational habits of mind</td>
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<td>In-depth knowledge of multiple cultures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good decision making skills</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Psychological and Emotional Development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Good mental health</td>
<td>Promotes social competence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td>Promotes emotional competence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good emotional self-regulation</td>
<td>Promotes moral competence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good coping skills</td>
<td>Fosters clear and positive identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good conflict resolution skills</td>
<td>Fosters self-determination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery motivation and positive achievement motivation</td>
<td>Fosters spirituality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confidence in one’s personal efficacy</td>
<td>Fosters clear and positive identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planfulness – ability to plan for the future</td>
<td>Fosters belief in the future</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sense of personal autonomy and responsibility</td>
<td>Promotes behavioural competence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pro-social values</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spirituality and a sense of ‘larger’ purpose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong moral character</td>
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<tr>
<td>A commitment to good use of time</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Social Development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Connectedness</td>
<td>Promotes bonding</td>
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<tr>
<td>A sense of social/place integration</td>
<td>Provides opportunities for pro-social involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commitment to civic engagement</td>
<td>Fosters pro-social norms</td>
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<td>Ability to manage multiple cultural contexts</td>
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Table 2.4 Criteria for Evaluating Youth Development Policies

These points have been condensed by Pittman and Irby (1996) into a ‘4 Cs’ rubric of competence, character, confidence and connections. These criteria stress that academic
competence is not the only skillset that young people need to develop; emotional and social skills are just as important as intellectual competence. Moreover, competence must be accompanied by character, confidence and be grounded in positive connections with peers and community in order for competencies to be channelled towards positive goals and activities.

Youth development still has a much greater influence on scholarship and voluntary youth organizations, than it does on policy. Many large scale voluntary organizations (that receive federal funding) have adopted youth development principles; these include 4-H and Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Although the concept of youth development is quite integrated into policy discourses – numerous new policy initiatives have referenced youth development as a goal – since the move towards asset-based programming tends to also involve a move away from targeted policies, youth development policies are often put aside in favor of targeted policies and the bulk of Federal and State programs remain concentrated on treatment and prevention. YouthBuild is one of the few large scale policy efforts devoted to youth development and that is aimed specifically at young adults.

YouthBuild was established in 1978 and provides counseling, education and work experience to unemployed youth between the ages of 16-24; many of whom are high school dropouts. Members of the program build affordable housing for low-income families, while taking classes with the goal of obtaining a high school diploma in alternate weeks. There are currently 273 YouthBuild programs in the country. Promise Neighborhoods, implemented under the Obama Administration in 2010, is another example of community-based federal program that is concerned with youth development. Promise Neighborhoods is a grant-giving initiative funded by the Department of Education that seeks to provide support to students in distressed
neighborhoods through comprehensive community programming. Although the program was not renewed in 2013, it was broadly implemented in over 20 states.

Promise Neighborhoods and YouthBuild show that there is interest in more comprehensive initiatives that promote youth development. However, there are still significant barriers to policy implementation of youth development strategies. These include insufficient funding for alternative strategies, taxpayer resistance, and a lack of interagency collaboration (Benson and Saito 2001). Although state actors have been slow to come to the table, the youth development discourse, however, has had a significant impact on nonprofit actors and organizations. Community youth development, for example, merges the goals of youth development with the activities of community organizers.

The community youth development movement champions creating strong connections between community and youth development efforts. Community youth development is driven by nonprofits and can be defined as creating environments that provide “constructive, affirmative, and encouraging relationships that are sustained over time with adults and peers, while concurrently providing an array of opportunities that enable youth to build their competencies and become engaged as partners in their own development as well as the development of their communities” (Perkins et al. 2003, 6). As such, the focus is shifted from the individual to the interactions between the individual and his/her environment.

Socialization, for example, is a development process that involves a young person’s interaction with various individuals and groups within a network that is composed partly by public and community institutions, such as schools. Socialization offers an opportunity for institutional agents and nonfamily adults to contribute to positive development; it is important
that opportunities for socialization are dispersed throughout communities, especially in those where young people may not be receiving adequate support in the home (Stanton-Salazar 2011). Research on resilient youth suggests that those who are resilient are skilled at identifying nonfamily adults to assist them in navigating high-stress environments. This suggests that environments such as schools and community-level organizations have can a tremendous impact on youth development (Grossman and Garry 1997). Further, research by Roffman, Pagano and Hirsch has demonstrated a positive relationship between positive youth outcomes and having opportunities for structured neighborhood participation through facilities such as recreational centers (Roffman, Pagano, and Hirsch 2001).

There is less scientific work on the effects of communities and socializing systems than there is on programs and organizations; this is perhaps because they are difficult to measure using a classic experimental design (Benson and Saito 2001). For example, there is little evaluation of 'safe spaces' – that is, semi-structured and loosely supervised places (e.g., open gyms, drop-in centers, parks) where young people can go and spontaneously choose from a variety of activities (Benson and Saito 2001). Qualitative research has shown that these sorts of informal ‘urban sanctuaries’ provide key opportunities for young people to gather and form important alliances with nonfamily adults (Halpern 1995; McLaughlin et al. 1994). But there is still little quantitative research on the “impact of Little Leagues, parks and recreation, banks, orchestras, dance, drama, ceremony, family ritual, middle school athletic teams, libraries, museums, natural intergenerational community, congregational programs, working at a Burger King, shopping malls, people on the street, conversations across the backyard fence, service learning, national and community based youth organizations or summer camps” (Benson and
Saito 2001:143). Such research is an important complement to existing qualitative research, as quantitative research has a greater influence over policy decision-making in the United States.

**Youth Autonomy**

Autonomy is an important research paradigm in France (Van de Velde 2008). In the context of the youth field, it refers to "the ability of a young person to become intellectually and financially independent and to be able to contribute to society" (Commission sur la Politique de la Jeunesse 2007). It is also a leading policy priority in the country; public policy efforts aimed at promoting autonomy are focused on supporting and reinforcing those capabilities required to for youth to become desirable citizens; such policies include work training, education and help with the acquisition of independent housing (Ranci 2010). For example, autonomy was given a central role as a leading policy priority in the 2009 Green Book (*Livre Vert* in French). The Green Book was prepared by the Commission on Youth Policy and outlines a new youth policy platform for the country. The document establishes 74 indicators for what youth policies should be achieving and promoting; these indicators are based on four outcomes identified as being most important for making good citizens (Commission sur la Politique de la Jeunesse 2007:9):

1. Autonomy: capable of making choices and achieving personal and social life goals
2. Solidarity: capable of acting for others and for themselves, and being able to share their concerns
3. Responsibility: capable of being accountable for their actions and of following through with plans and tasks
4. Committed: capable of asserting themselves in respect of their values, a cause or an ideal and to act accordingly

Research on autonomy is much concerned with the de-structured nature of youth transitions due to the increasingly mismatch between public institutions and labor market demand. Transitions are no longer clearly laid out by tradition, norms, institutions and communities, so individual biographies are more prone to anxiety and risk (Beck 1992). Since modern youth
transitions are more complex and protracted than they were in the past, traditional indicators for the labor market and past policies may not be sufficient to address the needs of young people today. Considerable policy effort has been devoted to providing institutionalized pathways with predictable outcomes so that young people may better navigate their way from school to work (Bynner 2001; Chisholm and Bois-Reymond 1993; Kelly 1999; Walther et al. 2002).

While school-to-work transitions are also the subject of research and policy in the United States, autonomy does not hold the central position in the American youth field that it does in France. Nevertheless, there are long established programs in America that are aimed at connecting disadvantaged youth with work. In 1964, for example, Job Corps was established as part of the Economic Opportunity Act to provide youth training and employment services. Youth employment is growing in importance as a policy concern, as is shown by the 2014 White House initiative, *My Brother’s Keeper*, which is focused on the needs of disconnected young men of color. Yet, although there is new interest in youth employment and autonomy following the economic crisis of 2007, Job Corps remains the largest federally funded training program for disadvantaged youth; it serves young people between the ages of 16 and 24 and has around 60,000 participants.

In France, the politics of autonomy dovetail with the politics of social integration, especially in the context of high youth unemployment. Much has been written in France about social integration; the concept has had a central place in French youth policy since the term was coined by the Schwartz Report in 1981. There are various modes of integration, but French policy is most concerned with systems integration, that is integration through formal and

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15 Job Corps represents 60% of all funds spent by the Department of Labor on youth training and employment services.
functional institutions. Social insertion as a policy goal is closely tied to the sociological concept of ‘social exclusion.’ Sociologist Alain Touraine first presented the notion of exclusion as a post-industrial form of class relations; namely that the class conflict of the industrial era had evolved into a disconnection between those on the inside and those on the outside: “the problem nowadays is not exploitation but exclusion” (Touraine 1991).

The concept of social exclusion has also had a substantive impact on both French and European policy; it is defined by the European Commission as: “a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination. This distances them from job, income and education opportunities as well as social and community networks and activities.” (EUROSTAT, 2010). Social exclusion is distinct from poverty as a policy problem because the notion captures the process-based and multidimensional nature of disadvantage; social exclusion focuses not just on outcomes and distributional issues, but also on capacity. It acknowledges that there are “multiple spheres and processes that can compound exclusion and trap people in disadvantageous situations” (Marsh and Mullins, 1998: 753).

Qualitative studies in English and French low-income neighborhoods have found that unemployed youth want to be involved in the labour market and dominant social systems, in the sense that they are neither revolutionary nor radical (MacDonald 1997; Truong 2013). Policies put in place to address social exclusion parallel those meant to support youth autonomy as they are grounded in socio-economic inclusion. Missions Locales, for example, are organizations that give young people the training and career counselling services they need to help connect them to
work. Additionally, young people are given early access to social assistance in order to help them to become independent from their families.

Autonomy is also a leading policy priority within the European Union, especially in the context of growing youth unemployment rates. The youth unemployment rate in the European Union was 23.5% in June 2013 and an estimated 30% of young Europeans are considered to be at-risk for poverty and social exclusion. The overall objectives of the EU Youth Strategy are to “create more and equal opportunities for young people in labor market and education, and to promote greater participation and citizenship.” This requires not only integrating more young people into the labor market, but also distinguishing between subgroups to design policy measures that will tailor to the needs and situations of NEETS, which is an acronym used by European policy scholars and practitioners to refer to young people who are ‘Not in Employment, Education, or Training’. NEETS are a particular target population as NEET status can lead to a variety of negative social outcomes, such as disaffection, isolation, and disengagement. European youth policy initiatives, such as the 2013 Youth Guarantee, impact all member states. Through the Youth Guarantee, member states ensure that all young people under the age of 25 – whether registered with employment services or not – will get a good quality job offer within 4 months of them leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. In France, the program was piloted in 2013 in ten départements16 and will become mainstream policy across France by 2016.

16 The pilot departments are: Aude, Bouches-du-Rhone, Seine-Saint-Denis, La Réunion, Vaucluse, Lot-et-Garonne, Allier, Finistère, Eure and Vosges.
Youth Agency: Research on Youth (Sub)cultures and Activism

Little of the writing reviewed above addresses how young people use urban space. Although much of the research discussed provides significant insight into how planners might better shape the built environment to promote youth interests, by approaching youth as subjects instead of agents, youth cultural practices are left out of the policy discourse. Research on youth cultures approach young people as agents rather than recipients of a dominant culture (Wyn and White 1997:24). The concept of ‘youth culture’ encompasses the norms, values and practices that are specific to young people. As such, research on youth culture gives visibility to the cultures, styles, and practices of young men and women – and more importantly, they suggest that cultural practices are, in part, political responses to external structuring forces. In his oft-cited essay, “Notes on Deconstructing the Popular,” Stuart Hall (1981) argued that youth culture and its expression in style and fashion can be a vital form of political resistance. Similar themes were taken up by Dick Hebdige (1979) who saw youth cultures as one means of protest for otherwise disempowered youth, and by Paul Willis (1981) who was interested in the ways that young people appropriated cultural commodities and used them for their own devices.

Grounded primarily in sociology – and then later adopted by other fields, such as anthropology and media/communications studies – research in youth culture has been focused primarily on alternative value systems and alternative consumption patterns (Hodkinson 2007). Youth culture emerged in the 1950s and 60s when youth became a class of consumers and thus became targeted by cultural industries. Moreover, the extension of compulsory education meant that young people were spending more time in an environment composed predominantly of
peers. Although youth cultures are typically approached as either ‘subcultures’ or ‘class-based sites of resistance’ in the literature, there appears to be a shared consensus that such cultures emerge as youth adapt to the conditions and conflicts associated with modern society in culturally and locationally specific ways (Bucholtz, 2002).

Initial studies of youth culture were inspired by early delinquency studies of the Chicago School. The focus was on the ways in which subcultures created by young people led to the collective rejection of dominant norms and values through the construction of alternative goals and values (Cohen, 1955; Becker, 1963). Such subcultures were seen as a coping mechanism for those who were unable to adjust to ‘normal society;’ by creating an alternative culture, these boys created environments in which they could achieve high status. The emphasis on deviance in research on youth culture held sway until the Centre of Contemporary Social Studies (CSS) at the Birmingham School offered an alternative approach that posited youth’s cultural practices as the result of class and the political-economic context of post-industrial Britain (Willis, 1981; Hebdige, 1979). This scholarship interpreted youth culture as a stylistic resistance to class conflict, yet acknowledge that symbolic resistance through the transformation and/or appropriation of clothes and materials did not change power relations. In *Learning to Labour*, Willis found that the cultural rebellion of British work-class youth ultimately served to reinforce class divisions, as by leaving school for the factory, working-class youth remained in working-class jobs. Inversely, in his research on inner-city black youth, John Ogbu found that although black and white youth have similar goals, histories and experiences of racism lead many black

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17 In France, the age of compulsory education was extended from 14 to 16 in 1967. In the United States, compulsory attendance laws are determined by each state (most are set at 16) and since the 1990s there have been efforts to raise the minimum school-leaving age to 18 (18 states have raised their minimum school leaving age to 18).
young people to believe that they cannot use the same strategies as whites to be successful; therefore they seek to cultivate their own pathways (Ogbu 1974).

Contemporary research on youth culture has emphasized the impact of post-modernity, as well as placing a greater emphasis on the impact of race, gender and other identity categories. As youth transitions have become longer and more unpredictable, scholars of youth culture suggest that young people seek out new forms of social differentiation and individualization that take the form of youth cultural activities (Beck 1992; Furlong and Cartmel 1997). Scenes, virtual communities, and lifestyles provide loosely knit, transitory identities for young people that can no longer be predicted by social class; Beck describes this as ‘capitalism without classes’ (Beck, 1992). Social divisions, however, continue to exert a strong influence on the lives of young people, especially as identities such as race or gender continue to embed social inequity in relations between groups. For example, scholarship on hip hop culture has critiqued the criminalization of black youth culture due to negative images of black youth as being prone to crime and violence. Rap and hip hop have been strongly linked with gang activity in policy and media, despite research that suggests that music was an important coping mechanism for youth surrounded by poverty and violence (Warikoo 2010). Tricia Rose, for example, has identified strategies of exclusion associated with hip hop culture in which access to music venues for rap concerts, events, and parties is made difficult (Rose 2008).

**Conclusion: Bridging Youth Policy and Urban Contexts**

In the literature, there are a lot of assertions that neighborhood context matters, but it is less clear as to how and why it matters. Most large-n quantitative studies still remain focused on the social impact/characteristics of neighborhood contexts, rather than the built environment and
physical setting. Ethnographic studies offer insight into how young people live in particular places, but rarely examine how they relate to and are affected by urban space. Even the much more spatially-oriented French literature seems more concerned with using space as a means of defining and delineating populations. What is clear from this literature, however, is that poverty and racism remain the most consistent predictors (or precursors) for the undesired outcomes identified as requiring the most attention. Young people growing up in poor, segregated, urban neighborhoods are more likely to drop out of school, have an encounter with the juvenile justice system, and be unemployed. Yet, neighborhood and community-based policies and interventions receive less funding in the United States than programs and organizations (Benson and Saito 2001). Perhaps this is due to the fact that establishing causal links between poverty, environment, and human development is difficult due to the complexity of neighborhoods. Nevertheless, the fact that the zip code a child is born in is still the greatest determinant of their life chances is worrisome, especially in the context of a shrinking welfare state that is aimed at addressing problems rather than structural inequalities.¹⁸ How can we change settings so that they promote youth interests?

How can planners make cities more livable and supportive of young people? It is important that planners take a more active role in the youth field, as a spatial perspective is sorely needed. Moreover, it is important that American and French planners learn from one another — although the French system has more actively mobilized place-based initiatives, some have been more stigmatizing than helpful. An approach to urban planning that includes youth interests promotes strong communities, economic democracy, and provides young people with safe, stimulating

¹⁸ In the United States, social assistance has been shifting from cash assistance through the welfare state, to cash assistance through the tax system. For example, the Earned Income Tax Credit is currently one of the largest forms of assistance to low-income families. While this program has managed to alleviate financial stress for the working poor, it ties assistance to employment.
places to spend time. To be resilient, young people need opportunities to develop pro-social behaviors and receive positive reinforcement for the things they do well. Youth development is interested in contexts for learning and growth; if external protective factors are embedded in the built environment and are connected in a meaningful way through design, young people can have access to opportunities for growth while also receiving the support and protection needed in a high stress environment.

Moving forward, incorporating principles of youth empowerment into urban planning and design can provide a theoretical base for thinking about how cities can support youth interests on both sides of the Atlantic. Following Rappaport, if we take empowerment to mean reciprocity between individual agency and structural opportunities, we can enhance both individual’s possibilities and capabilities to pursue subjectively relevant objects (Rappaport 1987). Social systems need to provide opportunities for youth where competencies can be displayed or acquired; this must involve giving young people windows to be agents. To do so, planners can help cities coordinate between the diverse branches of youth services by bridging environments through the strategic placement of facilities and legible geographies that make it easy for young people to connect to what they need. It is important that youth are embedded in a system rather than a patchwork of services. The following chapters will explore how these trends in policy have impacted the urban environment of youth in New York City and Paris. The analysis reveals that two very different urban landscapes result from problem-based and asset-based youth policy regimes.
“Just think of me as Gatsby” (2013). This was part of a conversation I had with I.D.K, a young man I got to know while doing research in New York. I.D.K is his rapper name. He is 19 years old and is looking to establish a career for himself in hip hop. If hip hop doesn’t work out, he and his friends – all members of a group they call The Black Market Collective – want to start a youth arts center for kids in their neighborhood. Not an uncommon goal among people of his age. He referred to himself as Gatsby (of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s novel *The Great Gatsby*) in response to a question I had asked him about his relationship to Manhattan and whether or not it felt accessible to him. I.D.K grew up in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn; one of the most impoverished neighborhoods of New York City.

With Manhattan and all its culture and opportunity just a quick subway ride away, it is a common perception that all New York City youth (regardless of which neighborhood they’re from) should have easy access to those opportunities, making New York City one of the “100 Best Cities for Young People,” according to America’s Promise and AIG. Yet many young people fall through the cracks. New York has one of the largest youth populations in the United States; it also has the highest youth unemployment rate in the country. I.D.K’s identification with Gatsby speaks both to that alienation but also to the drive, desire and talent of many of the City’s marginalized youth. Many youth who drop out of high school continue to aspire to a better life. Of the 31,000 New York City youth who passed the GED test in 2007, six in ten cited their desire to attend college as a reason for taking the test (O’Connor and Hilliard 2009:7).

New York youth continue to experience high rates of poverty and marginalization. In 2011, 30% of children in New York were living in poverty and 30% of all public housing
residents were under the age of 18 (NYC Center for Economic Opportunity 2013). In 2012, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 16- to 19-year-olds had experienced an unemployment rate of above 30% since 2009; this figure is three times the city’s unemployment rate. In the same year, the Department of Education estimates that 68,000 youth age 16-21 dropped out of school, making high youth unemployment rates especially problematic. New York City’s Workforce Investment Board revealed that one in five New Yorkers between 18 and 24 are out of school and out of work.

These challenges are particularly present for young men of color living in impoverished neighborhoods. The unemployment rate for black men ages 16-24 without a high school diploma is 52% (Banks and Oliviera 2011). Young men of color also have significantly more experience with the criminal justice system; 91% of admissions to the City’s corrections facilities are black and Latino men (Banks and Oliviera 2011). The youth detention rate in New York State is one of the highest in the country, with most of the convicted coming from the city. On any given day, there are approximately 800 adolescents, age 16-18, at Riker’s Island (Powers 2013).

These challenges persist despite the numerous programs and agencies present in New York to provide youth with the services and skills that they need to succeed. Areas in the city with high youth populations are some of the most impoverished in the city (Fig., 3.1). What explains this paradox? Why do youth in the one of the nation’s wealthiest cities continue to experience urban poverty and disadvantage? I propose that the problem is twofold. First, the policy goals and instruments used to address youth problems are not aimed at building capabilities. In his book *Development as Freedom*, Amartya Sen proposes that social development can be seen as a “process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” (Sen 1999:1). If freedom is the underlying objective of development, it is important that the object of
New York City: Age and Poverty, 2012

Legend
Population below poverty level
2 - 149
150 - 280
281 - 429
430 - 632
633 - 1180
Age
0 - 14
15 - 20
21 - 25
26 - 30
31 - 40
41 - 50
51 - 60
61 - 70
71 - 89

Figure 3.1 Map of New York City by Age and Population living below the poverty line
freedom be properly understood; Sen argues that freedom is not merely the freedom to pursue opportunity but also includes having the capabilities needed to pursue opportunity. "In analyzing social justice, there is a strong case for judging individual advantage in terms of the capabilities that a person has, that is, the substantive freedoms he or she enjoys to lead the kind of life he or she has reason to value" (Sen 1999:86). Many people lack such capabilities and so will remain oppressed even in the presence of opportunity. These capabilities, however, can be enhanced by public policy and so it is important that social policy instruments be evaluated in terms of their ability to expand the capabilities of marginalized groups to take advantage of opportunities.

Second, programs aimed at providing opportunities for youth are challenged by competing programs that limit young people's ability to make use of urban space. This is particularly true for young people living in low-income communities of color where there is disproportionate regulation through policies such as zero-tolerance policing. New York City has transformed its urban landscape by shifting resources from community-building and social programs to surveillance and incarceration (Fox and Fine 2013). Projects such as the High Line in Manhattan, Yankee Stadium in the South Bronx, and the Barclay Center in Brooklyn, encourage financial investment and gentrification at the expense of the displacement and exclusion of local residents. Having to fit young people into a landscape that is designed to maximize profits, facilitate capital flows and reinforce social and racial hierarchies, means that young people are awkwardly inserted into an environment in which institutions meant to support them are not meaningfully connected through thoughtful place-making.

Additionally, young people must navigate an urban landscape composed of regulatory rules and spatial arrangements that make it difficult for them to identify places to recreate, express themselves creatively and seek relief from an otherwise harsh environment. Data
collected on 311 complaints related to ‘disorderly youth’ show that young people are reported most often for ‘playing in an unsuitable place.’ The term ‘disorderly’ is described on the 311 website as “people or small groups, including protestors, who have caused hazardous or dangerous conditions in the past or repeatedly in the same location. These small groups can include youth who are repeatedly disorderly, cause a nuisance, or are in a park between dusk and dawn.” Neither the website nor the dataset provided a definition for ‘playing’ or ‘unsuitable place.’ The map below (Fig., 3.2) shows the location of complaints within the city in 2012. Although 311 complaints abound throughout the city, they are most pronounced in Harlem and the South Bronx, suggesting that facilities for youth are particularly lacking in these neighborhoods. Moreover, recreational spaces are unevenly distributed across the 5 boroughs with nearly all cultural and museum spaces concentrated in Manhattan and many sports facilities and stadiums located in the periphery.

The lack of space for young people may be due to the fact that young people are very often an afterthought in urban planning. The New York City Planning Department has very little official involvement in youth issues; its website does not have ‘youth’ listed as an issue area, the City does not have a youth master plan, and it is not a member of the New York City’s Interagency Coordinating Council on Youth, a council that brings together 20 city agencies to aid with coordinating efforts and service delivery programs where goals and target populations overlap. Membership in the Council includes major youth service providers such as the Administration for Children Services, the Department of Education, and the Department of Youth and Community Development, as well as agencies with a relatively small role in youth

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19 311 is a phone number and website (like 911) that provides non-emergency government services. 
20 Some mid-sized American cities, such as Nashville, have a Youth Master Plan – however these are programmatic and for the most part do not address physical planning and design issues.
services, such as the New York Housing Authority and the Department of Cultural Affairs. The Department of Youth and Community Development is devoted to youth programming in the city, with a focus on promoting

311 COMPLAINTS: DISORDERLY YOUTH
NEW YORK CITY 2012

- PLAYING IN AN UNSUITABLE PLACE
- NUISANCE/TRUANT

Figure 3.2 Map of 311 Complaints regarding Disorderly Youth in New York City, 2012
self-sufficiency and youth development; it is important to note, however, that the Department does not offer services directly and functions as a funding agency. Therefore, they have no physical footprint on the landscape and are not involved in providing places for young people to go. Perhaps due to the Planning Department’s absence, the Council’s efforts to make service provision more manageable through agency coordination are not reflected in the built environment. As such urban design and land use planning often overlook the unique ways that young people use and navigate urban space. Involvement in youth policy is a missed opportunity for urban planners and designers to create better places, and by extension better outcomes, for marginalized youth.

**Growing Up with Neoliberal Urbanization in New York**

Due to the lack of a coherent policy agenda at all scales of government, youth policy in New York City encompasses a complex terrain of services and initiatives aimed at youth. The Department of Education, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Administration for Child Services, and Department for Youth and Community Development are the agencies that administer the majority of youth-oriented initiatives and therefore have the largest budgets devoted to youth (Interagency Coordinating Council on Youth 2012). However, these are not the only kinds of policies that affect how young people experience urban life. Urban policies regarding security and economic development have an equally significant impact on the ways that young people can make use of urban services and space. Therefore, when talking about the impact of public policy on young people, it is important to look at both youth policy specifically and urban policy more broadly.
This approach reveals a contradictory policy setting in which the goals of policies regulating the built environment are often in conflict with those intended to improve youth’s quality of life. This is partly due to the fact that problems that youth development policies seek to resolve involve outcomes that contradict market-oriented policies by allocating space to unprofitable actors. An institutional analysis of the city’s urban and youth policy not only reveals this contradiction in policy goals, but also shows that neoliberal ideology has influenced an evolution of policy problem definition that defines youth problems in relation to their exclusion from the market (this is also evident in France). Moreover, urban policies since the 1970s have resulted in the gradual exclusion of youth from public space, suggesting that spatial exclusion of low-income youth is a consequence and strategy of neoliberalism.

Neoliberal ideology is described by Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore as “the belief that open, competitive and unregulated markets, liberated from all forms of state interference, represent the optimal mechanism for economic development” (Brenner and Theodore 2002:153). The impact of neoliberalism on urban governance has been a gradual shift from distributive policies, welfare and direct service provision to more market-oriented approaches that are aimed at promoting business interests and competitive restructuring (Swyngedouw, Moulaert, and Rodriguez 2002). This includes an emphasis on urban development projects that benefit middle and upper class interests; a greater presence of business professionals in the management of government departments, such as education; privatization of public space and public resources; the reduction of public school budgets; and the criminalization of social challenges, such as homelessness and trivial social disorder infractions.

The relationship between neoliberalism and urban space has been a key subject of inquiry within critical urban theory. Urbanization is conceptualized as the political economic processes
that manipulate urban forms and spatial arrangements in order to accommodate dominant economic systems. In other words, economic restructuring (such as the change from an industrial to a post-industrial economy) accompanies and is contingent upon changes in the built environment. Neoliberal urbanization refers to the spatial restructuring at the urban scale that has accompanied neoliberal transformations of the economy and governing institutions. It is a profit-based form of urbanism that is based upon the intensive commodification and privatization of land and services (Brenner, Marcuse, and Mayer 2012).

Neoliberal urbanization emerged in the 1970s and was preceded by a set of spatial economic relations commonly referred to as Keynesian urbanization (1940-1970). Keynesian urbanization was an approach to urban management that sought to promote a more equitable distribution of resources and so channeled funds to underdeveloped cities, neighborhoods and regions. Neoliberalism emerged as an alternative governance strategy (to Keynesianism) in response to economic recession in the 1970s. The economic crisis challenged the foundations of the economic order and as state and market actors struggled to overcome the crisis, a process of deregulation was put in place – deregulation weakened limits to market activity and so gave business actors a new set of tools and policies. The shift from promoting even distribution to promoting capital accumulation had profound consequences for urban publics, who were gradually divested of their right to urban space; for example through such mechanisms as the privatization of public space, the elimination of rent control, and the construction of high market developments in low-income communities (Chronopoulos 2012; Fainstein and Fainstein 1988). Conflicts with civil society groups have emerged in response to the new institutional
arrangements that have been developed to promote the neoliberal agenda (a new round of dis-embedding\textsuperscript{21}, so to speak).

Looking specifically at how youth have been impacted by economic restructuring can provide insight into the interaction between policy, the built environment and the youth population. New struggles between youth and urban state actors take multiple forms – from urban riots to squatting and the illegal tagging of property – and articulate a struggle against social exclusion and marginalization as well as a desire for cultural recognition and access to public life.

**Youth and Keynesian Urbanization: 1940-1960**

At the turn of the twentieth century, youth programs in New York were orchestrated primarily by Settlement Houses that were concerned about the wellbeing of urban children. Working-class populations lived in dense, multi-story tenements that were crowded and unsanitary. Privacy and space for leisure activities within private homes were rare; even backyards were filled with vegetable gardens, farm animals, outhouses and sheds. Children were left to play on the street. The street became a playground that was shared with adults who also used stoops, side streets and sidewalks as places to socialize, meet and sell goods. As such, there were frequent conflicts between adults, who saw children as a nuisance, and children, who saw adults as intruding on their play space (Nasaw 1985:18). There were also dangers associated with recreating in the public street; traffic accidents that resulted in injury or death provoked reformers and settlement-house workers to lobby for the establishment of parks, playgrounds and

\textsuperscript{21}In *The Great Transformation*, political economist Karl Polanyi argues that until the advent of capitalism, market forces were embedded in social relationships that enabled subsistence. The transition to commodity production required dis-embedding these institutions from their social base and creating market institutions based on individualism (i.e., laissez-faire). Since the 'great transformation' institutions have undergone movements of re-embedding (i.e., social security) and dis-embedding (i.e., neoliberal reforms).
after school programs for children. Overall, though, public actors were not concerned with youth as a group and all youth-related public policy was subsumed under ‘children’s welfare,’ thus excluding young adults and not attending to the specific needs of adolescents. The National Youth Administration is a notable exception. During the Great Depression, the Federal Transient Relief Act set up the National Youth Administration in 1935 to open employment bureaus and provide cash assistance to poor college and high school students; the program, however, was terminated in 1940 on the grounds that it was too expensive (Bremner, Hareven, and Mennel 1971).

In the 1950s and 60s, federal and municipal governments responded to socio-economic transformations, in particular uneven development, through a series of urban-based reform programs that sought to address urban poverty and juvenile delinquency through community action programs (Fernandes-Alcantara 2012). President Johnson’s War on Poverty included numerous initiatives that targeted young people, such as Job Corps and Upward Bound. Job Corps sought to provide job opportunities to low-income youth, whereas Upward Bound assisted low-income youth to attend college. Education legislation, such as the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, provided federal funding to low-income schools, and the 1974 Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act provided grants for state and local governments willing to set up more rehabilitative and preventative juvenile justice programs.

In New York, the earliest precursors to youth policy interventions emerged in the late 1940s in response to gang violence in low-income neighborhoods. In 1947, the New York City Youth Board was formed in response to the growth in gang membership. The Youth Board employed street workers (also called ‘detached workers’ since they worked with youth in a street and not institutional setting) to combat gang violence by engaging young people in recreational
and job training activities in Central Harlem, Tompkins Park and in the South Bronx (Schneider 1999). A high profile anti-gang initiative, Mobilization for Youth, was started in 1962, after receiving municipal funding and a federal Anti-Delinquency Action grant. The program was implemented in five New York City settlement houses located in Manhattan’s Lower East Side; the participating settlement houses coordinated a team of street workers who mounted intervention efforts with more than a dozen neighborhood street gangs. The program was based on the theories of Cloward and Ohlin (1963) and so promoted the notion that delinquency could be reduced if the gap between opportunity and aspiration was bridged. As such, job training, job placement, subsidized employment, and social service programs were established to prevent gangs from forming by providing new channels of opportunity for neighborhood youth. A team of activist lawyers was assembled to protect and expand residents’ legal rights, advocating for social benefits and economic entitlements. As the program became politically radical, however, it gradually lost funding and five years later, had to limit its scope to the Henry Street Settlement House (Cazenave 2007).

Youth and Neoliberal Urbanization: 1970-present

Despite gestures towards youth in earlier policy programs at the municipal level, youth policy was still a relatively new idea in the 1970s, when youth became formally recognized as a stakeholder group with a unique set of needs and challenges. The creation of the federal Family and Youth Services Bureau22 in 1970, for example, established a more defined role for youth (as distinct from children) within public policy (Fernandes-Alcantara 2012). The Bureau was created to provide greater leadership for youth services and policy at the national level and was focused on providing shelter, community services and prevention education for at-risk youth populations.

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22 The Family and Youth Services Bureau is part of the Administration for Children and Families, which is a division of the Department of Health & Human Services.
The Bureau’s activities responded to a growing number of social challenges in low-income urban communities, such as homelessness, domestic violence, teen pregnancy and growing incarceration rates. As such, programs dovetailed with urban policy initiatives in many large American cities, such as New York, which were still influenced by the community action programs of prior decades. Efforts to channel public money to the city’s poorest neighborhoods through re-distributional programs, such as Model Cities, persisted in New York until the mid-1970s when federal funding cuts, financial crisis, and immense political pressure to keep public spending to a minimum led to the decline of social programs.

In 1975, New York public spending came under the supervision of the New York City Seasonal Financing Act which installed a monitoring body for the city’s spending. The monitoring body brought forth a strict austerity program that cut many social security programs. Existing youth programs and services were streamlined so as to target those young people who were already in need of public assistance and diminished budgets for recreational services and parks meant that only the bare minimum of services were provided. Moreover, the replacement of Model Cities with Community Development Block Grants in 1974 meant that the city had wider latitude in how they used the Federal funds meant for low-income communities and so attempts to revive the economically depressed city shifted to encouraging commercial development in Manhattan through zoning and tax incentives, as well as directing government money toward areas with greater potential for redevelopment (Fainstein and Fainstein 1988). Efforts to attract investment also involved a vain attempt at cleaning up the subway system through an anti-graffiti campaign that was started under Mayor Lindsay in 1972 when graffiti was made illegal. Although Lindsay’s campaign was largely ineffective, it marked the beginning of the city’s reclamation of public space from urban youth.
Efforts to promote economic development in New York City took off under Mayor Koch, who served as mayor from 1978-1989. Koch championed the interests of investors and property owners over those of low-income residents. In the youth field prevention programs, such as the D.A.R.E anti-drug campaign, that sought to prevent young people from engaging in problem behavior gained in currency. Gradually, at-risk youth became a key client group and the majority of prevention campaigns were focused on those considered to be highest at-risk for problem behavior; in particular, the children with incarcerated parents, young people with limited educational attainment, public housing residents and young people growing up in single-parent households. Prevention programs became concerned with surrounding environments – that is the environmental context in which risky behaviors are assumed – in the late 1980s, when concerns about overlapping problems pointed policy-makers towards environments in which troubled youth were growing up, rather than just individual behaviors.

In the 1990s, public interest in youth picked up and policy objectives diversified. Although delinquency and at-risk youth remained relevant policy frames, the rise of youth violence at the end of the 1980s and new studies in psychology that identified environmental context as a key factor in a young person’s development (Bronfenbrenner 1977) added two new influential frames: violent youth and youth development. Heightened gang activity and a fast growing youth homicide rate – particularly in coastal cities such as Los Angeles and New York – led to fear and anxiety regarding violent youth. John Diulio, a senior advisor to President George W. Bush, coined the term ‘supra-predators’ to describe these “extremely violent juveniles … who prefer murder to mischief” (Dilulio 1995:26).

The fear rhetoric surrounding young people led to more punitive responses to misbehavior and stressed zero-tolerance towards minor incidents that were thought to represent a
slippery slope for crime; they coincided with a more stringent regulatory approach to the built environment through New York’s zero-tolerance policing practices (Bratton and Knobler 1998). As such, policy responses to youth violence encompassed a pastiche of preventive services employing everything from a public health approach to violence, such as the Cease Fire model, and zero-tolerance for minor incidents. Juvenile arrests for less serious offences, such as drug possession and disorderly conduct, grew during the 1990s and remained high through the 2000s (Bureau of Justice). In their research on the impact of aggressive policing on New York City youth, Brett Stoudt, Michelle Fine, Madeline Fox have found that young people living in communities of color do indeed feel harassed by policing tactics in their neighborhoods (Stoudt, Fine, and Fox 2012).

Interest in youth development approaches also picked up steam in the 1990s, mostly as a reaction against the prominence of problem-based approaches to youth. It has been adopted widely in rhetoric, although community development professionals found many of the youth development-focused initiatives to be more talk than action. For example, Maria Fernandez of the Urban Youth Collaborative has critiqued the public policy actors for their lack of meaningful action in the youth realm. “The conversation among elected officials is ‘we need more after school programs,’ which is true, but then nothing happens. We need to go beyond these conversations. And no one is saying let’s change education and teach social and emotional learning in schools. Or they can say that, but they don’t do it.” Nevertheless, the youth development narrative has had an observable presence in policies that were implemented in the 2000s.

In the Comprehensive Plan for Youth Outcomes, New York State cited the “need for a policy shift toward positive youth development principles and strategies” and instituted a Youth
Development Team, a public-private partnership, to promote the vision of achieving policy shifts that "focus on youth assets, rather than liabilities" (Carter et al. 2006:15). ACT for Youth and The Children's Plan, two major policy initiatives put forward by New York State in 2005 and 2008 respectively, recommend "that we proactively address the developmental needs of youth ... through school, across various living situations, in multiple service providers" (Office of New York State Governor David A. Paterson 2008). The Department of Youth and Community Development, established in 1996 to "provide the City of New York with high-quality youth and family programming," cites youth development as the guiding paradigm for their work.

Although many of the trends set in the 1990s remain the dominant focus of youth policy efforts, in the mid-2000s, initiatives began to focus increasingly on 'disconnected youth.' Similar in spirit to youth development, programs targeted at disconnected youth seek to help youth build the assets they need to better participate in the labor market. This approach is apparent in the City's new Young Men's Initiative. In their "Report to the Mayor," Young Men's Initiative program co-chairs David Banks and Ana Oliviera state that the "situation facing young men of color is facing a crisis level in New York ... because of their disconnected status" (Banks and Oliviera 2011:8). Disconnected is defined as being "out of school and out of work, which includes neither working nor looking for work" (Banks and Oliviera 2011:9). The task of reconnecting youth to the market has become increasingly central to many new youth initiatives of past years, such as YouthWorks which aims at reducing high unemployment rates by providing tax credits to businesses that hire unemployed youth, and YouthBuild, which gives young people working towards their GED jobs and job training in affordable housing construction projects. Like the Empowerment Zone Program which tackles poverty by attracting
business to “highly distressed urban communities,” these initiatives draw upon economic development strategies to address youth problems.

The evolution of youth policy problems from delinquency to disconnection suggests the growing influence of neoliberalism on policymaking and corresponds with the rise of neoliberal governance in New York City. Interestingly in the context of dis-embedding market forces from social relationships, there is a need to simultaneously connect marginalized populations to the market, but without any of the social and political protections that an embedded system provides. This, perhaps, is why programs aimed at disconnected youth are so often critiqued for being superficial – the neoliberal context of a free market makes policies with good intentions less effective, from a social justice perspective. Trying to connect youth to self-regulating markets is a social effort that often falls flat because a welfare regime that is premised on providing bridges to employment cannot provide all necessary social supports to low-income individuals. So, while there is certainly social value in addressing youth unemployment and poverty, such efforts must be more holistic and should connect youth to systems that will protect them from the vagaries of the market. Youth policies aimed at youth’s wellbeing should look beyond connecting young people to jobs, but should also engage with their skills and the things that they love to do. The impact of neoliberal urban governance on youth therefore has not just been to reframe policy problems – it has also diminished public investment in low-income communities and strategically navigated public resources away from spatial investments in youth development and towards the criminalization of youth culture, communities of color, and poverty.
Youth, Policy and the Built Environment

Socially, neoliberalism has re-framed youth development in the context of market connectedness. Spatially, it has provoked a shift away from making cities more inhabitable for youth, to making youth more manageable for cities. It is therefore important to evaluate neoliberalism from the bottom up by looking critically at the urban youth experience and the spatial consequences of the neoliberal project. Youth in New York face an ever-present encroachment on their ability to use public space as they are increasingly exposed to harsh policing and strict regulatory practices in their neighborhoods. The criminalization of youth culture, coupled with the separation of key youth-based institutions from the community, has picked away at the spaces in which young people can feel a sense of ownership and belonging. These policies have had the greatest impact in the past 20 years and run antithetically to the goals of youth development, which would encourage an approach to public space that accommodates young people and their cultural practices. The urban design politics of such policies reveal an unstated agenda towards youth in urban policy that emphasizes regulation and exclusion.

Criminalization of Youth Culture

Youth culture has always been a point of contention between young and old; however, in New York City suspicion and disapproval gradually gave way to criminalization beginning in the 1970s. The coincidence of high crime rates, disinvestment and financial crisis in the city led to the crafting of a policy in which clearing the cityscape of undesirable elements (note: undesirable not criminal) was deemed necessary for reducing crime, and so opened up the city to investment, gentrification and financial expansion. The adopted policing strategy claimed that creating an environment of social order was the necessary first step in reducing violent crime (Bratton and Knobler 1998). The criminalization of youth culture went hand in hand with this strategy;
practices such as zero-tolerance policing, anti-graffiti legislation, and quality-of-life offenses targeted youth cultural activities by designating them as visible signs of social disorder. Packaged as an integral part of the city's large-scale crime reduction campaign, these policies 'liberated' public space for privileged classes and disinvested youth of the public spaces in their neighborhoods they had once had access to.

Anti-Graffiti Legislation

In 1972 Mayor Lindsay's instituted anti-graffiti legislation with the hope of cleaning-up the City's graffiti covered subway system. Although Lindsay's anti-graffiti campaign was largely ineffective, it paved the way for Mayor Koch's aggressive anti-graffiti campaign of the 1980s, where efforts to clean up the subway were intensified. Broken Window Theory had a strong influence on these policies. Broken Window Theory posits that signs of lawlessness, such as broken windows, graffiti, and turnstile jumping, can create an atmosphere that emboldens criminals and leads to more serious crimes. Since it links physical appearance with violent crime, Broken Window Theory recommends that signs of social disorder be removed from the urban environment. As such, ridding the urban landscape of graffiti tags was considered a necessary first step to more orderly behavior.

Today, New York City maintains its tough anti-graffiti stance and uses its Anti-Graffiti Task Force, which was started by Mayor Giuliani in 1995, to keep the city graffiti-free. Under Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who was in office from 2002-2013, the program sought to increase graffiti arrests even more by aggressively by publicizing a $500 reward for information leading to the arrests of graffiti vandals and by sending 311 calls directly to officials with the task force, which coordinated with the mayor's office for community affairs (Rutenberg 2005). In a 2005 press conference, Mayor Bloomberg stated that the "graffiti is something for which our
administration has zero tolerance," calling it "an invitation to criminal behavior" (Rutenberg 2005). For many young people, however, graffiti was never about social disorder but about the transformation of the fixed spatial meanings from which they are excluded. "Lower class kids," observes cultural critic Nelson George, "have always wanted and created their own thing ... Graffiti provided them with a strategy of resistance from the alienation they felt” (George 2001:44). Or, as psychologist Miriam Kramer (2013) noted in her many conversations with inner city youth, “they would talk about them [graffiti], they would talk about them with reverence and they didn’t want to be stopped from doing them ... they didn’t look at graffiti as dirtying up a surface. They looked at it as artistic and a way of expressing their feelings.”

**Zero-Tolerance Policing and Quality-of-Life Offenses**

An increase in violent and non-violent crime in New York City through the 1980s and 1990s provoked a heavy handed policing response under Mayor Giuliani. Police Commissioner William Bratton introduced a proactive approach to policing that targeted quality of life offenses, drug dealers and gun crime in order to prevent crime by aggressively targeting high-risk activity and high crime areas using a statistics program called COMPSTAT that could identify areas that required extra policing. What made this program particularly relevant for young people was the new zero-tolerance policing strategy that targeted low level offenses (i.e., ‘quality of life’ offenses) and effectively criminalized many youth activities, such as playing loud music on a street corner. Increased police presence in public space combined with a zero-tolerance attitude gradually excluded young people from the public spaces they had once inhabited. While the program did indeed lead to a dramatic reduction in crime, antagonistic policing practices, especially towards communities of color, have resulted in a rise in complaints over police misconduct (Goodman, 2013). Moreover, since zero-tolerance policing is considered the
lynchpin of the program, aggressive policing of low level offenses remains embedded within police practice (Bratton & Knobler, 1998).

With the desire to return public space to the middle class, Mayor Giuliani’s policing policies targeted groups whose use of space were antithetical to those of business and criminalized their activity (Smith 1998). In 1994, for example, the New York Police Department adopted Police Strategy No.5: Reclaiming the Public Spaces of New York. Under the grounds “aggressive panhandling, squeegee cleaners, street prostitution, ‘boombox cars,’ public drunkenness, reckless bicyclists, and graffiti have added to the sense that the entire public environment is a threatening place” the Mayor declared these types of behavior to be “visible signs of a city out of control ... A city that cannot protect its space or its children” (NYPD 1994). The new policing policy allowed the New York Police Department to “advance a quality of life legislative agenda to enhance the police department's ability to respond effectively to disorderly conditions and low-grade criminal activity that increase public fear” (NYPD 1994). Parks in particular were largely seen as depraved spaces ‘occupied by delinquent youth’ that needed to be regulated and securitized. Bratton’s policing strategies were continued in the Bloomberg administration under Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly. Operation Impact targeted crime hot-spots while Operation Clean Sweep focused on quality of life crimes.

These policies turned public spaces where youth gather into highly regulated areas and as such made it increasingly difficult for them to gather, organize and recreate outside of their homes. This proved particularly problematic for young people living in public housing who have few spatial resources to begin with, in the sense that they have less private space within their homes – such as basements, garages and in some cases, their own bedrooms, to pursue creative and leisure activities.
**Operation Crew Cut**

The tension between youth culture and increased policing is further illustrated by one of the City’s latest policing initiatives, Operation Crew Cut. Operation Crew Cut is a tough anti-gang legislation that doubles police staffing in the anti-gang unit of the New York Police Department and expands the definition of gang to ‘any group of young men.’ In a speech announcing the new plan, Police Commissioner Ray Kelly said that they would: “focus these resources not on large, established gangs such as the Bloods and Crips, but on the looser associations of younger men who identify themselves by the block they live on, or on which side of a housing development they reside ... their loyalty is to their friends living on a relatively small area, and their rivalries are based not on narcotics trafficking or some other entrepreneurial interest but on turf” (quoted in: King 2012). The crew, however, is a seminal component of much non-violent youth culture. Although gangs are obviously groups of young people – the crew very often refers to a non-violent association. It is not uncommon to see young people photographing themselves with their crews and referring to them as ‘family.’ This policy illustrates the extent to which youth culture is profoundly misunderstood by policymakers. In fact, an aggressive policy towards crews runs counter to the goals of the City’s attempts to ‘reconnect’ disconnected youth as crews are very often the first vehicle through which young entrepreneurs build and promote their business endeavors.

**The Separation of School from Community**

The school represents a central neighborhood anchor that can serve many functions in a community if properly leveraged. As an environment in which children and young people will spend the majority of their day, schools can very easily become more than an educational institution; they provide space that brings together many age groups – students, parents, alumni.
Moreover, a school’s convenient location in residential neighborhoods means that they are ideal public spaces for community events and meetings after school hours. Despite their potential to act as community anchors, public schools are traditionally disconnected from local government in terms of community development and land use planning (McKoy and Vincent 2007). To this end, in the early 1990s New York City’s Beacon Program took advantage of the symbolic meaning of the school building and kept participating public schools open after hours to provide community services such as tutoring, exercise classes, and quiet study space. The Beacons were designed to be a “safe haven” for young people living in difficult environments and was one of the first to make use of an already existing community anchor to provide much needed services for youth (New York Dept of Youth and Community Development 1991). The Beacons were highly successful and the program was expanded multiple times in New York and replicated in cities across the country. The beacons were an example of how community development and planning can come together to build positive reciprocal relationships between the built environment and educational opportunities.

The Beacon program created a positive environmental relationship between youth and the school. In an evaluation of the program, researchers revealed that youth living in communities with a beacon overwhelmingly identified the school as a ‘safe space’ for them in the neighborhood (Warren, Brown, and Freudenberg 1999). However, Giuliani’s 1998 Memorandum of Understanding challenged much of that work by turning public schools in New York – especially those in low-income communities of color – into highly regulated and controlled environments. The Memorandum transferred school safety from the Department of Education to the New York Police Department. The transfer gave School Safety Agents the authority of arrest and expanded their responsibilities from responding to complaints to
monitoring school hallways, entrances and exits; operating ID scanners, cameras and metal detectors; checking student and staff identification.

At the time, School Board member Sandra Lerner raised concerns over the possibility of police overstepping the authority of the school staff. “I believe there has to be a school culture, not a penal culture,” Lerner said in a press conference in 2004 (Archibold 1998). The program has since grown under Mayor Bloomberg, including the new Impact Schools initiative which targeted schools with high levels of reported crime for heightened policing with the expressed goal of creating safe school environments. New York City has more School Safety Agents than any other school district in the country. According to a study produced by the New York Civil Liberties Union, if School Safety Agents were considered to be their own police force, it would be the tenth largest police force in the country (NYCLU 2007:21). In the apt words of a current student: “What has come of all this spending? Nothing, except to tell kids that a place they once thought was a sanctuary is not really safe after all” (quoted in NYCLU 2007:10).

Youth and the Built Environment in the Bronx

The Bronx borough contains many of New York City’s low-income neighborhoods; according to the 2010 census, 28% of the population in the Bronx lives below the poverty line. It is largely residential, with 34% of its land occupied by single and multistory housing and another 32% used for open space and recreation, according to the Department of Urban Planning. The neighborhoods south of the Cross Bronx Expressway are colloquially referred to as the South Bronx. Although there is disagreement over exactly which neighborhoods belong to the South Bronx, the area has a collective identity that was established when the area experienced physical and social decline in the context of economic recession in the 1970s. During this time period, the
Bronx experienced not only poverty, disinvestment, and population loss, but widespread arson and landlord abandonment, making abandoned lots and burned out buildings characteristic features of the urban environment. The South Bronx has since been characterized by its poverty, minority-majority population (the predominant populations are black and Latino) and high crime rates. It is also known for its status as the birthplace of hip hop.

Hip hop is, in many ways, the product of the distinct urban environment of New York in the 1970s; in particular, the Bronx, where many of hip hop’s creators grew up. Due to recession, arson and widespread disinvestment, the borough possessed a preponderance of abandoned public space. According to South Bronx rapper Grandmaster Caz (2013), “the times and the environment played a big part in bringing about hip hop. I think that the [economic] conditions had more to do than anything with hip hop. And it was a physical thing, you know? We played in those burnt out, abandoned lots. We jumped off fire escapes into dirty mattresses in these places. The conditions that we lived in were right in our faces. This was at the forefront of us, so we needed a relief — a coping mechanism.”
Hip hop culture was a means to resist the burning of the Bronx; groups of young people used dance and hip hop as a way of fighting back the neglect of their neighborhoods because it allowed them to express their anger and claim territory through their art. In fact, the invention of hip hop is widely attributed to a 1973 house party at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue, a subsidized Mitchell-Lama building in the West Bronx. Here, in the building's community room, DJ Kool Herc hosted the first documented party that involved all four elements of hip hop: DJing, MCing, graffiti and breakdancing.

The discussion that follows is based upon three study areas in the Mott Haven, Melrose and Hunts Point neighborhoods of the South Bronx (see maps above). The neighborhoods of Mott Haven and Melrose are located at the heart of the South Bronx area. Melrose is a predominantly residential neighborhood whose population is predominantly Puerto Rican, Dominican and African American. Nearly all residents are renters, and many live in the
neighborhood's 17 public housing developments. Melrose is also one of the youngest neighborhoods in the Bronx, with 34% of its population under the age of 20. Mott Haven is located just south of Melrose and shares its demographic characteristics. The HUB, which is the commercial heart of the South Bronx, sits between Melrose and Mott Haven at the intersection of Melrose and Third Avenue. It is one of the busiest neighborhoods in New York, attracting 200,000 people every day who come to the neighborhood to shop, work, and hang out. Hunts Point is a neighborhood located on a peninsula where the Bronx River and the East River meet. Hunts Point one of the prominent industrial areas of the city, and is home to the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center, which is one of the largest food distribution centers in the world. Its residential population, therefore, is exposed to the fumes emanating from the trucks that pass through the neighborhood every day. The population in Hunts Point is predominantly Hispanic (around 70%) and African American (20%).

Figure 3.5 Retail corridor in Mott Haven
Figure 3.6 Melrose Houses in Melrose

Figure 3.7 Industrial fence decorated with graffiti, on Westchester Avenue (Melrose)
Figure 3.8 Spofford, the now vacant juvenile detention center in Hunts Point

Figure 3.9 Hunts Point has one of the biggest food terminals in the world
The urban design politics of youth environments in New York suggest the systemic exclusion of young people from urban space. This section will show that this exclusion happens at the urban scale, the neighborhood scale and the architectural scale. At the urban scale, the concentration of security personnel, impact schools and juvenile corrections facilities in low-income communities of color imply that heavy regulation and securitization are disproportionately employed in the City’s poorest neighborhoods and that youth and youth cultures that are most visible in these neighborhoods are under the most duress and pressure from outside forces. However, the effects of these system-wide control tactics are felt most palpably at the neighborhood scale, where the physical evidence of environmental regulation, such as signs for the New York Police Department, security cameras and razor wire, is most visible. Site-planning for public institutions also reveals strategic choices and assumptions made about the residents of a particular neighborhood and their behavior. Such exclusionary urban design is enhanced at the architectural scale by features such as security infrastructure, surveillance technology, and street furniture designed to prohibit popular youth activities, such as skateboarding. The cumulative effect of these spatial practices and technologies is to create a politics of space in which there is an overwhelming absence of useable space for young people living in low-income communities of color. Not only are their primary environments under heavy regulation, but efforts to provide social space for the community tend to be directed towards children and the elderly, leaving very few places for teenagers and young adults to appropriate, use and occupy.

There are five primary spatial environments in which young people spend most of their time: the school environment, home, public space (sidewalks, stoops, the street), recreational
space (parks, plazas, playgrounds) and the juvenile justice environment. Recreational space is a category of urban space that includes interstitial/creative places created by youth through unique programming or design, and also encompasses publicly and privately funded spaces for recreation such as parks and community centers. Within the Bronx, they are subject to extreme regulation by authorities. Schools are outfitted with permanent metal detectors; juvenile justice environments are getting bigger and more pervasive; many residential buildings are part of the Clean Halls program; public streets and spaces are being constantly patrolled by officers who are empowered by Stop, Question and Frisk to detain any suspicious looking individual or break up any gathering of three or more people. Stop, Question and Frisk is a policing strategy that allows police officers to question and detain an individual without a warrant and probable cause, so long as they have ‘reasonable suspicion’ that a crime has been, or is about to be committed (Weeden 1998). The program has come under heavy criticism for racial profiling, as young men of color as disproportionately stopped by police (Weeden 1998).

Consequently, there are very few places for young people to express themselves and be creative in the Bronx. Few publicly funded projects in these neighborhoods signal to young people that the City values them and is willing to invest in their creativity. The control tactics invoked by the state have had the dual effect of making neighborhoods safer while simultaneously creating a hostile environment in which young people feel under siege. Most young people will have their first interactions with a state institution within these urban environments; therefore the way that these places are designed is important and significant. It is within the design and spatial organization of these environments that planners and designers can have the greatest impact on youth development.
School Environment

The Bronx is the most deprived borough in terms of education, with the highest dropout rate in the country. Of the 63 high schools closed as part of Bloomberg’s educational reform strategy, 22 were located in the Bronx and were closed due to poor performance and the poor physical condition of the building. Even when these buildings are replaced, school closings send negative messages to students and young people living in their communities. While some students are ambivalent, others feel that school closings show that they’re not good enough and also feel that they’re losing a piece of their personal history. Moreover, school safety reform has transformed many schools – particularly those in the Bronx – from community amenities to controlled environments.

Figure 3.10 Line-Up at Morris High School

Figure 3.11 Line-Up at DeWitt Clinton High School

The Impact Schools Initiative was an educational reform initiative launched by the Bloomberg administration in 2004. Drawing from the policing strategies that were used in Operation Impact, the Impact Schools Initiative used COMSTAT to identify high crime schools – that would become ‘impact schools’ – and instituted increased police presence, zero-tolerance

23 Photograph by Adama Diallo, accessed from: http://www.norwoodnews.org/id=5614&story=a-trip-through-metal-detector-means-late-for-class/.
policies for minor offences per the Department of Education’s discipline code and strict punitive responses. Of the twelve original schools enrolled in Impact Schools, six were located in the Bronx, six in Brooklyn, one in Queens and one in Manhattan. The program has since expanded to include an additional ten schools. This distribution shows a clear concentration in low-income communities of color. Moreover, most of the schools identified as having high levels of crime, were also among the largest in the City. For example, before being identified as an ‘Impact School,’ Franklin K. Lane High School had a student body of around 3,700 students in the 2003-2004 academic year. Impact Schools were also found to be underfunded before being entered in the program. On average, spending per student in schools selected to be part of the Impact Schools program was $9,037 compared to the City average of $10,519. These discrepancies suggest that neglect and overcrowding had a bigger role to play in the troubled state of the schools than ‘violent youth.’

There have been two significant design responses implicit in Impact Schools that have transformed the school environment: security infrastructure and the educational campus. The design of the school interiors outfits them to look more and more like prisons, especially since the Impact Schools initiative took effect. Moreover, the presence of metal detectors has been widely reported to be disruptive to the learning atmosphere since the lines are very long and often make students late for their morning classes. According to a student from Dewitt Clinton High School in the Bronx, “the line for the girls was 200 yards long. If you got metal in your pockets they make you go to the back of the line” (quoted in Fisher 2005). In their report on school security, the ACLU found that long lines to get through metal detectors frequently make

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25 In 2007, Franklin K. Lane High School was phased out for closing by the Department of Education. To ‘phase-out’ a school means to stop new enrollments but wait until all current students have graduated before school closure. The school building now houses now houses four small schools: Cypress Hills Collegiate, Multicultural High School, the Academy of Innovative Technology and Brooklyn Lab. Combined, the schools had a student population of 1500 in 2013.
students late for school (NYCLU 2007). Furthermore, metal detectors often alienate young people from what should be a ‘safe space’ in their communities. For example, students involved in efforts to protest the use of metal detectors in schools complained that their schools “treat us as prisoners” and asserted that “schools are not jails.” The official aim of the Impact Schools Initiative was to create a ‘safe environment’ for students. However, the question remains: a safe environment for whom?

The New York Police Department has been subject to class action lawsuits filed by students and civil liberties groups, such as B.H et al v. City of New York, for overly aggressive policing. The program’s zero-tolerance approach to the School Board’s discipline code brings youth more frequently in contact with school security agents and the juvenile justice system over minor matters. In an interview with Senior Coordinator for the Urban Youth Collaborative, Maria Fernandez (2013), I learned about the difficult nature of some of the interactions between young students and school security agents. In February, a second grade student was arrested and questioned by a school security agent for two hours because he stole $5 from another student. This is an incredibly strong reaction for what should have been able to be resolved by a trip to the principal’s office. Although there are also positive relationships between students and school security agents, tense and difficult interactions are also commonplace and may do more harm than good for the student body as a whole. Since the beginning of the program, many Impact Schools have been closed and replaced with smaller, thematic schools that are clustered together on a single site; this has transformed the high schools to campuses. The educational campus is a new approach to school design that privileges small schools of 500 over large ones. Most of the new schools that have opened in the Bronx to replace those that have been closed have been transformed into campuses.
The Mott Haven Educational Campus is a recent example of a large school building project; it is also the biggest and accommodates 2000 students. The campus brings together four different 'schools' of 500 within a single campus. It is located on a 6.6-acre parcel that once housed the rail yard and a gas plant, just off of Grand Concourse on 153rd street. The architecture firm Perkins Eastman designed the $137 million Mott Haven Campus to accommodate four distinct schools on the site. The school's site was quite controversial as it was built on a brownfield with toxic soil and groundwater. Although the School Construction Authority cleaned the site, it did not provide a plan for long term remediation and so was sued by the Bronx Committee for Toxic Free Schools. The large new campus design is a bold approach to school design. It is very splashy and makes a grand visual statement that the City is investing in education in the Bronx. However, what can't be seen are the metal detectors and security features installed within the walls of the school and the poor environmental quality of the selected site. The extent to which the new campuses are integrated into the community to create strategic systems of learning is questionable. Rather than dispersing small schools throughout the community, the campus model gathers them in large super-block sites – turning a school into a mega-product that may be too large to serve as a community anchor and that is reminiscent of the large scale public housing developments inspired by modernist design principles.
Lastly, new emphases on testing in New York City schools have put added pressure on teachers to focus on test scores and not on the development of their students. The stress of tests has a negative impact on teachers – activist and sociology professor Mark Naison has been heavily involved in protesting against Common Core. In an interview with Naison (2013), he explained that the method of funding schools and evaluating teachers based on academic performance only is a tactic dreamed up by business men who have never entered the classroom, and are trying to run a school like a corporation. “We’re taking away the arts, sports, chances to reward students for improvement, to give second chances, we’re placing undue pressure on kids, taking away more and more opportunities where they can feel accomplished” (Naison, 2013).

In another conversation with Charmaine, a high school teacher from Soundview in the Bronx, I learned about some of the difficulties faced by teachers in these settings when they are constrained by the test-based curriculum. She was very frustrated that policy makers don’t actually engage with the schools and spend real time in them to learn about the issues facing teachers. She also spoke about how important it is to be able to go ‘off the book’ when it’s obvious that a child needs to talk about something that they’re going through, since so many of
these children are experiencing great hardship at home. “Sometimes you can just tell that something has happened to a child. And you need to be able to take a moment to talk to the class about some of the hardships that they might be facing in their everyday lives that won’t be covered in a standardized curriculum. I’m not saying that everything needs to be tailored made for every school, but by making it harder and harder for us [teachers] to take an hour to talk about drug addiction, or violence in a community, or the experience of abandonment, we are not able to respond to our classrooms (Charmaine, 2013).” What I found most inspiring, though, was when she told me that it is most important to have a positive and loving attitude towards the kids that are most difficult to teach. “They know if you are already annoyed or tired when you see them. They can tell. Each day has to be a new day, each day you have to love them” (Charmaine, 2013).

**Juvenile Justice Environment**

The Bronx represents a disproportionate share of youth arrests and detentions. 33% of detained youth in New York City come from the Bronx. Of the top 15 districts for youth detention, 7 are in the Bronx: Tremont, University Heights, East Chester, Morris Heights, Soundview, South Bronx, and Bedford Park (Criminal Justice Information Services, 2013). Of those sent to corrections facilities, 60% are black and 40% are Hispanic. Increased security measures of the past two decades have seen decreases in violent crime but have also seen increases in arrests for minor infractions. Most detained youth have been charged with low-level, non-violent offenses. The costs, both social and financial, are high. It costs $260,000 per year to incarcerate a child in a state-run facility. In contrast, the average cost per pupil in a New York City high school is only $12,000 (Mayor’s Office of Operations 2012).
The detention centers are the clearest physical manifestation of the juvenile justice environment and represent a conflicted urban design politics. Young people feel affronted by the presence of detention and corrections centers\textsuperscript{26} in their neighborhoods; especially since detention centers are located in marginalized communities and seem to build upon the stigma imposed upon low-income communities. Yet, at the same time, there is also an argument for locating facilities within the communities that detainees are from. The Closer-to-Home Initiative, led by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, sought to transfer inner-city youth who are usually sent to upstate corrections facilities to facilities in the city in order to make it easier for them to keep ties with family and friends in their communities. This initiative, however, required the construction of more youth facilities within the City to meet demand.

The architecture of juvenile justice facilities has changed dramatically in the last 20 years. Comparing Spofford – a detention center in Hunts Point which was closed down first in 1998 and then for good in 2011 – to the Horizon Detention Center, the replacement center designed by KMD Architects and located in South Bronx, shows a movement away from purely penal experience and towards a more rehabilitative one for inmates. KMD architect, John McAllister, worked on the design for Horizon, as well as Crossroads, its sister facility in Brooklyn, and many similar projects around the country. According to McAllister, the Horizon facility mixes the typical security features found in a juvenile detention center with more normative community features, such as day rooms, yards and bright windows. Much effort was put into making the facility look more like a rehabilitation center than a prison, both externally and internally. According to McAllister, the “visibility of such facilities is important in sending a strong message to the community that detained youth are still a part of the community ...

\textsuperscript{26} Detention centers hold youth pre-trial and corrections centers are where they are sent post-trial if convicted.
therefore we design youth facilities with a welcoming community presence” (McAllister, 2013). Horizons is located within the Mott Haven community of the South Bronx in a central location in the community that is about a 10 minute walk from the neighborhood’s major commercial corridor. It is located near a public elementary school, a Burger King and can be seen from the elevated rail that services the 5 subway line.

Its predecessor, Spofford, was located in the more industrial Hunts Point. Spofford looked very much like a traditional adult corrections facility, with barred windows, no recreational facilities, and small rooms with no air conditioning. It was located on a brownfield (prisons are zoned as ‘industrial use’ and so are not subject to the same controls and regulations as all other residential building sites). Spofford still stands in the community and is empty. It does not have any intended plans for redevelopment, although resident activists would like to see the site used for either a school or a rehabilitative center for former detainees. Spofford was shut down for good in 2011 following much public outcry about the building’s poor conditions. John Mattingly, commissioner of the Administration for Child Services27 referred to Spofford as a “Dickensian building” (quoted in Beekman 2011). In a conversation I had with a community organizer in Hunts Point (2013), she recalled visiting friends and family members at Spofford: “It was scary. It was scary to go in, to be there, as a teenager. It was even scarier for my friends who were there.”

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27 The Administration for Child Services absorbed the Department of Juvenile Justice in 2010.
The design of Horizons is emblematic of major changes that have been occurring in the juvenile justice system since 2000. State and city-led initiatives have pushed juvenile justice facilities to be more rehabilitative for youth. This development is particularly interesting in the context of increased security design elements in schools and housing developments. The urban design politics underlying this transition suggest that state actors see detention centers as a space to cultivate youth, not as an undesirable last resort. John McAllister observed that in the past 15 years, youth facilities have undergone a transition from punitive to restorative; the Horizon Juvenile Center was one of the first to set this trend in motion (McAllister, 2013). Detained youth are now able to get academic credit while being detained and there are numerous programs offered that teach emotional coping skills and provide mental health services (Kramer, 2013). Services offered to detained youth take into account the developmental needs of young people and more openly acknowledge the fact that youth is a distinct age group. A psychiatrist at a corrections facility that I spoke with told me that she was shocked to discover that many of the
boys she worked with had very little idea of how to play, as many had had very difficult
childhoods. In one particularly memorable instance, she recalls “my coworkers and I did
different projects to teach them coping skills; the periods were 30-40 minutes. The boys that
were in the coloring classroom never wanted to stop coloring. These were 15-16 year old violent
boys. They just wanted to color” (Kramer, 2013).

Although the juvenile justice environment sees its most obvious physical manifestation in
the juvenile justice facilities, its impact is felt throughout the borough due to pervasive
interactions between young people and the justice system. Despite knowing statistical data about
high proportions of detained Bronx youth, the meaning of the figures didn’t resonate until I had
spent a good amount of time in the borough. In an interview with Grandmaster Caz (2013), we
spoke briefly about a community outreach program he does at the youth unit of Rikers Island
Correctional Facility. “Every time I go to Rikers,” he said, “I see somebody I know. I was there
just the other day, to do a rap session with the kids, and all of a sudden, I see my son’s stepson
there. Everyone in my neighborhood has been to prison or knows someone who has been to

28 Images from the KMD website.
prison.” Rikers has a 75% recidivism rate for young offenders, meaning that three out of four young men who leave Rikers will return to Rikers.

Unsurprisingly, I found myself frequently having conversations with people who had spent time in a detention or corrections facility. One afternoon, I stopped at a McDonalds on West Kingsbridge Road for a quick lunch between meetings. While I was eating I was joined by a group of young men – I think they might have been around 20 or 21. They started chatting with me, asking questions like: What do you do? Do you live in the Bronx? Where are you from? When I told them that I’m originally from Canada, one of them said that he’d love to go to Canada one day but that if he left the US, he’d have trouble getting back in. This was early on in my fieldwork, so I naively suggested that he apply for a passport and then he’d have no trouble getting back in to the country. “It’s different if you have a felony,” he said in response. I didn’t ask what it was for, but I assumed that it was for a probably for a minor offence since he hadn’t been detained for very long.

Arrests for minor offences that lead to time in a corrections facility can result in a whole range of legal discrimination measures in employment, housing, education, public benefits, voting rights and so forth, once they get out. So, for those who were detained while in their late teens and early twenties and have a permanent record, the experience will limit their life options long into the future. “I used to work at a nail salon right over there,” said MR, pointing across the street to what’s now a convenience store at the corner of 152nd and Melrose (MR, 2013). “You did nails?” I was incredulous. MR is about 6’4 with a muscular physique and a tattoo that reads God’s Favorite on his neck. He didn’t seem like the beauty salon type, but he nodded in agreement. “Listen Shorty, when you do acrylics, you get $5 a finger. That’s $25 a hand… It was sweeter than drug money!” I met MR a year after he had gotten out of a prison after being
convicted for drug dealing. I don’t know how long he was there or exactly where he had been sent, but I know that he was there for over a year. Since then, MR has been involved in numerous self-starter businesses that were still waiting to take-off. At the time, he was running a cleaning service. “There’s just so much red tape,” he complained. “You go to jail once – only once – and all of a sudden, half of the world disappears” (MR, 2013).

Public Space

Melrose and Mott Haven had the fourth highest number of Stop, Question and Frisk incidents in New York City in 2011, with around 18,000 stops. Since Operation Impact there has been a heavy increase of police presence in high crime neighborhoods. Increased police presence has been met with mixed feelings from residents. On the one hand, decreases in crime have made neighborhoods safer and, by extension, more open to a bigger ‘clientele.’ For example, at an event at Brooklyn’s Red Hook Park, one of the organizers (2013) commented to me: “ten years ago, we would have all been robbed by now – and you probably wouldn’t even dare to come here.”

I have heard similar comments about so many of the neighborhoods in the Bronx and Brooklyn that I’ve been working in – from both residents and outsiders. So, in one sense, police efforts have indeed resulted in lower crime in most New York neighborhoods which is especially beneficial for those living there. On the other hand, this safety comes at the expense of many freedoms and liberties, particularly since the majority of individuals targeted for Stop, Question and Frisk are young men of color. The racially skewed costs of Stop, Question and Frisk beg the question: who are these neighborhoods being made safe for? Is heavy police presence aimed at making neighborhoods safer for residents or aimed at making them more desirable for businesses and yuppies being priced out of Manhattan?
The decline of public space is concerning in part because of the connection between public space and the creative expression of young people. Public space has long since been a foundational component of youth cultures as it provided the necessary socio-spatial configurations for the culture to grow and mature because they were accessible to anyone who wanted to participate; one didn’t need to have money or be well dressed to gain access to a park jam or learn how to MC or breakdance. For example, the combination of a ravaged urban landscape and a system of interconnected public space in 1970s New York was a key element in the development of the hip hop movement. Then, public space was a prevalent feature of the urban environment; for young people, recreational space was found in public housing, public parks and playgrounds, community rooms and a largely unregulated streetscape, rather than in the backyards and basements of single family homes.

These public spaces formed a pervasive network that enabled the emergence of a cultural movement that required the collaboration and talents of a diverse range of individuals. Rap, DJing and break-dancing emerged in public parks, streetscapes and community rooms through technical experimentation and sharing. At Kool Herc’s famous party, for example, the combination of beats scratched from a record player with a greater role for the MC produced the rhythmic spoken word that we identify as freestyle rap. Breakdancing moves were compared and shared in public parks and basketball courts and graffiti styles and techniques spread through the illegal tagging of public walls and urban infrastructure. Graffiti writers sought out the most difficult and visible surfaces to display their art. The subway cars were the ideal surface because they were hard to get to and because they would circulate throughout the City. A former graffiti writer told me: “We would go down to Dewey Yard and A Yard looking for trains. It was like I was Ahab, and the subway car was Moby Dick – my great white whale” (A, 2013).
The hyper-regulation of public space has disrupted these traditions. Young people once used public space as part of a coping strategy. By making something creative out of a blighted landscape and forming crews based on artistic practice rather than violence, young people involved in the hip hop movement demonstrated great resilience to the many challenges posed by their environment. Young people today still turn to hip hop culture to find a place for themselves in a harsh environment and an alienating job market. By barring them from public space and criminalizing their cultural activities, programs such as Stop, Question and Frisk work against the resilience by taking away key protective factors that young people connect with.

**Residential Environment**

The Bronx is New York's most rent stressed borough with 35% of its residents paying 50% or more of their pre-tax income on rent; this figure has increased from 32% in 2006 (NYU Furman Center 2013). 80% of Bronx residents are either renters or public housing residents and, according to the Office of the State Comptroller, the Bronx has the greatest concentration of public housing, accounting for one of every eight apartments. The youth population in public housing is quite high; 34% of the NYCHA population are residents younger than 21 and 27% are minors younger than age 18 (NYCHA, 2014). The young people living in public housing face a particular set of challenges. Research has shown that young people living in public housing are at greater risk for poor educational outcomes since students living in public housing tend to be clustered in the same, under-resourced schools; about half of all elementary school-aged children living in a property managed by the New York City Housing Authority attend just 10% of the City's schools (NYU Furman Center 2008). Moreover, young people living in public housing (or more sparsely appointed rental housing) do not have many spatial resources within their homes. There are no basements, garages and backyards for youth to pursue extra-curricular goals — such
as a garage band – and many children living do not have their own bedrooms or quiet space, making it difficult to study. The Department of Youth and Community Development’s Out-of-School Time initiative is meant to address this need; however, Out-of-School Time only serves young people in middle and high school (so not young people over the age of 18 who are also in need of space) and have been criticized by those in the community development field for being superficial and ineffective.

Public housing is well known for being a highly regulated environment (Vale 2005). Green public spaces in the courtyards of large developments are often restricted spaces, where use is either prohibited by management or highly regulated; such rules tend to be particular stringent for young people whose activities are thought to be particularly disruptive and potentially dangerous. Beyond management, however, youth living in public housing developments and in many privately owned residential complexes in the Bronx are also subject to police surveillance in their homes through the Clean Halls Program. In effect since 1991, Clean Halls, also known as the Trespass Affidavit Program, allows police to execute ‘vertical patrols’ of residential developments by going up into private buildings and conducting stop-and-
frisk searches in hallways – with the landlord’s permission. More than 3200 buildings are enrolled in the program and all NYCHA properties are automatically enrolled in Clean Halls.\textsuperscript{29} Hundreds of juvenile arrests have resulted from police patrols in participating buildings.

Although the program was challenged at the State Supreme Court for violating privacy and being unconstitutional, it was upheld and continues to be in use in the City. Walking through many neighborhoods of the Bronx it is not uncommon to see signs notifying passers-by that a building in part of the Clean Halls program. The signs are a striking feature of the urban environment, suggesting that a residential building is unsafe and in need of extra policing. “Broken mailboxes, like busted locks and New York Police Department Clean Halls Project plaques, are some of the telltale signs that I had come to recognize in a neglected building” (Dwoskin 2010).

\textit{Conclusion}

In \textit{The Ecology of Human Development} (1979), Urie Bronfenbrenner suggests that in order to understand human development, the entire ecological system in which growth occurs must be considered. Bronfenbrenner’s insight was not just that the contexts and places in which a young person spends time will impact his or her development, but that the connections between these different environments (for example, between parents and teachers) are just as important as the environments themselves. Collectively youth environments constitute a system that can make life more difficult for young people or make it easier. They can be coordinated with one another to offer shelter/relief from difficult situations (school as a safe space from home, and vice versa) and to provide opportunities for learning, creativity and empowerment. The disparate nature of youth services and related departments, however, means that such coordination rarely happens.

\textsuperscript{29} Brochure for Trespass Affidavit Program.
Moreover, the environments that young people do spend most of their time in are not responsive to their activities and cultural practices.

Public policy does not acknowledge youth culture unless it is to criminalize cultural practices deemed criminal because they disrupt public order. Although many programs incorporate youth cultural activities into their curriculum, this incorporation comes at the implementation phase and not at the beginning. In short, youth culture is not taken seriously by policy makers and so it is not taken into account at the beginning of the process, when policies are being made. This is problematic because without listening to young people (by looking seriously at those cultures that they choose to invest in) we run the risk of misunderstanding them. To this effect, Maria Fernandez of the Urban Youth Collaborative (2013) has observed: “the establishments – the school system, the justice system, all that stuff – has created these narratives about what young people are and they are creating policies that perpetuate that narrative and then we buy it. We talk about ourselves as good and bad, you know? It’s not addressing the real issue about the value of life. Whose life do we value? Whose culture do we value?”

There is much urban planning and design can learn from youth, if the profession learns how to look. The switch from place-making to place-regulating in New York has created a difficult terrain for young people; yet they have responded with innovative spatial appropriation strategies that show their interest in and desire for urban space. Planners should broaden their understanding of youth participation beyond youth councils, charrettes, surveys, and other formal modes of participation, to include culture, lifestyle, social media activity. Including these cultural activities within the purview of planning and design will enable practitioners and researchers to connect with the broad underlying social systems that informally program urban space. Chapter 4
will provide an in depth look at influential youth cultural movements in the South Bronx, Brownsville and parts of Bedford-Stuyvesant.
Youth culture – and its place in the built environment – is overlooked by policymakers, planners and designers in two significant ways. First, an understanding and consideration of youth culture is virtually absent from youth policy and from the planning and design of the built environment. As is the case with schools, housing developments, juvenile detention centers and public space – there is very little consideration for the cultures of young people (that is, why they do the things that they do and why they find those things significant) and more often than not, youth cultural practices are criminalized and maligned by policy. Second, youth cultures are often misinterpreted and are therefore misunderstood. The criminalization of youth culture stems in part from a profound misunderstanding of the functions and meanings of youth cultural practices. Crews, for example, are approached by New York Police Department as potential gang units, whereas for many young people a ‘crew’ is a group of friends that provides mutual support for professional endeavors. Graffiti is approached aggressively by the City as vandalism and as a sign of blight and disorder, whereas for many young people, graffiti is not only a beautiful decoration for the built environment but serves the function of memorialization, belonging, and is a non-violent means of gaining respect among peers. It is vitally important that policy and planning understand these practices for what they are so that they might respond to them appropriately. As urban planners and designers we need to ask: why are these practices important to youth? What do these cultures tell us about how youth feel? What can these practices tell us about how young people fit into urban life?
**Urban Youth Cultures**

In this project, I focused on cultural activities that have a visible impact on the urban environment – as such, this discussion does not encompass cultural practices that take place within the home, such as gaming (Howard 1998) and bedroom culture (McRobbie and Garber 1976). Urban street culture, as the name implies, are those cultural practices that necessarily involve and/or are inspired by urban public space. As such, these are admittedly ‘spectacular cultures’ and does not include those activities embraced by youth that are not as readily observable. During my fieldwork, hip hop culture was the most dominant culture I observed on the street. It was consistently referred to as a central and important cultural movement by the young people I interviewed, and by community organizers and community leaders who worked with local youth. Hip hop has a strong visual culture as it produces street art, performance, and easily identifiable fashion. The visibility of hip hop and its roots in black culture make it a target for policymakers; in particular, for those who connect hip hop with gang culture due to the emergence of gangsta rap in the 1990s and general trends towards the criminalization of black youth.

**Hip Hop Culture: A Primer**

Hip hop has evolved into one of the most influential youth-oriented cultural forces in urban settings and has an intensely articulated emphasis on space, place and identity; yet it remains an untapped resource for planning as a means of understanding participation, place-making and identity politics. “The narrative of hip hop describes how individuals or communities live, how the micro-worlds they constitute are experienced, and how specifically located relationships are negotiated” (Forman 2002:3). Hip hop culture emerged in the mid-70s (purists date it to 1974, when DJ Kool Herc hosted the first party that involved DJing and MCing), just
around the time that neoliberalization processes were beginning to take effect on the urban
landscape. “At its most elemental level hip hop is a product of post-civil rights era America, a set
of cultural forms originally nurtured by African-American, Caribbean-American, and Latin
American youth in and around New York in the 70s” (George 2001:viii). Although hip hop is
commonly associated with MCing (or rap), the term refers to an urban cultural movement that
encompasses multiple forms of cultural practice, namely: MCing, graffiti, DJing and break
dancing. These cultural practices have their own histories and distinct media, yet since they
emerged and developed in tandem, they can be treated as a singular cultural movement: “they
come out of the same cultural fusion and heritage, respond to the same challenges and hardships
and are created by similar groups” (Miller 2002:40).

As a cultural movement, hip hop emerged largely as a response to poverty, racism, and
the Black Power and Civil Rights movements – it expresses the urban experience of that time
and is a vehicle for expressing shared urban experience (Miller 2002). It is such a significant
movement because, for the first time, it gave voice to urban black youth, whose voices had been
marginalized and allowed them to tell their story – their experience – to the world. Artistically,
forms of hip hop were influenced by contemporary pop culture and by African-derived traditions
coming from both Africa and the Caribbean (Miller 2002). It grew largely out of urban street
culture and was nurtured in urban spaces. Rap and break-dancing emerged and matured in urban
block parties and graffiti styles and techniques spread through the illegal tagging of public walls
and infrastructure.

**Hip Hop and Gangs**

Due to the notoriety of gang tagging, graffiti is often viewed as a threatening activity by
authorities and a sign of neighborhood decline by residents; graffiti is among the top three 311
complaints filed in New York and is the dominant complaint in the Bronx. It is important to note, however, that although gang culture was closely tied to hip hop culture – many gangs had their own graffiti artists, rappers and break dancers – for many, hip hop crews represented an alternative to gang membership. Rap battles, competition between break dancing crews and graffiti writers gave youth the opportunity to form identity groups and to build respect in their communities without recourse to violence. For Afrika Bambaata, founder of Universal Zulu Nation, hip hop was as an answer to the violence of gang conflict and the violence of world events (i.e., Vietnam War) – being a member of a crew offered protection for young people while at the same time giving them something to do and a means with which to establish a reputation. After a formative trip to Africa, Bambaata, a former gang member, formed the Bronx River Organization, as an alternative to his former gang, The Black Spades. Along with other prominent DJs of the time, including DJ Kool Herc and Kool DJ Dee, Bambaata sought to use hip hop as a way to draw kids out of gangs. This eventually served as the platform for the Universal Zulu Nation, which served as hip hop’s governing body. According to Hip Hop writer Bonz Malone (2013), Zulu Nation “smashed 40 gangs because of hip hop.”

The assumption, then, that hip hop leads to higher forms of crime is a gross oversimplification of hip hop’s relationship to violence and gang activity. Although it is impossible to deny that stories about hustlers pervade contemporary hip hop, instead of pointing to these rhymes as being the cause of a criminal culture, I think it is more productive to look at what we can learn from them about the experience of minority youth. As Tricia Rose argues, “early gangsta rap featured stories that emphasized being trapped by gang life and spoke about why street crime had become a ‘line of work’ in the context of chronic black joblessness. Thwarted desires for safe communities and meaningful work were often embedded in street
hustling tales" (Rose 2008:2). Gang life is certainly an important facet of life for youth in poor neighborhoods. However, it is not synonymous with hip hop. Therefore, assumptions made by policymakers that graffiti and rap are early indicators of gang activity are missing the potential of hip hop to offer an alternative to gang culture.

**Freestyle Urbanism: Appropriations of Public Space for Cultural Practices**

Young people with few spatial resources will frequently use and transform leftover spaces, such as parking lots, alleyways, and abandoned buildings to meet their needs. These spaces enable what I call freestyle urbanism; that is, a form of urban use and intervention that transforms space spontaneously and ephemerally. Cyphers, shows and performances, graffiti, block parties, park jams, pickup basketball tournaments, parkour— all of these popular activities among youth involve the use of leftover space and show the different ways that young people read and approach the built environment. Outdoor public spaces, such as parks, street corners, abandoned lots and interstitial surfaces are particularly instrumental in the development of youth-led cultural movements. Public urban spaces provide the necessary socio-spatial configurations for the culture to grow and mature by allowing them to take control over the claim and transform spaces in their neighborhoods and program them in a way that is exciting and fun. According to Orlando Torres, a Bronx-based community organizer (2013), “hip hop is an expression of public space. Everything that was being done in those years in the 1970s and the 1980s was in public space. The parties were in public space. The graffiti was in public space. The dancing was in public space. The music started outside at those public housing parties. It was not declaration of ‘we want public space’ — at that point the space was already there and it was abandoned. What people were saying was: this is ours and we’re going to make it beautiful.”
Block Parties and Social Geographies

Block parties are a popular social event hosted in public outdoor spaces. The block party has a long provenance in New York, as many early hip hop artists got their start in their local block parties. All the elements of hip hop – rap, DJing, graffiti, and break dancing – would come together in large block parties and local residents would be able to socialize, have a good time, and also share skills with one another. In the 1970s, DJs would tap electricity from public street lamps to power turntables and speakers during their block parties. Bonz Malone, an acclaimed hip hop journalist who grew up in the Bronx in the 1970s, describes neighborhood park jams as a "concert taking place in a moving museum … the DJ is mixing beats, you can hear the music all over the neighborhood and it draws people out of their homes, the trains are running past you and each one has a new tag and you look at them like art in a gallery – there’s Phase II and Taki 183" (Malone, 2013)! These public events in outdoor park spaces offered local youth a place to gather, battle, play music, and look at the new tags passing by on the trains. “Parks were the nucleus of hip hop. It’s where things got invented and how they traveled. We were inventing in public space and so even without radio we could share with our neighborhoods all the new things we were discovering” (Malone, 2013). Theodore Livingston, better known as the Grand Wizard, got his start DJing at Behagen playground in the Morrisania neighborhood of the Bronx. Livingston is credited with inventing scratching – when he was young, he would go to Behagen after school and spin while b-boys battled.

Since they take place on residential streets or the green space of a public housing development, block parties are social events for the neighborhood at large that are subject to their own set of social rules and geographies. Since residents are often familiar with their neighbors, block parties are not open to passersby, even though there is no official inside-outside
delineation. It is, however, an unspoken agreement that you don’t go to someone else’s block party if you’re not invited. Photographs of block parties cropped up frequently on the Instagram feeds that I surveyed. Young people acted as both host and guest, but would often use the block party as a venue for showing their talent and skills to a familiar audience. A group of young rappers I had met at an event invited me to a block party to see a live performance of their first album. I went and when I arrived, someone quickly came up to me and asked me what I was doing there and who I knew. When I told him that I was a guest of B and that he had invited me to come and watch his show, the gentleman took a closer look at me and said: “Are you Lili?” I nodded. “You’re B’s big homie from MIT! We’ve heard all about you! Come on in, I’ll introduce you around; B and them are on their way.”

The creation of localized social geographies is a practice adopted by youth that extends beyond the event of a block party. Public housing projects in particular serve as the basis for geographic delineations that are fairly important to young people. I discovered this relatively early on in my research when I had gotten an interview with Grandmaster Caz, one of the original hip hop MCs. I assumed we’d be meeting at a restaurant or an office (he now does hip hop tours, which was how we met) but when I looked up the address I found that he’d invited me to his home in the Soundview Houses. Since I didn’t relish the idea of going to a stranger’s home alone, I asked my friend RM, a photographer who lived nearby in the Bronx River Houses (2013) if he would go with me. When I asked, though, he said: “Are you crazy? He lives in a different project. I can’t just go wandering into someone else’s project! This is what you do: Tell him to meet you at your car and walk you in. You don’t want to be wandering around and end up in the wrong place and end up seeing the wrong thing. And don’t go bring some white boy with you either. Go alone. But get picked up at the car.”
A few weeks later, I followed up with RM on the social geography of the projects. "Why wouldn't you go into someone else's project? How would they even know?" I asked. "They know. You think people don't know who live in their project? Most of them lived there their whole lives — you know. You wouldn't just walk into someone else's backyard without an invitation would you? So you don't go into someone else's project if you're not invited" (RM, 2013). I pursued this a bit further as I was interested in the depth of the territoriality surrounding public housing. I learned that it was most common among boys and young men. In an informal conversation, Leroy Williams, the community development coordinator for the New York City Housing Authority (2013), told me that they do it because it gives them something to take ownership over. "They have to share everything. They want something of their own."

The local networks seemed to break down most powerfully, however, when young people were involved in a cross-city network. A few of the young people I met were part of a network of hip hop radio DJs who were interested in promoting local young artists from all 5 boroughs. They organized a music tour and the rappers toured around to colleges and universities in New York City to perform. People would also meet at city-wide organized events and competitions and through these meetings become networked. One afternoon, R and I had ventured out to Harlem to get lunch at Doug E's, a chicken n'waffles restaurant owned by the rapper Doug E Fresh. When we got there, however, it was closed for renovations until further notice, so we ended up getting sandwiches at a local deli on 138th street. When I went to pay for my sandwich and could barely believe that it was only $3, the owner started laughing at me and said "Lady, you're in Harlem now!" Indeed. We ended up at St Nicholas Park, where I got some freestyle lessons where R would say a sentence and then I would have to finish it. I was bad at it and definitely got a good sense of exactly how hard freestyling is. Mid-way through our lunch, a
random man walking past us suddenly stopped, looked at R and said: "I know you from rap-a-thon! You battled with Kayana Blade – she’s my sister!" And R did know him, and they exchange hellos, and then we called up Kayana and I thought to myself – it really is a community.

In some contexts, such as the encounter with R and the man from the park, belonging to hip hop culture overrides spatial and territorial divisions. This is perhaps because hip hop, more so than other youth cultures, is particularly open to newcomers. When I started my research, I didn’t know very much about hip hop, but the young people I met were very open to teaching me about hip hop and welcoming into their social world. It was about sharing and learning and a new form of collaboration. One evening, for example, we were on the train, and I was telling them about my project in more detail and about how I was going to Paris and that I was nervous about making connections with other hip hop artists there. "We just have to teach you how to beat box!" said CW, a young MC from Bedford-Stuyvesant (2013). "Then you’ll be able to communicate with them even if you don’t know the slang and the language.” I laughed but tried my hand at beat boxing and, even after multiple tries, could barely make the basic noises sound convincing, which everyone found funny. “Don’t worry we’ll practice – you’ll get it! And then, when you’re there, you’ll have this awesome story, like I met these hip hop heads in New York and they taught me how to beat box” (CW, 2013). The others nodded. “And you’ll need a snap hap,” said S (2013), as she handed me the baseball cap that she was wearing to try on.

**Political Reactions to Space**

A constant discussion thread, with young people I interviewed and also on Instagram, were political interpretations of the urban environment and of the racism and socio-cultural discrimination built into the landscape. Images of public housing and road signs for the Bronx
would be tagged ironically with the caption #dontgothere; others also add a #we4rmthere hashtag. The satirical element of many of the politically themed posts was initially surprising to me, but I think it represents the simultaneous desire to critique and take ownership over one’s neighborhood. For example, a friend of mine, who I called Strawberries, would frequently post critical observations about his neighborhood with the hashtag #brooklynbullshit. One memorable post was a GIF that read “Not sure if fireworks or gunshots.” It was captioned ‘Typical #brooklynbullshit.’ The image received three comments: lmao\textsuperscript{30}, lmao was thinking that last night, and lmao word.

Many of the posts were also more candid. One young man I followed on Instagram posted images of the public housing project he grew up in Crown Heights with the accompanying caption: #struggle. I also saw photographs of signs in clubs that banned certain items of ‘ghetto’ clothing, such as do-rags and baggy pants. Pictures of NYPD squad cars and signs would be posted with comments about police brutality and/or incompetency. Images of surveillance cameras have captions such as “eyes in the sky #plantationpolitics.” Photographs of sneakers hanging from telephone wires or street lamps would be frequently posted, sometimes with a remark about the image being typical of New York. The idea of struggle was another frequent theme in many of the Instagram photographs I surveyed. Photographs of poverty and displacement frequently had the #struggle attached, as did images that revealed situations and challenges that young people felt they were up against. Some of these would be personal, such as studying for a test or working hard towards a goal, but others would represent struggles faced by an entire community, such as images of protest.

\textsuperscript{30} lmao is a frequently used acronym on social media that stands for ‘laughing my ass off.’
Correspondingly, there was a very clear articulation of the social and economic problems plaguing their neighborhoods in the conversations I had with local youth. The social commentary would blend into their art – as all the aspiring photographers, rappers, graffiti writers, breakers and DJs I met staked part of their identity as artists on the neighborhoods they grew up in. For example, I.D.K also referred to himself as the Brownsvillain, after his native Brownsville neighborhood, and would photograph himself in the mask from the film V for Vendetta as a symbol for revolution. In the summer, he even posted a picture of himself burning a dollar bill with the caption ‘let’s see how many likes\(^{31}\) this can get.’ The photograph got 58 likes. At the same time, though, he was also actively involved in leading the entrepreneurial events of his crew. CW also had a strong political sensibility and once we spoke about the tensions inherent in the sneaker culture that he and his friends were so strongly invested in. “Sneakers are a big deal, but we so rarely think about the industry. When I buy sneakers, what am I really doing? Who am I supporting? How come I’m not supporting my friends instead? Because they don’t make the hottest sneakers? But why does that matter to me? And I’ll tell you all of this – I’ll tell you all about the problems of the industry and sneaker culture all while wearing Jordans\(^{32}\) I got two weeks ago” (CW, 2013). The oft contradictory political dialogue was a common occurrence. The young people I spent time with were simultaneously aware of the political inequities and problems embedded in the industries and systems that they nevertheless wanted to be a part of.

The political commentary readily available through social media platforms used by young people is a substantive method of political participation that does not fall within conventional understandings of activism and participation. The sophistication of the posts and the critique suggests that perhaps policymakers need to be thinking more broadly about what

\(^{31}\) On Instagram, users can ‘like’ a photograph by double tapping it on the screen.

\(^{32}\) Jordans, or Air Jordans, are popular Nike basketball sneakers.
counts as participation as well as recruiting young people to institutionalized venues for participation, such as Youth Councils. This is not to say that young people do not participate in more active modes of political activism. Political organizing was another significant component of the youth culture that I observed through my interactions with local youth in Brooklyn and the South Bronx. There were also many photographs posted of young people participating in political protests or activities that they were clearly proud of. In July 2013, for example, many young people participated in (and posted photographs of) protests in support of Trayvon Martin, following the day that George Zimmerman was found not guilty of second-degree murder in the shooting death of Martin.

Although the young people I spent most of my time with were not directly involved in political organizing and activism, the Instagram feeds suggested that there was an interest in organizing in a significant subsection of urban youth. Many of the community organizers I met over the course of my fieldwork told me that they got started in their teens. A friend of mine, for example, told me that he became interested in community organizing when he was 14 because he had attended a community meeting in his neighborhood between the police and local youth and saw, for the first time, a situation in which he himself had the power to have authority figures listen to him.

*Urban Sports: Pick-Up Basketball and Parkour*

Pick-up basketball was another activity that I observed in the neighborhoods I spent time in. Pick-up games are started spontaneously by a group of players; often in a basketball court, but sometimes, just around a net. There are hundreds of basketball courts in New York City,
Harlem’s Rucker Park, being one of its most famous. Pick-up basketball is a sporting subculture, as it is informally organized (teams are formed spontaneously, for example) and often there is a more relaxed attitude towards the rules of the game on the court. This does not mean that pick-up games aren’t fiercely competitive; like in hip hop, ballers can gain respect in their communities for their talent and skill and so becoming recognized as a great player is a goal of many of the young people seen playing on the courts. The culture of pick-up basketball in New York is depicted in Bobbito Garcia and Kevin Couliau’s documentary, *Doin’ It in the Park: Pick-Up Basketball in NYC*, in which the directors visit 180 courts in all five boroughs and talk to the players who spend all their time there. Pick-up basketball is connected to sneaker culture, which is the interest in wearing and collecting the newest and most popular sneakers. CW told me once that sneakers are the most important fashion statement for him and his friends. “Especially when I was younger – I would always want the newest, coolest pair of sneakers. I still love sneakers. It’s a lifestyle statement that I think is important to a lot of people” (CW, 2013).

Parkour is an activity that is growing in popularity in New York. Parkour originated in France in the 1980s and became the subject of numerous European documentaries and commercials in the 1990s and early 2000s, giving the activity visibility in the United States. Inspired by the military obstacle course, parkour is a free-running activity that turns the city into an obstacle course. Much like skaters, practitioners of parkour (i.e. tracers) integrate elements of the urban built environment into their course; for example, a tracer might vault over a fountain or run towards a high wall and then try and scale it. Parkour also integrates acrobatic movements into free-running, so tracers will do flips as they move towards a new obstacle. Since parkour requires no equipment and requires great skill, it is an appealing pastime for young people looking to establish talent with few resources. It is another ephemeral activity that makes
creative use of the urban environment for the purpose of recreation and sport. Although none of the young people I personally interviewed did parkour, it came up in the interviews that I did with community organizers who worked with local youth. In a conversation with Rebecca Rosado of the Point (2013), for example, I learned that many of the young people she spent time with were practitioners of parkour. “It’s a physically challenging activity and it makes use of existing space – so you don’t need equipment. I think it’s a way for them to show off some skills and be creative. I don’t see it too often on the street, but I hear a lot of them talk about it all the time, so I assume it’s important to them.”

**Cyphers and Graffiti**

The relationship between hip hop and urban space has changed markedly since its invention. Widespread gentrification and a city-wide turn towards the stringent regulation of public space has changed the socio-spatial environment in which contemporary hip hop continues to evolve. These policies have significantly decreased the amount of public space readily available to young people and as such, have transformed the socio-spatial parameters of hip hop. City-wide gentrification has changed the visual appearance of low-income communities. The abandoned landscape of the South Bronx has since been rebuilt, even though most of its neighborhoods continue to face challenges brought about by disinvestment and segregation. Anthony Marshall, the co-founder of Lyricist Lounge, a hip hop showcase in Manhattan that drew famed hip hop artists, such as the Notorious B.I.G and provided a platform for new and emerging artists, observes that there is now a disconnect between the visual culture and spatiality of the urban environment and the experience of poverty and marginality still affecting many New York youth. “It’s never going to be the environment that it was in 1973; as life progresses and hip hop progresses as well. There are no longer broken buildings in the Bronx – our environment
no longer reflects what we were going through” (Marshall, 2013). Despite these changes, hip hop remains a relevant and significant vehicle through which young people express themselves. As Bronx-based community organizer Orlando Torres (2013) observes, “hip hop is the ghetto’s place to have the American debate.” Hip hop still draws upon public space for gathering, creating and spreading the message. Cyphers and graffiti are two popular hip hop practices that depend on, actively make use of and transform public space.

![Figure 4.1 Flyer for a Cypher I attended at Brooklyn College in Flatbush, BK](image)

Cyphers are a mainstay of hip hop culture today. A cypher is a freestyle rap jam session that can be planned or can emerge spontaneously when a group of MCs get together. During a cypher, a group of MCs will take turns freestyling, while one person beat boxes to provide a rhythm for the rhymes. Cyphers can take place in any number of places: spontaneously on street corners, at McDonalds, on the subway, in public parks and on school campuses. The art of the cypher was explained to me by a young hip hop artist and entrepreneur, named S. She hosts a
cypher in Union Square Park every spring to commemorate the death of iconic Brooklyn rapper the Notorious B.I.G. “For a cypher, we use the park. We come to the park and we rap. Plenty of times we’ll be on the train and we’ll rap on the train. Train space performances are notorious in New York ... We use any space we can. I feel like that that’s what we’re here for – this hip hop generation. We’re here to bring it back. So before us, I don’t know who was having cyphers in Union Square or on the train and I think that’s why we do it because no one was. The point is to bring it back to NYC the way it was when it started ... and that’s what the energy is kind of like” (S, 2013).

S explained that the cypher provided both an opportunity to celebrate Biggie and, more importantly, for fellow young hip hop artists to meet one another, form connections and support one another in future endeavours. “Hip hop is community; it’s also love, but it’s really community. How else are you going to make it, if you don’t have a strong community that will
support you and your art” (S, 2013)” SS, a young MC from Bedford Stuyvesant (2013), made a similar remark. “Unity is what matters. We need to help each other to become stronger. Cyphers, pickup basketball, artistic release – these are moments where we can unite and become one.” Indeed, one of the defining features of a cypher is that it isn’t competitive; this is what distinguishes a cypher from a battle, which is a competition between artists to determine who is the best lyricist and who has the best flow.

Figure 4.3 Cyphers in public parks, subway stations, basketball courts, and a restaurant

I was surprised at what I learned about hip hop when I started asking young people who loved it why it was important to them. I thought that I would hear a lot more about music industry ambitions; and although all the artists who I spoke to dreamed of making it one day, it wasn’t why they were invested in hip hop or why they embraced it as a culture in the first place.
One evening, R took me to 5 Pointz, a loading dock in Long Island City where graffiti writers are allowed to paint and display their art on the building’s exterior walls. It is venerated by hip hop heads, regardless of borough, because it is a space where graffiti artists can paint freely and as such serves as a graffiti showcase for the city.

The building will be demolished in 2014 to make way for a residential development; in response to widespread protest to its destruction and community-led efforts to preserve the space, the owner of the building had it whitewashed on November 18, 2013, effectively destroying the artwork that made the building special. The event was devastating to many in the hip hop community. The following day, my friend JR, a 20 year old rapper, posted to Twitter: “the assassination of urban art is all around you. Stand together or die alone.” Many of JR’s friends also posted about the event on Facebook; everyone bemoaned the loss of what was widely considered to be a cultural treasure. The case of 5 Pointz is not only an example of the strained relationship between youth culture and the economic development of urban space; it also shows how important it is to have places where youth cultural practices are openly and loudly celebrated. The popularity of 5 Pointz suggests that writers embrace authorized walls, as much as they do the spots and surfaces that are illegal to write on. It also begs the question: would the building’s destruction have caused such an uproar if the opportunity to freely paint on a wall wasn’t such a rarity in New York City?
The day that R took me to 5 Pointz, everything was still intact. So while R and I walked around the building and I photographed it from all angles, R told me about how he became involved with hip hop culture. R is 22. He’s from Canarsie, but is currently living in Flatbush as he is a student at Brooklyn College. I met him through S and CW because he hosts a radio show at Brooklyn College that plays local hip hop and interviews new, up and coming artists. He’s also an aspiring rapper and belongs to a hip hop crew called Kilz. One of the many interesting things about R is his rapper name, Normal. When I asked him why he chose it, he told me that as an artist he wanted to be an everyman so that people could easily identify with him. We talked about hip hop and why it mattered to him. “You can’t have good style until you know who you
are. That’s what hip hop is all about. It’s not just about the four elements\textsuperscript{33}. It’s about figuring out who you are. There are a lot of people who don’t get to have time in school to learn about what they’re good at. Hip hop gives you that space to ask those questions.” He told me that hip hop helped him to come to terms with a lot of emotional drama that he was going through with his family when he was younger. “It’s [hip hop] expression – I had all this anger when I was younger and I needed to find a way to deal with it. That was how I started rhyming. I started writing rhymes and going out to cyphers and practicing. And then I found this community … which is funny, because it’s competitive and it’s a community so it’s got all these different dimensions.”

Hip hop culture is strongly linked to both personal development and the political story and power of place. Graffiti remains an important tool for transforming neighborhoods into more visually appealing places. It is seen by many young people as an urban amenity and as such I found many photographs on Instagram where graffitied surfaces were described as ‘beautiful’ or as transforming a mundane surface into an ‘urban oasis.’ In many instances, graffiti is used by youth to transform their neighborhoods. As a young graffiti artist said to me once, “it’s like, when everyone tells you that your neighborhood is ugly, or dangerous, you just want to say, fuck you man, it’s beautiful, it’s mine, so you take out the paint.” As a key mechanism of place-making, graffiti can provide much needed color and personality to an otherwise bland landscape. It also provides a way for young people to make their mark on a space that they feel they belong to. In an environment in which belonging to a place is very much tied into property ownership, graffiti provides a mechanism for claiming space and place. Most graffiti writers, for example, have a tag that they develop over time that they feel represents them. Graffiti writer BT (2013)

\textsuperscript{33} The four elements of hip hop are DJing, MCing (or rap), graffiti and breakdancing.
told me in a conversation that “a sketch is a representation of who you are – it’s your skeleton, an image of yourself. Graffiti is our contribution that makes us remembered.” Hi friend AV (2013) agreed, saying: “I tag my name anywhere but mostly at intersections so that you have to see it. I want my name to be in all those places you have to look at.”

Figure 4.5 Hip hop culture: fashion, graffiti, and urban intervention
Graffiti, however, is not just motivated by the desire to leave one’s mark on a particular place. It is also connected to rituals of memorial and constitutes an act of remembering for youth in the communities I spent time in. Over the course of my fieldwork, I observed that young people have their own form of rituals to cope with violence and loss in their communities. Unlike political commentary in which appropriation of language and place is used to subvert power relations or call attention to embedded discriminations, rituals involve the reclamation of space to honor friends. Murals represent one such form for memorializing the fallen, as does dangling sneakers off of telephone wires at the location where someone was killed. There were many graffiti memorials throughout the neighborhoods that I worked in and on more than one occasion I saw sneakers thrown above telephone wires. These murals are incredibly important to the young people who live in the community and who create them.

Crews

The organizational capacities of young people are a striking component of their cultures. Youth culture very often requires the formation of teams (basketball teams, graffiti crews, dance crews, etc). What distinguishes these groups from cliques is that they are goal and activity-oriented groups. Perhaps more importantly, what distinguishes them from gangs is that they operate according to a different mindset. B described it to me as “when hip hop was getting started, there was a transition from gangs to crews. It was like the way people were thinking totally flipped and instead of wanting to be the toughest, they were all competing to be the flyest. Everyone wanted to be the dopest DJ, rapper or [graffiti] writer. And that was important because it gave this new way to get respect. You could get respect by being the most talented person. It was the same with basketball. Guys could get respect by being the best baller on the court. So there were alternatives to gangs. Crews were the alternative (B, 2013).”
Over the course of my fieldwork, I encountered many crews. The Black Market Collective, Hieroglyphs Thesaurus, and Kilz represented three crews through which the young people I interviewed were able to join together to help advance one another’s artistic and professional goals. Through the active use of event planning and social media, these crews create not just a presence for themselves, but form broader (often place-based networks) that link them all together. The Black Market Collective was a collection of hip hop artists keen on advancing social issues through a blend of activism and conscious rap. Conscious rap is a genre of rap that engages with social and political issues. Kendrick Lamar is considered to be the newest conscious rapper and many of the young people I interviewed within The Black Market Collective believed that conscious rap was making a comeback. I.D.K, for example, took inspiration from Nas’ CD cover for his album *Illmatic* which shows an image of his face layered
over a picture of the public housing project where he grew up. When discussing the Black Market Collective, S told me “we realized that we weren’t progressing because we weren’t getting anything done so we needed a firm community and you separate yourself from the weak links and you find the people that will support you and your art – and it’s the same in the whole group. CW already had his clothing line, black market wares and so we formed the black market collective (S, 2013).” There also seems to be a sharing of skills among crews (see below) as crews constitute mini teams that work together to achieve as a ‘family.’

![Figure 4.7 I.D.K holding up a copy of his first album next to a record of Nas’ Illmatic](image)

**Colonizing Creative Space**

There are very few reliable yet programmatically flexible places in the South Bronx and in Brownsville for young people to go and be creative. This is problematic because spatial resources – having space and being able to occupy/program space - provides young people with needed capacities to be innovators and change-makers. Having access to un-programmed space allows young people to pursue interests and projects that might not necessarily line up with the
expectations of adults and organizers. As CW observed (2013), “in their interactions with different spaces, young people slowly learn how they might fit into those spaces of the city and how to think about their position.” Moreover, having an institutional space – that is a space that is not ephemeral – gives a constant place to go to.

S made a similar point about the need for places to go: “It’s important to have somewhere to go and you get there and someone is smiling because you’re there and we can talk about whatever you need to talk about. When you don’t have that … there’s nothing but trouble outside … that’s the problem. There always needs to be a space for people to go when you can’t be at home. Even for adults. Imagine how traumatizing that would be for a child! You have no money, you’re not in control of your being, you’re not even in the mind state to make proper decisions and you don’t have anybody. So I need to fill that void with the community space and classes and weekend volleyball, whatever. It needs to happen” (S, 2013). S was not alone in this view. Many of her peers felt the need to give back to the communities and reach out to the kids living in their neighborhoods. In the summer, I.D.K posted a picture of himself with a young kid to his Instagram account following a show with the caption: “It’s all about the kids. Shoutout to a young homie for rocking with us last night. I hope I helped birth another hip hop soul.”

Spaces Created by Community Organizers

Despite the lack of spatial resources in the Bronx, there are community-run centers that cater to the cultures of local youth. The Point in Hunts Point and the Rebel Diaz Arts Collective in Mott Haven are two examples of such organizations in the South Bronx. The Point is a community development organization that provides formal programming for young people but also has flexible space within the building that can be used by groups looking to pursue a particular activity, like a fashion show. The Point’s main facility is located on Garrison Ave, just
about a ten minute walk from the Hunts Point Av subway station. The main facility is composed of a 4,000 square-foot atrium space, which houses a café, space for various after-school youth programs, and rooms for small businesses and non-profits; a dance studio; a 4,500 square-foot black box performance space; a black room; a computer lab; and a space for therapeutic counseling service that serves youth and families in the community. The graffiti crew turned professional muralists, TATS Cru, also have their studio space in The Point. As such, the open outside courtyard is covered in graffiti and murals.

Rebel Diaz is another space that provided young people with spatial resources to be creative. The group, however, was evicted from their space in February 2013, however, after the landlord raised their rent from $1400 to $2400 within one month, making it difficult for them to make rent payments. Rebel Diaz hosted a popular open mic night for the community, an annual hip hop festival called South by South Bronx (SXBX), would run DJing workshops and was generally regarded by young people – especially young artists – as a place to retreat to.

**Work**

There is an entrepreneurial element that is missing in many accounts of youth culture. Entrepreneurship and unconventional pathways to employment were a central concern, not just of the young people I followed through my fieldwork, but also in the photographs that were posted to Instagram. Photographs of entrepreneurial activities, as well as images of posters and flyers for upcoming events, were very common. There were also many aspirational messages about the need to work hard, ignore the haters, and support those who weren’t famous yet.

During my fieldwork, I came across many young people with business cards, yet no actual jobs. The business cards were well designed, some would have a logo, others might just
have a personal photograph; most were targeted at drumming up freelance work in music and graphic arts. Importantly, these activities are connected to the leisure activities of young people, but also span beyond them in many instances to include community development. The young people I spent time with were constantly organizing recreational events; many young people have started their own small-scale clothing lines (i.e. screen printed t-shirts); and there is a pretty constant stream of promotional events with small cover charges that are organized. Over the course of my fieldwork in New York, I attended three fashion shows, three artistic release parties, two open mic nights, a rap battle, two art shows, a ‘paint n’ poetry’ jam session, two pickup basketball tournaments and a ‘get fit’ event – all organized by young people, all charging a modest cover, all as a means of networking, gaining exposure and branding. There is also the constant use of social media tools, such as Instagram, Twitter, Reddit, and Facebook as a means of branding. The desire to build a personal brand is reflected in the practice of creating and carrying business cards. This may be due in part to the growing lack of job opportunities for young people – or the new possibilities opened up by social media.

Figure 4.8 Business cards from local youth

Figure 4.9 Black Market Collective CD
Despite the abundance of entrepreneurial activities, there are very few spaces that actually provide young people spatial resources needed for organizing and hosting their events. Co-working space in New York is expensive and as such is not easily accessible to young people from low income neighborhoods. *We Work Labs*, for example, is a popular co-working space in Manhattan where the cheapest membership costs $250/month. Co-working space is clearly in demand among youth and existing co-working spaces could serve as an excellent model for community co-working space that would be empowering and capacity building for young adults. Though not officially a co-working space, the gallery *3rdeye(sol)ation* in Bushwick, Brooklyn struck me as an invaluable spatial resource for enterprising young people in the neighborhood. *3rdeye(sol)ation* is a small gallery on Broadway, just a short walk from the Halsey J train. Although it is officially a gallery space, *3rdeye(sol)ation* functions like a catch-all for the spatial needs of local youth pursuing entrepreneurial activities and as such served as an every-space for them. Run by S’s cousin, the gallery space morphed into a performance space, gym, workshop,
casting office and catwalk, at night and on weekends. I went to numerous events in this space — each one hosted by a different group for a different purpose. The seamless use and transformation of the gallery suggested two things: young people need more work space and when given work space, they’ll use it productively and innovatively.

Figure 4.11 The many entrepreneurial efforts of local youth. From top left: Black Market Collective’s clothing line; charity food drive; I.D.K’s newly produced CDs; and music event called Trillfest.

Conclusion: Engaging Youth Culture

According to studies in environmental psychology, young people value spaces that give them personal freedoms and independence from authority figures (Owens, 1988; Ladd, 1978). As such, public spaces such as parks and undeveloped areas where youth can have some degree of autonomy are a desired characteristic of communities. Moreover, many of the desired place-characteristics identified in Growing Up in Cities (see Table 1.1), coincide with youth
development factors. The landscapes that youth desire, therefore, are more or less the landscapes that youth development researchers would create for them. Yet, the provision of such landscapes comes into direct conflict with the current rules and regulations that govern the uses of public space, especially by the young people of color living in poor communities.

The planning profession has an opportunity here to step up and advocate for youth interests. Planners still have a limited role in youth policy in the United States; although some cities, such as Nashville and San Jose, have taken a more proactive stance towards youth by creating youth master plans, these plans are programmatic and not spatial. There is still much room to improve the built environment through which young people experience urban life.

Outside of the United States, planning and design tools have been harnessed more actively towards youth interests. In France, place-making is a central component of youth and urban policy. As such, young people have greater access to urban space through the provision of amenities throughout the city. The provision of amenities, however, has historically been used as a means of keeping youth populations in check. Recently, however, planning and design efforts in Paris have been aimed at providing young people with freer access to urban space. The Atelier Parisien d'Urbanism, the key planning consulting agency for the city, published reports in 2012 and 2014 that take a progressive and proactive stance towards urban youth. The city has also initiated projects that encourage young people to participate in the programming and transformation of space. Le 104, for example, is a cultural center in the 19th arrondissement that provides un-programmed space for local youth to gather, dance, rap and do basically whatever they like so long as they remain respectful of other users. The dynamics between youth, the state, and urban space in Paris and France will be discussed in Chapters 5.
“Rap is the best way to talk to youth. The young people here only listen to rap; it is an important means of expression for them which makes it an important communication tool for us.” I was told this by Benjamin, a 29 year-old youth worker and former break dancer (2013), one morning over coffee in Flandres, a neighborhood in the 19th arrondissement of Paris. “When I was growing up [in Ivry-sur-Seine], we didn’t feel included in French culture, but we wanted something different from the culture of our parents, so we grabbed onto hip hop. It was something that we could make our own.” Hip hop remains a central component of the youth culture of low-income communities in Paris and its surrounding suburbs. Flandres is one of Paris’ most impoverished neighborhoods. It also has the city’s largest youth population and one of its highest youth unemployment rates. As such, it draws many public policy efforts aimed at improving the lives of young people in the neighborhood by providing them with a wide assortment of services, ranging from career consulting to break dancing classes. Due to its popular appeal, hip hop has been a pivotal engagement tool drawn upon by youth workers. Yet, tense relationships between marginalized youth and public institutions make this task increasingly difficult. Anger over police violence and discriminatory hiring practices cast doubt over even those projects aimed at celebrating the lifestyles and creative activities of young people. A few days later, I met some graffiti writers for beers in a small bar in Belleville – a hipster hot spot, popular among activists, artists and students. “Hip hop has become institutionalized,” complained J, a 21 year old graffiti writer (2013). “If you want events outside of the institutional sphere – you have to go underground. That’s why we have our parties in a squat.”
Paris has the highest youth population in France, with just over 300,000 young people, age 16-25, living in the city and 91,000 commuting there daily for work from a nearby suburb. In the surrounding departments of the Ile-de-France region, the under-25 demographic makes-up around 30% of the population; with a greater proportion of adolescents (age 13-17) living in la petite couronne\textsuperscript{34} and young adults (18-25) living in Paris. Since this age demographic is fast becoming a defining feature of the life and politics of the region and its cities, the challenges they face – young people are particularly beset with unemployment, poverty, and a consequent delay in making a transition to an autonomous life – occupy a central problem for public policymakers (Table 5.1). Consequently, French youth have a robust system of public services at their disposal. In fact, there are over 110,000 associations (80,000 of which are youth-related) in the Ile-de-France region.\textsuperscript{35} Grounded in the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Popular Education, youth policy in France seeks to level an unequal playfield by providing all young people with decent housing, schooling, and employment.

The challenge for Paris is similar to the one facing New York City: a robust system of youth services and yet relentlessly high rates of youth unemployment, chronic poverty and inequality. Yet, although youth services have not been able to stave off the negative impact of chronic poverty and unemployment, as evidenced by the string of urban riots in suburban communities all over the country, young people maintain access to public space and juvenile incarceration rates remain relatively low; on average 3000 minors\textsuperscript{36} per annum are held in a penitentiary establishment. This means that 1/1660 minors in France will be incarcerated,

\textsuperscript{34} La Petite Couronne is an area that encompasses Paris and its bordering départements: Seine-Saint-Denis, Val de Marne, and Haute de Seine.

\textsuperscript{35} Figure from: Prefet de la Region Ile-de-France.

\textsuperscript{36} In France, the age of criminal responsibility is 13. For the juvenile justice system, a minor is any individual between the age of 13-18. In New York, the age of criminal responsibility is also 13, but a minor is defined as an individual between the age of 13-15.
whereas in New York City 1/450 minors will spend time in prison. The difference in youth incarceration rates is an important one and is particularly striking in the context of intermittent rioting in France. What explains the particularities of youth outcomes in Paris and its petite couronne? Why are services able to keep incarceration rates low, but failing to connect young people to jobs and promote academic success?

In France, most youth policy initiatives concentrate on building capacities, but fail to connect young people with meaningful opportunities. This is particularly so for chronically disadvantaged populations. Immigrants are disproportionately affected by unemployment and are more likely to drop out of school than non-immigrant youth. Yet, reluctance to collect data on race and ethnicity means that policymakers do not acknowledge the demographic contours of disadvantage; so affirmative action programs that may exist in France must be territorially based. Territorial programs, however, often stigmatize residents and as such, can work against the goal of connecting young people with jobs and opportunities outside of their neighborhood. Moreover, in this context, territorial identities become easily conflated with racial or ethnic identities, a process which blurs the line distinguishing race-based and territory-based sources of discrimination for both institutional and civil society actors. The shortcoming of capacity-building in the French case suggests that for youth policies to work effectively there must be a reciprocal opportunity-capacity service provision system.

Significant inequalities between departments exacerbate the challenges experienced by young people living in marginalized areas and so contribute to mistrust of government

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37 Since a minor in France is anyone between the ages of 13-18, and a minor in New York is anyone between the ages of 13-15, this comparison understates the New York figure. Because demographic reporting on detained populations is done only in age groups, it was not possible to determine a more comparable figure.
38 The race debate in France is a complex one, due to the lack of census data on race and ethnicity, the diverse nature of the immigrant population (there is no dominant ethnic group therefore not a strong platform for political mobilization) and also the strong territorial nature of the politics surrounding exclusion and disenfranchisement – territorial mobilization is more common in France than racial mobilization.
institutions and produce conditions of chronic poverty in priority neighborhoods. The complex relationship between Paris and its surrounding suburbs is well documented (Dubet et al. 1985; Dubet 1987; Tissot 2007). From an administrative perspective, Paris and its suburbs belong to the same region (Ile-de-France) but to different municipalities and departments. Politically, this means that although there are many shared programs coming from the national and regional government, local government resources are different, despite the myriad connections between the municipalities in terms of work, transportation, leisure, etc. This disjuncture creates significant differences between Paris and its neighbors. For example, the youth unemployment rate is significantly lower in Paris (18%) than in the La Courneuve (33%). More young people live in poverty in La Courneuve (34%) than in Paris (14%). Such discrepancies hold even in Paris’ lowest income communities, such as the 19th arrondissement. Although poverty (25%) and youth unemployment (27%) rates are considerably higher in the 19th arrondissement than they are in the rest of the city, a young person is still better off being poor in Paris than being poor in one of its suburbs.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, relations between Paris and its surrounding suburbs have been quite tense in the past. According to Pierre Mansat, a Deputy Mayor for Bertrand Delanoë, “until 2001, Paris ignored its neighbors. Relations between Paris and the neighboring municipalities were unbalanced and the image of a hegemonic relationship between Paris and its suburbs was omnipresent … with Bertrand Delanoë we have sought to break with that history.” Paris’ mayor Bertrand Delanoë is a member of the Parti Socialiste and was in power between 2001 and

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39 Priority Neighborhoods, or quartiers sensibles, are low-income communities designated for special development attention.
Since 2001, the Paris government has started cooperative initiatives with nearby local governments through its Paris Metropole initiative. Paris Metropole approaches the Paris region (that is, Paris and its Petite Couronne) as one large metropolis; as such, it has the aim of improving working cooperatively with local governments to improve the lives all their residents. This, however, is a new initiative and so it is not yet possible to tell whether Paris Metropole will have a substantive effect on inequalities between the central city and its low income suburban communities.

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Table 5.1 Characteristics of the 19th arrondissement and La Courneuve

Socio-economic challenges and inequalities, however, are balanced by a pro-youth approach to urban space. Place-making is a prominent tool of youth policy, and so public authorities employ spatial governance practices that encourage the liberal use of public space by

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40 Prior to Delanoë, however, Paris had two mayors from the Gaullist (and right-wing) party Rassemblement pour la République – Jacques Chirac (1977-1995) and Jean Tiberi (1995-2001). In April 2014, Delanoë was succeeded by Parti Socialiste candidate Anne Hidalgo, who is now Mayor of Paris.
41 Data from 2010 Recensement, INSEE.
young people. While the government has yet to successfully integrate its disenfranchised populations into dominant economic and political systems, its general response to youth unrest in recent years acknowledges the role of marginalization in producing widespread anger and dissatisfaction by deploying cultural and quality of life interventions, rather than just increasing security and regulation. This approach can be observed in the way that the city leaders choose to govern, allocate and design urban space. By using inclusive mechanisms of spatial governance, such as mediation, the local government is able to provide a more open urban environment for young adults and adolescents. Similar tactics are employed – though to varying degrees – in Paris and its suburbs. As a result, youth policies correspond more closely with the policies that regulate how space is used and designed. This alignment helps promote a healthy relationship between young people and the urban environment and so makes moves towards repairing relationships between marginalized youth and government institutions. While the French case shows that there are indeed limits to positive spatial politics, it suggests that there may be real benefits to a system that makes space for youth in the city.

**French Government and Urban Development: A Brief Overview**

France is known for its strong-state tradition; the French government operates under a central, national government that has traditionally played a significant role in guiding the country’s economic development. Active state involvement in the economy, also known as *dirigisme*, involved the expansion of nationalized sectors, such as banks, intervention in the private market and promotion of export markets as part of national economic plans for industrialization (Hall 1986). The long tradition of state involvement in the economy created deep ties between private corporations and public institutions, which in turn created substantial
barriers against deregulation. In fact, unlike Britain and the United States, France didn’t move to deregulate the market until the 2000s, when it was widely accepted that France no longer had a statist economy (Amable, Guillaud, and Palombarini 2011). In France, neoliberal pressure has come predominantly from supra-national institutions, such as the European Unions’ monetary union, and has been concentrated in the industrial sector. Neoliberal policy privatized state-owned industries, gave more room to private financial institutions, and facilitated liberal global and inter-European trade; however, the dismantling of *dirigisme* didn’t involve a retrenchment of the welfare state. The French social welfare system has therefore remained strong as the state not yet yielded to pressures for austerity and reductions in public spending. The strong social base protecting the welfare state has made it politically difficult for politicians to implement neoliberal reforms, such as privatization, without also providing social programs to ease the pain of economic restructuring.

**Administrative Organization**

The French Fifth-Republic, the term given to the current French governance system, is a hybrid presidential-parliamentary form. The president is head of state and assumes responsibility for the executive branch of government. The president also designates a head of legislature, the Prime Minister, and the remaining cabinet ministers. The executive government is subject to the confidence of the National Assembly, which is the lower chamber of the legislative branch. The president must therefore appoint a Prime Minister from the party that holds that majority of seats in the National Assembly (cohabitation is the term used when the Prime Minister and the President are from different political parties).

Constitutional changes made under the Fifth Republic increased the power of the President, who now enjoys broad authority, at the expense of the National Assembly. The
national government is represented at all levels of local government by appointed Prefects, who ensure the administrative supervision of local authorities. Much of what is run by municipal and state governments in the United States, such as education, is managed in France centrally, through a nationally appointed and controlled bureaucracy. In France, therefore, it is more common to speak of local administration than local government. In 1982, however, the Defferre law began a slow transfer of responsibilities and decision-making authority to local governments. In 2003, the Loi Chevenment devolved even more power and responsibilities to municipal governments, which prompted some to band together and form agglomerations called intercommunalités. Since many communes are quite small—in France the status of ‘commune’ is bestowed upon any municipality, regardless of its size, and many have fewer than 1000 residents—the agglomeration enables them to provide urban services more effectively. La Courneuve, for example, is part of an intercommunalité called Plaine Commune that is composed of nine neighboring towns.

In France, there are three levels of local administration and government: the commune (which is similar to the municipality in the United States), the department and the region. The region was created in 1955 to facilitate regional planning and so its main competencies are in the town and regional planning and economic development. Departments and communes are much older, dating to 1789 and have a greater range of powers and responsibilities. The department has jurisdiction in social services (that is shared with the commune in some cases) and is also charged with the maintenance of roads. Before Paris had its mayor in 1975, the Département de la Seine was also heavily involved in its governance. The commune is the most popularly recognized level of local government. The mayor’s powers and responsibilities include the budget, public health, sanitation, security, land use and zoning, and the maintenance of public
buildings; in short, the mayor (or Mairie, in French) is responsible for the everyday needs of its residents. The Mayor has the dual role of being both the locally elected champion of local interests and the representative of the Prime Minister at the municipal level; this can result in conflict when local and national interests do not align.

Paris is a unique case among communes, as for most of its recent history the city never had a mayor. The Office of Mayor was first established in Paris in 1789; prior, Paris was governed by Provost. The Office was quickly abolished in 1847 and then reestablished for only one year in 1848, prior to the reign of Napoleon III. During this time, Paris was controlled by departmental prefects,42 with local representation coming only from the arrondissement (a level of government most comparable to a neighborhood). This arrangement kept Paris under the strict control of the state, as it was also the physical seat of the national government. Although the Office had another year-long revival in 1871, it was not until 1975 that Paris was granted the right to its own mayor through legislation that made it both a commune and a department. Jacques Chirac was the city’s first elected mayor; during his time in office, he made sure to protect and increase the Mayor’s power and autonomy relative to the state.

An Introduction to Urban Policy and Planning Processes in France

Urbanization processes in France have been guided by both regional and local institutions. Urbanisme and Amenagement de Territoire are key terms in French urban planning that refer to the national government’s role in guiding urban development (Booth et al. 2007). Urbanisme is an activity undertaken by the Ministry of Transport, Planning, Tourism and the Sea; they are essentially in charge of regulating building and land use change and so are involved in local planning. Amenagement du Territoire, is a system that runs parallel to urbanisme, where

42 Prefects are the purveyors of state interests at local levels of government in France.
the focus is on regional planning. The Délégation Interministérielle à l’Aménagement du Territoire et à l’Attractivité Régionale (more commonly known by its acronym, DATAR) is the national ministry charged with achieving regional equality and with making territories ‘attractive.’ This is achieved through state-financed mega projects and through coordination with local authorities on their planning projects. Following the 1982 decentralization laws, communes and regions have received more authority in urban planning and so development agencies now also play an important role in the development and implementation of planning policy. Both regional and municipal governments create and fund agences d’urbanisme to provide research and technical support for planning projects. In Paris, the Atelier Parisien Urbanisme (APUR) serves this function, and for the Ile de France region, it is the Institut d’Aménagement Urbanisme Ile de France. These agencies function essentially as consultants; although they do not implement projects, they produce research, help guide programming and study the social and urban evolution of their territories.

Social development is the terrain of urban policy (la politique de la ville, in French). Unlike the United States, urban policy is almost entirely focused on disadvantaged neighborhoods. It first emerged in the late 1980s when unrest and social inequality in the suburbs made it clear that physical planning needed to be accompanied by social programs and community development. Rapid urbanization following WWII was accompanied by the rapid construction of housing estates in the suburban areas of major French cities under a national policy called Zone Urbaine Prioritaire (ZUP); the housing estates, or grands ensembles, were immediately criticized by urbanists who found them to be socially isolating and barren (Tissot 2007). It was not until the 1970s, however, that public and political opinion caught up and the blighted conditions of the suburbs became recognized as a social problem. The Social
Development of Neighborhoods program was established in 1982 to try and address educational, social and public order problems. The program was run under the auspices of individual mayors given the new decentralization. Many of the smaller municipalities, however, lacked the necessary resources to properly address unemployment, blighted housing, rising racial tensions and a burgeoning drug economy. The creation of a national Ministry of Urban Affairs in 1990 (Ministère de la Ville) and the 1991 Loi d’Orientation de la Ville, therefore, reinserted the national government in the urban field.

In response to social inequality between municipalities, social exclusion and the housing crisis, urban policy identified 400 priority action zones that would receive resources and support from the central government. In 1996, the Pacte de Relance de la Ville established a more precise taxonomy of zones for intervention: priority neighborhoods (Zones Urbaines Sensibles) urban renewal zones (Zones de Redynamisation Urbaines), and urban tax free zone (Zones Franches Urbaines). Mustafa Dikeç has called this a policy of “positive territorial discrimination” (Dikeç 2007). Priority neighborhoods were identified based on a high proportion of public housing, or degraded housing and a high discrepancy between housing and employment. All priority neighborhoods may receive a further categorization as either an urban tax free zone or an urban renewal zone. Urban renewal zones are designated using a statistical indicator that combines data on local unemployment rate, youth population, the dropout rate, and the fiscal potential of the municipality. In 2000, legislation was passed that requires all municipalities to ensure that at least 20% of their housing stock is subsidized. In 2003, the Borloo Law and the creation of the National Agency for Urban Renovation brought forward a period of urban renewal meant to “break up the ghettos” through the demolition of housing estates throughout the country. As part of this program, Le Balzac, a tower in La Courneuve, was destroyed in August 2011 amid much
protest from residents. Today, the fence surrounding the vacant lot that once housed Le Balzac has graffiti and messages scribbled on it that make references to ‘home.’

Growing up with Neoliberalism in Paris

In France, neoliberal ideology has predominantly influenced industrial policy, not social policy. Economic liberalization processes in France were gradual and were accompanied by social services and labor market policies designed to “ease the pain of liberalization on French workers” (Appleton 2009:11). As such, the welfare state has remained strong in France and neoliberalism has had a more subtle impact on young people in Paris than in New York City.

In the 1980s, when Thatcher and Reagan were deregulating the market in Britain and the United States through reforms such as privatization, France embarked upon a set of Keynesian reforms under President Mitterand. Although the expansionary policy was ultimately unsuccessful and the government had to invoke economic austerity policies and privatization in order to control inflation rates and keep its obligations to the European Union, the strength of the social base and the strong ties between the state, industry and finance made welfare retrenchment an undesirable political move. Moreover, social security remained important for maintaining electoral success especially therefore changes in economic policy that might cause pain to the working and middle classes had to be accompanied by social policies that would help capture those social costs. Jonah Levy uses the term “social anesthesia state” to capture the act of easing the social costs of privatization and liberalization with social programs (Levy 2008). Through the 1990s, therefore, even conservative governments maintained the hybrid neoliberal/socialist model, and so dirigisme arguably lasted longer as a dominant governance strategy than it did in other countries (Amable et al. 2011).
Although it is widely accepted that the French economy is no longer state-led, embedded social institutions and the state’s historical involvement in the market have resulted in a form of neoliberalism in which the state remains devoted to balancing the social costs of economic deregulation. The tension between neoliberalism and the entrenched welfare state can be observed at the urban scale in the context of youth’s access to public space. Although large scale development projects have captured once-popular gathering spaces for artists and youth, such as La Défense, there is still an active interest in enabling young people to use public spaces, even if certain activities (like skateboarding) may be annoying to nearby businesses and patrons. For example, in preparation for *Metropole du Grand Paris*\(^4\), a policy enacted by Parliament in July 2013 that will see Paris merge administratively with its surrounding suburbs in 2016, large scale economic development projects have been deployed in the communes that make-up the future metropolis.

The project is a clear manifestation of the French blend of market openness, competition and social prioritizing. At the heart of the plan is a series of territorial development contracts organized by theme. Plaine Commune, which encompasses La Courneuve, has been designated as a Culture and Creativity Territory, and so has received a territorial development contract to enhance the creative resources of the area. According to Benjamin Masure, one of the consultants on the project: “they want to know about what kinds of cultures exist in Plaine Commune so that they have a sense of what resources they have to build upon in the area – so culture is still in the margins, so to speak. But on the other hand, I think that they are looking to work with local assets and resources, which is far better than just dropping a global corporation in the middle of Saint Denis or La Courneuve” (Masure 2013). This project is an illustration of

\(^4\) The *Metropole of Grand Paris* does not expand the administrative borders of Paris (and thus the power of the Mayor) but rather creates another level of local government that sits between the City of Paris and the Region of Ile-de-France.
the way that economic development projects maintain an interest in the needs and wants of vulnerable populations. Plaine Commune is a key territory of hip hop. Many of France’s most venerated hip hop artists come from the area and so a development project that is focused on the arts in Plaine Commune seeks to make (and preserve) space for the activities and cultural practices of its young people.

Youth policy in France has historically invested in setting aside space and creating places specifically for adolescents and young adults. As such, it has set a precedent which preserves youth’s position in the urban landscape. An examination of the evolution of youth policy (and the related youth environment) in the context of urban transformation shows not only the intersection between urbanization processes and the evolution of youth policy, but also the importance of having an active youth sector and a planning department that will defend youth interests. Therefore, although the influence of neoliberal ideology on national and local governance has become more pronounced, young people’s spatial resources continue to expand.

Youth and Dirigisme: 1950-1980

The youth policy tradition in France has a long history dating to the latter half of the 19th century. As in the United States, however, early efforts to provide services for urban youth were taken up by philanthropists who were concerned about the immoral effects of urban life on young people, especially those employed in factories (Crubellier 1979). Youth did not become a domain of public policy until the 1960s with the creation of a National government ministry devoted to youth under the leadership of Martin Herzog. In the pre-war period, youth policy was concerned with the most basic welfare of young people and was preoccupied mostly with the working conditions of young industrial workers. Personal and professional development was left primarily to voluntary associations. In 1966, however, the creation of the Ministry of Youth and
Sports (La Ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports) inserted youth and youth issues into the mandate of the Federal government. Minister Herzog sought a partnership with the voluntary associations and this cooperation led to the confluence of social work/philanthropy and public policy. Under Herzog, the dominant approach to youth was one that was based on thinking about how to best create the necessary conditions for education, leisure and work that would help young people become successful and productive citizens. At this time, therefore, emphasis of youth policy was on sports, education and leisure (Loncle 2003). This positive framing of youth can also be observed in the juvenile justice realm; the 1945 Ordinance on Juvenile Delinquency held that educational measures should be prioritized when dealing with offenders and that incarceration should be reserved for only extreme circumstances.

The emergence of a state-led youth policy regime coincided with the creation of large-scale public housing estates in the suburban areas of major French cities. In France, urbanization took place in two cycles. The first took place in the late 19th century with the initial industrialization of the country. This wave of urbanization was due predominantly to rural-urban migration as people came to cities from the countryside looking for work in the manufacturing sector. Many of these industrial workers in the Paris region were living in slums in the undeveloped vacant land along the outskirts of the city, called ‘the Zone.’ Paris embarked upon a large-scale building project following WWI to provide more sanitary housing for workers. The Habitats de Bon Marché project was a precursor to the existing social housing policy (Habitat de Loyer Modéré) and established housing developments and garden cities in the Parisian periphery. These projects had some facilities specifically earmarked for children, such as

44 The term Habitats de Bon Marché can be translated in English as “inexpensive housing” and the term Habitat de Loyer Modéré translates to “housing with modest rent.”
playgrounds and primary schools, which marked one of the earlier spatial public interventions for young people.

The second wave of urbanization was much more transformative than the first and took place between 1945 and 1975; a time period referred commonly to as *les Trentes Glorieuses*, for the economic growth experienced throughout the country. All urban areas saw tremendous growth during this time due to rebuilding of war damaged cities, population increase from high birth rates and migration from Southern Europe and North Africa, and rural-urban migration linked to the decline of agricultural employment (Le Galès 1991). Population growth from international migration had particular significance for French urbanization processes, as family reunification policies for guest workers in the 1970s brought entire families from former North African colonies to France. In order to get rid of the large slums that were amassing in the Parisian periphery, the national government began another building project in the 1950s to create temporary accommodations for the workers and families living in the large housing slums. This policy, combined with the dissolution of the French colonial regime, meant that French cities experienced new demand for urban services that had not been needed when guest workers lived temporarily in hostels without their families. The suburbs emerged in this time as sites to house new migrant families and through this clustering of low income families in the periphery of major French cities, an urban problem of segregation and marginalization emerged. These suburbs quickly developed into segregated low-income communities; this led to the emergence of the *banlieue* (the French term for suburb) as a social category and territory.

The housing estates also introduced a scale of urban youth that the suburbs had been previously unaccustomed to, therefore provoking the need for new policy responses to the challenges that marginalized young people faced in their everyday lives. In the 1950s and 60s,
populations in the housing projects were predominantly youth, with 50% of their residents being under the age of 20 (Clerc 1967). Initially, French urban policy and planning was concerned primarily with providing physical environments deemed necessary for families living in the new suburbs. In addition to the quick construction of modern and clean housing, socio-cultural facilities, recreational space and schools were included in master plans for housing estates.

As such, a major component of youth policy the provision of amenities for young people whose small apartments were not equipped with spaces for recreation. For example, when planning and designing La Cité de 4000, a large housing estate in La Courneuve, the project’s landscape architect Jacques Sgard was concerned about providing recreational space for the children and youth living in the housing estate: “there were many recreational places ... we wanted to give each group of buildings its own recreational space, so there were 4 or 5 such places” (Sgard, 1982). Although the youth policy of the 1950s and 60s were particularly preoccupied with the construction of socio-cultural facilities and recreational space; housing estates in the suburbs remained relatively remote and so such amenities were not embedded in a programmatically diverse landscape. For many low income youth, this led to the boredom and malaise described by Dubet in his book *La Galère*.

In the 1970s, the degradation of the physical condition of housing developments, coupled with growing youth unemployment and discontent in the suburbs, made it obvious that there were social problems associated with spatial segregation that had to be addressed. Yet at the same time, economic crisis, coupled with malaise provoked by the Student Movement of May 1968, led to a gradual slowdown of proactive efforts in the youth field. Investment in socio-cultural facilities diminished and the buildings continued to deteriorate. Social inequalities in the suburbs increased during this period. The emergence of territorially concentrated social problems
led to the Housing and Social Life Program \textit{(Operations Habitat et Vie Sociale, in French)} in 1977. Although the Housing and Social Life Program essentially involved only the renovation of building façades, it laid the groundwork for an urban policy tradition that would be devoted to improving the quality of life in distressed neighborhoods.

\textbf{Youth and the Urban Crisis, 1980-2000}

The 1981 riots in the Les Minguettes, a residential development in a suburb of Lyon, brought forth a more social and regulatory dimension to the youth field, introduced prevention policies and a heavy emphasis on ‘social and professional integration.’ This decade saw the re-emergence of the youth field as the ‘social question’ took a central role in youth policy and politics. Youth unemployment and juvenile delinquency commanded the attention of policymakers, who were also becoming more aware of the everyday lives of young people. Questions of housing, training, health, access to work and security became quickly connected to the youth field and the emphasis shifted from education and leisure to these everyday concerns. The 1981 Schwartz Report, commissioned by Prime Minister Pierre Mayroy in the wake of increasing dropout rates and high unemployment (but incidentally before the riots) proposed a more universal approach to youth that would coordinate across sectors to address a wider variety of needs.

The Schwartz Report called for a greater attention to the integration of young people into social and professional life – indeed, the goal of social and professional insertion would become a central policy objective for decades following. The term ‘insertion’ was carefully chosen in the context to mask the social stratification of disadvantaged youth and instead place an emphasis on ‘socialization’ as a mode of state intervention in youth transitions (Loncle 2003:225). Perhaps relatedly, many of the programs that were developed to address inequality and exclusion were
targeted towards specific neighborhoods (or *quartiers*) and territories. Educational Priority Zones were established in 1981; Missions Locale in 1982; and the Social Development of Neighborhoods program included a series of initiatives aimed at young people, such as tutoring services and constructing local recreational amenities (*Development Sociale des Quartiers*). These policies emphasized target territories (over target populations) and that used socio-cultural amenities to address social problems and inequalities. Missions Locales, for example, were employment training centers that were set up in low-income communities to help connect young people living there to job opportunities. The idea of *jeunes en difficulté* – or at-risk youth – became a key framing device. The emergence of the *banlieusard* as client coincided with an academic interest in the urban sociology of the *banlieue* (Tissot 2005) and *la galère* (Dubet 1987) which posited a ‘dangerous new class’ of disenfranchised youth that was the product of post-industrial society. 46

In the mid-1980s and early 1990s urban violence and juvenile justice became central concerns. The once moderate justice system fixed on the ‘petite délincuance’ which increased the contact between young people and the justice system. Although incarceration rates were (and are) still quite low in France relative to the United States, there is a higher proportion of arrest and summons now than in the past, and a complex landscape of alternative sites, such as reform schools, in which young people may have to serve time has emerged (Fig., 5.1). In a report to the Senate on juvenile delinquency, Sebastian Roché noted that “since the 1970s, we have replaced an elderly impoverished population with a young one … the demographic structure of poverty in

45 *Banlieusard* is a term used to refer to young people living in the suburbs. It is most often used to refer to young, North African men living in the suburbs.

46 *La galère* is a term coined by the French sociologist Francois Dubet in his book *La galère : Jeunes en Survie* (1987). It refers to the fury of young people, expressed by violent acts that imply a tantrum – that is, violence that is not directed at a socially defined opposition (making them riots rather than social movements and so trivializing them).
France has changed dramatically. We now have young poor people, and this, for the subject of
delinquency, is very much different” (quoted in Schosteck and Carle 2002). Moreover, the
Education Priority geography expanded though the 1990s (almost doubling in size) and began to
dovetail with the neighborhoods designated as priority areas for urban policy. The growing
overlap of schools identified as priority and neighborhoods identified as priority is a cause of
concern for some French scholars, such as Jean-Claude Delarue (2001), who found that the
labels have become stigmatizing for both students and neighborhoods. Additionally, Bertrand
Ravon (2000) worried that the coincidence of these zones had led policymakers to think of
students having difficulty in school as ‘at-risk’ youth, rather than just students in need of more
academic attention. In fact, in the 1990s, the presence of a large youth population became an
indicator used in the identification of priority neighborhoods; as a result, urban policy and youth
policy became more intertwined, especially as territorialization (i.e., the identification of priority
zones for policy) became a dominant social policy tool.

Alongside stricter regulation came alternative responses to youth violence that focused
more on the confluence between everyday hardships and delinquency. These programs involved
urban redevelopment projects, housing initiatives and prevention clubs that sought to address the
social conditions believed to be at the heart of delinquency. These contradictory responses to
urban violence were particularly characteristic of youth policy following decentralization. The
mix of departments involved in addressing urban youth combined with initiatives coming from
national and local governing bodies meant that programs sometimes contradicted one another.
Attempts to better coordinate policy between governing authorities and ministries were
addressed through the formation of inter-ministerial committees and delegations formed in the
1990s.
Personal responsibility also emerged as a key organizing rhetoric during the 1990s and so increases in arrests, incarceration and prevention programs were accompanied by policies aimed at increasing youth autonomy. For example, in 1990, the Local Committee for Autonomous Housing for Young People (*Comité Locaux pour le Logement Autonomes des Jeunes*) was created to help young people find housing. This resource provides young people, age 18-29, with counsel and information in their housing search and help ensure that their rights are being protected (e.g., that they are not being discriminated against by landlords). They also help connect young people with state subsidized housing that they may be eligible for. Paris, for example, provides furnished subsidized apartments for young workers and students (*Foyers de Jeunes Travailleurs et Résidences Sociales*) that are meant to help first-time renters transition from their family home to an independent living situation. Since they are intended to bridge a
transition, they are also a “space for acquiring community living skills and building one’s independence.” As such, the apartments have a term limit of 2 years per tenant.

**Youth and Neoliberalism: 1990 - present**

In the 2000s the movement towards autonomy became evermore pronounced in the youth field, at both the national and local level. For example, the 2005 Plan for the Social Inclusion and Insertion of Youth installed a national work-training program that emphasizes apprenticeship, recruitment and job training with the intention of reaching upwards of 800,000 young people. The program involved the creation of *Maisons d'Emploi*, which are organizations that combine all job training and recruitment services in one place. In 2008, the national government also partnered with municipalities that had high rates of youth employment to implement the *Plan Espoir Banlieue* (the Hope Plan for Suburbs), that would help connect young people to jobs through professional mentorship, industry networking, funded internships and also created ‘second chance schools’ which would give dropouts the chance to earn their secondary school degree.

The emphasis on autonomy, social insertion and youth unemployment coincides with the most recent round of post-industrial economic restructuring. Policy efforts aimed at addressing the unemployment produced by the decline of manufacturing in turn promoted market oriented solutions to social problems; in short, rather than problematizing the political economic system, youth policies largely problematize the inability of young people to participate actively in the existing market. In coming years, however, youth policy may experience a paradigm shift towards the principles of the socialist government of François Hollande. Hollande made youth a significant component of his 2012 presidential campaign; on the eve of the election, he even
stated “I ask to be judged on two promises: to justice and to youth” (quoted in Baumard and Kremer 2012).

Youth policy remains a mandate of the national government; historically in France the local level of government – the municipalities, departments and regions – developed youth policy programs voluntarily only to respond to particular needs of the population. Many cities have opted to develop youth policy or set up a youth delegation in their City Hall; however, there is no political obligation for them to do so and individual mayors essentially can decide whether youth will be a priority. As such, most youth facilities and programs remain state funded and directed; however Mayors do have influence over what kinds of facilities are being built and where they are located.

In Paris, there wasn’t a municipal youth policy until Bertrand Delanoë became mayor in 2001. Upon his appointment, Delanoë set up a youth cabinet and a youth deputy mayor to make urban service provision and programming for young Parisians more effective. Elie Silva, the Director of Deputy Mayor Isabelle Gachet’s youth cabinet (2013) explained that many of their earlier initiatives were focused on the cultural practices of young people and youth participation. “We set up a youth council so that young people felt that they could have a say in the governance of the city … and we created Kiosques Jeunes to provide greater access to cultural institutions, like museums and the theater. We also have the Youth Pass which provides free or discounted entrance to cultural and recreational facilities around the city.” Although there is still quite a bit of activity focused on recreation and information education, since 2008 programs to reduce youth unemployment have become the focus of youth field. According to Silva, “there are lots of challenges for us to address – the big challenge is clearly youth unemployment, and so autonomy – for Paris and for France – remains the cornerstone of youth policy. Now we try and start...
preparing them at 13 and try to encourage them to think about becoming an adult. So many of
the projects now are not just aimed at young people who are looking for work – and there are
many of those, of course – but we’re also thinking about how to prepare young people to build
the necessary foundations to become financially independent and active citizens in the future”
(Silva, 2013).

While the Mayor’s office has prioritized autonomy and employment, the continued
commitment to culture shows that they are also concerned that young people feel that they have a
place of belonging in Paris. “In essence, we have three elements underlying all our policy,” Silva
told me. “The first is social insertion, so we have programs that are directed at youth
development, training, and access to housing, health and mobility. The second element is more
related to the place of young people in the city; that is, how are we going to make the city a place
for young people. So in this sense, we’re concerned with youth participation. How can we get
young people to express themselves and be heard? We’ve also been thinking a lot about how the
city gives young people access to sports, leisure and public space. In such a dense urban area,
young people – in particular adolescents – need space for themselves. How do we make sure that
they have a place in our parks, gardens and public spaces? The last element is equality. We need
to ensure that all young people living in Paris have access to the same quality of information and
to the same quality of programs. At the end of the day, it’s about making sure that all young
people have the same rights, and that if they feel they’ve been discriminated against, they know
the legal tools that are available to them” (Silva, 2013).

**Youth, Policy and the Built Environment**

Differences in urban governance can be observed by looking at the spatial priorities of
existing governments and the spatial governing mechanisms that they choose to employ. Spatial
allocation and modes of spatial regulation can be approached as key indicators of a government's neoliberal propensities and are central components of the urban design politics of urban youth environments. The potentially negative effects of neoliberal urbanization have had tempered effects in Paris because of the political desire to make space for young people and because of the long-established tradition of place-making as a youth policy strategy that has embedded youth amenities in the urban landscape.

It is significant that in Paris, where land value is very high, there are active measures being taken to ensure that young people feel that they have a place in the city and access to its public spaces. Young people living in Paris have a wide range of spatial resources where they can express themselves creatively, physically and intellectually. By privileging the needs of youth in planning and design, Paris has created a system of socio-spatial environments that provide a meaningful setting for youth development. Recent financial investment in making such spaces architecturally beautiful reinforces this commitment to young people and makes a visual statement that the creative abilities and aspirations of youth have value. Additionally, youth culture has also been included in youth policy initiatives as a tool of socio-political engagement. So rather than criminalizing the cultural practices embraced by young people, especially those living in low-income neighborhoods, many policy efforts draw upon such art forms as a means of connecting with youth and of providing political recognition. Recently, this approach to youth culture has resulted in the incorporation of a Hip Hop Center in the new redevelopment project at Forum des Halles in central Paris. This commitment to giving young people places devoted to their chosen modes of cultural expression suggests an inclusive approach to spatial governance.

On the other hand, the extensive landscape of youth amenities raises critical questions concerning the topic of containment: are these amenities intended to empower youth, to hide
them away, or to better control their movement through the city? To this end, the term *encadrement* is used often to describe youth policy and related programs by scholars and policymakers. The word *encadrement* translates to 'framing' in English, and in the youth policy context is used to refer to either supervision, containment (through an institution or a physical space) or, in the most liberal sense, mentoring or coaching. From this perspective, vigorous place-making might be seen as a mechanism of social control; indeed, a characteristic *républicanisme* is to use public institutions to shape ideal citizens. In fact, some of the earliest youth training programs sought to "make workers and active contributors to the French community" by gathering youth in supervised, contained settings (Danvers, Wulf, and Aubret 2006:249). Some of these institutions, such as the Maisons de la Jeunesse et la Culture (referred to most commonly as MJC) s, still have a strong presence in France. In her 2010 analysis of youth policy, sociologist Veronique Bordes argues that youth policy is becoming more and more about social control: "the trend is that we deal with youth by containing them so that we know where they are and what they are doing" (Bordes 2010:22).

Therefore, while one reading of the youth landscape is that the abundance of amenities constitutes a progressive youth development policy, another reading is that these amenities are a means of controlling the way that young people use public space. In this sense, these policies may not be a challenge to neoliberalization but in fact may constitute an alternative mode of urban neoliberalization. While I think that, theoretically, the Paris case calls our attention to containment as a process of neoliberalization, for the purpose of assessing the Parisian policy context, it is important to acknowledge shades of containment and empowerment. Since youth policy is such as transversal arena, conflicting agendas are to be expected and this nuance is particularly relevant to Paris where its security and prevention policy runs parallel to its cultural
and popular education policy. I suggest that much of what we see in Paris under Delanoë is progressive, but that these efforts are mixed with policies with less progressive goals, especially when taking a historical lens to this policy context.

Spatial Politics: Making Space for Young People in the City through Place-Making

Place-making has a privileged position in French youth policy implementation. In the post WWII-era, many of the initiatives aimed at youth resulted in the construction of shared amenities that complemented, and physically articulated, policy goals (Loncle 2003:181). In this sense, early youth policy was in sync with the modernist project, which also looked for physical planning solutions to social problems. Perhaps appropriately, young people were among the primary beneficiaries of the socio-cultural facilities set up in the suburbs in the 1960s. It was clear to policymakers that the space young people needed for leisure and recreation would not be available to them due to the spatial constraints of the public housing developments, so shared places for play and for gathering were created outside of the home (Loncle 2003:187). As such, socio-cultural amenities found a particular legitimacy in this early stage of urban planning.

In the 1970s, however, the zeal for building slowed down due to global economic recession. Yet at the same time, there was a great reluctance to simply leave young people to their own devices in un-programmed spaces, such as stairwells and bus shelters. Moreover, it became increasingly clear that young people had different spatial habits from adults and thus made different demands upon urban space; rather than having a set of ‘static demands,’ young people simply wanted access to a wide variety of places in the city, such as public parks and plazas (Vulbeau, 1995). From a spatial planning perspective, Alain Vulbeau observes: “free space for young people was the big oversight of modernism: they made functional spaces and spaces for circulation, but most often when young people find places to meet, they are quickly
excluded because of conflicts with adults over how the space should be used” (Vulbeau, 1995: 96). Vulbeau’s argument aligns with a similar critique concerning containment. In her book *L’Alternative Jeunesse*, Veronique Bordes argues that “this social group [youth] causes worry, especially when they become too visible. This is why municipalities create places where they can be easily identified and contained” (Bordes 2007). Indeed, from a place-making perspective, growing fear of youth violence in the 80s and 90s led to a switch from building leisure spaces to setting up ‘prevention clubs’ and job centers. To this end, Bordes calls attention to the important distinction between spaces that are being *made for* young people, and spaces that are being *used by* young people.

Today, recent projects suggest a return to cultural and leisure-based facilities as well as a purposive move towards creating places that youth can manage more autonomously. This is related, in part, to the importance of urban culture to the social integration project. According to Benjamin Masure, cultural consultant for Plaine Commune, “there is always this claim that public and informal spaces are central to the development of urban culture – but all types of spaces are important. The street, informal spaces … these provide inspiration. But there needs to be a rapport – a relationship – between informal practices and institutional space and programming since this is part of recognition” (Masure, 2013).

**Youth Culture as a Tool of Social Engagement and Integration**

In France, culture has always been a part of the urban development project. By folding culture into the broader framework of urban development, urban cultures have held a privileged, yet controversial position, as an arbiter of urban policy initiatives. Projects such as *Banlieue 89* (1989) and *Quartiers-Lumières* (1991) are just two examples of projects that harnessed culture as a means of promoting social integration in priority neighborhoods. *Banlieue 89* was a program
initiated by the Mitterand government that sought to address some of the social problems of the suburbs through urban design. The initiative was led by the architects Roland Castro and Michel Cantal-Dupart; the architects worked with local mayors to find projects in their jurisdictions that would “reintegrate and create a new image for part of their areas” (Banlieue 89, 1989). The architects wanted to bring urbanity to the suburbs and to promote great engagement between Paris and its surrounding municipalities. Banlieue 89 projects took a variety of forms, including buildings, landscape, art installations, cultural events and urban design projects. The cultural events and art installations were used to attract city-dwellers to the suburbs, whereas the built/landscape projects were concentrated within the neighborhoods themselves. The built projects were predominantly low-impact interventions that aimed to create a sense of place within large housing estates through a variety of conventional design strategies such as “creating a center, finding a geography, enhancing the neglected ... breaking an enclave ... introducing culture and leisure ... and reconciling the road and the town” (Roberts, 2000: 25). Overall the designers were concerned with creating more urbanity in the vast, large-scale landscape of the housing estates (Castro, 1992).

In this tradition, youth culture occupies a particularly odd terrain, as it is privy to malcontents, but at the same time has been actively used and coopted by youth workers as a central means of political engagement with disenfranchised youth. This form of outreach can be observed at all scales of government and in fact, is the subject of complaint amongst those interested in furthering the artistic development of hip hop in the country, as they feel that the role of hip hop in the youth field has trivialized, or delayed, its incorporation into French Culture. Nevertheless, the active incorporation of hip hop in public projects suggests a willingness to take youth cultures seriously – to engage with them. This interest is demonstrated
by initiatives such as the Mayor's 2003 Commission Pari(s) Hip Hop and the proposed Hip Hop Center for the new Forum les Halles. Such efforts show a region-wide interest in promoting public engagement with youth culture and also suggest that authorities see political value in investing in and trying to understand youth cultural activities.

*Commission Pari(s) Hip Hop*

**Figure 5.2** La Quinzaine de Hip Hop event in the 19th arrondissement. Picture from the City of Paris website

*Commission Pari(s) Hip Hop* was an effort started in 2003 by City Hall to discuss how the City of Paris treats hip hop, recognizing that hip hop is an important culture for many young people in the city. The Commission gathered hip hop artists and youth workers (*animateurs*) from all over Paris to get a sense of what they need to properly conduct their activities. The Commission also involved elected officials and representatives from the youth field, Ministry of Culture, and urban policy actors working in low income Parisian neighborhoods. It was one of
the first times that such a broad range of elected officials sat down with the associations and
with hip hop artists to talk about how Paris might invest more heavily in hip hop. The key goals
of the Commission were to encourage more universal recognition of hip hop as a French art
form; promote the artistic talents of hip hop artists; and to better connect with young people who
self-identify with hip hop culture.

Yannick Freytag, of the association *Hip Hop Citoyen* (Hip Hop Citizen), was involved in
the workshop and in writing the report that was presented to City Hall. In an interview he told
me that the Commission was so important because it involved actors from the Ministry of
Culture. "Usually, any programming that involves hip hop receives financial support from
Ministry of Urban Affairs, or the Youth Ministry, but never from the Ministry of Culture...For
us, it was very important to have the Ministry of Culture involved in the talks so that we could
work towards greater cultural recognition" (Freytag, 2013). *Hip Hop Citoyen* is an association
that was started in 2002. Although a significant component of their activities are centered on
working with young people from low income communities, they are also very devoted to
furthering the cultural recognition of hip hop as a part of French culture. "Hip hop in France is
frequently used as a tool for working with youth. I think that the cultural aspect is just as
important. But achieving recognition of hip hop as a French art form, we gain greater recognition
of the talents of young people – often young people from the banlieue – as French artists"
(Freytag, 2013). They have also been involved in regional projects that seek to gain recognition
for young artists from surrounding suburbs by bringing them to Paris to perform. "A project that
came out of the Hip Hop Commission is a music festival called *La Quinzaine de Hip Hop* that is
run by the City of Paris and the associations involved in the Commission. "When organizing the
festival, we created links with other municipalities so that artists from surrounding areas, like
Saint Denis, could be involved in the event ... We wanted to give young artists a chance to gain exposure within Paris" (Freytag, 2013).

The Hip Hop Center at Les Halles

The proposed Hip Hop Center in the redevelopment project of Forum les Halles is an example of local municipal efforts to make space for youth culture in Paris. Before redevelopment, Forum les Halles was an underground shopping center, whose open-air area was a sunken plaza, surrounded by – and containing sculptures and fountains. Les Halles also sat atop the metro stop, Châtelet les Halles, a central hub of the commuter rail system (i.e., the RER). As such, les Halles has been a central gathering space for young people from both the City and its suburbs. It was an especially popular venue for young hip hop artists, who would come to the central location to hang out, break dance, and battle. Les Halles is located in the center of the city, about a 10 minute walk from City Hall (Hôtel de Ville in French).

According to Elie Silva, the project for Les Halles is meant to accommodate young people from the whole metropolitan region, not just Parisians: “there are lots of metropolitan youth at Les Halles – that is, youth from all the suburbs – who would practice and dance informally ... and so the idea was to offer them a space that would support them with a proper facility where they could go to see a show, practice, listen to a track, do graffiti, etc.” (Silva 2013). The decision to include the Hip Hop Center was made in 2010, when the development project for Les Halles was just underway. Since Les Halles was already a popular spot for young people to gather to do hip hop, the creation of the Hip Hop Center is more of a concession than it is a move to establish a space that didn’t already exist. At the same time, the fact that young people weren’t entirely displaced through the process of redevelopment is example of the French
neoliberal urbanization process; economic development is championed but at the same time, public interest (even the interest of a marginalized public) is taken into account and defended.

Figure 5.3 Battle between Les Twins and Bones the Machine in Les Halles before the renovation

In January 2010, the Mayor’s office convened a panel on urban cultures in which the Hip Hop Center was presented and discussed. A key impetus for the center was to preserve the original use of the space. Marion Boyer, the Cabinet Director for Bruno Juillard, expressed that “we think that it is necessary to maintain a space in Paris [for urban arts] – and Les Halles is the most appropriate space, given its history and its location. After much discussion and reflection, particularly with the cabinet of Christophe Girard, we are convinced that we should give this space to hip hop.” Another key point was the importance of making space for hip hop in French culture. According to Juillard: “it is necessary for hip hop culture, which has been

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47 Image from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLcKX1f9tnM
48 Bruno Juillard was Deputy Mayor in charge of Youth in 2010.
49 Deputy Mayor in charge of Culture.
generally overlooked in cultural policy, to have a dynamic policy that enables the diffusion of
this culture, beyond a young audience." Third, was to create a space that would attract young
people. Guillaume Descamps, of SEM PariSeine, noted that "by proposing a hip hop theme for
this project, we are trying to reach a young population through a universe that young people feel
close to, that is familiar to them."50

Youth Culture and the Politics of Recognition

Popular youth cultures, such as hip hop, are also tied closely to a politics of recognition
as a means of addressing racism. Although officials don’t speak about racism per se, the dialogue
around inequality and discrimination are framed in the ‘integration’ debate. Hip hop was seen as
a way of building trust between the young people in the suburbs, who felt let down by French
institutions; the school and police remain the two most contentious institutions in the suburbs
(Mucchielli 2011). The problem of integration was made clear by the events of 2005. According
to Caroline Coll, the Director of Cultural Action for the Mayor’s Office of Saint Ouen (2013),
the large scale riots in the country forced officials to pay attention to youth culture because they
demonstrated “there was a large part of the youth population that did not feel recognized.” For
this reason, Coll feels that it was made clear to public policy officials that young people needed
space to express themselves: “Giving people space is a major act of recognition and so,
following the riots, officials were motivated to create these spaces of expression for young
people.” As such, hip hop has a central role youth and cultural programming in Plaine
Commune. Coll explains that “the intercommunalité is a place where we innovate a lot in terms
of cultural actions and definitions of what culture is.” Hip hop is a key component of the lives of

50 Quotes from Boyer, Juillard and Descamps from published transcript of the Urban Cultures Meeting on January
10.pdf?PHPSESSID=a400193d68a7f0859077db05f5b17ce9
young people living in the agglomeration’s communes and so is approached as a part of its cultural identity overall. “A key component of our work is to animate the associations system and to support our associations and the artists who are living here in the commune, and even those who work outside of our public facilities, because we know that we are an area with a strong and dynamic network of cultural associations and a great artistic vitality” (Coll, 2013).

**Spatial Governance Mechanisms**

Spatial governance addresses how governments manage the production and use of urban space. Paris has a relatively progressive approach to spatial governance, in the sense that diverse and shared uses are encouraged and quality of life values are sometimes prioritized over economic ones. Four mechanisms of spatial governance that are particularly relevant for youth are: social mediation; socio-cultural autonomy; the equitable distribution of spatial resources; and beautification of youth amenities.

**Social Mediation**

Social mediation (*Mediation Sociale Urbaine*) of public space is a spatial governance technique that emerged in French cities the 1990s as a means of ensuring “peace and tranquility” in public spaces. It was implemented as a national public policy in October 2001 by the Comité Interministériel des Villes. Social mediation is defined by the Comité Interministériel des Villes in their *Guide to Social Mediation* (2012) as: “a processes of creating and repairing social relationships and of resolving everyday conflicts … in which a neutral and independent third party attempts to improve a relationship or to settle a dispute by facilitating dialogue between people and institutions.” In this sense, mediation is meant to play the double role of providing a sense of safety and security to residents living in low-income neighborhoods and of acting as an alternative solution to urban violence. Mediators are present in public spaces to resolve conflicts
and to make public spaces feel safer; however, they do not have power of arrest and are meant to be an alternative to police regulation. A key goal of mediation is to help diverse publics share public space and negotiate conflicting interests. Mediators encourage and facilitate dialogue so that conflicts that arise when groups disagree over how to use a space can be resolved without the police. Distinguishing themselves from the police is therefore important to mediators, who even avoid wearing their parkas, as they are too similar to the ones worn by police officers. Mediators who work at night, called *correspondants de nuit*, are also meant to provide a sense of security for people walking around the streets.

![Figure 5.4 Correspondants de nuit. Picture from the City of Paris website.](image)

Key areas of intervention for social mediation are: public spaces and amenities; public transportation and public housing. Social mediation now has an important place in prevention and delinquency policy and is used particularly in security priority zones (or *zone de sécurité et prévention* in French). Security Priority Zones are neighborhoods that are considered to be high crime neighborhoods and in need of extra security. In the 19th arrondissement, for example, the
neighborhoods of Flandres has been designated as a security priority zone; a major component of policy has been an increase in the number of mediators and correspondents de nuit in the area. Mediation in this context is met with a mixed response from young people, as some appreciate the sense of security they have at night, while others resent being watched by the mediators and feel that it is a form of surveillance (Mounier-Vogeli 2013). At the same time, it is interesting to note that the majority of mediators are in fact, young adults from priority neighborhoods enrolled in state-led youth employment programs.

Although it is primarily a security and prevention tool, mediation is also used in areas that are used by diverse publics; for example, Paris as part of its youth policy in Place de la République, where extra financial resources have been set aside to fund daily mediators in the new plaza (Mairie de Paris 2012). Place de République is a public space shared by diverse publics. The newly renovated pedestrian plaza is located between the 3rd, 10th and 11th arrondissements of Paris. The République metro stop is beneath the square and it is surrounded by restaurants and shops, such as the furniture chain Habitat and McDonalds. The plaza used to have a traffic circle, but was renovated between 2010 and 2013 to make it entirely pedestrian. The TVK architecture firm, led by Pierre Alain Trévelo et Antoine Viger-Kohler, was in charge of the project and guiding concept for the project was to make an open space with multiple urban uses.

The new plaza holds an entrance to the metro and a monument to the Third Republic at its center. There is a café pavilion and water feature at its south end, and a small kiosk for children’s activities in the north-west corner. When they were in the process of designing it, the architects imagined different zones of activity, including protest, skateboarding, outdoor dining, and children’s play. The plaza does indeed accommodate these diverse and seemingly
contradictory uses. Walking through the plaza, one encounters young adults skateboarding in the north corner of the plaza, children playing around the water features, and tourists and local professionals having coffee in the café on the south end. There is also frequent protesting in the plaza as it is a large, visible, and central space for protesters to gather. The mediators in the plaza, therefore, are there to help ease tensions between the diverse groups of people using the space. Unlike mediators in the priority neighborhoods, who are there predominantly to help prevent delinquent behavior and help make people feel safer, the mediators in the Place de la République are present to facilitate shared usage of the space.

_Socio-cultural Autonomy_

Socio-cultural autonomy is a more recent mechanism of spatial governance. Until recently, the programming of cultural facilities (especially those targeted at young people) was a top-down process. However, in response to demand for more autonomy, there has been a movement towards giving young people more freedom in how they use socio-cultural facilities. Le 104, for example, is an institution in the 19th arrondissement where young people are welcome to come and dance, hang out, play music, etc..., in the large central hall of the complex. The central hall in the building is flanked by ateliers, restaurants and small shops and is next to a museum that curates modern art exhibitions (over the summer of 2013, they were exhibiting a Keith Haring show). The activities in the central hall – where there are always breakers and dance crews practicing – are usually the most dynamic part of the space. When it first opened, however, Le 104 didn’t allow this free use of space and so it was quite unpopular. The new director, however, has embraced hip hop and opened the space to _practices spontanées_ and now it attracts between 300 and 500 people each day who are there to make use of the space. “When I first arrived,” said 104’s director José-Manuel Gonçalvès, “you couldn’t hang anything,
move anything – it was all blocked off by the architect ... It was time to stop treating the space as a monument (quoted in Carpentier 2013).”

Gonçalvès approach to programming cultural space appears to be gaining traction, as more and more directors of socio-cultural facilities, such as Maisons de Jeunesse et de la Culture, are incorporating informal art practices in their programs. Gonçalvès’ success has also been recognized by the Mayor’s office as he has been named the artistic director for Nuit Blanche\textsuperscript{51} 2014 – a prestigious post given to him for his ability to “connect art with territories and publics.” In an interview with sociologist Fabien Truong, we discussed the success of Le 104 and the growing influence of Gonçalvès in the management of cultural facilities. He told me that the Centre Pompidou, the famous modern art museum in central Paris, was setting up meetings with him to learn how to better connect with young people. “They know that young people like to hang out in Les Halles but they do not come to the museum [even though they are only 5 minutes away from one another]... so the museum director called me and wanted to ask how to make young people feel more interested in coming to the museum. At first, I couldn’t believe it – why would the director of Centre Pompidou want to talk to me? But they were serious” (Truong, 2013)! Apparently in 2010, the Museum had set up a temporary creative space dedicated to adolescents called Studio 13/16. The program was intended to bring young people in for artist-run events and workshops. Studio 13/16 was part of a larger exhibition on urban art and was intended to bring an interactive and youth-oriented perspective to the show; it did not, however, attract the attention that the organizers were hoping it would, so they’re now thinking about how to attract adolescents and young adults through more informal programming.

\textsuperscript{51} Nuit Blanche is an all-night arts festival in which cultural institutions are open all night free of charge and art installations are set up around the city.
Local Amenities as Local Democracy

The equitable distribution of spatial resources is promoted by urban policies intended to assure equal access to local services and amenities (referred to as équipements de proximité in French) across French neighborhoods and municipalities. The presence of local amenities is an indicator that is commonly used in French urban policy to assess inequality between neighborhoods; in fact, the 2002 Démocratie de Proximité legislation made equal access to local amenities a criterion for local democracy and transferred responsibility for the provision and maintenance of local amenities to municipal governments. This includes facilities for young children, such as daycare and playgrounds; cultural facilities, such as youth clubs and Maisons Jeunes; sport facilities; and parks and open space that are smaller than 2.5 acres. As such, urban renewal efforts in municipalities have involved aggressive building campaigns in cities all over.
France. In Paris, the new policy has led to over the construction of over 800 new facilities since 2002. The map below (Fig., 5.5) shows the projects that were built as part of this policy between 2007 and 2009. The map shows that building has been prioritized for under-resourced neighborhoods, predominantly in North-East Paris but also in 13th and 14th arrondissements in the south (APUR 2009).

![Figure 5.6 Map Detail. North-east Paris.](image)

Paris's building project focused on two types of amenities: those directly related to municipal programs and more general amenities needed for basic service provision. The policy identifies four key areas of intervention: solidarity (lodging, social inclusion, elderly, children, health), employment, youth, and culture. In the map above, projects corresponding to these areas of intervention are mapped out. The pink dots represent cultural projects, the red dots represent employment resources, the blue dots represent youth facilities, the green dots represent sport
facilities and park space, and lastly, the yellow dots represent projects that fall within the solidarity category. The map below (Fig., 5.6) shows a more detailed image of the North-East building projects. Although the majority of projects are aimed at improving solidarity, there are quite a few youth-related projects. The building campaign between 2007 and 2009 is particularly interesting because it integrated more community participation in the choice and programming of projects. To do so, the city launched numerous neighborhood surveys, such as the Baromètre Quartier, to ensure that the projects were actually meeting the needs of residents.

**Beautification of Youth Spaces**

The beautification of youth spaces is an element of urban design politics where it is possible to observe a significant difference between Paris and its suburbs – even within low-income areas. The youth facilities in the 19th arrondissement show clear investment in architecture and design. Le 104, for example, was redeveloped by the Paris-based architectural firm Atelier Novembre; the refurbishment cost €110 million and was funded entirely by the city. The architects took care to preserve the history of the 19th century funeral parlor, while adding necessary modern touches to make it a functional space for cultural collaboration. This was achieved partially through a mix of materials, in which original materials (stone, brick, and steel) and architectural details were mixed with new concrete walls, glass doors and skylights. Art displays punctuate the space and temporary exhibitions and events attract visitors from all over Paris. The nearby green promenade, Jardin Flandre Tanger Maroc, also underwent a dramatic renovation in 2010. The small garden, located just off of Avenue Flandre, was a neglected promenade connecting towers that are part of the Mathis housing estate. The landscape architecture firm Mutabilis was tasked with designing a space that would serve as a recreational space and would promote a diversity of uses from different age groups. The project had a €1.3
million budget; a cost the architects remarked was similar to the budgets for green spaces in more central Parisian neighborhoods. To accommodate different uses, the design for the garden created distinct zones of activity, using plant features and different paving materials to create visible zones. The design includes a community garden, a playground, a basketball court and a long wood promenade flanked by trees.

Figure 5.7 Examples of recent projects in the 19th arrondissement. Clockwise from left: young people dancing at Le 104; the main hall of Le 104; basketball ball court at the Jardin Flandre Tanger Maroc; Jardin Eole

The architectural effort put into youth spaces has changed the visual culture of the neighborhood and as such, serves as a symbol of social investment in the neighborhood’s youth. Previously neglected or abandoned sites have been developed into thoughtfully designed public spaces. Therefore, although a large proportion of young people live in the dreary looking public housing developments, there are beautiful spaces for them to spend their time. The spaces are
also diverse in terms of programming and are meaningfully connected to one another in space. As such, they offer a stimulating environment for urban youth. It is important to note that the projects discussed here were all implemented under Mayor Delanoë. According to Christian Blanc, former French State Secretary for the Development of the Capital Region, before Delanoë was mayor most urban development was happening in the wealthy areas of Paris. "Delanoë changed the status between Paris and its neighborhoods and has moved from bilateral to multilateral thinking. This has had a major impact on planning and land use."

Youth and the Built Environment in 19ème and La Courneuve

The urban design politics of youth environments in Paris suggest system-wide efforts to accommodate the needs and cultural activities of young people in the planning and design of urban space. These efforts can be observed at the urban scale, the neighborhood scale and the architectural scale, but are more prevalent in Paris than in La Courneuve. At the urban scale, although public facilities are relatively well distributed, the quality of the urban environment is higher in Paris’ low-income communities than it is in La Courneuve; simply put, in Paris, youth environments are meaningfully connected to one another and so coordinate to provide more opportunities for learning, creativity and empowerment. These discrepancies are felt most palpably at the neighborhood scale, where the physical evidence of youth cultural activities is most visible. Despite having a large youth population, it’s less common to see young people hanging out in La Courneuve than it is in Paris’ 19th arrondissement. Differences in urban design are enhanced at the architectural scale by well-designed buildings and green spaces. The cumulative effect of these spatial practices is to create a politics of space in which there is a good
quantity of space for young people living in low-income communities, but where the quality of that space differs dramatically.

There are four primary spatial environments in which young people spend their time: the school environment; the residential environment; the socio-cultural environment; public and recreational space. The juvenile justice environment does not loom large in the ecology of low-income youth – even in the suburbs. This is likely due to the fact that there are no juvenile penitentiary establishments in the petite couronne and so young people that live in the region do not have much contact with the juvenile justice environment. For example, none of the young people that I spoke with had even seen a juvenile detention center or knew anybody who had been to one. Even in a discussion with over 50 senior lycée students attending a priority school in the suburbs, not one had any personal knowledge or experience with a detention center. This was quite a different experience from my time in New York where many of the young people I spoke with had stories to tell about the juvenile justice environment, even if they had never had contact with the system themselves. The obscurity of juvenile justice system in the Paris region again touches upon questions of containment; is the system more progressive or are the detention centers kept purposively far away from cities and families?

As a window into the design politics of youth environments, it is helpful to compare two specific areas. The 19th arrondissement of Paris and the suburb of La Courneuve are two low-income communities in Paris and its petite couronne. Both sites can be considered disadvantaged, using the European Commission’s primary indicators of social exclusion\(^52\) that define a socially excluded neighborhood as being low income, have high levels of unemployment, low educational attainment and poor health levels (see Table 5.1). The 19\(^{th}\)

\(^{52}\) The 14 indicators are listed on the EC’s website: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=756&langId=en.
arrondissement was formerly an industrial area, located in the north of Paris. It is crossed by two canals – the Canal St Martin and the Canal de l’Ourcq – which meet in the Parc de la Villette. The arrondissement is densely populated, with one of Paris’ largest youth populations. It also has a predominantly immigrant population and has one of the highest poverty rates in the City; at 25% it is substantially higher than the City’s average. Its two large public housing estates, Cité Michelet and Cité Mathis, house about 1/3 of its population. Due to high numbers of theft and drug abuse in the area, it was recently designated a Security Priority Zone.

Figure 5.8 Cité Michelet in the 19th arrondissement. The neighborhood has one of the highest residential densities in the city due to its many large housing developments.
Figure 5.9 Avenue Flandre is one of the main commercial boulevards in the 19th arrondissement. The storefront with the bright green façade is the local Antenne Jeune.

Figure 5.10 The Canal St Martin is a prominent landscape feature of the neighborhood.
La Courneuve is a suburb to the north of Paris in Seine-Saint-Denis. Nearly 50% of La Courneuve’s residents are immigrants and the majority of the population lives in public housing. With 17 large housing estates in the small commune, housing is the dominant architecture of the area; in fact, La Courneuve houses one of the country’s largest estates, the Cité de 4000. Today, La Courneuve is in the midst of major urban renewal projects, evidence of which can be seen in the vast number of signs advertising public building projects that dot the urban landscape. Some of the original housing towers, such as Le Balzac, were demolished following the 2003 Borloo Law. It is a member of the Plaine Commune agglomeration and so many local amenities are shared across the 9 communes. La Courneuve is connected to Paris through both the Parisian metro system and the regional commuter rail. There is a tramway that connected La Courneuve with neighboring municipalities, such as Saint Denis.

Figure 5.11 Arial view of Cité 4000 Sud in La Courneuve. Photograph from IAU website.
Figure 5.12 Newly renovated plaza near the few commercial offerings near Cité 4000 Sud

Figure 5.13 Recreational space in the neighborhood is quite basic and visually unimaginative
The pie charts below (Fig., 14) display the distribution of local amenities in La Courneuve and in the 19th arrondissement; it shows that residents in both neighborhoods have access to all different types of facilities. La Courneuve has a greater proportion of sporting and socio-cultural amenities than the 19th arrondissement and the 19th has more cultural institutions; however, there isn’t an obvious lack of a particular type of amenity in either area. The difference between them really comes to the fore when comparing architecture and urban design. In other words, it seems to be more a matter of quality than quantity.

In the 19th arrondissement, a lot of effort and expense has been put into creating beautiful places for local youth. The well-designed parks and cultural spaces, as well as the visibly appealing public spaces and a wide variety of landscapes distinguish the environment of the 19th arrondissement from the more monotonous landscape of La Courneuve. The commercial and urban life of the 19th arrondissement is easily accessible throughout the neighborhood and amenities are embedded within a more densely knit urban fabric. The main retail corridor of Avenue Flandres is just one of many streets where there are shops, cafés and bars. Moreover, the newly renovated area around the Canal Saint Martin now has a movie theater and restaurants. La Courneuve has very few restaurants, cafés and bars; these urban features are concentrated in two
commercial clusters that are quite small, far away from one another and from many of the large public housing developments, such as Cité des 4000. The closest area of real urbane and fun is in the neighboring commune of Saint Denis, which can be accessed relatively easily on the tramway, but is not within walking distance.

**School Environment**

The French education system is centralized; the State provides a uniform curriculum and the national Ministry of Education is charged with monitoring and providing educational services throughout the country. In 1981, the introduction of priority education zones (*zones d'éducation prioritaire*, or ZEP) constituted a radical break from this model by identifying disadvantaged geographical zones in need of additional funding and staff. According to scholar Bernard Charlot, “the ZEP policy is the first example of affirmative action in which social inequalities are corrected through targeted funding; it is also the first example of regional educational policy which enables educational institutions to adapt to the diversity and specificity of their students and positions the local as the most relevant scale for addressing social and academic difficulties and for implementing educational projects to address these difficulties” (Charlot 1994).

In France, there are three levels of school: primary, college and lycée. School is mandatory until the age of 16; however, over 90% of 17 year olds in the country remain enrolled in school. The school day runs until 6pm, leaving a much longer school day for students. The three tiered school system means that students can receive either secondary school qualifications (baccalaureat, or ‘bac’) which would enable them to go to university; or they may receive vocational secondary school qualifications (CAP and BEP) which would enable them to go to technical school or to start work in an apprenticeship. As such, only 11% of youth age 18-24 do
not have any secondary qualifications; however this number ranges regionally as much as from 6% to 30%. The French are concerned about both early school leaving and school failure (déchrochage). Since the education system is heavily test-based, school failure is a mounting problem in France, with higher proportions of students (particularly students from low income communities) failing the Bac. However, France also has a higher percentage of college graduates than the US – 75% of college students graduate, vs. 60% in the United States.

School security is a relative new issue in France. Originally, school security was focused primarily on keeping students safe from outside harm; in particular, traffic. Security measures to protect against intrusions and theft included mostly video surveillance, automatic doors and alarms. Around 60% of schools in Île-de-France have cameras and most of them have large gates that require an access card (IAU 2007). However, according to a new study from the IAU on school security in the region, security measures are increasingly turning towards the activities within the school, so there’s been an increase in cameras that are installed in hallways and classrooms. Moreover, older schools that were designed to interface with the surrounding urban environment are being retrofitted with gates and courtyards to close them off. Yet despite these

changes, security infrastructure is not a prominent feature of the school environment. When visiting a lycée class in a suburban ZEP, I showed the students some photographs of metal detectors in New York City high schools and talked to them about the presence of security officers in the schools – they were shocked. These in fact were the images that captured their attention the most because they couldn’t believe that they were looking at a school and not an airport security line or a prison.

**Socio-Cultural Environment**

Socio-cultural facilities are designed especially for adolescents and young adults. Unlike community centers that cater to all ages, these types of facilities are targeted at this demographic. Because of heavy investment in socio-cultural facilities, there is a plethora of different kinds of places and institutions in which young people can practice art. This environment is a distinguishing factor of the French youth ecology because these amenities seem to be relatively evenly distributed – so it’s not just the provenance of wealthy communities or neighborhoods – and because it occupies a rather prominent place in the youth field. These facilities are both social and cultural in their content and focus.

There are three main categories of socio-cultural space used in France:

1. *Centre d’Animation* (is roughly the equivalent of a recreational center in the United States, but there is a greater emphasis on cultural programming)
2. Antennes Jeunes (the word *antenne* means satellite in English, so an *Antenne Jeune* is a place where youth can get information)
3. *Lieux Creatifs* (translates to ‘creative spaces’ in English)

The Centres d’Animation are leisure and recreational spaces, many of which stay open late in the evening; they are meant to offer young people programmed activities and have more of a social mandate attached to their cultural programming. Antennes Jeunes are centers where youth can
get information and advice on school, job training, housing, and health; they also provide access to computers to aid those without computer resources at home in their job search. The Antennes Jeunes are meant to support young people on their path to autonomy and so provide free internet access and counseling. The buildings are located specifically in areas where young people gather or pass through and the space is designed to be inviting to those passing through. As such, these facilities are integrated into the urban fabric where they are visible and likely to attract visitors. In the 19th arrondissement, for example, the Antenne Jeune is located on the major commercial boulevard, Avenue de Flandre. Lieux Creatifs are purely cultural amenities and include mediatheques, discotheques, libraries, and videotheques. Although these amenities are not directed specifically at youth (they look to cater to all demographic groups), they often have one component of their programming aimed at young people and many offer workshops.

Although some socio-cultural amenities are not popular among young people, due often to poor management by an unpopular director, for the most part, they are well used. In Paris, I visited the Antenne Jeune in the 19th arrondissement 5 times and there were always young people there, either waiting to speak with a career advisor or using the computers. The centres d’animation were also very full every time I visited. In La Courneuve, I always saw young adults playing soccer outside the Maison Jeune and saw adolescents and pre-teens milling about in the
lobby of the building between activities. All of the break dancers I spoke with told me that they
got their start in a Maison Jeune. It’s where they first learn skills and start to practice before they
feel comfortable stepping out to the more visible places, like les Halles.

In an interview with Marguerite Mboulé, a former break dancer who now works with
young people in La Courneuve and Saint Denis (2013), I learned that there is still much interest
among adolescents to learn these skills within the Maison Jeune. “You know, it’s the easiest way
to get space to practice and to teach. I was debating between starting a private dance workshop or
an association – but ultimately I decided on the association because I wanted to reach more
people, but also, when you start an association you can get office space and practice space from
the city.” When I asked her about how she recruits her students she told me that she does
presentations in schools, will approach dancers on the street, and that just as often, they come
and find her. “It’s still so popular. I’ll go to a school and I’ll be giving a presentation and I’ll ask
them who wants to learn how to break dance? And it’s always at least half of them raising their
hands. For the older students it’s more casual, but for the younger kids, they’ll say Me! Me! Me!”
The same seems to be true for Paris, where I always saw Le 104 packed with young people
working on dance routines or practicing new skills.

Public and Recreational Space

Public space in the 19th arrondissement offers far more opportunities for recreation, play
and activities than in La Courneuve. As a predominantly residential suburb that hosts many
large-scale public housing developments, there is scant commercial activity in La Courneuve and
few resources to invest in designing visually appealing public spaces. As such, even the
commercial areas possess little urban energy and although basic amenities for youth (such as an
Antenne Jeune and a Maison Jeune) are present, they are not connected to one another through
an engaging and dynamic urban landscape. The lack of restaurants, cafés, bars, promenades and appealing parks mean that there are few opportunities for gathering and encounter and young people are often left to hang around in parking lots, empty concrete plazas or the stairwells and entry halls of the residential buildings. One afternoon, I went to La Courneuve to meet my friend Audrey for lunch. Audrey works for a youth association in the area. We went to three different restaurants that were closed before we finally found one that was open but only on certain days of the week. “It’s always like this,” Audrey explained. “It doesn’t really bother me, because I don’t live here, but there’s really nothing to do. There are four restaurants and one fast food and they’re often closed. So aside from these little restaurants there’s no life for the people here. It’s really hard for young adults. There are no bars, no night life” (Noelter, 2013).

The urban landscape in La Courneuve is quite vast. Large housing developments are sited on large plots separated by large open spaces that have little punctuating them but some tree plantings. Since the small moments of commercial activity are separated by long expanses of either housing or roadway, the urban fabric is quite fractured. For example, it takes 20 minutes to walk from the commercial hub at the base of Cité 4000, which has one restaurant, one bakery
and a tabac, to the next commercial area that has two fast food restaurants and a tramway stop. The scene in La Courneuve is not characteristic of all residential suburbs (though it is of most), as neighboring Saint Denis has a robust and dynamic urban quality.

The conditions of the urban landscape in La Courneuve contrast sharply with the 19th arrondissement, where the parks, cultural facilities and the recreational public space around the canal offer a diverse range of places for young people to hang out and play. Parc de la Villette, for example, is one of the largest parks in Paris and is located in the northeastern edge of the 19th arrondissement. It was designed by Bernard Tschumi in 1984 and is widely regarded as a landmark of post-modern landscape design. The park hosts numerous cultural institutions, including the city’s science museum and the acclaimed Cité de la Musique, which was designed by renowned architect Christian de Portzamparc. Parc de la Villette also provides acres of green space for physical activity and is a popular spot for young people to meet to play football. The park was one of the first major design investments in the neighborhood and now hosts regular and well-attended events, such as the open-air film festival that runs every summer in July. The park also has hip hop events as part of its summer programming; in 2013 it hosted graffiti and breakdancing workshops, along with two rap concerts featuring a showcase of French artists.

Figure 5.21 Soccer game at Parc de la Villette, 19th arrondissement, Paris
Aside from Parc de la Villette, many of the neighborhoods' public spaces are relatively recent additions. Due to the large youth population in the 19th, there was high demand for spaces for recreation and leisure in the neighborhood, especially since post-industrialization had left the area with many abandoned lots and brownfields. Le 104 and the Jardin d'Eole are two examples of the building projects undertaken by the Delanoë administration in the past decade. The Jardin d'Eole is a public park area that lies on the border between the 18th and 19th arrondissement. It flanks the rail infrastructure for Gare de l'Est, one of the major train stations in Paris, and so sits on the railroad's fallow lands, also known as the Cour de Maroc. It was planned in 2004 as part of an urban renewal plan for the neighborhood that sought to respond to the need for recreational space in a quartier défavorisé with a highly visible project that would have city-wide recognition (Beaumont 2008). The park was named for the Association Eole that lobbied the City and the SNCF to turn the area into a park. Association Eole was able to mobilize the local population and appropriate the land by hosting events for the neighborhood, such as picnics and the Cirque Electrique, to show the City and residents the potential of the space for recreation. The aforementioned cultural space, Le 104 was another large scale project that was begun in 2006 and completed in 2009. The City spent €110 million rehabilitating the former state funeral parlor.
and turning it into artist's studios and public space. The building provides an indoor recreational space and is especially popular among young 'breakers' (i.e., break dancers) for the space that it offers for practice.

**Residential Space**

Cité Michelet in the 19th arrondissement is one of Paris' largest public housing developments. The 17 acre site is composed of 16 towers that contain 1800 apartments and 4300 residents. Its striking appearance – the design of the building facades are often compared to figures from the video game Tetris – makes it an almost iconic place; especially since the towers can be seen from the commuter rail. Even if people don’t recognize the name Cité Michelet, they’ll know what you’re talking about if you mention the black and white towers in the 19th arrondissement.

Cité Michelet was originally built in 1968, on the land of a former gas factory, under the name Cité Curial. Its name was changed to Cité Michelet when a large-scale urban renovation project was announced in 2004. The housing development had gained a poor reputation for being violent and a drug den, so the name change was in part a political move to try and transform the image of public housing. The renovation has included both physical improvements to the buildings (façade treatments, new plumbing, elevator repair, etc.) and also an urban design that brought in new sidewalks, green spaces, and public amenities for children and youth, including a primary school and an Espace Jeune. According to Sophiane Nafa, director of Espace 19, a youth cultural facility in the development, residents have changed their impression of the renovation project: “they are seeing that things are moving and changing [for the better]. The green spaces that were promised have materialized and the new school is in session” (Nafa, 2013).
La Cité des 4000, the large housing estate in La Courneuve, is also in the midst of renovation. La Cité des 4000 consists of 153 large housing towers and was originally built between 1956 and 1964 as part of the country’s rapid response to urbanization pressures in the 1950s. The housing development was named for its 4100 planned housing units (it originally housed 17,500 people). At the time, the buildings were celebrated for their modern amenities, such as washrooms in each unit, central heat and elevators; however, the remote location of the buildings and their disconnection from an urban fabric received criticism even from contemporaries. Poor maintenance of the towers and the gradual change in resident population from a diverse mix of working-class French and immigrant families to a predominantly low-income immigrant population has led to the stigmatization and neglect of the Cité, and by extension, La Courneuve (Lepoutre 2001).

La Cité des 4000 is divided into two sites, the 4000 Nord and the 4000 Sud, which are separated by over 1 kilometer and are divided by highway A1. 4000 Nord, located just off of the Six-Routes tramway stop, is in the middle of reconstruction and signs promoting reconstruction efforts can be found throughout the area. 4000 Sud was renovated in the mid-2000s, following
the 2003 Borloo Law and spurred by the 2005 urban riots. The 4000 Sud is considered to be the more ‘central’ location and so has had more aesthetic renovations, including a new paved plaza. It is also much closer to the commuter rail that runs to Paris; from the central plaza, it is about a 5 minute walk to the train station.

Figure 5.25 Reconstruction in les 4000 Nord

Figure 5.26 New plaza and renovations in 4000 Sud

4000 Nord and 4000 Sud are subject to rivalries, especially among young people. Territorial identities are asserted through graffiti and a strict social rivalry that mirrors the divisions that are found in New York. The 4000 Nord has a reputation for being tougher and so references to the status of the Northern estate can be found in hip hop (the group NTM’s name refers to both the saying *nique ta mere* and *le Nord transmet le message*) and in pro-north slogans scrawled in the landscape. The 19th arrondissement experiences similar rivalry between Cité Michelet and neighboring public housing towers that are located on the super-block that between Rue Mathis and Rue Ricquet. Although the towers within this block are not a single development, like Cité Michelet, since they share an internal courtyard, they act as a single territory.

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54 The English equivalent of *go fuck yourself*
55 “The north gives the message”, in English
**Conclusion**

The active role of the state in creating amenities for urban youth has created a landscape that provides young people with a great variety of spatial resources, but also one that makes them more legible for public actors and, therefore, more easily controlled (Scott, 1998). Although recent projects in Paris suggest movement away from the tradition of containment (or *encadrement*), at least in the way that public spaces are being designed and managed, this is not necessarily evidence of a paradigm shift.

Young people have responded to their environment in contradictory ways – simultaneously making use of the buildings and amenities at their disposal and seeking autonomy from state institutions. Youth cultural movements and spatial appropriation tactics of urban youth will be discussed at length in Chapter 6. Although young people in Paris and New York City are invested in the same cultural movements, they are working with different opportunities and constraints, so their spatial appropriation tactics are quite different; in Paris and its suburbs, young people are more preoccupied with visibility and recognition, leading them to seek out high profile places – often in the city center – where they can be easily be seen.
French urban youth cultures depend on the urban built environment for inspiration and performance. Since there are plentiful socio-cultural amenities in French metropolitan areas, appropriation practices among French youth have different motivations from those in New York City. To this end, the relationship between youth culture and public policy has a significant impact on the motives and methods behind appropriations of space. Youth culture has long been integrated into public policy so many of the cultural movements that young people are invested in are linked to public institutions (Lafargue de Grangeneuve 2008). For example, the workshops and practice spaces where many artists first learn break dancing techniques take place within a *Maison Jeune*.

The state’s strong involvement with youth cultural movements and its prolific placemaking have been critiqued as a form of containment (or *encadrement*) by scholars (Bordes 2007; Loncle 2012) and provokes mixed reactions from young people themselves. Young people have many places to practice and so they appropriate visible public places to perform and gain exposure. For others, state involvement in youth culture makes them feel subject to a mode of territorial control and seek to break out of the specific areas designated for their cultural activities. In municipalities like La Courneuve, however, where there is a lack of diverse and inspiring urban places, spatial appropriation comes more from necessity, especially if young people don’t want to travel long distances just to practice their dance moves.

**Urban Youth Culture**

Hip hop was by far the most popular cultural movements I observed among the urban youth living in my sites of investigation. It is appealing because it offers a platform for
expressing and retaliating against conditions of marginality, while remaining one of the more
democratic art forms in the sense that there aren’t financial barriers to entry (you don’t need any
special equipment to rap or to break dance). Hip hop is also considered to be cool, and so is a
movement that most young people seemed eager to be identified with. As such, hip hop was
consistently referred to as a central and important cultural movement by the young people I
interviewed, and by community organizers and community leaders who worked with local youth.
Breakdancing is a particularly popular dimension of hip hop culture in France, due in part to
disproportionate state spending and support of break dancing, relative to graffiti and rap (Faure
and Garcia 2005).

Other popular activities for urban youth I observed include soccer and urban sports, such
as skateboarding and parkour. In fact, skateboarding is one of the most visible activities in public
space (more so than dancing), even though there are designated skate parks in the city. Place de
la République, for example, has many adolescents skateboarding there every day. This activity is
tolerated by authorities and other users of the space. Basketball is also a popular activity but
much less so than soccer. It’s more common to see a group of young people playing soccer on
the weekend than it is to see a game of pick-up basketball. Urban sports are included in this
discussion because they too engender particular lifestyles, fashions and cultural attitudes that
extend beyond participation in the sport itself. Skateboarding, for example, has a distinct fashion
that makes skaters recognizable even when they are not actually skateboarding. Moreover,
skateboarding and parkour involve skill, athleticism and innovative engagements with the built
environment, making them distinctly urban.
**French Hip Hop Culture: A Primer**

Hip hop came to Paris in the 1980s from DJs who were captivated by the culture in New York. DJ Dee-nasty is one of the universally-recognized pioneers of French hip hop. He was a Grandmaster of Zulu Nation (from NYC) and hosted the *bloc parties* in the abandoned land surrounding La Chapelle, an area in the 19th arrondissement near Stalingrad, so that people could come and party for free. Much of hip hop’s early development in Paris happened in the city’s interstitial spaces and *terrains vagues* (i.e., abandoned land), night clubs, public housing developments. The northern suburbs, in particular Saint Denis and La Courneuve, as well as the northern neighborhoods of Paris were central to the development of artists, many of whom lived in the suburbs and came to the northern neighborhoods of Paris to go to nightclubs, such as the Bataclan in the 11th arrondissement, or the *bloc parties* in La Chapelle. Independent radio stations and the television show *H.I.P. H.O.P.* helped diffuse rap music and breakdancing beyond these spaces. Breakdancing became very popular in the 80s, although rap remained relatively underground until the early 1990s. Breakdancing was harnessed early on by public actors who saw it as a way of engaging suburban youth. As such, it was integrated into the programming of Maisons Jeunes and many young people found early exposure to the dance techniques.

French suburban youth connected with hip hop because it was a form of artistic expression that they could claim as their own. Many of the early adopters of hip hop were young immigrants or the children of immigrants, predominantly from North African countries, living in the public housing estates in the suburbs. They didn’t feel accepted as French (and so didn’t want French cultural forms) nor did they feel connected to their parent’s cultures (as many had not grown up in the countries their parents were from) and so they wanted to find a new form of self-
expression. In this sense, rap was significant because marginalized youth took hold of the French language and manipulated it, played around with it, and even transformed it, to meet the needs of a musical genre all their own. It was the first art form to reflect and emerge from conditions in the low-income neighborhoods of France and so, since its inception, has been engulfed in the social politics of inequality and recognition. Additionally, breakdancing became a vehicle of cultural recognition and so many of the dance crews that formed informally, such as Force Aktuel and Black, Blanc, Beur became professional dance troupes.

In the 1990s, French rap began to achieve some commercial success with the emergence of artists such as MC Solaar in 1991 and NTM in 1995; although it would take well into the 2000s for public actors to accept rap as a legitimate French art form. As French artists grew in popularity, French rap began to develop its own stylistic characteristics and distinguish itself from its American counterpart. This is done primarily through unique lyricism and beats, as many of the themes in French hip hop are similar to those that are predominant in American rap. One distinguishing feature of French hip hop is the use of complex slang. Many MCs compose all their lyrics with Verlan, the French slang in which words are reversed or recombined; the term ‘verlan’ itself is an inversion for the French word for ‘reverse,’ l’envers). Although French rappers and hip hop artists have gained more commercial success in France, American rap remains very popular and I found French youth to be as knowledgeable of American rappers as French ones. In fact, having a distinctly ‘French’ version of hip hop seems to be more important to the Ministry of Culture than it does to many artists and young people.

**Youth Culture and Social Media**

A particularly surprising facet of French youth culture that differs quite radically from the United States is the relatively low use of social media. Adolescents are not avid users of media
apps like Instagram, Twitter, Vine, and Snapchat. They also don’t use Facebook and other social networking sites, like Reddit, with the same frequency as their American counterparts. This is likely due to the fact that very few of them have smartphones due to high costs. According to Mobile Marketing Association, only 44% of the population in France use smartphones; the 16-24 demographic represents only 16% of smartphone users. This is compared with much higher user rates in the US. According to a recent Nielsen report, young adults are the leading smartphone users in the U.S., with a full 81% of Americans aged 21 to 25 using the devices. Adolescents aren’t far behind, with almost 70% of those aged 13 to 17 already using a smartphone (comScore 2013). This isn’t to say that smartphones aren’t desired by French youth. In fact, according to Paris Police Chief Michael Gaudin, smartphones now constitute around 50% of petty thefts. The interior minister, Brice Hortefeux, calls it the iPhone effect and reports that the majority of the thieves are young men from the poorer suburbs (Erlanger 2011).

#Identity: Youth and Identity Politics

Urban cultures are infused with identity politics; however, I found that unlike New York City where racial identity is a major facet of youth cultural movements, in Paris and La Courneuve identity politics were more closely connected to geography than to race. This is not to say that racial and ethnic identities are not pathologized in France; however, the young people I interacted with did not talk about exclusion or discrimination in terms of race. Instead, it was much more common to hear about geography, citizenship, and religion as significant markers of difference. For example, a young man I spoke with at a party in Belleville talked to me about how people from Paris discriminate against his neighborhood. “They don’t like my neighborhood [Saint Denis] because they think they’ll get robbed ... but really it’s no different from any other neighborhood. There’s just not enough investment in making it look nice so
people assume there is more theft.” When I asked him if he thought that race or ethnicity had anything to do with it, he shrugged. “Maybe. Maybe not.”

In a conversation with a group of rappers at the same party, they told me that where you’re from is more important than what you look like. All these young men were French citizens of North African descent, and they spoke only about the difficulties of being from Saint Denis and being Arab. It is very common on Instagram, in graffiti and rap lyrics to see references to neighborhoods, cités and even departments. For example 93, which is the official administrative number of the Seine Saint Denis department, is commonly referenced in songs by well-known French hip hop groups, such as Suprême NTM, Tandem, and Alpha 5.20. It is also common to see parallels drawn between French suburbs and American cities and neighborhoods, such as the Bronx and Chicago, that are central to hip hop. In one photograph on Instagram, for example, a young man tagged his neighborhood as #clichycago. It is perhaps significant that these areas also experience tense racial relations; although there were no explicit references to race in the posted photographs, this may be a dimension that young people are identifying with, yet expressing in place-based terms.

It is significant that race is not the dominant discourse used by the young people to express exclusion and marginalization. This may be due, in part, to insider/outsider status being understood in terms of citizenship and meaningful inclusion in the French community. Alongside geography, citizenship was another important lens through which marginalization was discussed and understood. The young people I spoke with were very vocal about wanting to being included in French or Parisian culture. Citizenship, in this context, seemed to be understood as both a political and cultural status in the sense that having political citizenship wasn’t as meaningful if one wasn’t also considered to be part of the French community. One thing that I found to be very
interesting on Instagram, is that when young people tag a photograph of themselves – a selfie or a group shot – and it includes a hashtag that expresses a non-French identity, such as #algierienne, #afrique, #beur, or #rebeu⁵⁶, it is almost always accompanied by #french or #paris. This draws attention to feelings of exclusion in terms of citizenship, but also suggests a desire to be part of the French community.

I spoke with French sociologist Fabien Truong at length about the conflict between ‘French culture’ and ‘Banlieue culture’ when I met with him to discuss his research on youth transitions in the suburbs (see Truong 2013). Fabien had worked as a teacher in a priority school in a suburb outside of Paris before becoming involved with academia, and so was able to draw from many years of interacting with young people living in marginalized communities. “For the young men and women living in the banlieue, they are always struggling with how to adapt and transform to the Paris lifestyle. They want to be part of Paris – they are not looking to rebel. Inclusion really is a priority for them” (Truong, 2013). He told me that in his conversations with young people – both while writing his book and working as a teacher – that many felt that they were not accepted as French citizens. “They feel alienated from the institution of citizenship, even though most of them are French citizens, because they are the children of immigrants and they live in the banlieue.” Interestingly, social security services were one of the few institutional features that young people spoke about positively when discussing the French state. “Social security still counts for quite a lot, but there has to be more” (Truong, 2013).

⁵⁶ Rebeu is a term in Verlan (French slang) used to refer to a young French person of Maghreb origin
Freestyle Urbanism: Appropriation of Urban Space for Visibility and Autonomy

In Paris, I found that space is appropriated in those instances when young people desire visibility, autonomy from state institutions, and, less frequently, where existing amenities are insufficient or undesirable. The motives for spatial appropriation are different from those of young people in New York City, who appropriate space first and foremost out of need; however, the tactics of Parisian youth can still be described as freestyle urbanism because they are ephemeral and are responsive to the urban environment. I also found the tactics of French youth to be less innovative, overall. This may be because young people have more spatial resources at their disposal. With extensive socio-cultural amenities and an urban spatial management policy that encourages shared use of space among diverse groups of people, youth in Paris have less need to appropriate space and are less likely to be accused of using space inappropriately. When speaking with Emilie Moreau of the Atelier Parisien d’Urbanisme, she explained that young people are very present in public places and that they are most eager to establish autonomy over these places and to be able to act independently. “We don’t often see conflicts over how to use the space. In République, for example, people are pretty good about managing themselves. There aren’t too many disputes between skaters and pedestrians and protesters” (Moreau, 2013).

Visibility and exposure were the two almost ubiquitous reasons young people gave for appropriating public space in Paris. Artists perform in Paris because they want to be seen; this is true for young people living in Paris and in the suburbs. Paris is a destination for cultural exposure and so while socio-cultural amenities are used by many for practice and learning techniques, they prefer visible, high profile, public spaces to perform and show off their skills. As F, a young b-boy remarked, “when you dance in the street, it’s like you are dancing in a show – people will come and watch you. You don’t need to be a professional dancer. You don’t need a
stage. You just need the street” (F, 2013). The desire for visibility is linked to the politics of recognition, discussed in Chapter 5. As such, it presents both a challenge and opportunity for planners as providing youth with visible places to show off their skills for an audience and for one another is a way to engage young people from the suburbs and create more positive relationships with Paris. On the other hand, finding the right type of place for this activity is difficult as performances can be particularly disruptive to users of public space.

Young people also interested in establishing greater autonomy over the spaces they use and inhabit. According to Emilie Moreau, most socio-cultural facilities are still highly programmed and this doesn’t appeal to young adults. “There are still few places where they can express themselves freely. Le 104 is part of a new movement towards more autonomous space – I think it’s a symbol for this new movement – but many of the older Maisons Jeunes still have directors who don’t embrace Gonçalves’ [director of Le 104] methods” (Moreau, 2013). As such, young people appropriate space in order to have greater control over how that space can be used.

Alternatively, I also spoke to young people who appropriated space for the sake of being outside of the institutional realm. They operate outside of publicly designated spaces in order to seek out a space in the city that is not related to the state and therefore is not complicit with its politics. Such activities very often took the form of squatting in an abandoned building or tagging an unauthorized wall. It is important to note that for many of the youth I interacted with, this was a political statement not a necessity. For example, I went to numerous parties at artist squats in Paris and in the suburbs. These would often be organized by activists and hip hop artists and were seen as great opportunities to bring hip hop out of the night clubs (which are expensive) and away from public institutions.
These artist squats are very different from those occupied by Roma populations. The Roma population living in the squats have no access to public services and so squat from necessity. Yet, sometimes these worlds collided in surprising ways. One evening, I attended a fundraiser rap concert in Ivry-sur-Seine, a suburb to the south of Paris. It wasn’t one of my research sites, but a few of my activist friends had invited me so I went just for fun. The event gathered hip hop local artists to raise money for people who had been arrested in 2005 during the riots; a small cover would be charged but they were also hoping for donations.

To my surprise, the event was held in a squat occupied by Roma families. This particular squat was in a mid-rise building, not one of the encampments, but I still found it highly unusual for these communities to come together; I had learned very quickly from fellow researchers that the Roma are the most difficult community to establish trust relationships with. As such, this party was the one and only time I got to interact with Roma youth. None of the performers were Roma youth, but there were lots of young people watching the concert, as well as many little kids running around, playing soccer in the courtyard area while the concert was taking place. Overall, it was a very eclectic group of people: Paris-based activists looking to get out of the purview of institutions, hip hop artists, political prisoners, disenfranchised minorities who spoke about exclusion in terms of race (the one and only time I heard people talk explicitly about racial discrimination) and a people who were forcibly removed from any and all state institutions and so were forced to live in the margins. Yet somehow none of these tensions were palpable at this party. If I hadn’t known the politics coming into it, I wouldn’t have been able to guess. It would have just seemed like a radical underground party.

As the situation of the Roma youth makes abundantly clear, in Paris there are of course instances when young people appropriate urban space because existing amenities are insufficient.
These instances of appropriation were most common in the suburbs, where young people do not
have the diverse public spaces and amenities that Parisian youth do. In Plaine Commune
facilities are shared across the intercommunalité, so it might take a long time to access certain
facilities depending where one lives. In these instances, young people will improvise and
appropriate public space. In La Courneuve, for example, I learned from breaker Marguerite
Mboulé that young people will frequently gather under stairwells or in public plazas to break
dance and to battle. “I think that the MJC [maisons de la jeunesse et de la culture] don’t work
anymore. We need spaces that are run by more local actors who understand the needs of their
community” (Mboulé, 2013). I did not see much of this during my fieldwork, but I also didn’t
seek out the tucked away stairwells and hallways that Marguerite described.

I did often see (mostly) young men milling about in the plazas and in the park spaces
between residential towers; but it appeared that they were just hanging out. The loitering was,
oddly, the most common ‘activity’ I personally observed in La Courneuve. I never approached
one of these groups, however, as they were often quite large; consisting of at least five people. In
fact, in many informal conversations I had with locals in Paris, I learned that the term gang
(bande, in French) was often used to refer to a group of young men who are just hanging around
in big groups. The use of the word bande to describe these groups of young people suggests a
negative and fearful attitude towards them. In fact, one of the roles of the correspondents de nuit
is to provide a sense of greater security to individuals walking home at night past bandes. Yet,
the fact that bandes are discussed so frequently in the context of loitering, suggests that they are
a public safety concern in part because of how they make onlookers feel, not because of any
actual illicit or violent activities they’re involved in. In communities such as La Courneuve,
loitering is common because of high unemployment and the lack of urban amenities, such as
bars, restaurants, cafés and entertainment that are easily accessible on foot. It is important to note, however, that spatial governance and design have not been harnessed to prevent loitering from occurring.

*Urban Sports: Soccer, Skate Culture and Parkour*

Football (i.e., soccer) is one of the most popular sports among young men in France. Sports clubs devoted to football, football stadiums and also open fields for practice are a common sight in French neighborhoods. When speaking with a group of 19- and 20 year olds about what they do for fun, nearly all of the young men spoke about playing soccer with their friends (*le foot avec mes gars*, in French). They all belonged to sports clubs outside of school
that organized formal and informal games. Many also sported the jersey from their favorite team; for most it was Paris Saint Germain. Not unlike the many basketball courts that can be found in New York City neighborhoods, there are recreational soccer pitches throughout residential neighborhoods in Paris. In the 19th arrondissement, for example, there are soccer pitches that are adjacent to public housing and that are part of large park spaces in the neighborhood, such as Parc d’Eole and Parc de la Villette. These were almost always in use when I passed them, regardless of the day of the week or the time of day. I found both Parc de la Villette and Parc d’Eole to be popular spots for sports.

![Figure 6.2 Soccer game in Parc d’Eole](image)

Skate culture (or board culture) is one of the more visible urban youth cultures in Paris and seems to be popular for both men and women. There are skate parks in the city, but most
skaters prefer to use the urban landscape as an ever-evolving obstacle course. Like hip hop, skate culture has dimensions that reach beyond the activity itself, as there is an easily recognizable style and aesthetic that goes along with it. For many skaters, there is a certain pride about being gars de la rue. They are mostly self-taught and so take pride in their ability to navigate the landscape using their boards. T, a skater I met while taking photographs in Place de la République explained that “it’s a different way of looking at the city. When you are a skater, you don’t see stairs and sidewalks and benches. You see inclines and places to do grind rails and tricks” (T, 2013).

Like skate boarding, parkour is an urban sport that draws inspiration from the urban environment. Parkour originated in the French town Lisse in 1988. Its creators were part of a crew called Yamakasi, a word taken from the Lingala language spoken in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that means “strong body and strong spirit.” Essentially, parkour is a way of acrobatically moving from one point to another, using the urban landscape as an obstacle course. Participants are called ‘traceurs’ and will leap from building to building using somersaults and flips, and will film their most successful runs and post them online. Although there are no official terms for parkour moves, basic maneuvers include the tic tac (when a traceur runs horizontally across a wall to cross an obstacle, such as a flight of stairs) and the cat leap (when a traceur runs towards a steep wall and propels up it). Parkour is both inspired by and dependent upon the urban environment. It is the unconventional and unintended nature of urban obstacles that makes them appealing to traceurs.

**Block Parties and Terrain Vague**

The terrain vague (i.e., abandoned lot) was a key site of spatial appropriations in the 1980s. Young hip hop artists and DJs would transform abandoned lots in Paris’ northern
neighborhoods into party spaces. The fabled *bloc parties* of La Chapelle were inspired by the park jams of 1970s New York and are an excellent example of how the relationship between youth cultures and public space has evolved. In the mid-80s, hip hop artists hosted *bloc parties* in the *terrain vague* of La Chapelle. Graffiti writers, breakers, DJs and rappers would get together there every Saturday to hang out. According to one of the originators of the *bloc partie*, DJ Dee-Nasty: “In the beginning, we were the only ones using the abandoned lot [in La Chapelle]. All the guys from the cités were there, listening to rap, writing graffiti, training – and everyone had a good time. And then, from Saturday to Saturday, it grew and grew. We would have 200 or 300 people on the lot. Then the police started asking questions. We did this from August to November 1986. But then things started to sour. In the spring, when we tried to come back to the lot, we had a big problem as they had changed the precinct captain and all these police cars were blocking it. So we had to go someplace else” (quoted in Bocquet and Pierre-Adolphe 1997:63).

Two decades later, peripheral spaces are becoming cool again; especially now that clubs in Paris have become so expensive. In an effort to move away from publicly sponsored events but to have a clear venue space, underground hip hop crews have started hosting parties in artist

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squats. One example is a series of events called “Block Parties” (in homage to the original bloc parties in Paris, as well as the block party culture in the United States) hosted by an activist association called Do the Red Thing. I went to a Block Party at la Miroiterie, the oldest artist squat in Paris. The space itself was covered in graffiti and consisted of a number of rooms and a large outdoor space. The party was an eclectic blend of hip hop artists, activists and members of the artist collective occupying the squat. The party was organized around an open mic night, where I heard a crew from Saint Denis called a2s perform. I spoke with them briefly outside after their performance. One of the guys told me that “Paris is nul” for hip hop, but then broke away mid-conversation when a cypher started up near us, yelling “Freestyle! I have to go!” Overall it was a rather racially diverse crowd. When I spoke to some of the guys there about the role of race in French hip hop, they told me that race doesn’t have the same central role in rap as it does in America. “We’re concerned with identity,” said TR, an MC who had also performed in the open mic night, “but it is more neighborhood based – also Muslim identity is becoming more featured in rap” (TR, 2013). This idea was repeated in conversations with other artists, especially with graffiti writers as many of them are white.

Figure 6.4 Members of Do the Red Thing. Photo credit: Do the Red Thing (Julian).
The desire to be outside of the institutional spaces for hip hop was an interesting dimension of these underground parties. The young people in attendance often spoke forcefully about wanting to be outside of state space and so were drawn to the interstitial qualities of an artist squat. This is an important tension inherent in state-sponsored youth cultural activities. Funding and tolerance provides necessary resources, yet can end up being resented by young people looking to establish themselves as autonomous actors and rebels. This is a challenge for planners and so it is interesting to see the 'quiet' ways that public actors can support youth activities.

Figure 6.5 Block Party at La Miroiterie, 2013

Posse

The posse (the French word for crew) is a central component of youth culture. Of the young people that I spent time with, many had a posse that they developed their hip hop skills
with (break dancing crews were very common) and like in the US, they would also have names. The posse served both a professional and interpersonal role, as many hip hop artists work with a crew and also hold their crew members as dear friends. On Instagram, I observed many posts about posses that were captioned with #lafamille (#family, in English). I noticed that young men were more likely to post about their crews than women; this was very different from New York where many crews were composed of both men and women, and where young women were just as likely to post about and refer to a ‘crew’ as young men. Women, however, were just as likely to participate in hip hop culture and so I assumed that many belonged to dance crews. Overall, I found that women more actively participated in breakdancing than they did in rap and graffiti writing. This gender dynamic was similar to New York; there were talented female MCs and writers, to be sure, there just weren’t nearly as many as men, especially within younger age groups (i.e., 16-18 year olds).

**Hip Hop Geographies: Rap and Breakdancing**

Today in Paris, there are geographic poles of hip hop that are created around certain groups and activities. According to one of the artists that I met at the Miroiterie, “the four elements (rap, DJing, graffiti, breakdancing) were together in the beginning and then they split apart. We are trying to bring them back together again but it is still very disjointed.” Indeed, breakdancing has held a privileged spot in public funding efforts and so it is the most popular form of hip hop to be practiced in France. Graffiti is the second most popular, with rap trailing behind.

For dancers there is a clear spatial history of hip hop as the poles for breakdancing, or ‘breaking,’ have changed frequently in the past few years. J, a 20 year old breaker recounted the history of displacement and subsequent moves. “When the plaza [les Halles] was shut down for
renovations, breakers moved to the plaza area in front of Gare de Lyon, but it wasn’t as major as les Halles. Also people got more into attending organized battles like the Chelles Battle Pro and wouldn’t just dance and hang out as often” (J, 2013). Breakdancing culture is very competitive in France. Battles are common among rappers and breakers, and can be either organized or spontaneous. Chelles Battle Pro, for example, is a well-known international breakdancing competition in Chelles, France, that is very popular among Parisian breakdancing crews. Many crews use the competitions to gain exposure and win prize money.

Alternatively, when dance crews encounter one another in a public space, a spontaneous battle can break out between crew members. This is why breakers seek out large, open spaces to gather. According to J, “for a while La Defense was cool because there was lots of space, but that also got shut down for construction and development. We are always looking for big open
parcels – but sometimes breaking outside, even though it’s more visible, can be hard because of the weather and the terrain. Le 104 is good for that. You know, it’s funny - at first, no one went to Le 104 but now it’s very popular because the director changed and really embraced hip hop, so more people started coming” (J, 2013).

Figure 6.7 Hip hop concert in Seine Saint Denis

J told me that Saint Michele in Trocadero, one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in Paris, is now a popular spot for breakers because they can perform there for large crowds and will often make money. I went to Saint Michele a few times to check it out and found that the dancers treated it very much as a performance space and collected money from onlookers (mostly tourists visiting the Eifel Tower). One afternoon, I spoke to one of the dancers there after a performance and asked him why he and his crew chose to dance in Trocadero. He told me, “This is a good place for us. There is a lot of room and a lot of visibility. There is always an audience. Plus, the police don’t bother us if we turn off the music when they come – if we keep up the performance, though, we have to pay a fine. But sometimes, if there is a big crowd, it’s worth it.” In a later
conversation, I asked J if there were any popular spots for dancing in the suburbs, he told me: “Lots of breakers come to Paris from the banlieue. I mean, they’ll practice there [in the suburbs], you know, in a free space or at an MJC if they’re younger. But most people come to Paris because that’s where the action is. Saint Denis is sometimes popular – but it’s not Paris” (J, 2013).

The mobility of hip hop and this relationship between the Paris and the suburbs in the context of hip hop culture came up again and again in conversations with artists. When speaking with B, a 19 year old rapper, I learned that hip hop culture has always involved some back and forth between Paris and the northern suburbs. The artist is nurtured and developed in their local territory but the validation of their talent has to come from outside. “This is why we go to Paris” (B, 2013). This sentiment was again repeated by Yannick Freytag of Hip Hop Citoyen. He raised the point that collaboration between the suburbs and Paris isn’t just about creating events that bring people from one pole to the other – it is about recognition. “It is important that we fund the development of art in the suburbs – where there are scant resources – but it is equally important that this art form is legitimated by Paris, which is still really the heart of French culture” (Freytag, 2013). B had similar thoughts about hip hop’s place in French culture. “What’s funny about the development of hip hop here, said B, is that I think at first they were really just using hip hop culture to try and calm everyone down. But then, it was like, this is just as much a part of French culture as the Molière and all those painters in the Louvre” (B, 2013).

From a work perspective, hip hop also seems to have a more recreational function for young people as there are relatively fewer individuals – at least that I encountered – who were looking to make it a job. FR, a 17-year-old aspiring rapper, his girlfriend M and I met up at the McDonalds in les Halles one day to talk about French rap. “The main themes in French hip hop
are drugs and alcohol and women and money,” said FR “but it’s also about anger and society clash but in a way that’s really grounded in neighborhoods. That’s what makes it different – the fights between neighborhoods and how important it is where you’re from. Like 93 [the zip code for Saint Seint Denis] is an important identity” (FR, 2013).

I also asked them if hip hop was popular. “Hip hop is cool for certain kids depending on where you live,” M told me. “In my neighborhood, Bondy, it is cool. People like hip hop. But in other, more bougie neighborhoods, like ... Saint Germaine ... they might like rock or pop better” (M, 2013). FR was one of the few young people I met with a professional interest in hip hop. I asked M if she was interested in being an artist. “No, not me. I like it, I think it’s cool. I like to listen to the music and a lot of my friends dance, but mostly just for fun. I’m in school for health administration. Most of my friends don’t want to be professional artists. It’s more of a culture for us than an aspiration” (M, 2013). FR agreed. “I want to have my shot. But I don’t count on it. If it doesn’t work out, I’ll do something else” (FR, 2013).

**Hip Hop Geographies: Graffiti**

Graffiti is very popular in Paris and is practiced in a wide variety of settings. I spent an afternoon with JT, a 21 year old graffiti writer I had met at a hip hop party. We went for a walk along the berges de Bercy – a new popular spot among graffiti writers in Paris. I had been told by many writers to visit Bercy so I was particularly pleased when JT suggested we go. I was also interested in it because it was also one of the legal spots to do graffiti in the city. “Writing is still very cool for our generation,” JT told me. “Everybody wants to do it, but a lot of people make a lot of crap,” he said, while pointing to a messy scrawl at the bottom of a wall. “This is the new trendy spot. A while ago it was les frigos, which is an artist squat not far from here” (JT, 2013).
Les frigos is an art space that houses 90 ateliers. It is, in fact, no longer a squat, although it is still inhabited by artists and their ateliers. The city now owns the building and leases workshop space to artists at a subsidized rate. The entire building is covered in graffiti inside and out and hosts an open house once a year that draws large crowds of visitors. When I asked him whether the laws against graffiti were restrictive, he responded: “It’s not more or less difficult here than anywhere else. And now there are a lot of places where you can legally do it. And
other tucked away places where no one will bother you. You have to know which neighborhoods are tolerant and which ones aren’t. To really get respect you have to do it in places that are hard to get to. But then again, places like this [Bercy] are also good because they are so visible – everyone sees your work – and you can really take your time to make something nice” (JT, 2013).

Throughout the City there are walls that are designated ‘graffiti walls’ where individuals can freely paint. The City distinguishes between legal graffiti, on these sites, and “graffiti sauvages” which are on walls that are not designated. This is a problem in part because of the old building materials and the effect of the chemical paint on historic buildings. The City will remove ‘graffiti sauvage’ for free if a property owner complains. There are 23 authorized graffiti
walls in Paris, which are shown in Figure 6.10. The walls are clustered predominantly in northeast Paris (18th, 19th, and 10th arrondissements) and in the 13th arrondissement to the south of the Seine. The geography of the graffiti walls mirrors the geography of building projects as part of the *Démocratie de Proximité* policy discussed in chapter 5 (see fig., 5.5). While the walls are located in areas with large youth populations, it is also important to note that they are not located in the city’s wealthiest or most touristy neighborhoods.

There are also many more walls in surrounding communes; they are unofficially compiled on the website *Legal Walls*, that shows that there are over 100 authorized walls in the *Petite Couronne*. What is significant about these walls is that the content is not predetermined. These are free-for-all walls. They are comparable to 5 Pointz in New York City but they are not privately owned. The fact that there is a policy for designated graffiti walls shows that public policy actors are willing to take urban youth cultures seriously. More importantly, it means that there is a space for free expression. The city, it appears, is making an effort to extend to youth the ‘right to the city.’

The authorized walls are very popular and I saw people using them all the time. They are covered in graffiti and people familiar with the French graffiti scene can easily point out top crews and writers on the authorized walls. It is significant that the city sees graffiti as a new component of its urban culture and that graffiti writers participate by making use of the authorized walls. This is an example effective planning practice that gives young people creative space, without over-programming it. Just because some graffiti writers approach illegality as a means of gaining respect and street cred, doesn’t mean that there aren’t just as many who are

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58 For the interactive map of the authorized graffiti walls refer to: [http://www.paris-streetart.com/](http://www.paris-streetart.com/)
willing to work within legal spaces. The popularity of places like 5 Pointz in New York and the authorized graffiti walls in Paris demonstrate this.

Figure 6.11 Graffiti writers at authorized walls in the 11th and the 19th arrondissements

**Conclusion**

Freestyle urbanism in Paris suggests ways that urban planners and designers can engage more actively with urban youth cultures. Much can be gained from making space for the activities of young people in the city; young people will use spaces that are given to them and have a vested interest in being included in the city’s public life. Providing space for recreation, practice and gathering is just as important as giving young people access to prominent places that allow for visibility and recognition. As the changing geographies of graffiti and breakdancing suggest, such spaces do not need to be permanent; young people are adaptable and ready to move to new territories. It is important, however, that impermanence be accompanied by trust that access to space won’t suddenly disappear.
CONCLUSION | Planning with Urban Youth Cultures

This dissertation began with the question: what is the role of urban planning and design in promoting the wellbeing of young people living in low-income communities? To answer it, I a) looked at the impact of youth policy regimes and neoliberal urbanization processes on urban youth, and b) surveyed the ways that young people respond to urban conditions by exploring their cultures and the various ways they create a place for themselves in the built environment. As such, I have identified some of the challenges and opportunities facing urban planners and designers seeking to intervene in the youth field. The issues most pertinent to urban youth are connected to the social, economic and political conditions of the city; urban places and neighborhood conditions have a significant impact on youth development. Yet, the production of youth space is under-researched and under-theorized. As such, youth programs often miss the mark or become subverted by policies with competing agendas.

Through my analysis, I have identified the need for urban planners and designers to participate in the youth field. Although the field is already split among many different policy sectors, planners are ideally positioned to mediate between the state and local actors by intervening in the way that the built environment is designed and governed. To this end, I have identified opportunities for intervention, either in the built environment itself or by highlighting aspects of youth culture that need support from policy and planning. Young people are innovative urban actors and so planners can gain much from engaging with them and their cultures. The success of youth-focused projects in Paris’ 19th arrondissement, the rather liberal programming of the newly renovated Place de la République, and the Hip Hop Center in Forum
les Halles show that urban design and planning can be harnessed to create an urban environment that promotes youth interests.

Left to discuss, then, is the criteria through which youth-focused planning practice might be crafted and evaluated. As such, this concluding chapter will reflect on what comparison between New York City and Paris has revealed about youth and cities, and put forward planning and design recommendations.

Case Comparison

This dissertation has been structured around a comparison between New York City and Paris. These two cities represent different landscapes for young people. In Paris, the state is actively involved in the youth field and so, young people have a richly developed environment of resources. Many young people, however, feel cordoned off to such facilities and seek greater engagement with the city as a whole. The Paris case shows that the provision of amenities is not the same as extending the 'right to the city' to young people. Initiatives under Mayor Delanoë, however, suggest the development of a more progressive spatial politics in Paris. Conversely, in New York City, there is still much hesitance towards recognizing youth through the allocation of urban space and as such, young people depend largely on private actors and community organizers for spatial resources. Although private actors provide high quality environments for youth, the constant struggle for funding makes it more difficult to embark upon innovative plans and pursue programs that cannot be easily evaluated with statistical measures.

The urban design politics of these landscapes reveal the tension between neoliberal urbanization processes and positive youth development. Spatially, policy in New York City shifted from making cities more habitable for young people to making youth more manageable
for cities. Socially, urban policy moved from supporting social programs to facilitating market interests. The goal of reducing youth’s footprint on the built environment – to render them invisible, so to speak – results in landscapes that provide fewer and fewer opportunities for young people to program, transform and appropriate urban space. In Paris, decades of place-making have entrenched youth space in the city, making it harder for the state to disinvest young people of their spatial resources. While such place-making historically sought to control youth populations – and so for all their spatial resources, immigrant youth (or first generation children of immigrant parents) still feel excluded from the French community due to their citizenship status – it has simultaneously entrenched youth space in the urban landscape, thus making it more politically costly to reverse the trend. 59

The main take-away point, however, is youth cultures build resilience among young people living in challenging urban environments. Although youth cultural activities led to different appropriation techniques in New York City and Paris, I found that they provide youth in both cities with protective factors and so support positive youth development. Research on resiliency shows that young people who receive support for development of their skills and interests, have opportunities for engagement within their communities, and receive positive feedback from mentors and peers, are less likely to become involved in violent activity (Resnick, Ireland, and Borowski 2004). Hip hop culture connects youth with like-minded peers, provides them with the support of a crew, and gives them opportunities to develop skills and receive praise. Youth cultures spatialize community protective factors in ways that maintain street cred (i.e., because young people create these spaces they are more likely to use them). It is therefore

59 This situation may be an example of path dependence. Margaret Levi offers a useful definition of path dependence: “Path dependence has to mean, if it is to mean anything, that once a country or region has started down a track, the costs of reversal are very high. There will be other choice points, but the entrenchments of certain institutional arrangements obstruct an easy reversal of the initial choice.”
important that public actors be tolerant and supportive of such activities. The challenge for planning and design is to connect with and support youth cultural movements without diminishing their ‘cool’ status. The Paris case offers both successful and unsuccessful examples of state-led youth cultural projects. Successful projects, such as Le 104, combine flexible programming, pro-youth management and strategically located facilities to engage youth. Facilities that provide overly strict guidelines for how the space can be used are less popular.

**Problem-based and Asset-based Youth Policy Regimes**

Youth policy regimes matter because they influence the way that policymakers approach youth challenges and so shape the policy solutions they regard as most appropriate and compelling. As discussed in Chapter 2, France and the United States have different youth policy regimes. The French model lends itself more to asset-based policies, whereas in the United States policies tend to be problem-based. It is important to note that the French model is not based on the principles of positive youth development. In France, the political culture of républicanisme provides impetus for a policy that works towards shaping the ideal French Citizen; this politics therefore supports capacity-building initiatives yet does so in a way that is top-down and provides few opportunities for youth to program space autonomously. Nevertheless, the end-result has yielded plentiful youth space in Paris, as opposed to the sparse and highly regulated landscape that has resulted from the American policy focus on individualism and improvement. Which is better? While normatively, I don’t think that one is necessarily better than the other, the French model provides more opportunities for pro-youth intervention, at multiple institutional scales of government.

**Spatial Governance: Exclusion and Containment**

Youth policy regimes provide a set of constraints and opportunities in which public and youth actors must operate. Spatial governance is a key mechanism through which such regimes
are expressed at the urban, neighborhood and architectural scale. Spatial governance is, in part, a negotiation between different users of space who have different needs and demands. In the context of neoliberal urbanization, where private land use and high rents are prioritized, New York City and Paris have approached conflicts arising over urban space in different ways. The strategies of containment and exclusion emerged as two possible modes of spatial governance. In New York City, when there is a conflict, young people are removed from urban space. This is illustrated by the many 311 complaints over youth “playing in inappropriate places” (Fig., 3.2) and the many policies that are aimed at spatial exclusion of young people, such as Operation Crew Cut. In France, similar conflicts must involve compromise; so rather than exclude contentious groups, the state contains them in a pre-determined geography where certain areas are designated as youth space. Young people have shown mixed responses to this geography; they make use of public amenities yet also push for greater autonomy and cultural recognition.

**Youth Culture and Public Policy: Engaging with Urban Youth Cultures**

Youth culture is incorporated very differently in French and American policy. In France, the struggle is over the incorporation of youth culture in Cultural Policy as a means of gaining greater recognition for urban arts, such as hip hop, as part of French culture. Youth culture has long had a place in social policy, specifically as a tool of social engagement. Conversely, in the United States, youth culture is criminalized by quality-of-life policing strategies and, when approached positively, enters the equation only in the programming phase of a project. For example, along with its aggressive policing of graffiti, the city’s Crew Cut policy blatantly criminalizes crew culture by equating it with gang culture. In France, although some public representatives have suggested links between rap music and the 2005 youth riots, such claims have never resulted in any actual policy action and have been dismissed by party leaders. There is, in fact, much evidence of interest in the potential benefits of youth culture at multiple scales.

264
of government, as the City of Paris and various federal ministries have requested reports and research on urban cultural movements.

My study of youth cultural movements in both cities shows that such movements provide alternative pathways to status and respect within communities. Being a great basketball player, a skilled breaker, a talented lyricist, and a daring tracer are accepted non-violent ways to gain status. By approaching some of these cultures (hip hop, in particular) as precursors or early signs of delinquency, American policymakers miss out on an important opportunity to engage with young people through a medium that they are already invested in. Such a task is challenging, as non-violent youth cultures exist alongside violent ones. While it would be naïve to suggest otherwise, local knowledge of place, lifestyle and neighborhood customs makes it possible to understand their dynamics. As such, I do not believe that this layer of complexity should serve as a deterrent for positive engagement with youth culture. The “good kids – bad kids” rhetoric is ineffective and impractical. To this end, figuring out a way to mediate between public fears and the talents of local youth requires innovative design solutions – this challenge is just one of the many opportunities for planners and designers in the youth field.

Critical Commentators: Multiple Pathways of Youth Participation

Young people are active users of public space. This is as true in Paris as it is in New York City, even though French and American youth often appropriate space for different reasons. In both cities I found that young people are sensitive and aware of the way that their neighborhoods are treated in the overall context of the city; they form attachment to places, take pride in their neighborhoods, and feel ashamed over stigmas such as school closings. More importantly, they are critically engaged with these urbanization processes; they are constantly observing them, interacting with them and commenting upon them. It is important, therefore, not to mistake lack
of involvement in formal political institutions as apathy. My analysis of youth cultural movements in both sites demonstrated that young people are thoughtful and sophisticated civil society actors. While they may act impulsively, take risks, and break the rules – they also respond critically and thoughtfully to the things that go on around them. As such, they have much potential as partners for collaboration. Too often, though, participation is confined to traditional pathways and so only a select group of young people are heard. For example, the Mayor’s Youth Leadership Council in New York City recruits high school students who actively engage in community organization and show potential for leadership. While these young people are excellent ambassadors, they may not be able to speak to the interests, needs and challenges of high school dropouts, alienated individuals, or even students who are struggling in school. Lifestyles, cultures and social media reveal as much (if not more) about how young people feel about their environment as a youth council, a publicly administered survey, or a charrette.

**Hustle and Show: Spatial Appropriation and Cultures of Work**

Young people living in low income neighborhoods in New York City and Paris are captivated by the same cultural movements. Although French and American hip hop have nuanced differences, at their core is the desire for a form of creative expression that young people can claim as their own. Although they are invested in the same movements, they appropriate space differently. Spatial appropriation in New York is more needs-based than in Paris, where young people are often seeking greater recognition of their skills. The proclivity towards either hustle (New York) or show (Paris) is influenced by the landscape of resources young people have at their disposal. Since there are resources in Paris, young people have more specific demands for space. Since it is sparse in New York City, young people take whatever space they can get. In New York, spatial appropriations were particularly innovative, as young people are constantly challenged to hustle and figure out new and creative ways to meet their...
spatial needs. In Paris, young people seek out places that give them visibility and respond most favorably to socio-cultural institutions that give them a certain degree of autonomy over programming. These spatial appropriation tactics provide planners and designers with a roadmap for understanding the types of spatial resources young people need and want.

One of the more interesting things I noticed is that youth cultural activities are just as related to work and community-building as they are to recreation and fun. Of course young people are looking for fun activities, but much of what they are doing is also aimed at finding a place in the society. In the 1970s, hip hop emerged as a coping mechanism – a response to a hostile environment and a means of owning it, transforming it, and taking charge. Today, it is possible to observe new forms of coping as young people use hip hop to navigate neoliberal economic systems. In both Paris and New York City, hip hop is used as a platform (or a bridge) to employment. Young people looking for work as entrepreneurs, freelancers, artists/performers and event planners colonize the kinds of spaces that they think they need to forge a pathway for themselves. In Paris, this means seeking exposure in high profile public spaces whereas in New York it means looking for office and production space from which to launch projects, such as social media campaigns.

**Principles to Guide Planning and Design**

Cities that plan for youth should prioritize public interest, encourage youth’s participation in public life, and provide young people with access to opportunities through necessary infrastructure, mobility and capabilities. Good youth space begins and ends with promoting youth’s public interest. However, it must also pay special attention to public life and access. While these two characteristics may be subsumed within public interest, I think that they are
worth identifying because they are the elements of public interest that are most important and relevant to youth.

**Public Interest:** Planning with regard to public interest means using the tools of planning to promote social justice. In *The Just City*, Susan Fainstein proposes that a city that promotes public interest is one in which “public investment and regulation would produce equitable outcomes rather than support those already well off” (Fainstein 2010:4). Fainstein advocates that public interest become a greater consideration in urban policies, particularly with regard to the choice of objects of investment (e.g. stadiums v. housing; schools v. convention centres) and locational decisions (e.g. where to put a bus station or public housing). She uses distributional equity as her primary standard for evaluating policy, which she defines as “a distribution of both material and nonmaterial benefits derived from public policy that does not favour those who are already better off at the beginning” (Fainstein 2010:36). For Fainstein, then, it is up to urban planning to ensure more equitable outcomes by using equity, diversity and democracy as guiding norms for policy.

**Public Life:** Planning that promotes the public life of youth will encourage their participation in the city’s shared spaces. Borrowing from Allan Jacobs and Donald Appleyard’s Urban Design Manifesto, this means that the “structure of the city should invite and encourage public life, not only through its institutions, but directly and symbolically, through its public spaces” (Jacobs and Appleyard 1987:116). Urban environments should be designed for all of those who use or are affected by them, rather than for those who own them or for those who are intended to use them. This means that urban planning should take a more active role in encouraging tolerance for the activities of young people in public spaces “Our problem is not to design streets, housing, a petrol station, or shops that can lend themselves to play, but to educate
society to accept children on a participating basis” (Benjamin 1974:3). Youth should have
greater autonomy in space programming and their cultural activities should have a greater
visibility in the city. Lastly, young people should understand their city, its basic layout, public
functions and institutions. They should be aware of its opportunities. Cities should encourage
landscape literacy among their youth by proving the information needed to easily identify places
for recreation and support (Spirn 1998).

Access: At its most basic level, providing access means that young people should be
provided with the infrastructure and knowledge needed to find and make use of the opportunities
offered by the city. Providing access, however, also involves providing young people with what
Henri Lefebvre calls ‘the right to the city.’ The right to the city is bound up with the power of
citizens to control the social production of space as it shapes the conditions of everyday urban
life. David Harvey speaks to this idea in Rebel Cities, “to claim the right to the city ... is to claim
some kind of shaping power over the processes of urbanization, over the ways in which our cities
are made and remade and to do so in a fundamental and radical way” (Harvey 2012:15). At the
moment, the right to the city is monopolized by corporate interest and property ownership.
Providing access, then, is the idea that one cannot exercise full rights without the ability to access
the space one has produced and to engage in the process of producing it.

Planning and Design Strategies

While public interest, public life and access provide three broad principles for planning and
design, they must also be connected to concrete actions, programs and policies. Key concerns for
practitioners as interesting in planning for/with youth are:

1. Learning (how to promote learning through planning practice)
2. Participation (how to involve young people in planning process)
3. Place experience (how young people experience and perceive urban places)

Since learning and participation have received much attention in the literature, I will focus primarily on place-making and design. Place experience involves place knowledge, place values and feelings, and place-use (Moore 1986). How well do young people know their city? Where do they go and how do they get there? How do they feel about certain places? How do they make use of urban space? These questions inform planning and design practice as they pertain to the places and urban characteristics that are desired by young people, as well as to the design and physical planning elements that young people need to properly take advantage of their environments.

**Designing Good Youth Space**

In *Growing Up in Cities*, Kevin Lynch identified six environmental characteristics valued by urban youth: social integration, interesting settings, mobility, meeting place, cohesive community identity and green areas that provide privacy. These traits are just as desired today as they were in the 1970s and most are still lacking in urban areas. Social integration remains a great challenge, especially for young people living in low income communities. As evidenced by both the New York and Paris cases, the politics of belonging and exclusion infuse urban environments and youth cultures. To this end, living in places with a positive identity attached to them is important to young people and so greater efforts should be made to avoid stigmatizing low-income neighborhoods; this is particularly relevant for France where policy interventions are most often place-based. I found that low-income youth in both cities strongly identify with the place that they live and form strong place attachment to their neighborhoods. They are very attracted to places with history and meaning. Rucker Park basketball court in Harlem is a successful youth space largely because it has a history and an identity that young people connect with. Many professional basketball players got their start playing at Rucker Park and
participating in the Rucker Park Tournament. The young people who spend time there feel attached to a history and tradition that is meaningful and inspiring to them. Therefore, recognizing the places that young people value is a relatively easy way that planners can support youth interests.

Another persistent challenge has been the provision of peer meeting places, especially since urban design has been harnessed to make meeting more difficult in many American cities (Owens 2002). Young people need places where they can gather with friends, yet making such places is contentious as groups of adolescents and young adults can be intimidating to outsiders. Designing meeting places for youth must indeed be a priority for planners and designers – as well as figuring out clever ways to make it possible for young people to meet without making other people feeling uncomfortable. This can be achieved in places such as mixed-use boulevard. The Canal St Martin in Paris is an excellent example of a youth gathering space. The Canal is located in the 11th arrondissement and is flanked by a wide embankment that allows people to walk along the Canal. In the summer, the embankments are used by young people as a gathering space in the evening; almost every night it is common to see groups of young adults picnicking and hanging out near the water. Because it is a long and narrow space, passers-by are never surrounded and so can walk past without feeling that there is no quick exit. Moreover, the presence of shops, cafés and bars on either side of the canal means that there is a diverse public using the overall space. As such, the canal can be enjoyed by patrons of business establishments, as well as by people choosing to picnic or simply sit along the embankment to hang out.
From my research with youth, I found additional characteristics to add to Lynch’s list, and some important differences. First off, privacy is not as important to young adults – who have personal home spaces more accessible to them – as it is for young adolescents and pre-teens. In fact, very often young people want more visible and public accessible places. For many young people, the kinds of spaces they desire are connected to their cultural activities and their professional ambitions. As such, young people seek spaces where they can work, perform, practice, organize and host events; it is important that these places be easily accessible and located close to public transportation. Moreover, they should be thoughtfully designed and allow for flexible programming and diverse uses. Lastly, meeting places need to be designed in such a way that accommodates both young people and passers-by. This is especially the case for nighttime meeting places, where large groups may be intimidating to someone walking by on their own – especially in the case of single women walking past large groups of men.

In terms of what young people desire from urban space, the following six criteria could be added to the findings from Lynch’s study:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS DESIRED BY YOUNG PEOPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people want to feel a sense of ownership over places they inhabit. It is important to them to be able to have some degree of autonomy over the programming of space and to be able to leave their mark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-cultural resources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people desire a range of places where they can express themselves creatively. It is important that young people be able to gather for activities such as cyphers and breakdancing battles without police interference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobility</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people want to be able to move freely around the city, to access places, to use multiple modes of transportation. Improving mobility involves the provision of safe pathways for walking and biking, as well as inexpensive public transportation options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work place</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people want niches in the community that where they can network, organize events, and work. Due to the ever-changing economy, young people are more and more reliant on unconventional pathways to employment. As such, they desire shared work space and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visibility</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people desire places where they can achieve visibility and be recognized for their talent and achievement. It is important that youth spaces have a central location (at the city or neighborhood scale) and not be located in places that are hard to find.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thoughtful Design</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that youth spaces be thoughtfully and purposively designed. Architects and designers should take into account how young people use space and what they need from space. Ideally, youth space should be locally specific and not overly standardized. Where possible, young people appreciate thoughtful design details that suggest that time and effort was put into creating a space. Such details may include the use of a variety of building materials, striking graphics, and façade engagement with the street.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1 Urban design characteristics desired by young people

Good youth space should promote positive youth development. The research reviewed in Chapter 2 shows what kinds of characteristics of a place young people need in order to be resilient, happy and well balanced in their lives. Very often, being responsive and reflective of youth cultures means balancing the challenges faced by young people in their homes and communities. It is therefore important that design and planning efforts synchronize the characteristics desired by youth with those needed for their development; since these have
significant overlap, there are clear ways that urban planners and designers can make urban environments more conducive to positive youth development. For example, by designing public spaces so that they encourage and foster use by multiple age groups, urban designers can help young people form relationships with non-family adults. By creating environments in which amenities are meaningfully connected through strategic spatial planning, planners can make it easier for young people to locate resources/supports that they need and understand what is available to them. Below are suggestions for ways that urban planning and design can incorporate youth development goals into projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GOAL</th>
<th>POSSIBLE PLANNING/DESIGN RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide young people with a sense of belonging</td>
<td>- Provide young people with access to public space</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Encourage young people to participate in public life by acknowledging their cultural activities (e.g. authorized graffiti walls)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Promote flexible and tolerant spatial governance practices, such as mediation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide young people with access to capabilities, opportunities and support</td>
<td>- Assure even distribution of youth facilities and amenities across urban neighborhoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Create meaningful connections between amenities so that they are easy to find</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide easily accessible information about available resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster resilience by embedding external protective factors into neighborhood design</td>
<td>- Provide opportunities for nonfamily adult relationships by removing barriers to mixed-uses of public space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Create environments that connect youth with adults in positive relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Out-of-School Time programs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provision of sociocultural facilities that connect youth with desired skills and mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build on pre-existing supports in communities</td>
<td>- Encourage youth participation in planning decisions and processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Create visual markers to designate spaces for youth (enable legibility)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Asset Mapping (e.g. Beacons) – multipurpose community facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Networks of safe spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Draw upon youth interests and talents to create youth oriented programs and activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.2 Possible planning and design responses to youth development goals

An Example of Good Youth Space

In many ways, the 19th arrondissement in Paris struck me as a good youth space. Although the neighborhood still faces many socio-economic challenges, from a design perspective it was clear that there was effort put into providing young people with dynamic and interesting environments; meeting places; recreational opportunities; and also to provide them with the types of resources they need to connect with work and better establish themselves professionally. These places are all located in central and easily accessible parts of the neighborhood; often on prominent boulevards that were within walking distance to residential housing developments, but that would easily be encountered by someone walking through the area. Recent projects meant to enhance the urban quality of the neighborhood were thoughtfully designed by prominent French architecture firms and provided opportunities for autonomous planning. Lastly, there were authorized graffiti walls in the neighborhood that would give young people places to express themselves freely.
The image above is a map of the neighborhood (Fig., 7.3) showing the key youth-related amenities in the neighborhood, labeled in the pink boxes. The orange square shows the location of Cité Michelet and the red dotted circle shows a 5 minute walking radius. The image shows that many youth amenities that are at close proximity to the housing development and that they are located in strategic spots. Many of the facilities are located along Avenue Flandres (the main commercial boulevard) and so are close to metro stations. Leisure space, such as the Jardin Flandre Tanger Maroc, is located near social facilities, such as an Antenne Jeune, to attract a
broader range of young people. In fact, the location of many of the newer facilities were chosen based on the walking habits and most frequent pathways used by young people in the neighborhood (Moreau, 2013).

**Planning Recommendations**

Planning is ideally situated to respond to urban youth as it can mediate between political institutions and the built environment at multiple scales. Based on my research, I have six recommendations:

1. Social Mediation is a less invasive mode of spatial regulation. It should be the first response to managing public spaces that attract and serve diverse groups.

2. Socio-cultural spaces where young people can express themselves creatively should be easily accessible in low-income communities. Management should allow a degree of autonomous programming and flexible use of space. Young people are most responsive to interventions where the state has a more quiet presence.

3. Work-space is a new and pressing need for young people. Shared work-spaces that give young people access to office space and resources should be integrated into communities; especially those with high youth populations and unemployment rates.

4. Spatial networks of youth resources should be legible, clear, and meaningfully connected through interesting and diverse urban spaces. Facilities built for youth should be thoughtfully designed and gathering spaces should be prioritized in parks and plazas.
   a. Amenities should be strategically placed so as to hook into systems, pathways, histories and narratives that youth people use and value.

5. Participation in planning and politics should be more broadly conceived to include social media and lifestyles. Young people are constantly participating in public discourse and debate through social media outlets such as Twitter and Instagram. Planners and designers should look to these outlets to understand what young people value, rather than relying solely on conventional participatory practices, such as charrettes which attract a self-selected group.

6. The built environment should be more reflective of and responsive to youth cultural movements.
Study Limitations and Future Research

The case study method is most commonly criticized for its lack of generalizability (Yin 2009). Critics ask: how can you generalize from a single case? In other words, can my findings from New York City and Paris apply to other cities? According to Robert Yin, “case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes” (Yin 2009:15). Case studies do not represent a sample, and as such are aimed at analytical generalization and not statistical generalization. Here, my case study research was used to generate empirical knowledge about the cases at hand, but also to make theoretical propositions about the relationship between youth, the state and the built environment. Due to the lack of research on this topic, rather than testing pre-existing theories, I choose to work inductively and formed theoretical propositions and ideas from the ground up. Moreover, the use of a comparative case study (as opposed to a single case study) allowed me to see which phenomena held constant across my cases, where there were differences, and which factors (such as institutional structure) were causing those differences.

Another potential limitation in this study stems from the slight variation in research design used to study youth cultures in New York City and Paris. As stated in the methodology discussion in the Introduction, I did not conduct an ethnography in Paris, but rather relied more on interviews and informal conversations with young people I met at parties to draw conclusions about youth cultural practices. I did not have sufficient time in France to build the kinds of trust-relationships I needed to connect with young people in Paris the way that I did in New York City. Moreover, the lack of Instagram and social media use also made it difficult for me to triangulate my findings and verify my observations. I do, however, feel confident that I was able to draw meaningful conclusions from the interviews, conversations and observations. An ever-
present challenge for ethnographic researchers – especially within the contained time of a dissertation where the researcher does not have years to develop and cultivate relationships – is the lack of control over whether or not it will be possible to gain entry to a community. In this sense, I think of the New York ethnography as a special opportunity, rather than the Paris fieldwork as a shortcoming. Moving forward, I think another round of fieldwork in Paris would be helpful, as I would be able to build upon existing relationships.

In general, forming relationships to get firsthand accounts from youth about their cultures and their experiences was mediated by IRB requirements and also my own personal limitations as a researcher in the field. Regarding IRB – although my study looks at the experience of urban youth ages 16-25, I only spoke with and interviewed young people over the age of 18, so as not to require parental consent for interviews. I had limited time in both sites and thought that gaining trust and making contacts with young people would be sufficiently time-consuming that to add the extra layer of a parent would be difficult within the timeframe. As such, I learned about the experiences of the under-18 demographic solely through second-hand information; either from community organizers and educators working with young people, or through stories my informants told me about their young siblings, personal history, and/or acquaintances. I do think that despite not speaking directly with 16 and 17 year olds, I was able to get a sense of how they perceive and experience the urban built environment. I was told many compelling stories by community workers and since many of my informants were 18 and 19 years old, they were easily able to reflect on their past experiences. I think that I experienced greater limitations due to self-imposed restrictions, based on feelings of comfort and safety. My informants were predominantly young men, as they more often approached me to talk and because I felt more comfortable approaching them with questions. The women I interviewed and befriended, I met
through my male informants. As such, my study disproportionately represents young men in both sites; however, I was able to talk to enough women that I feel I can also comment on and represent them through my research.

Lastly, since I was the only person coding my data, I was not able to verify and validate my coding assignments with other researchers. Since I used captioned material (Instagram photographs) for a large section of my data analysis, though, I think that I was able to make informed guesses as to the intent and meaning of a photograph. Moreover, the coding of policy documents involved little subjective interpretation as it was mostly based on identifying a pre-determined policy paradigm and/or youth cultural activity.

**Final Thoughts: Planning with Resilient Youth Cultures**

Youth cultures are unacknowledged protective factors – they provide young people with the supports and opportunities that they need to be resilient to harsh and challenging environments. So rather than co-opting or criminalizing youth cultures, public actors should make space for them in the urban built environment. To plan with youth cultures is to acknowledge and work with them, despite the stigma that they so often carry. After all, what kind of message do we send to our young people when our laws pathologize them? When we racialize and then criminalize the cultural movements they choose to invest in? When we exclude them from our public spaces? The message is that we do not value young people; this is a message that I think must change. American cities have the resources and the physical space – even in New York City – to make meaningful places for young people to grow up. As a community of researchers and practitioners, I think that it is our responsibility to make a youth a greater priority and to protect their interests.
Appendix 1: Interviews – New York City

Bonz Malone, hip hop writer and journalist (2013)
Grandmaster Caz, MC (2013)
Maria Fernandez, Urban Youth Collaborative (2013)
Yorman Nunez, Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (2013)
Ashley Teitel, former employee at Def Jam records (2013)
Martha Diaz, Hip Hop Education Center (2013)
Moises Lopez, Hip Hop Education Center (2013)
Orlando Torres, Bronx-based community organizer (2013)
Rebecca Rosado, community organizer at The Point (2013)
Danny Rodriguez, community organizer at The Point (2013)
Kelly, community organizer (2013)
Charmaine, high school teacher (2013)
Lester Spence, professor (2013)
Mark Naison, professor and education activist (2013)
CW, MC (2013)
S, hip hop journalist (2013)
R, MC (2013)
K, MC (2013)
SS, break dancer (2013)
B, MC and event organizer (2013)
‘Strawberries,’ DJ (2013)
RM, photographer (2013)
JL, dancer and student (2013)
Jeremy Callais, MC (2013)
MC, entrepreneur (2013)
JR, MC (2013)
A, graffiti writer (2013)
AV, graffiti writer (2013)
I.D.K., MC (2013)
Appendix 2: Interviews - Paris

Loic Lafargue Grangreneuve, public policy scholar (2013)
Fabien Truong, sociologist (2013)
Audrey Noelt, One, Two, Three ... Rap! (2013)
Vi Khadouna, One, Two, Three ... Rap! (2013)
Atte, One, Two, Three ... Rap! (2013)
Mark Gore, Canal 93 (2013)
Yannick Freytag, Hip Hop Citoyen (2013)
Mariche Davis, Cliché Urbaine (2013)
Nathalie Barraux, Hip Hop Maison (2013)
Benjamin Masure, consultant for Plaine Commune (2013)
Juliean, Do the Red Thing (2013)
Thibault, Do the Red Thing (2013)
Benjamin, youth worker and former break dancer (2013)
Marguerite Mboulé, break dancer and dance instructor (2013)
Sofiane Nafa, Espace 19 (2013)
Fabienne Metayer, Youth Strategy at the European Commission (2013)
Finn Denstad, formerly at European Commission (2013)
Caroline Coll, Director of Cultural Action for the Mayor’s Office of Saint Ouen
Elie Silva, Director of Deputy Mayor Isabelle Gachet’s youth cabinet
Hugo Bevort, Director of Deputy Mayor Pierre Mansat’s cabinet for Paris Metropole (2013)
Emily Moreau, Atelier Parisien d’Urbanisme (2013)
Panos Mantzarias, Ministere de la Culture et la Communication (2013)
Gilles Baccala (INJEP)
Cedric Dawny, Director of Prevention et Security for the City of Paris (2013)
Yann Watkin, Institute d’Amenagement et d’Urbanisme (2013)
Tany le Goff, Institute d’Amenagement et d’Urbanisme (2013)
JT, graffiti writer (2013)
J, break dancer (2013)
T, skateboarder (2013)
TR, rapper (2013)
B, rapper (2013)
FR, rapper (2013)
F, breaker (2013)
Appendix 3: Hip Hop Glossary

Battle: A battle is a competition between artists to determine who has the best skills. Battles can take place between rappers and break dancers. They are non-violent competitions that can take place spontaneously or can be planned in advance and hosted in a specific venue, such as a nightclub.

Beatboxing: Essentially vocal percussion, in which the practitioner will imitate sounds of drum beats and musical sounds to create a rhythm.

Break Boy/Girl: A break boy (or a b-boy) or a break girl (b-girl) is a practitioner of break dancing. Breakdancing was originally called ‘breaking’ so break-boy and break-girl were the original term used to describe a dancer. They are also commonly referred to as ‘breakers.’

Crew: A crew is a group of friends, who usually collaborate on an artistic activity, such as graffiti crews and breakdancing crews.

Cypher: A cypher is an uncompetitive freestyle session. In a cypher, a group of MCs will take turns freestyling, while one person beat boxes to provide a rhythm for the rhymes.

DJ: DJs play recorded music for an audience. Hip hop DJs will play music using multiple turntables to back up an MC; ‘scratch’ with a turntable to create percussive sounds; and sample for different records to create new tracks.

MC: MCing refers to spoken or chanted rhyming lyrics. MCing is more commonly referred to as ‘rap’, though purists prefer the term MC, which stands for ‘Master of Ceremonies.

Tag: A graffiti tag is a graphic image of a graffiti writer’s name. Sometimes it will be the writer’s actual name or initials, but often it will be a nickname or the name of a crew.
Appendix 4: Constructing Grounded Theory for Analysis of Instagram Photographs

The list below shows the original codes I used when I first went through the photographs I had collected from Instagram to analyze youth culture in New York City. I coded the photographs based on both image and caption content. After the first round of coding, I had 34 codes. Codes with a # represent photographs I coded because they had that word as a caption. Repeated words (e.g., #community and community) were used so that I could sort photographs that both used a #community caption and those that did not have the caption but represented a community image, such as a neighborhood basketball tournament. When a photograph represented more than one category, I double coded it. For example, a neighborhood basketball tournament would be coded as: basketball, community, and neighborhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Codes for New York City Instagram Photographs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#blessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>block party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#chillin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#bronx / #bx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#brooklyn / #bk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#hood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#crew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>economic development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freestyle space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hip hop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#hip hop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graffiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#graffiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recreational space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sneaker culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urban landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td>violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#ghetto</td>
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<tr>
<td>work</td>
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<tr>
<td>entrepreneurialism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the second round of analysis, I sorted my original codes into categories which were most significant and that helped me identify overarching trends. I choose categories that helped make the most sense of my data and that best represented the many themes and sub-categories from the first round of coding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding Category</th>
<th>Sub-categories and Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>- Images of work activities or images that show ‘walking to work’ etc…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Images of entrepreneurial activities, such as promotional events, fashion shows, posters and CDs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Captions that make reference to work culture, to entrepreneurial activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>- Images with captions that refer to power relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Captions/comments that refer to race and identity politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Often captions will make satirical reference to fear surrounding a person’s home and/or neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Images of participation in protest activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Images of neighborhoods and residential environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Images of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Captions that reference particular neighborhoods and boroughs, such as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#hood and #home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Space</td>
<td>Images that show urban space and uses of urban space without direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reference to community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pictures of urban space that are shown as being culturally significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Creative uses of urban space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Block parties are frequently depicted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Graffiti when referred to as 'urban' art or decoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hip Hop</td>
<td>Images depicting an element of hip hop – MCing, DJing, graffiti, breakdancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Images that reference hip hop culture, history, or the hip hop community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Images often show hip hop landmarks, such as Doug E’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew</td>
<td>Images that show groups of friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Images with the caption #crew or #family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Images often accompanied with #blessed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The images below are examples of the photographs that were sorted into the six categories described above. Each row represents a different category. Beginning from the top, they show: Work, Politics, Neighborhood, Urban Space, Hip Hop and Crew.
A tree grows in the South Bronx.

To this concrete jungle, call home.

The beauty of the point... why they were there haven't the slightest.

The whole block is being developed, but this person refused to give in.

Beauty.

Block party out in the middle of nowhere.

5 pointz, hip hop in the making.

A block party.

Hunts Point, and Spofford Ave, come thru.

A block party.

Cypress last night, we're going in.

If I had to love for my check.

Our sisters in hip hop, represent.

Me and the creator, DJ Kool Herc.

#TRUESTKPREATOR.

I got mad above for my #HuntsPointFamily.

Check out me and my crew @tribentic.

At the wake the other day for my bro #shane. Listening to his powerful music.

#HEROSYTHIESAURUS AT #BLOCKPARTY.
Bibliography


New York Department of Youth and Community Development. 1991. *First Request for Proposals to Operate School-Based Community Center Services.*


