risen in defense of the fragile balance of neighborhood ecologies, had none of their rebellious edge: urban design became urban renewal with a human face. While it took a little longer for the "this will kill that" antinomies of suburb and city to become theoretically reconsolidated in the neither here nor there formats of New Urbanism, a consistent disciplinary discourse was quickly consolidated under the rubric of "traditional" urbanism. This formulation provided— at least initially—what seemed a very big tent, capacious enough to shelter neighborhood and preservation activists, Modernists looking for a reinvigorated schema for total design, defenders of the natural environment, critics of suburban profligacy, and cultural warriors in pursuit of transformative lifestyles of various stripes.

Collisions were inevitable, and urban design's prejudice for the formulaic, for a reductive "as of right" approach to planning based on the translation of general principles (formal variety, mixed use, etc.) into legal constraints, was necessarily imperfect. And each of the positions that urban design sought to amalgamate into its increasingly homogeneous practice came with its own evolving history and arguments about the bases of correct urban form, replete with potential incompatibilities and often driven—like the city itself—by a refusal to be fixed. Questions of the relationship of city and country, of the rights of citizens to space and access, of the limits on their power to transform their environments, of zoning and mix, of the role of the street, of the meaning of density, of the appropriateness of various architectures, of the nature of neighborhoods, of the relations of cities and health, and of the epistemological and practical limits of the very knowability of the city, have formed the matrix of urban theory from its origins, and its constant evolution is not easily repressed.

This continuous remodeling of paradigms for the form and elements of the modern good city is also—and necessarily—an architectural enterprise. Models of the city—from those of Pierre L'Enfant to those of Joseph Fourier, Ebenezer Howard, Arturo Soria y Mata, Le Corbusier, Victor Gruen, and Paolo Soleri—remain indispensable conceptual drivers for urban progress, for making urban life better by refreshing choice and by holding up one pole of the indispensable dialectic of permanence and provisionality that describes the city. Unfortunately, such concrete visions have become thoroughly suspect— victims of the failed experiences of Modernist urbanism—tarred with the brush of authoritarian totalization, by the willful insistence that every utopia is a dystopia, that certain scales of imagining can only