

of intoxicating forms, their project was at once hugely influential formally and almost completely ineffectual politically. Not exactly an unusual fate for countercultural product.

However, the most important attempt to create an alternative style of formal urban practice at the point of emergence of urban design was advocacy planning, which—given the nature of the times—arose as explicitly oppositional, dedicated to stopping community destruction by highways, urban renewal, and gentrification. In its specifically physical operations, the focus was on restoration and self-defense, on the delivery of municipal services to disadvantaged communities, on the repair of the frayed fabric of poor neighborhoods, on tenement renovations, community gardens, and playgrounds in abandoned lots. The redistributive logic of advocacy work looked on architecture and planning with suspicion as an instrument of destruction or privilege. The problem—an analysis descending from Engels—was not a lack of architecture but the fact that too much of it was in the wrong hands.

While this was both a logical and a consistent position, its morphological modesty was a hard sell for anyone eager to build and offered no clear proposition for greenfield sites, certainly no strong insights for transforming the suburbs, which were also viewed with suspicion as enemies of diversity and as economic threats, sucking the inner city dry of resources. Advocacy's visual culture, such as it was, was very much fixed on community expression, on self-built parks, inner-city murals, and the improvisational workings of the favela, its own overromanced utopia. These preferences were infused by an old dream of a political aesthetic, but advocacy's taste was reductive, looking for the artistic reproduction of social content only when it was presumed direct, when it was authored (not simply authorized) by "the people." This position, which looks to produce design as midwifery, continues to enjoy substantial currency in a range of community-based design practices and has found coherent ideological backing both from the school of "Everyday Urbanism" as well as from the progressive wing of planners and geographers—for whom equity and social justice are the gold standard—which is still the most lucid voice on urban issues in the academy.

These multiple strains remain the dialectical substrate of urban design today. A matrix of traditionalism, environmentalism, Modernism, and self-help configures the practices—and ideological accountancy—for virtually all contemporary design that purports to build the city. Although every current tendency embodies some degree of conceptual