private investment cooperation. The book’s uniqueness lies in achieving meaningful neighborhood revitalization by retaining and empowering low-income residents, and doing this within the existing capitalist economic system. In doing so, Grogan and Proscio’s policy prescriptions satisfy perspectives on both the left and right ends of the political spectrum.

Tae Jung Kwon

Kwon is a Ph.D. student in the urban, technological and environmental planning program at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. His research interests include downtown development and human behavior.

Tourists in Historic Towns: Urban Conservation and Heritage Management


Can tourism be the catalyst for urban preservation while permitting the continuation of urban culture? Only if local distinctiveness, rather than preserved monuments, is what attracts tourists to an historic region, argues Orbaşlı. The author advocates preservation through a planning-management approach. This approach avoids façadism (i.e., preservation of the physical elements only), and instead accounts for the life within the city, balancing the needs of both residents and tourists. It requires identification of the key players and issues in order to achieve a collaborative model and improved strategies for managing irreplaceable urban resources.

Readers expecting innovative solutions for planning and heritage management in historic towns will be disappointed, since the suggestions offered are an amalgamation of what is currently practiced in Western Europe. Nevertheless, the book is valuable for understanding the spatial morphology of historic areas and for defining the stakeholders in urban preservation. The author presents a general framework for developing tourism as a “clean” industry that preserves the interaction between the residents and their environment. This can be achieved by promoting cross-cultural understanding between hosts and guests. The book offers informative examples of how differences in cultural perceptions of tourism and preservation can be resolved. It is useful for policymakers and planners, as well as nongovernmental organizations and private institutions working in the tourism sector.

Louna J. Khirfan

Khirfan is a Ph.D. student in the urban, technological and environmental planning program at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She has a background in architecture and a Master’s degree in Heritage Management from the University of Birmingham, U.K.

Sustainable Transportation Networks


Despite the holistic and complicated nature of the concept of sustainability, Nagurney argues in this book that sustainable transport networks can be achieved. The book presents a rigorous yet practicable framework for transportation planners and policymakers to use in developing and analyzing sustainable transport networks. Nonetheless, it is questionable whether the variables in Nagurney’s models can actually compute sustainability, and whether such precise quantification is in fact the missing element in our search for a more environmentally benign transportation policy. The mathematical models presented do not recognize the holism inherent in sustainability. It will be interesting to see, when dealing with real world data, whether or not the concepts of viability and sustainability laid out in Nagurney’s models are achievable in social and political terms—the crucial elements that these models regrettably ignore.

Angkana Chairatananon

Chairatananon is a Ph.D. student in the College of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Her research interests include transportation policies and planning, with an emphasis on developing countries, as well as policies regarding pollution prevention and control.

Videos

Transportation

Taken for a Ride

Tango 73: A Bus Rider’s Diary
Gabriela Quirós, writer, director, producer. 1998. 28 minutes. $175. (Available from New Day Films)

Modern Transportation Management
Michel Groulx and Michelle Allen, writers. Francois St-Laurent and Mire Giroux, producers. Laurier Bonin, Laurent Beauchemin, and Jean-Claude Marteling, director. 1991. 23 minutes. $89.95. (Available from Films for the Humanities & Sciences)

There is perhaps no more enduring story in planning than that of the insidious corporate plot to force Americans into private automobiles by systematically destroying the streetcar systems that a century ago blanketed nearly every U.S. city. This story has never been more compellingly told than in the 1996 film Taken for a Ride. Drawing on a dazzling array of archival footage, as well as their obvious skills as storytellers, Jim Klein and Martha Olson have created a handsome, provocative, and disturbing film. Unfortunately, their stylized and polemical work does a disservice to urban transportation history, and it is the audience that gets taken for a ride.

In 1939, a corporate coalition, led by General Motors, formed a holding company called National City Lines, which eventually acquired some 100 street railway companies around the U.S. and converted them into diesel bus operations (General Motors, 1974). Ten years later, GM and its partners were found guilty of violating the Sherman Anti-Trust Act for their involvement in National City Lines, and were slapped with token fines (Plane, 1995). But to what end these corporate giants were conspiring has been the subject of considerable debate.

In 1974, Bradford Snell submitted a


FOR THOSE UNFAMILIAR WITH THE RESEARCH ON THE GM CONSPIRACY THEORY, TAKEN FOR A RIDE IS UNDOUBTEDLY PERSUASIVE. IN ONE DRAMATIC BLACK-AND-WHITE SEGMENT, PILES OF STREETCAR CARCASSES ARE SHOWN BURNING AT NIGHT FROM A FURTIVE PERSPECTIVE REMiniscent of clips of nighttime book burnings or lynchings from the same era. WE ARE GIVEN NO HINT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THIS FIRE, OR EVEN WHETHER IT IS RELATED TO NATIONAL CITY LINES; IT DOESN’T REALLY MATTER. TAKEN FOR A RIDE IS RHYTHMICALLY EFFECTIVE IN PART BECAUSE IT DOES NOT CONFORM TO THE RITUALIZED (AND SOMETIMES INSIPID) EVEN-HANDEDNESS THAT CHARACTERIZES MODERN JOURNALISM. BUT DOES THIS SUGGEST THAT COMPPELLING DISCOURSE IN PLANNING REQUIRES ONE TO PRETEND THAT COMPETING PERSPECTIVES SIMPLY DO NOT EXIST? I DON’T THINK SO. ADLER’S 1991 CRITIQUE OF SNELL, FOR EXAMPLE, IS ALSO PROVOCATIVE, BUT UNLIKE TAKEN FOR A RIDE, HE PRESENTS AND ATTEMPTS TO REFUTE COMPETING ARGUMENTS. IN ITS POLEMICAL BIAS, TAKEN FOR A RIDE SHAKES MUCH WITH OLIVER STONE’S RIVETING, ALBIE FACTUALLY CHALLENGED, JFK. BOTH FILMS DEMONSTRATE THAT CONSPIRACIES MAKE FOR ENTERTAINING FILMS, PARTICULARLY WHEN THE DETAILS ARE SELECTIVELY OMITTED OR FUDGED TO HEIGHTEN THE DRAMA.

IN CONTRAST TO THE HISTORICAL AND HISTORIO-MIC TAKEN FOR A RIDE, TANGO 73: A BUS RIDER’S DIARY EARNESTLY TELLS THE CONTEMPORARY STORIES OF FIVE WOMEN WHO DEPEND ON THE ALAMEDA–CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT 73 BUS LINE IN OAKLAND, BERKELEY, AND ADJOINING CITIES IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA. THE STORIES ARE TOLD FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE NARRATOR, WHO IS WRITING HOME TO HER SISTER IN COSTA RICA. THE TITLE OF THE FILM REFERS TO THE DANCE, OR “TANGO,” PASSENGERS PERFORM IN WAITING FOR AND CATCHING THEIR TRANSIT VEHICLES. THE 28-MINUTE FILM WAS CREATED BY GABRIELA QUIRÓS AS A STUDENT PROJECT AT UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY. WHILE OVERLY DIDACTIC IN PLACES AND CLEARLY PRODUCED ON A LOW BUDGET, TANGO 73 HAS THE FRESH LOOK AND FEEL OF AN INDEPENDENT FILM.

RESEARCH ON TRAVEL BEHAVIOR HAS CONSISTENTLY SHOWN THAT BOTH UNCERTAIN TIMES AND LONG WAITS MAKE PUBLIC TRANSIT LESS ATTRACTION TO USERS. THIS FACT HAS NEVER BEEN CONVEYED MORE POWERFULLY THAN IN A SCENE IN TANGO 73. IT IS CHRISTMAS DAY, AND WE ARE FOLLOWING A NON-ENGLISH-SPEAKING AND NON-DRIVING IMMIGRANT GRANDMOTHER AND HER GRANDDAUGHTER TO THE BUS STOP ON THEIR WAY TO CHURCH. DECKED OUT IN THEIR SUNDAY BEST, THEY ARRIVE AT THE STOP ONLY TO DISCOVER THAT THEY HAVE JUST MISSED THE BUS. THE LOOK OF CRESTFALLEN DISAPPOINTMENT ON THE GRANDMOTHER’S FACE, AS SHE REALIZES THAT THE HALF-HOUR WAIT FOR THE NEXT BUS WILL MAKE THEM LATE FOR THIS ONCE-A-YEAR CHURCH EVENT, CONVEYS MORE ABOUT THE STRESS AND INCONVENIENCE OF LONG HEADWAYS ON TRANSIT THAN ANY WAIT TIME DISUTILITY STUDY EVER COULD. SCENES LIKE THIS, WHICH PUT A VERY HUMAN FACE ON PUBLIC TRANSIT, ARE THE STRENGTH OF THIS FILM. AND WITH THE ATTENTION OF SO MANY TRANSIT PLANNERS AND POLICYMAKERS FOCUSED ON DRAWING SO-CALLED “CHOICE” TRAVELERS OFF OF CONGESTED HIGHWAYS AND ONTO PUBLIC TRANSIT, TANGO 73 OFFERS A POIGNANT PORTRAIT OF “TRANSIT DEPENDENTS” WHO HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DEPEND ON LOCAL BUS SERVICE FOR MOBILITY.

THOUGH VERY DIFFERENT IN TONE AND CONTENT, BOTH OF THESE FILMS ARE VISCERAL AND MOVING IN WAYS THAT TRADITIONAL PLANNING SCHOLARSHIP IS NOT. TANGO 73 VIVIDLY PORTRAYS THE LARGELY UNNOTICED DAILY STRUGGLES OF THOSE DEPENDENT ON PUBLIC TRANSIT, AND TAKEN FOR A RIDE IS RIVETING IN ITS PARANOIC PORTRAIT OF CORPORATE CONSPIRATORS IN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING. THE EMOTIVE POWER OF THESE TWO FILMS IS IMPRESSIVE, AND PERHAPS TROUBLING. TO WHAT STANDARDS SHOULD THE MAKERS OF FILMS ON PLANNING BE HELD? ARE THEY SIMPLY ARTISTS WHO CREATE SELECTIVE AND NECESSARILY SUBJECTIVE VISIONS OF CITIES AND PLANNING? OR ARE THEY SCHOLARS WHO SHOULD BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE ACCURACY AND COMPLETENESS OF THE EVIDENCE THEY PRESENT IN SUPPORT OF THEIR VIEWS?

FINALLY, IN Stark contrast to the provocative TAKEN FOR A RIDE AND TANGO 73, MODERN TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT is drawn from a television series in Quebec called THE SCIENCE SHOW. THE 23-MINUTE FILM CONTAINS THREE SEGMENTS: THE FIRST DESCRIBES RAILROAD TRAFFIC OPERATIONS; THE SECOND DESCRIBES AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL OPERATIONS; AND THE THIRD, INCONGRUOUSLY, DESCRIBES THE WORKINGS OF THE BORING MACHINES USED TO DIG THE “CHUNNEL” BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE. THE OPERATIVE TERM HERE IS “DESIGNS.” THE UPHOLD NARRATOR PRESENTS ALL THREE SEGMENTS WITHOUT A TRACE OF REFLECTION, CRITIQUE, IRONY, OR HUMOR, WHICH GIVES THE FILM AN ODDLY DATED QUALITY, REMINISCENT OF FILMS ON EROSION OR PHOTOSYNTHESIS SHOWN TO MILLIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN DECADES PAST. THIS UNCRITICALLY POSITIVE TONE COMBINES WITH SHOTS OF NOW VINTAGE BOEING 727 AIRCRAFT, MONOCHROME COMPUTER MONITORS, AND CIRCA-1990 COMPUTER GRAPHICS TO MAKE THE BREATHLESS DESCRIPTIONS OF THE CUTTING EDGE IN THIS 1991 FILM FEEL, WELL, NOT MODERN. SO WHILE NEITHER MODERN NOR DIRECTLY RELATED TO MANAGEMENT, MODERN TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT does provide a fine descriptive overview of railroad and air traffic operations and railroad tunneling for those looking for an introduction to these topics.
REFERENCES


Taylor, AICP, is an associate professor of urban planning and director of the Institute of Transportation Studies at UCLA. His research examines the politics of highway and public transit planning and finance and the demographics of travel behavior.

Sprawl

**Save Our Land, Save Our Towns**

Thomas Hylton, producer. 2000. 57 minutes. $195. (Available from Bullfrog Films)

**Store Wars: When Wal-Mart Comes to Town**

Micha Peled, producer. 2001. 59 minutes. $250. (Available from Bullfrog Films)

Thomas Hylton, a newspaper journalist and a resident of Pottstown, Pennsylvania, wanted to know why the vibrant neighborhoods and small cities of his youth had declined over time and what could be done about this decline. His quest for answers resulted in *Save Our Land, Save Our Towns*, an excellent video dealing with the topic of sprawl development.

Filmed in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Oregon, and England, *Save Our Land* creatively blends interviews, history lessons, and sights from suburbs and cities to tell a story about why sprawl happens and how it can be stopped. The video starts by explaining how sprawl started in post–World War II America with huge government subsidies for suburban development, which led to the growth of suburbs and the decline of cities. Interviews with homeowners, builders, business leaders, and public officials are used to describe the impacts of sprawl and what it means for everyday people.

Hylton’s search for alternatives to sprawl takes him to England, where he shows viewers the carefully planned, self-contained British suburbs modeled on Ebenezer Howard’s Garden City concept. Here, homes, jobs, and stores co-exist within walking distance of each other. Public transit is readily accessible, and greenbelts surround built-up areas. Hylton makes a telling observation by comparing present-day England to pre-1950s America, before government programs such as the Interstate Highways encouraged sprawl.

Back in America, Hylton uses Oregon as a model for good land use planning, where cities are healthy and the countryside is protected from rampant development through the use of growth boundaries. Other examples of alternatives to sprawl come from Charlotte, North Carolina, where new zoning ordinances are producing traditional neighborhoods, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where a brownfield site is being reclaimed and converted into a productive pedestrian-oriented community.

*Save Our Lands* contains an optimistic message about the future. Hylton says that sprawl is a recent experiment brought on by bad government policies that can be changed. He believes that it is not too late to rebuild cities and towns with the same principles that were prevalent in pre-1950s America.

*Save Our Lands* is a valuable tool in the war against sprawl. Hylton narrates the video with passion and a welcome lack of jargon and technical terms. He explains concepts and makes points in a way that informs and entertains viewers at the same time. This video is suitable for both practicing planners—as a refresher course on basic principles—and nonprofessionals, such as students, planning board members, and lay audiences, who will gain valuable insights on the topic of sprawl.

If *Save Our Lands* presents the global story of sprawl, then *Store Wars: When Wal-Mart Comes to Town* deals with a local aspect of the same story. It provides an in-depth look at the arguments for and against a Wal-Mart store proposed in Ashland, Virginia (near Richmond). It tells the story from the time the Wal-Mart store is first proposed to the final vote of the city council to rezone land for the project. Viewers gain insights into the thinking of the major decision makers, including planning board and city council members who vote on the project, as well as the Wal-Mart team, a group of residents who oppose the project, and citizens of the town. *Store Wars* presents a compelling case study of the battle over big-box retail stores going on throughout the country.

Although it presents both sides of the story, *Store Wars*’ true focus is on the efforts of the opponents’ group, called the Pink Flamingoes, which was formed to...