

THE LEGACY OF JANE JACOBS: UNDERSTANDING AUTHENTIC URBANISM

Jane Jacobs changed the way the world views cities. Starting with her journalism, her pitched battles against New York Planning Czar Robert Moses and her first book, *Death and Life of Great American Cities* in 1961, Jacobs articulated an accessible and potent alternative to the social science thinking of the day. In the years since, she has given us a library of books **B** six in all **B** offering insights and wisdom regarding the nature and functioning of cities and the nations that contain them. Authentic urbanism is best understood by reading Jacobs.

After World War II, viewing cities as full of problems was prevalent. This helped popularize the suburban ideal. This was the era of central planning, big highways, slum clearance, urban renewal. Cities needed to be reconfigured was the expert thinking. Mega-planner Robert Moses started carving up New York State under these programs. He set a trend that spread rapidly.

Jacobs rejected all of that. Instead of looking at the city as a problem that needed fixing, Jacobs recognized the strengths of cities and sought to build upon them. She understood the challenges faced by cities. She saw cities with problems, not cities as problems. But, loudly and clearly, Jacobs said the *experts* were studying cities in the wrong way, offering ill considered theories and hatching

half-baked destructive policies. She accused the city planning, banking and governmental power structure of being Aanti-city@ and of Asacking@ cities instead of aiding them.

Jacobs was one of the first to see cities as appealing, complex organisms while others focused on cities as full of cancers. Most importantly, Jacobs understood how cities work. She argued for common sense derived from direct observation and related everything to peoples= daily lives. Her message was crystal clear and totally accessible to the ordinary person. Jacobs gave voice to what many citizens were instinctively feeling. She gave encouragement to civic protestors who shared her vision. And she helped inspire the variety of citizen-based urban development and environmental movements that today are making the difference between positive and destructive urban change. Urban Villages is, perhaps, one of the most prominent in the United Kingdom to draw on her principles. Advocates of her ideas encircle the globe.

She defined the city through the notion of Aorganized complexity.@ A city comprises what appears to be completely random activities. But, Jacobs demonstrated, these seemingly complex, ad hoc occurrences are artfully connected and interdependent in a way that comes together as a balanced whole. The micro can only be understood and studied as part of that whole, cannot be functionally separated from it and cannot be reduced to formal plans and cookie-cutter strategies. Only as part of a web can any particular

strand be understood.

Within the seeming chaos and jumble of the city, there is a remarkable degree of order, she wrote, in the form of relationships of all kinds, that are absolutely fundamental to city life, more fundamental and necessary to safety, to convenience, to social action, to economic opportunity, than anything dreamed of in the image of the rebuilt city. Where it works at all well, she adds, this network of relationships is astonishingly intricate. It requires a staggering diversity of activities and people, variously interlocked in often invisible ways, though often casually so, and able to make constant adjustments to needs and circumstances. The physical form of the city has to be full of variety and flexibility for people to accommodate it to their needs, not only as a family unit, but as a living community.

Jacobs saw the city as an holistic organism at a time when prevailing movements insisted on breaking it into divisible parts. (This is still true.) Recognizing that cities have been and will always be under some kind of stress, never reaching a clear equilibrium, she illustrated that, like natural organisms, cities develop their own form of health, if not inappropriately interfered with. Where her principles have been followed, her optimism has proven justified.

By focusing on neighborhoods, streets, local economies, community relationships and the like, Jacobs offered opportunities

for both the average person and open-minded professional to observe and understand cities. She gave substance and encouragement, in effect, to opponents of so-called slum clearance, of neighborhood destruction for highway construction, demolition of historic buildings and districts, of devaluation of manufacturing areas and of the replacement of mass transit and open space by car-dependent suburbs.

It is not easy for uncredentialed people to stand up to the credentialed, even when the so-called expertise is grounded in ignorance and folly, she wrote in the intro to the 1993 Modern Library Edition of *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

In the first book, Jacobs wrote in the introduction, her intention was merely to describe the civilizing and enjoyable services that good city street life casually provides and to deplore planning fads and architectural fashions that were expunging these necessities and charms instead of helping to strengthen them. She quickly discovered, however, that everything she looked at was intimately mingled with clues and keys to other peculiarities of cities. Thus one discovery led to another, then another...

The legacy of Jane Jacobs is as complex and innovative as the cities, the economies and the processes of nature she has written about, celebrated and defended. Sometimes elusive but always powerful, her teaching is as relevant today as it ever was, particularly in

American cities where large swaths of downtowns are being cleared for mega-projects as de-urbanizing as the slum clearance and urban renewal projects she witnessed 50 years ago. And it is as relevant today in American and British residential neighborhoods where new suburban housing is replacing the dense complexity of real urban communities. In too many places, the insights of her thinking have been stolen for promotional rhetoric but ignored in practice and application. The tendency too often seems to be to learn and unlearn lessons. Thus, the advocacy inherent in Jacob's teaching is an ongoing struggle.

The Jacobs legacy is best recognized in the places that embody her precepts: in old industrial districts showing new residential and economic life, such as New York's SoHo, Portland, Oregon's, Pearl District, London's Shoreditch, Manchester's Castlefields, Liverpool's Old Haymarket or Toronto's King/Spadina district; in traditional mostly residential neighborhoods, regenerated with new buildings filling empty lots on a modest scale and new uses without erasing the existing buildings and uses, such as the Greenwich Village Houses on the far west side of New York's Greenwich Village, the North Side of Pittsburgh, the Arts District in Liverpool, or the East End of Glasgow; in a few new, dense, mixed-use neighborhoods developed over time on already cleared land like Toronto's St. Lawrence Neighborhood and Pittsburgh's re-emerging Hill District.

The good news is the large number of places embodying her legacy.

For cities of Great Britain, this is particularly relevant. The once great industrial cities, while suffering economically and dismissed as anachronistic in recent decades, retain the rich urban fabric and modest new innovations ripe for regeneration of the most enduring kind, the kind of diversified, organic rebirth about which Jacobs writes. Some suffer from large American-style urban renewal projects, like Birmingham, or smaller ones, like Liverpool. But recognition of these mistakes is widespread. The determination to undo them is apparent. And the impact of earlier misguided redevelopment schemes is smaller in scale than in most American cities. In effect, if the appropriate authentic urban principles are applied, British cities are poised for a remarkable resurgence.

JACOBS=S NEIGHBORHOOD REFLECTS JACOBS=S PRINCIPLES

The lesson of HOW to observe the particular, HOW to see all the connections and HOW to value the complexity of it all is at the heart of Jacobs=s legacy. Just walking on Jacobs=s Toronto block reveals a vision that, at its most complex, rests on very simple, clear principles. Her block is not unique. The lessons are universal.

Jane Jacobs lives in a medium-size brick Queen Anne house on a street in a Toronto neighborhood more typical of an American urban street than the Greenwich Village street she left behind more than 25 years ago when she, her husband and three children moved to this Canadian City. One and two-family, detached and semi-detached houses

line up close to one another, separated by a driveway with garages in some of the small backyards. Great variety of style, material and color mark this collection of individualized houses. Small front yards, mature street trees, and a sidewalk of modest width separate the houses from the street on which cars park on both sides and traffic passes slowly. The simple grid of neighborhood streets has been modified so that cars cannot speed through the neighborhood. Occasional directional changes, speed humps and the narrowing of intersections discourage pass through traffic. The streets serve well only people with local destinations. This city-implemented traffic pattern discourages intrusive car traffic, strengthens pedestrian appeal and safety and makes neighborhoods highly livable. Overnight street parking is limited to resident permit holders. Curbside parking spots absorb transient parking during the day. No parking lots interrupt the continuity of houses, either between or behind houses.

Half a block from Jacobs's house is a small tranquil park. One block in the other direction is a major neighborhood commercial thoroughfare, Bloor Street, under which the subway runs. An eclectic variety of businesses stands here, serving a gamut of customers from local to international. Above most of the stores are apartments or offices. This is the classic pedestrian and transit-oriented urban street with more potential for the emergence of new businesses so critical to a vibrant urban economy.

The commercial mix serves both the nearby neighborhoods and citywide needs. No singular business overwhelms the diversity of use and scale. And when some businesses fail or move, others seem to open readily in their wake. One now famous large department store, Honest Ed's, started as a small shop decades ago. Honest Ed's comes closest to being a singular business which overwhelms the diversity of use and scale of the street but is, fortunately, limited to one block. The owner is now a major popular culture producer in Toronto. Two eateries, the Country Style Restaurant and Elizabeth Deli, remain, holdovers from when the neighborhood was the center of the Hungarian immigrant community. The ethnic variety of live entertainment in small venues changes from year to year. Chic restaurants are scattered around, drawing from the larger city. University of Toronto students find much that is appealing on this street. A homegrown small theater is not far from a night club offering live rock music. And a local store, Grass Roots, sells recycled and chemical-free products to a citywide clientele. The economic ebb and flow appears reasonably in balance.

A few blocks away, perpendicular to Bloor Street, is Bathurst, another commercial thoroughfare with a streetcar line running south toward the waterfront and a longer bus route going north. Bathurst is wider and not as economically robust as Bloor but has room to grow, to house innovations, offering cheaper space for the experimental to occur. New business formations, Jacobs repeatedly

points out, need cheap space in old buildings. Only established and successful businesses can occupy the more expensive space new buildings offer.

There is nothing simplistic about this combination of seemingly simple assortment of activities. The whole appears deceptively simple, if one only looks at the physical form. Many of the small changes that have occurred in recent years mirror large urban dynamics. Some of the mostly early 20th century three-story houses, for example, have been converted to two-family dwellings or contain modest apartments. Probably even more have reverted to single family that for many years contained apartments. But the ability to reverse the alterations either way in the future is undisturbed, assuring small adjustments over time without destabilizing the larger neighborhood shopping district without diminishing the intimacy of a predominantly single-family house community.

From one to the next, one can observe the newly planted gardens, the creative new landscaping, the latest flowering tree or the newest decorative edge fencing. Jacobs is observed discussing with her neighbor, front porch to front porch, the activities of a local racoon family. At one time, Jacobs had a rooftop garden, and while seeming to be just a garden, it reflects Jacobs' early understanding of Appropriate technology, as green roofs are increasingly recognized. In fact, she used saw dust instead of dirt, a lighter material that would not overload the roof after a heavy rain or

snowfall.

Seemingly small changes are observable along the block. Some houses have converted part of the front yard to a parking pad. The reverse is also true. A variety of landscaped spaces exist where drive-in pavement had been. Near the corner is a relatively new, small apartment house on the site under which the subway was built. At three corners are restaurants, two with sidewalk tables and a definite cosmopolitan air.

The overall physical appearance and neighborly feel of the block has remained the same for years. Yet, the block is not frozen or museum-like. *Many small initiatives over time do add up to big change without massive development overwhelming and replacing a functional place.*

This block is part of the Annex, one of downtown Toronto's older and most desirable neighborhoods. Annexed to the city in the late 19th century, this popular residential neighborhood was born during the era of the streetcar; like so many of today's popular urban neighborhoods across America. In Toronto, however, the streetcar survives, in sharp contrast to American cities that destroyed this most effective mode of urban transport. Toronto almost lost its streetcar system to less efficient buses in the 1970s but a citizens coalition fought to save the system. The streetcar is key to long-term stability of many vibrant Toronto neighborhoods with commercial streets that would have withered if the streetcar had disappeared.

(Deteriorated commercial streets in many American, English, Canadian cities **B** and elsewhere **B** once had streetcars going along them.) The subway along Bloor is part of a system built in the 1950s and still in process of being added to as the city grows. The streetcars, buses and subways complement each other and form an efficient transit network for the city.

DENSITY IS KEY

The livability of this neighborhood is clear to any visitor but its density **B** so critical to its success **B** is not. In formal planning terms, the Annex is at least 15 to 20 units an acre, a density vigorously and wrongly resisted in so many North American and British neighborhoods. Yet, the range of housing choices, the vibrant commercial street and convenient mass transit options would not be viable and could not exist without the density. While the density is critical to the livability, it is not enough. The presence of the other uses **B** diversified employment, shopping, institutions, entertainment **B** play an equally important role. *Everything is connected to everything.* This cannot be reiterated often enough.

The incremental process of urban change that Jacobs celebrated is not confined to this neighborhood. Where it spreads throughout the city, it strengthens individual neighborhoods and the larger city at the same time. The same kind of community groups that formed in the Annex **B** to oppose an expressway, resist out-of-scale development, organize recycling efforts and the like **B** emerged in

other neighborhoods, as well, setting many different priorities and defending features characteristic of their own area. But it was that process of citizen involvement and positive change that moved from block to block and neighborhood to neighborhood that today makes Toronto interesting and solid.

Healthy urban neighborhoods and commercial districts anywhere must allow for the fluidity of change illustrated in The Annex. Property owners have considerable latitude to make modest alterations and express their individuality while not disturbing the overall consistency of the neighborhood. This enables neighborhoods to be distinguished from one another. Time, as well, Jacobs points out, is important in all of this. Neighborhoods don't come into instant, finished life. They have to be changing, growing in different ways, altering and, Jacobs injects, revealing new things. A neighborhood develops itself.

Creative growth requires an encouraging, not constrained, environment. This cannot mean unconstrained new construction, often labeled and promoted as economic development. *True economic development is about the birth, expansion, and replacement of businesses, not about development new buildings. Real estate does not drive development. Development drives real estate. This is the fundamental Jacobs lesson.*

Downtown from Jacobs's neighborhood, a once-thriving industrial Toronto district at the edge of the commercial core today flourishes

anew, reflecting the application of more of her precepts. The old garment district, with its rich assortment of loft and early office buildings, has been reinvented organically with new businesses and residences of all kinds attracting a broad range of people. With Jacobs= total involvement in a public planning process, the long-standing planning and zoning regulations that kept this a fully industrial district were removed. New guidelines, rather than rigid zoning policies or grandiose plans, were put in place. Now this area, known as King/Spadina, of which a vibrant Entertainment District is an unanticipated part, has evolved also into the desirable residential district that was anticipated. The same planning principles apply to a companion district to King/Spadina on the other side of downtown called King/Parliament. Together they are known as The Kings@ (some 400 acres) and as mixed development heats up in the first, activity spreads to the second.

Former zoning and density limits were eliminated. Instead, design guidelines limit height, preserve the street wall, provide setbacks and protect sunlight. Building depth is limited, guaranteeing useful alley separations and the absence of super-blocks. All non-noxious uses are permitted, as long as they are in an urban form and meet the building code. Parking is strictly regulated with no open lots permitted. The market is the basic rule setter but the city stands ready to step in with corrections as needed. New mixed-use buildings with high-end condos are filling vacant lots. Sports stores,

recording studios, retail stores, graphic artists and conventional corporations are compatible neighbors.

A framework with limitations, not a planning and zoning code. Radical? Contrary to convention? To be sure, by today's planning practice. But this has long been the essence of Jacobs's prescriptions. They cannot be reduced to formal plans or zoning regulations. For more than 35 years, she has criticized the planning profession and focused on the ills of zoning. Toronto heard the message, absorbed lessons from her books and learned from her participation in public forums. In 1995, Chief Planner Paul Bedford, with Mayor Barbara Hall, and Urban Designer Ken Greenberg, set out to change the declining Kings District guided by new ideas proposed by developers, a wide range of other interest groups and citizens, including businesses and labor unions in the area at public forums, listening, responding and shaping accordingly.

When asked why he followed her lead, Bedford said he viewed Jacobs's approach as perfectly logical. "She's simply right," he says. "That's the obvious thing. There are so many pressures put on a planning department that it is easy to be pulled in different directions to the point that the logic of things gets lost. I absolutely told myself I would not let that happen and that I would go the full measure to change things. The reality is that a planner is trained to do the opposite. So we said, 'Let's experiment, let's trust the common sense of developers. People are not going to do

stupid things. Everything is always full of >what ifs?= The system bogs down. The result is paralysis when you try to anticipate everything. That=s what planners usually try to do. The public goal is positive change and we are getting those results incredibly fast. It is all perfectly logical. The proof is in the pudding.@

Such common sense is refreshing.

STARTING WITH NEW YORK=S SOHO

The transformation of the King/Spadina district occurred in the hands of public officials, in itself a testament to the Jacobs legacy. This Toronto experiment brings full circle the lessons of the transformation of New York=s SoHo which started in the 1960s with a successful battle led by Jane Jacobs against a major highway and urban renewal project promoted by planning czar Robert Moses that would have wiped out what we know today as SoHo, Little Italy, Chinatown and much of Greenwich Village. With the defeat of the highway **B** known as the Lower Manhattan Expressway **B** SoHo, this onetime industrial district, was transformed with little loss of the 19th-century buildings, without any suburbanizing adjustments, without any diminution of its authentic urbanism, and without large public funding. A more up-to-date, modern district cannot be found, the birthplace in recent decades of many new businesses, great creativity and residential opportunities for artists and artisans, single and married, young and old, immigrant and native.

In the 1960s, Jacobs, with the enormous help of hundreds of

neighborhood activists opposed urban renewal and highway projects that would erase whole neighborhoods in the name of progress. Jacobs argued that the dense unplanned mix of uses is what constitutes a healthy urban district and sustains a viable urban economy. She looked at the big development projects and showed them to be failures while pointing to the success of the modest new economic, social or physical initiatives that emerge, often unpredictably, but that fit in, knit into the web of an existing places.

As a basic notion, Jacobs has shown that a city by its very nature is so full of variations and differences that a universal solution is both impossible and undesirable. To even begin to solve problems in any place, you have to know what is missing to know what improvements are appropriate and that differs from place to place. A vibrant place has to include an undergrowth, not readily apparent, of new things happening because that is where new problems are being solved. This is why the small things are so important. Their possibilities are unlimited. Growth depends on the small things. The large ones reach limits.

Such sensible and observable reality was then heresy. Today, to some planners and urban designers, like Toronto's Paul Bedford and Ken Greenberg, some public officials and millions of average citizens, this is common sense. That adds up to quite a legacy, one taking root in urban districts across American and in the rejuvenating industrial cities across Great Britain which have not experienced

the massive clearance and demolition history crippling so many American downtowns today.

The value of authentic urbanism, that Jane Jacobs first wrote about so eloquently, is not sufficiently recognized. Many people don't even understand what it is or know how to recognize it. Urbanists are primarily found among those who live and work in city districts. That is why their voices are so critical to any revitalization process. They can contribute new ideas and creative solutions based on direct experience if given a genuine opportunity during a public process. The absolute key to regeneration is building on the remaining strength of authentic urbanism, where it exists. This must include human assets, in other words, people in place. Where urbanism is not fully understood, recognized and valued, the future is grim.

In too many US cities, we have mistaken for regeneration the recently built big, dazzling mega-projects that attract tourists but do nothing for the cities they are in. We built big, flashy projects. We replaced messy, hodgepodge genuine urbanism with pretty, neat faux urbanism, selectively picking and choosing appealing urbane elements that don't add up to urbanism. We've transformed too much of the public realm into private enclaves. We've suburbanized so many neighborhoods, thinned them out, and then wondered why they can't support local businesses or transit and have minimal street life. We've erased our productive districts, the ones with small and large businesses that include producers of **Athings@** not just

A paper, @ the innovators large and small that may be tomorrow= Microsoft or Cuisinart. We=ve replaced factory, warehouse and low-income mixed districts with stadiums, shopping malls, convention centers, cultural centers, aquariums, and lots of parking lots. We=ve turned city centers too often into assemblages of projects, killing or crippling the real city in the process. This is not regeneration. *An inventory of projects is not how to measure the health of a city. They don=t add up to a city. They are not about urbanism.*

A big difference exists between a place rebuilt and a place reborn. Rebuilt is replacement; reborn is the regeneration of the existing fabric developed over time. Inevitably, the big expensive projects fail the cities they promised to improve, even if boosterism and slick public relations camouflage the failure. We=ve mistakenly staked our cities= future on the visits of suburbanites and tourists instead of understanding that the true strength of a place depends on its local people, places and economic innovations, a lesson Jacobs has promoted since the 1960s. Sadly, as well, we have not recognized that without a viable public school system, any regeneration effort is crippled.

NOTHING BIG HAPPENS AT ONE TIME in urban districts reflecting the birth process Jacobs describes. Lots of modest things happen over time with no singular big project overwhelming the district. The result? Big, in fact enormous, change but gradual, incremental, enduring and not as vulnerable to national downturns as are the tourist-dependant, single dominant industry

and mall store areas. The result: genuine urban districts, always adapting, always changing, always receptive to innovation, continuously spawning new businesses some of which will grow and spread their impact. Some, as well, will fail. Small failures do not endanger the diverse assortment of activities around them. No one big project overwhelms the district or makes the area dependent on it. And as the district grows successful, parts of it may get too successful and too expensive for the new small innovation. Room must exist elsewhere in the urban fabric for that energy to move into. The process works best where the urban fabric **B** even with some destructive intrusions **B** is still dense enough, still filled with the great mix of old and new buildings inviting to new people and new businesses. Great Britain=s historic industrial cities reflect this potential. The potential is more limited in American cities so over-Arenewed@ by big projects that only remnants of genuine urbanism remain.

If the surviving urban fabric is valued and not eviscerated and the human assets recognized and nurtured, then whatever remains of authentic urbanism can be the foundation for regeneration, once again serving as centers of innovation, strength and enduring character. With luck, that regeneration process can spread and extend the web that once existed in most American cities.

JACOBS=S PRINCIPLES B BEYOND AUTHENTIC URBANISM

Jacobs is best known for these urban development ideas but in

time, her economic and environmental concepts may and should gain equal attention. They already are a significant part of her legacy and when understood, enable more creative thinking about urban challenges.

Environmentalists seek to conserve and enhance what has evolved over time, to preserve natural resources rather than exploit them and to learn from and fit into nature instead of controlling and overcoming it. Jacobs cites the work of Eco-Trust, an innovative environmental organization working on conserving the rainforest of the Pacific Northwest U.S. and Canada by finding alternative or supplementary activities which are economically friendly.

Conservation-based development or development-based conservation, Eco-Trust calls it. Either way, the depleting of a natural resource, such as an ancient forest, is replaced with a combination of diminished logging and creative use of wood for new products, adding more human capital than logging jobs alone require. Employing farmers living next to the rain forest to grow coffee beans in the shade or extract nuts from undisturbed forest are further examples of the conservation-based development that Eco-Trust advocates.

The creative employment of human capital, not just the exploitation of natural capital and pursuing endeavors that use the yield from the natural capital but not the capital itself are key to interconnected thinking about economics and nature. If one understands the natural processes, Jacobs illustrated in her latest

book *The Nature of Economies*, then one at least has a road map to the economic process. Professional economists, Jacobs argues, fail to understand the parallels between the processes of nature and economies. The real trick, the pragmatic notion, is to learn from and draw from those processes of nature.

A system can be making itself up as it goes along, Jacobs says. The weather is like that. Evolution is like that. Economies, if they aren't inert and stagnant, are like that. Since they make themselves up as they proceed, they are not predestined. Not being predestined, they are not predictable.

In her second book, *The Economy of Cities*, Jacobs had illustrated how the economy of a city works, how interdependent all of the often invisible components are and how economies reflect a process that can't be created but can easily be undermined. In this book. She also illustrated how cities are the economic engines of whole regions, the net generators of the national wealth, and how they spawn other places, like suburbs and regions. She focused on what urban economies do well, not what they don't do well. She continued this idea in subsequent books, expanding her conviction that economies need to be self-sustaining, self-renewing and relying on local initiatives instead of centralized bureaucracies.

Jacobs illustrates the more significant value of many modest investments than the singular mega-investment. Micro-lenders put

into practice the value of small but significant economic steps, by either risking small loans for the new idea, the new business that adds something to the economy instead of moving an existing business around. Micro-lenders also make capital available in deteriorated neighborhoods where talented and energetic human capital is in place but is ignored or not valued by conventional investors. Jacobs often cites the success of the South Shore Bank of Chicago. With \$600 million in assets B small as banks go, South Shore Bank=s investments rescued 16,000 housing units on Chicago=s South Side stimulating a reinvestment momentum that led to the stabilization and upgrade of thousands more.

AYou may think they are too small,@ she says of the bank, but, in fact, they are Amaking the biggest difference because they are doing something no one else is doing.@ One also must calculate what would have been lost to continued decay, in order to fully value what has been gained. Economic developers who understand Jacobs= groundbreaking ideas about Aimport replacement@ find creative ways to encourage new small businesses, breakthrough innovations and any other ways that value human capital and strengthen local economies.

PRINCIPLES, NOT IDEOLOGY

AIdeology,@ Jacobs says, Ais the hunger for certainty of some kind, the comfort of certainty.@ People with an ideology, she adds, see themselves as Akeepers of the true faith.@ Strict adherence

to their Aversion of the truth@ interferes, she says, with A dealing practically with how the world works and what each of us is trying to do.@

Jacobs=s teachings are, by definition, non-ideological. No one Amovement@ or Aism@ can claim to follow Jacobs=s path. But, many civic activists and farsighted professionals have adopted elements of her thinking. Transit advocates, sprawlbusters, community-based redevelopers, historic preservationists, new urbanists, park restorers and public space advocates, all draw from Jacobs=s ideas to advance their own piece of a larger agenda. Some, however, don=t embrace the full picture, don=t grasp the complexity and don=t provide for the full diversity of activity required for the vibrant, healthy city.

Observes Urban Designer Ken Greenberg: AOne of the weaknesses of certain doctrinaire elements of the New Urbanist movement has been to oversimplify and caricature the kinds of urban places Jacobs describes, to focus on a frozen >look= at a certain point in time, but fail to allow the play of forces over time that will achieve the real thing. In part, this stems from an exaggerated pre-occupation with aesthetic control and an idyllic and circumscribed image of community life that eschews the inherent >messiness,= incompleteness and open-endedness of true urbanity.@ The great subtlety and intricacy of the mechanism Jacobs has observed cannot be designed

or planned into existence. The creative unlocking of opportunities for the private sector goes beyond control, regulation and planning. This conflicts with those planners and architects wedded to a total vision. ASome planners and architects need to shake the notion that they are making something complete instead of building a foundation for change,@ Jacobs says.

Slowly but assuredly, recognition of the validity and strength of the authentic urbanism Jacobs advocates has taken hold, overcoming the formidable and entrenched view that only suburbs are the future. ASuburbs are not where new things are happening or new problems are being solved,@ she says. Diversified activities and opportunities are found in cities. Surely, the growing popularity of living in cities again, especially in Amessy@ former industrial neighborhoods, attests to this revaluation of cities. Yet, the extraordinary potential inherent in fully understanding and promoting the authentic urbanism that Jacobs helps us understand is far from being reached.

The hardest lesson of the Jacobs legacy is that new cities cannot be developed from a preconceived plan. They have to evolve as innovations and new economic configurations emerge, as communities grow up with and around these innovations. Density and transit must be integral. The providing of flexible spaces of varying scale in which the unpredictable can happen is key to encouraging the unplanned emergence of new innovative economic and social uses. True public spaces must exist to make possible the endless unprogrammed

encounters that bind people together as citizens and neighbors. Realistically, cities can be rejuvenated, added onto, or extended, assuming that variety and interconnectedness also extends and the web that defines urbanism is strengthened.

A formidable obstacle to the broader application of Jacobs's legacy is that Jacobs's ideas conflict with the misguided priority of planners and elected officials to accommodate the car. We can hide it, squeeze it in tight spaces and do all sorts of things to deal with it, observes Bedford, but it is still about a driver, with no genuine alternative to the car. Bedford's goal, central to all his planning efforts in Toronto, is to make it possible over time to lead a full life from birth to death without a car and not feel deprived as a result. That doesn't mean eliminating the car. It means having a choice. But the option for that non-car-dependant life, he says, must be the core value. Only in a few places, he notes, is that now possible. A genuine urban web, a real city, embraces that core value. *Car dependancy has no place in authentic urbanism.*

The forces against this and other core urban values, in America and around the globe are powerful beyond measure. In fact, the belief that cities are bad places remains strong. The problem is not that Jacobs's ideas are not understandable, pragmatic and appropriate. I don't think it is hard for ordinary people to accept, says Jacobs. I think it's hard for professionals and experts who've been taught

differently and have a vested interest analyzing these things.@
And, of course, whole industries and international institutions have
a vested interest in maintaining business as usual. Overcoming
established patterns of thought and action is a formidable task.

Jacobs=s legacy is a guidebook to understanding authentic
urbanism **B** what it is, how to recognize where it is weak or strong
and how to appropriately add to it and solve problems over time.
This legacy is a potent force, making inroads in many unpredictable
places and having an enormous impact as urban districts learn to
reinvent themselves without losing the fundamentals of their
strength.

The book is still open everywhere on the future of cities and
if you like open books, Jane Jacobs is your best librarian.

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