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Co-Producing Urban Governance for Social Innovation

Editor
Liz Richardson

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Table of Contents

Politics and Governance (ISSN: 2183–2463)
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Editorial

Coproducing Urban Governance

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Abstract
There are many critiques of existing forms of urban governance as not fit for purpose. However, what alternatives might look like is equally contested. Coproduction is proposed as a response to address complex wicked issues. Achieving coproduction is a highly complex and daunting task. Bottom up approaches to the initiation of coproduced governance are seen as fruitful, including exemplification of utopian alternatives though local practices. New ways of seeing the role of conflict in participation are needed, including ways to institutionalise agonistic participatory practices. Coproduction in governance drives demands for forms of knowledge production that are themselves coproductive. New urban governing spaces need to be coproduced through participative transformation requiring experimentation and innovation in re-designing urban knowledge architectures. Future research in this field is proposed which is nuanced, grounded in explicit weightings of different democratic values, and which mediates between recognition of contingency and the ability to undertake comparative analysis.

Keywords
coproduction; knowledge production; participation; urban governance

Issue
This editorial is part of the issue "Co-Producing Urban Governance for Social Innovation, edited by Liz Richardson (University of Manchester, UK).

1. Introduction

This thematic issue looks at the theory and practice of coproduction as approaches to governance for 21st century cities. Much about existing forms of urban governance is not fit for purpose, not fully inclusive or just (Fainstein, 2010; Marcuse et al., 2011), nor delivered prosperity for the most disadvantaged. The 20th century prescriptions of 'good governance' and 'trickle down' have not delivered (Perry & May, 2011) and are insufficient to deal with the contemporary 'urban polycrisis' (Swilling & Annecke, 2012). Pre-occupations with finding an 'organisational fix' for urban governance has led to a proliferation of different organisational forms. Few have delivered fully on promises of democratisation (Davies, 2011; Harvey, 1989; Logan & Molotoch, 2007; Purcell, 2008). However, while critiques of existing forms identify what might be wrong with urban governance, there are as many areas of contestation about alternatives as there are suggestions for alternatives. There is a gap in understanding of parsimonious solutions across different contexts to address wicked governance dilemmas (Jones & Ward, 2002; Offe, 1984), and how there can be a reconnection of local expertise, innovation and creativity in urban policy.

To understand how alternative governing spaces may be constituted, we draw on debates about coproduction, while mindful of the contested lineage of the term, which has been deployed as a mobilising narrative both within and outside academia (Durose & Richardson, 2016; Vershuere, Brandsen, & Pestoff, 2012). Achieving effective

coproduction in urban governance is often a highly complex task and one 'ridden with challenges' (Teisman, Gerrits, & van Buuren, 2009, p. 116). Indeed, 'designing institutional arrangements that help induce successful coproductive strategies is far more daunting than demonstrating their theoretical existence' (Ostrom, 1996, p.1080). Neither new governing spaces nor coproduction are sufficient predictors of urban change. There are dangers that the mantra of coproduction serves, inadvertently, to reinscribe 'business as usual', running the risk of co-option and capture. The articles in this collection speak to two sets of key debates in the field: binaries between 'top down' and 'bottom up' approaches; and knowledge production about coproduction.

2. Thinking about 'Top Down' and 'Bottom Up' Binaries

The 21st century city has been predicated on a particular form of technocratic and economic knowledge that constitutes expertise as residing in elite and professional epistemic communities. Political cultures are characterized by relatively stable 'civic epistemologies,' or 'public knowledge ways,' that comprise preferred modes of producing public knowledge and conducting policy deliberation (Jasanoff, 2012, p. 9) initiated, or controlled from the 'top'. This context has given rise to an emergent informal tier of non-state governance actors working across and between different sectors and communities who are experimenting with alternative forms of urbanism (Brenner, Marcuse, & Mayer, 2012). The commentary in this issue by Sarmiento and Tilly (2018) offers empirical examples of some strategies used by urban informal actors in north and Latin America. Successful coproductive arrangements are often generated out of informal spaces and relationships (Fung, 2001) from the 'bottom'. As Wagenaar and Wood (2018) discuss, the literature distinguishes between government-induced and bottom-up interactive governance. A renewed focus on the 'everyday' has shown its potential as a space for radical transformation (Bang, 2005; Cooper, 2014,). This has usefully highlighted the value of prosaic interactions, and microdynamics in complex social realities. However, there is a risk of a critique of conventional governance forms leads to alternative theories of governance which reify the everyday in place of a reification of the local state (Davies, 2011). In Perry, Patel, Bretzer and Polk's (2018) article, local contextualisation, they warn, can work against global connection. Context-sensitivity butts up against 'equal concern' about the 'fetishization of the local'. More than this, is the binary itself a useful heuristic, or a false dichotomy? Of course, as Sarmiento and Tilly (2018) suggest, different processes of coproduction operate on a spectrum, with degrees of orientation towards state actors, which they refer to as a continuum of 'radicalism'. Actors may move between modes or strategies, but they remind us that even those seeking to opt out of state-led processes often must contend with the state. How can we understand how these binary or continuum notions are constructed in theory and practice in different governance settings?

In Wagenaar and Wood (2018), innovation, for example in governance, is argued to be public, but not necessarily limited to the public sector. They describe how experiments in collaborative governance 'emerge in the civic sphere, and transfer to political society'. Citizens have been demonstrated to be 'restless' and 'uninvited' innovators (Hirst, 1994, p. 105). Privileging the bottom up sphere, they make the claim that 'innovative potential' is premised on the origins of initiatives in the 'free spaces' of civil society.

In Atkinson, Dörfler and Rothfuß (2018) empirical study, there remained in the perceptions of some local activists, a clear separation between 'from below' governance efforts through self-organisation, and existing 'mainstream' governance institutions. Two of their four groups felt the need to protect their practical governance efforts against elite capture, and rejected prevailing governance forms, which were seen to be 'part of the problem'. In place of existing structures was exemplification through practice, including 'laboratories for utopias'. Except for one group, their participants had little or no desire to engage with existing forms of governance or to transform it. The authors argue that these alternatives subvert existing governance forms and offer "new ways of 'governing from below'".

In Atkinson et al. (2018) and in the article by Silver (2018), we can see reflected the idea that local practices are exploiting 'cracks and fissures' in systems (Holloway, 2010). He argues that far from being prosaic, the everyday can contribute to the transformation of governance. Everyday citizens engage only sporadically in governance, and those expert citizens who do are increasingly disconnected from other citizens (Bang, 2005). As with Atkinson et al. (2018), local practice is an opportunity for learning about possible alternatives or 'utopias'. Attempting to avoid accusations of reification of the everyday, he posits the idea of municipal radicalism, giving a key coordinating role to the local state.

In distinguishing between top down and bottom up approaches, Silver (2018) and Atkinson et al. (2018) discuss the role played by critique of existing forms, disruptions to dominant discourses, and the role of dissensus. Wagenaar and Wood (2018) steer us to a consideration of outcomes to adjudicate tensions and conflicts over the social value of innovations. Dean (2018) asks how some of the distinctive features of challenge might be brought into existing institutions, to engage more constructively with 'citizen resistance'. Building on Rosanvallon (2008), he proposes the institutionalisation of 'agonistic participatory practices', such as oversight and scrutiny into existing institutions. This is a crucial debate in relation to concerns about the risks of co-option in coproduction, but also offers an analytical challenge to the binary, or that bottom up approaches have a monopoly on particular characteristics of challenge and critique. As Dean (2018) points out: 'elevation of collaboration…to a

paradigmatic value means that collaborative governance has a complicated, often confused, relation to conflict'. He reminds us that agonistic practices, such as separation between the executive and legislature, are already well-established within institutions, but primarily used for elite contestation. Dean (2018) suggests a series of practical ways that these ideas might be developed in governance, such as strengthening a city-level right to petition, as a means of popular prevention of impropriety in decision-making.

3. Knowledge Production about Coproduction

For Sheila Jasanoff (2004) coproduction is a proposition that the ways in which we know and represent the world are inseparable from the ways we choose to live in it. Coproduction implies multiple forms of expertise and knowledge, bringing new or additional perspectives as befits complex wicked policy issues. Jasanoff's coproduction idiom relates to society as a whole (May & Perry, 2010), driving new demands for forms of knowledge production about coproductive governance, that are themselves coproductive. New urban governing spaces need to be coproduced through 'participative transformation' (Klev & Levin, 2012) requiring experimentation and innovation in re-designing urban knowledge architectures.

The articles by Silver (2018) and Atkinson et al. (2018) start to speak to the nature of knowledge production in this field. Both are proponents in their articles of the value of experiential expertise and local knowledge. For Silver, this is not about understanding the 'texture' of lived experience per se, but understanding the radical potential in everyday practices. 'Knowledge' about possible radical futures is generated by reflection on everyday life, and people's strategies for adapting to everyday challenges, which act as 'a critique of the present', as well as opening up alternatives. For Atkinson et al. (2018), knowledge is about sense-making by actors involved in governance, as well as their capacities to act. Within sense- and meaning-making processes, narratives are recognised for their 'generative nature'. They paint a picture of a fierce battle between dominant and alternative forms of knowledge. Some environmental activists viewed dominant knowledge forms with 'a general suspicion, if not outright rejection', and posed 'locally generated knowledge based in everyday life', and demonstrations in local practice, as alternatives to participation in governance. Sarmiento and Tilly (2018) show how claims to particular kinds of knowledge and identity are mobilised as a strategy to lever urban justice.

Perry at al.'s (2018) article here explicitly addresses the challenges of forms of knowledge production which mirror the challenges of coproductive urban governance in the modes of inquiry. This work is produced by a diverse set of authors across the global north and south. It offers a rich empirical insight; as the authors point out: 'theory is catching up with practice' in innovation on co-producing knowledge for urban sustainability. Their article describes an international partnership of four local interaction platforms (LIPs). In the LIPs, attempts were made to make 'urban governance more fit-for-purpose' by opening up "coproductive 'boundary spaces'", designed to 'enable the knowledge and expertise of different participants to be recognised', without privileging any one form of expertise. The experiences of the LIPs suggests, they argue, that approaches are needed which bridge and iterate between local practices, grounded in specific contexts, and shared knowledge about addressing common urban governance challenges. Reflecting on their experiences, they note the serious challenges of fulfilling the principles of coproduction, for example describing tensions between the centre and the local platforms.

4. Conclusion

There is much food for thought offered in the articles about where studies of coproduction might go next in specific areas. Perry et al. (2018) caution that there has been "insufficient critical examination of the presumed 'neutrality' or 'safeness' of new boundary spaces", and suggest this as a future research agenda. Dean (2018) proposes exploration of how collaborative and agonistic practices may be combined in governance, and under what conditions difference forms may be more appropriate.

Beyond this, there are three noticeable underlying approaches that run through all of the articles in the thematic issue. The first is a grounding in epistemological traditions of pragmatism. It is perhaps no surprise that ideas of iterative processes of dialogue in knowledge are seen as compatible with studies of coproduction. Secondly, closely linked to this is a strong normative streak in all of the articles, in more or less explicitly articulated ways. Future research needs to wrestle with the challenges, and opportunities, that a normatively-informed and open-ended positioning offers to studies of coproduction. Wagenaar and Wood (2018) raise the problem of essentialism, and Sarmiento and Tilly (2018) warn against reification; the articles all speak, in different ways, to the highly contingent nature of coproduction. Recognition of complexity and contingency is a third underlying theme. However, the desire to understand coproduction beyond a series of interesting but contingent cases remains. We look forward to seeing more nuanced understandings of coproduction which are grounded in explicit weightings of different values, and broker between contingency and comparative analysis.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

The Precarious Politics of Public Innovation

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Abstract
This article argues that debates about public innovation among governance scholars risk essentialising the concept. Rather than recognise the inherently normative content of public innovation, some scholars have created taxonomies that conflate very different forms of 'innovation' in the public and private sectors, the latter of which is deeply contradictory to public values. We re-think public innovation as both a pragmatic process, a way of responding to developments in contemporary governance, and an inherently public and democratic practice. Our analysis addresses three points: who innovates; what is the object of innovation, and what are the effects of innovation? From this analysis we specify public innovation as both inescapable and democratically necessary to safeguard and promote the important values of public life.

Keywords
collaborative governance; democracy; essentialism; new public management; public innovation; unintended consequences

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Co-Producing Urban Governance for Social Innovation", edited by Liz Richardson (University of Manchester, UK).

1. Introduction

Even a brief perusal of the public innovation literature demonstrates that, apparently, innovation in the public sector needs to be argued for. It is a common rhetorical trope to contrast innovation in the private and public sector, to consider the first inevitable, an intrinsic element of the market, and to provide a list of characteristics of government (bureaucratic, silos, monopoly or monopsony, absence of incentives) to argue why public innovation is supposed to be less likely (Potts & Kastelle, 2010; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). On the face of it, these small rhetorical habits seem odd. Reform and innovation have always been an intrinsic part of public administration (Dunleavy & Hood, 1994; Merritt & Merritt, 1985; Moynihan, 2006; Weatherley & Lipsky, 1977), from the days of Woodrow Wilson's *The Study of Administration* to Osborne and Gaebler's *Reinventing Government*. Moreover, the sheer size of the literature on public sector reform shows that the siren call of public innovation is hard to resist (for a historical study see Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). In the advanced, administrative democracies of the West public innovation is a way of life, a professional default state. It's never difficult to find something amiss with the workings of the political and administrative system, and the environment in which governments operate keeps changing at dizzying speed. Who, then, does not want government agencies to be more efficient, responsive, technologically integrated, and designed on the basis of scientifically advanced, expert knowledge (Margetts, 2010, pp. 26–27)? Empirically, the affluent, well-organized administrative states of the West are the result of more than a century of patient, incremental, and sometimes radical, public innovation which combined changes in the organization of state bureaucracies, the direct production and delivery of services, and progressive fiscal policies, often supported by Social-Democratic, Christian-Democratic, and sometimes even Conservative politicians. The introduction of state-provided social insurance laws by Bismarck

in 1883, the remarkable program of Social-Democratic social housing construction and comprehensive urban planning in Vienna between 1918 and 1934, the introduction of the National Health Service in the UK in 1948, were all large-scale, highly successful examples of public innovation. Innovation in the public sector is, and has always been, as commonplace as in the business sector.

So why the slight rhetorical display of defensiveness in the recent academic literature? In arguing for 'collaborative innovation' for example, Hartley, Sørensen and Torfing (2013) assert the need to 'confront the myth that the market-driven private sector is more innovative than the public sector', while Torfing and Triantafillou (2016, p. 71) begin an empirical study of public innovation stating they aim 'to challenge the common understanding that innovation is something for the private sector only'. Rhetoric is the art of persuasion. So what does the reader, given the ubiquity of public innovation, need to be persuaded of? We will argue that public innovation is above all a political process, but that this has been under-emphasised in the literature. Most authors agree that public innovation contributes to public value. This implies that it stands in the service of sustaining and improving democratic life. Our theoretical argument is that in much public innovation literature (and practice) this democratic, political dimension is either downplayed or ignored altogether. This is because the starting point is to argue that innovation is a private sector phenomenon, and then assert that it can be a public one too (see for example, Sørensen & Torfing, 2011, p. 846). We argue that this potentially leads to importing an understanding of innovation based largely on managerialist understandings of corporate efficiency and market value. Our argument here is informed by a certain impatience with the innovation 'industry' and its institutionalized amnesia: the powerful administrative-academic complex that creates the market for public innovation and produces the authoritative rhetoric to sustain it.

Our proposed solution is to begin by imagining innovation *as a public good*. Instead of starting by distinguishing public innovation from other types of innovation commonly found in the 'private' sector, we suggest innovation *is an inherently public and democratic practice*. Public innovation is both a ubiquitous feature of the public sector and democratically necessary to safeguard and promote the important values of public life. Our aim is to subject the idea and ideal of public innovation to critical interrogation, by exposing some of the assumptions that constrain its study, and to sketch a positive, democratic theory of public innovation. Such a theory is fashioned according to pragmatist principles of democratic experimentalism (Ansell, 2011; Healey, 2010; Honneth, 2017, Chapter 3; Smiley, 1999). Pragmatist democratic experimentalism entails, in the words of Christopher Ansell, "an open-ended process of refining values and knowledge" (Ansell, 2011, p. 8).

This article is organized in five sections. First, we show how existing justifications for public innovation tend to rest on precarious grounds, unless innovation is viewed as a democratic good. We then structure the second, third and fourth sections around three questions concerning public innovation: Who innovates? What is the object of innovation? What are the effects of innovation? This helps us to build a critical perspective on public innovation from multiple angles, focused on the *actors*, *objects and results* of innovation. These questions capture the originators of innovation (government, the corporate sector, citizens, societal organisations, transnational bodies), its object (ideas, organisations, behaviours, relations, technology), and the all-important question of its intended and unintended effects, on government agencies, on officials, citizens, the budget, and on society. We then recap our argument and re-emphasise that if public innovation is not seen first and foremost as about democratic experimentation (Ansell, 2011), then academics (and practitioners) may repeat the mistakes created through decades of managerialism attempting to mimic private sector values in a public sector context.

2. What Is Public Innovation?

In general terms "public sector innovation is about new ideas that work at creating public value" (Mulgan, 2007, p. 6). These ideas need to be sufficiently large and enduring to constitute a recognisable break with past practices (Hartley, 2005, p. 27). They also need to be proactively pursued by the originating actor (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011, p. 849). This is an exceedingly broad definition that includes many registers of political rule and public administration. 'New ideas' include new ways of organising public sector organisations, new ways of financing government (direct taxes versus user fees), new ways of delivering public services (public delivery versus privatisation or public-private partnerships), new ways of organizing the relationship between different agencies of the state (the centralization, devolution, or transnationalisation of governing powers), new ways of organising the relation between citizens and the state (interactive government, citizen participation), the introduction of new technologies (user-centred digital government), and so on (see also Mulgan, 2007). As we will see later, in the literature on public innovation this broad definition is perceived to have a universal quality in that it applies to all political systems and cultures.

An important element of public innovation consists of rhetoric. Not as a separate object or dimension of innovation (as in Hartley, 2005, p. 28), but as an integral dimension that pervades the very activity of innovation. Much public innovation is storytelling, acts of meaning making, of making sense of an overwhelming, unyielding and incomprehensible world. Through the allure of evocative rhetoric indeterminate ambitions are transformed into self-evident reform strategies that aim at convincing communities of their authority and legitimacy. For example, the introduction of corporate man-

agement techniques in public agencies became a strategy to get "From Red Tape to Results" by "Creating a Government that Worked better and Costs Less" (Gore, 1993; Klijn, 2008). Or, by involving citizens in the design and implementation of government programs in so called "interactive government", "governments can obtain wholeness, coherence, and effectiveness, taking into account that governments no longer have the opportunity to direct, command and exercise control over their citizens" (Edelenbos & van Meerkerk, 2016, p. 1). The suspicion that rhetoric is an essential performative dimension of public innovation is further supported by its follow-up. Hood and Dixon conclude, for example, that the debate about public sector reform "is surprisingly ideological" (2015, p. 5). Ironically, they also conclude that in the absence of serious evaluation studies "despite pious assertions about the importance of evaluation", even the evaluation of public sector reform has become part of the rhetoric (Hood & Dixon, 2015, p. 5). The promise of reform trumps its results.

Much of the literature lists good reasons to make the case for the necessity of public innovation. Growing expectations from stakeholders, growing ambitions by elected officials and above all the complexity of a society that is dominated by interconnectedness and unpredictability (Bourgon, 2011; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). These are, however, almost always phrased in general terms. Torfing and Triantaffilou (2016, p. 1), for example, introduce the need for public innovation as a response to "political challenges such as demographic changes, increasing public health expenditure, unmet social demands, a growing number of wicked problems and the presence of numerous policy deadlocks". Sørensen and Torfing (2011, p. 847) refer to the need for public innovation arising out of "rising expectations about the quality, availability, and effectiveness of public services" and "growing ambitions in terms of the quality of public governance and its ability to solve social, economic, and environmental problems".

Societies, citizens and governments face real and serious challenges, such as climate change, falling wages and precarious labour contracts, the lack of affordable housing, crumbling infrastructure, the monopolistic dominance of FAMGA (Facebook, Apple, Microsoft, Google, and Amazon) and its impact on society and democracy, stagnating wages, tax evasion and avoidance by corporations and the rich, structural racism, gender bias, and so on. Most of these challenges exceed the imagination and governing capacity of governments and businesses and certainly warrant changes in the organization and process of governance. Our point, however, is a different one. Making these 'reasons for innovation' explicit also reveals their underlying political causes. In fact in quite a few of them, the state is as much part of the problem as the potential solution, bestowing upon the concept of 'public innovation' a less managerial and more politically charged, meaning. In addition to these functional reasons there are democratic reasons for continuous public innovation. Liberal democracy is always poised between stability and disruption (Griggs, Norval, & Wagenaar, 2014, p. 27). It is an inherent quality of democracy that it will always fall short of its own high standards. As Griggs et al. (2014, p. 27) state: "the intrinsic fallibility of democracy places the individual in a complex ethical position. If we do not embrace a radical rejection of democracy because of its imperfections…we have no alternative left but to take responsibility and try to repair the imperfections or undo the shortcomings". In other words, public innovation is a defining characteristic of democratic governance, and, as the quote suggests, this ethical imperative extends to all citizens, not just political society. Therefore, public innovation ought to be viewed first and foremost as a public and democratic good, rather than a tool for problem solving (although it might be both in practice).

3. Who Innovates in Public Innovation?

An obvious answer to our first question is: government and its agencies. The elected officials and appointed administrators who design and implement policy and provide public services; the political-administrative complex of liberal elected democracy. A good example of this way of thinking is the work of Sørensen and her collaborators. Public service innovations have moved towards the centre of attention with governments at all levels as well as with Public Administration scholars (for an overview, see Agger, Bodil Krogh, & Sørensen, 2015). This is particularly the case in Northwestern Europe (Agger et al., 2015, p. 3). Public service innovation takes place within the institutional framework of electoral liberal democracy. The decisions of politicians regarding the direction and priority of public services reflect not only what they "perceive to be right, just and valuable for society" (Sørensen, 2017, p. 4) but also how they frame the relationship between citizens, or more precisely different groups of citizens, and the state, the relationship between the state and the corporate world, and the role and position of the nation state in the international order. Sørensen further argues for political innovation as a complementary to public sector innovation. Political innovation takes three forms: changes in "the institutional arrangements that regulate and authorize actors to govern a political community" ('polity'), changes in "the process through which policy-making takes place in practice within a given set of political institutions" ('politics'), and changes in "deliberate efforts to develop and promote new political visions, goals, strategies and policy programs" ('policy') (Sørensen, 2017, p. 4).

These programmatic statements are as revealing for what they leave out as for what they contain. As is clear from the above summary this work is characterised by a certain statist viewpoint. This might appear surprising as collaborative governance is nowadays presented as a distinct innovation paradigm in addition to market competition and organizational en-

trepreneurship (Ansell & Torfing, 2016; Hartley et al., 2013; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). However, the elaborations and examples of collaborative innovation demonstrate that collaboration is either a form of coordination between government agencies, public servants, intraorganizational networks of public managers, public-private networks, and internet-supported "crowdsourcing", a form of government-invited participation (Hartley et al., 2013, pp. 825-826). Innovation, Hartley et al. (2013) argue, is innovation in the public sector, and the public sector is defined in terms "of a collective effort to produce and deliver public value that is authorized or sponsored by federal, state, provincial, or local government" (Hartley et al., 2013, p. 822). However, this definition excludes some of the most interesting and significant forms of public innovation.

Vigoda (2002), for example, makes a plea for a move from responsiveness as a guiding value of public administration to collaboration. However, perhaps because of the contrast with the unidirectional, passive connotations of responsiveness, Vigoda (2002, p. 529) frames collaboration decidedly in democratic terms: "[collaboration] means negotiation, participation, cooperation, free and unlimited flow of information, innovation, agreements based on compromises and mutual understanding, and a more equitable distribution and redistribution of power and resources. According to this utopian analysis, collaboration is an indispensable part of democracy". Vigoda elaborates his inclusive definition of collaboration between governments and citizens by delineating a continuum of roles, ranging from 'citizens as subjects' to 'citizens as owners'. Vigoda's democratic definition of collaboration bears resemblance with the literature on deliberative systems (Mansbridge et al., 2012) and Type II democratic deliberation (Bächtiger, Niemeyer, Neblo, Steenbergen, & Steiner, 2010). Both emphasize "a talk-based approach to political conflict and problem solving" and realize that for this to work these 'systems' must be both dispersed and democratically inclusive (Mansbridge et al., 2012, pp. 4–5). Similarly, Vigoda's continuum of citizen roles resembles the distinction between "government-induced" and "bottom-up interactive governance". The first is a form of citizen participation that is "strongly organized by governments"; the second involves all kinds of civic initiatives (Edelenbos & van Meerkerk, 2016, p. 2).

At least since the late 19th century days of Guild Socialism, citizens have been restless innovators, who, *uninvited*, organize themselves to manage their workplaces and neighbourhoods, produce social goods, and provide innovative ideas about the organization of society and the economy (Hirst, 1994, p. 105). They usually do this in socially and democratically innovative ways, transforming relations between individuals and social groups and empowering people who feel abandoned by the state (Claeys, 2013; Moulaert, Maccallum, & Hillier, 2013, p. 40; Wagenaar, 2016). The innovative potential of these initiatives resides precisely in the fact that they originate in the "free spaces" of civil society (Evans & Boyte, 1986). If we broaden our geographical horizon then we discover that Latin America is a breeding place for citizen-initiated innovations. As Avritzer notes, democratization in Latin America was spurred by "participatory publics". He describes a process, largely similar in most Latin American Countries in which community groups associate to address "contentious issues", subsequently transform "informal public opinion into a forum for public deliberation and administrative decision making", and finally design and negotiate with the authorities "institutional formats" for the outcomes of these participatory initiatives (Avritzer, 2009, p. 7). Avritzer emphasizes the role of participatory publics in providing "a democratic and participatory response to the problem of administrative complexity" (Avritzer, 2009, p. 137). Similarly, NGOs are in the business of public innovation, often setting agendas, designing solutions, formulating quality standards, and forging new forms of collaboration in areas such as fighting climate change, supporting refugees, and restricting worker exploitation in global production chains. The importance of NGOs is that they often operate at the level of global governance.

The above examples suggest there is more than a mere definitional issue at stake here. The statist bias in the definition of public innovation obscures from view some of the most important forms of public innovation and their effects. It draws a priori boundaries around the reach of democracy within public innovation, thereby arbitrarily limiting the possibilities for democratic renewal. Moreover, it can obscure more private sector-focused understandings of public innovation that drive a private takeover of the public sector (Bowman et al., 2013).

4. What Is the Object of Innovation?

There is a tendency in the public innovation literature to essentialise public innovation. Essentialism is the doctrine that "objects have certain essential properties, which make them one kind of a thing rather than any other" (Sayer, 2000, p. 82). The rhetorical impulse in the literature to define, categorize, and anatomise public innovation are, to our mind, ever so many attempts to essentialise it. While there is in principle nothing wrong with categorizing and finding (or declaring) similarities, for various reasons essentialism is risky in the social sciences. The first risk is that claims about sameness are mistaken. They may involve non-existent similarities or denials of significant differences. (Sayer, 2000, p. 83). For example, as we saw earlier, the definition of public innovation is so broad and involves so many different instigators, objects, goals, strategies and outcomes that one might genuinely question if it can be considered a coherent category in the first place. Taken to its extreme, the current rise of populism would fall within this definition of innovation. The purpose, or perhaps it is better to speak of the effect, of the habitual abstract definitions and categorizations is the use of the concept of

public innovation outside its relevant context, its denotation as a clearly identifiable, stable and by implication, manageable, activity, that can be applied more or less unproblematically in different contexts. This kind of essentialisation shows itself, for example, in common vocabulary of 'design', 'tools', 'restructuring' and 'leadership' that suggest a requisite measure of control in instigating and implementing innovation (Edelenbos & van Meerkerk, 2016; Hartley, 2005; although Hartley et al., 2013, are careful to emphasize the open-ended and contingent nature of public innovation).

There are different problems with these taxonomies that transcend mere definitional or linguistic habits. For one thing, it raises the issue of validity. Validity implies the accurate relation between thought and action, and at this point the rhetoric loses its innocence. To what extent are the characteristics of an innovation—New Public Management (NPM), interactive governance, government-driven democratization, participatory publics—an accurate reflection of what is happening 'on the ground'? The most likely answer is that the relation is at best tenuous. Ideals are indications of how we would like the reality in organizations, neighbourhoods or cities to look like. It requires considerable and sustained collective effort to get there. We will return to this later.

The second problem is moral equivalence. Every classification is a simile of the great taxonomies of Enlightenment botany and zoology. Taxonomy is meant to be morally neutral; the genus and species are entries in the book of nature, wholly outside ethics. However, for three reasons, this ethical quarantine cannot be transferred to public innovation. First, public innovation is by definition an attempt to improve the world of governance and public administration by making it more efficient, equitable, responsive, integrated, innovative or democratic. These are big values and some forms of innovation will realize these values better than others. Second, some realizations will promote some values over others, creating contradictions in the relative weighing of values in the public domain (Margetts, 2010, p. 41). For example, in many public service systems the emphasis on economic efficiency in the context of NPM has favoured budgetary restraint and public competition over service coordination and deliberation (Wagenaar, Vos, Balder, & van Hemert, 2015). Or, the emergence of innovative and responsive citizen cooperatives has eroded universalism in public service delivery (Wagenaar, 2015). Third, implying moral equivalence ignores the power differentials between actors in the public innovation arena. Much public innovation involves the transfer of rights, money and powers by public actors to corporate actors. This is of a wholly different order than sharing power with citizen groups. We will return to this point when we discuss unintended effects.

However, apart from problems of essentialism, the question remains: What, in concrete situations of public administration, is the object of public innovation? Is it more effective, more efficient service delivery? Better coordination between government agencies? More inclusive local decision-making? A change in the relation between officials and citizens? A smaller state? The institutionalization of participatory governance? What exactly is it that needs to change? Let's look at a somewhat extended example.

NPM is as good an example as any of a public innovation. With hindsight, NPM is arguably the most significant and widespread public innovation of the last 30 years. Its ethos and vocabulary of corporate managerialism has enthralled governments around the world. Its repertoire of techniques—performance indicators, outsourcing, performance-related pay, auditing, consumer boards—has changed the face of public service delivery in many countries (Hood & Dixon, 2015). Although it is generally described as an innovation in public administration, its objectives of radically reconfiguring the relationship between politicians, officials and the market are deeply political. The origins of NPM have to be found in the writings on public choice, a blend of dysphoric critique of big government and the application of microeconomic theory to public administration (Buchanan, 1988; Niskanen, 1971). For 15 years these ideas were debated and developed in relative quiet until Osborne and Gaebler published their famous book which functioned as an 'instruction manual' for NPM. In these 15 years the economic-political order underwent a profound neoliberal transformation (Crouch, 2011; Streeck, 2017) that prepared the ground for the ideas of NPM to be put into effect. In hindsight, the time was right; a policy window had opened for the ideas of Niskanen, Buchanan, Osborne and Gaebler. In clear, concise language, unencumbered by economic theory, Osborne and Gaebler laid out a blueprint for a government that promised a smaller yet more effective government than is required by the direct delivery state. It contained a catchy 'logo' ('steering not rowing') and concrete instructions of how to reorganize the public sector according to corporate and market principles (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). Numerous 'Third Way' social-democratic governments who saw NPM as a solution to the conservative challenge that 'government is the problem, not the solution', enthusiastically adopted their ideas. NPM contained the promise to shrink government outlays, maintain a required level of service to the public, and sport a modern, rational, decisive image by adopting corporate management techniques. "Creating a government that worked better and cost less" (Gore, 1993; Hood & Dixon, 2015), rapidly acquired the status of a valence idea. The result was a reframing, a resetting of expectations, of what citizens can expect from the state, a reconfiguration of state relations with citizens and corporate actors, an extension of corporate influence in civil and personal life spheres, and a hollowing out of democratic accountability through an acceleration of the privatization of public services.

We could probably tell a similar tale about the vicissitudes of three decades of interactive government (Voor-

berg, Bekkers, & Tummers, 2015). The point is not about the specifics but the plot of the narrative. Convenient labels such as 'NPM', 'interactive government', or 'public value management' suggest more ideological and strategic unity than is warranted. Public innovation is more a social movement or a historical trend—contingent, emergent—than a coherent program. Christopher Hood and Ruth Dixon did us a great service by compiling a detailed overview of thirty years of public innovation in the UK. Theirs is a story of restless improvements and innovations that span the whole gamut from political restructuring to changes in delivery systems. Devolution to regional parliaments is followed by the (financial) autonomy of local government. The shape and functioning of the administrative bureaucracy is shaken up by the creation of independent regulators and political civil servants. Many bureaucracies were split up into agencies and then consolidated again. At the same time state public sector bureaucracies introduced corporate management arrangements. A large number of state companies and agencies were privatized; core public services, such as public transport, health, adult care, and energy and water provision, have been contracted out to private sector companies (Hood & Dixon, 2015, pp. 20–43). With some effort we could probably put together a similar story of incessant innovation in countries such as the Netherlands and Denmark (with more emphasis on interactive governance and government-initiated citizen participation). The birth and worldwide adoption of NPM or interactive government show similarities to the contingent agenda setting processes as described by John Kingdon where parallel streams of ideas, ideologies, and political developments interact in unpredictably ways while policy entrepreneurs restlessly circle the halls of government trying to pounce on the right moment (2011). The key point is that in all these instances most of these innovations are instigated without being part of a larger plan. They are reactive and pragmatic; their rationality is largely after the fact.

Public innovations are not straightforward applications of an impulse to improve the functioning of our administrative apparatus, as most definitions of public innovation imply. Instead they are the contingent outcomes of human agency, ideological enthusiasm, strategic one-upmanship, and historical development. They try to solve a locally or nationally bounded problem, their content inspired by some ideology (of a better and smaller government, as in the case of NPM), an opportunity for strategic advantage (as in Third Way innovations), a more responsive and democratic form of governance (as in the case of interactive or collaborative governance), a reshuffling of the roles and responsibilities of state, corporations and civil society in delivering public services, or a mix of the above, with little anticipation of, and interest in, the future effects of the change, but with a keen eye on presenting them as rational, reasoned improvements of government practices. Some of these local innovations aggregate into a more coherent movement, to which a professor or policy entrepreneur attaches a label and a storyline that appeals to a receptive audience.

5. What Are the Effects of Public Innovation?

Clearly, many good things have followed from the efforts of politicians and officials to improve the functioning of government. The high quality of life in Northwestern European democracies testifies to that. But, as that shrewd observer of public policy, Aaron Wildavsky, wrote 40 years ago, policy is its own cause (Wildavsky, 1979). Why is that? The answer, in today's terms, is because every policy space is a complex system, where interaction effects and positive and negative feedback create wholly unpredictable system dynamics that quickly overwhelm policy makers (Teisman, van Buuren, & Gerrits, 2009; Wagenaar, 2007; Waldrop, 1992). Most of these "emergent effects" are unforeseen; some are positive (Hood & Dixon, 2015) but many of them undesired by at least some of the relevant stakeholders (6, 2001). Given the high risk of unforeseen negative consequences following interventions in the social order, public innovation aggravates that risk by its ambition to overhaul whole systems of public administration.

The above point makes another of Wildavksy's observations particularly pertinent: the Law of Large Solutions. "The Law of large Solutions implies that the greater the proportion of the population involved in policy problem, and the greater the proportion of the policy space occupied by the supposed solution, the harder it is to find a solution that is not its own worst problem" (Wildavsky, 1979, p. 63). Our position is that public innovations have real world consequences for citizens, communities, third sector organizations, public sector employees, and local administrations. They define their relationship to the state, and the possibilities for just and effective governance and service delivery. Moreover, the types of public innovation are not morally neutral, the effects of innovation can and should be assessed within the normative framework of Western democracy, and as a result of such assessments we need to distinguish between effective and less effective innovations (Hartley, 2005) as well as between more and less desirable forms of public innovation. For reasons that are rooted in the two preceding challenges, we argue that the outcomes of public innovation should occupy the top of the public innovation agenda.

In one of the few systematic studies of the effects of administrative modernization, Hood and Dixon (2015) emphasize the diversity of impacts. What effects can we expect? First, and most straightforwardly, history is full of political innovations that served ignoble or repressive purposes. The discovery and perfection of modern media—at the time wireless radio broadcasts—as a tool for propaganda by the National-Socialist regime is just one example. The use of advanced search and data storage technology for the mass surveillance of citizens is another. On a much smaller scale, Wagenaar, Amesberger

and Altink (2017) report the use of innovative coordination tools in local administration that are used to entrap sex workers. Governments hitch on to new technology to expedite the process of government, both for benign and pernicious purposes. On the basis of perceived threats to its integrity, every state divides its population in deserving and undeserving groups (Edelman, 1988), and it deploys its full panoply of discourse, technique and innovation to check, contain or, ultimately, eliminate such groups (Wagenaar, 2015).

A second possibility is the absence of desired effects. Although the reform initiative is genuine, and stakeholders engage enthusiastically, the outcome may nevertheless be disappointing. This is the pattern of much invited participation of citizens in the design, implementation and delivery of policy programs. Although there are some spectacular examples of successfully institutionalized participatory efforts (the Porto Alegre participatory budgeting initiative is the most cited showcase), many of them have disappointing outcomes. The reasons are manifold. Avritzer ascribes the success of the Porto Alegre experiment to a favourable confluence of political circumstances. Similar experiments in Belo Horizonte and Sao Paolo were much less successful (Avritzer, 2009). In our study of governance-driven democratization in The Hague we encountered many small organizational obstacles, many of them the result of earlier NPM reforms, that prevented the voice of citizens to be heard in municipal agencies (Wagenaar, van Schijndel, & Kruiter, 2010). Sometimes it is the government's obligation to protect constitutional values and procedures that constrains officials' possibilities to transfer executive power to citizen groups. For example, the disappointing results of a more participatory approach to social care in the Netherlands, is credited to the government's legally prescribed obligation to regulate and its inability to refrain from micromanaging citizen initiatives (Linders, Feringa, Potting, & Jager-Vreugdenhil, 2016). In both examples the explanation for the disappointing outcomes of these innovations resided in the systematic-structural conditions that drove the public sector in those particular locations.

But even well intended public innovations generate negative unintended consequences (Hartley, 2005, p. 32; Hood & Dixon, 2015). For example, as with every policy intervention, the publicized benefits of an innovation might never materialize. After a painstaking and difficult compilation of data on the outcome of NPM reforms, Hood and Dixon conclude that in the UK "running costs rose substantially in absolute terms over thirty years, while complaints soared" (2015, p. 178). What drove up cost was not so much the wage costs of civil servants but the "'outsourced' elements of running costs, even though outsourcing had tended to figure large in standard recipes for greater efficiency" (2005, p. 178). Hood and Dixon conclude that "this is not exactly what 'it said on the tin' of all those grandiloquent reform makeovers aimed at containing costs and improving administration for citizens" (2005, p. 178).

When Hood and Dixon conclude that the costs of outsourcing had driven up the costs of government in the UK, they overlooked a number of important negative unintended consequences of outsourcing. Bowman and his colleagues at the Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change at the University of Manchester have done for outsourcing what Hood and Dixon did for NPM. In a careful collection and analysis of hard-to-find data they traced the effects of contracting out. First, Bowman et al. (2015) estimate the annual turnover of the "public service industry" in the UK at between £80 and £100 billion, the fastest growing segment in local government (Bowman et al., 2015, p. 3). The more important question perhaps is what effect this frenzy of outsourcing has on the quality of government, and for that matter, of democracy and society. In summary, the effects are a massive transfer of public money to private corporations, a serious decline of the availability and quality of essential services, the intrusion of the extortionist practices of the finance industry into the public sector, and the erosion of democratic influence and accountability. For example, contracting out is sold as a cost saving measure that simultaneously increases the quality of service delivery. If that claim is made true then a £100 billion outlay (the total of pubic service contracts to corporate providers) is public money well spent. However, Bowman et al. (2015) reveal a pattern of excessive profit-taking, without risk, at the expense of the taxpayer and the workforce. The reasons are that the return on capital for supplying services to the state is much higher than that of suppliers to private industry (Bowman et al., 2015, p. 45), the industry's ability to obtain franchises that amount to a "local monopoly for the multi-year duration of the contract" (Bowman et al., 2015, p. 46), and the routine strategy of private providers to save costs by cutting wages and hollowing out labour contracts (Bowman et al., 2015, p. 53).

What about the quality of the outsourced services? Unfortunately the picture is equally dismal. Using complaints to the ombudsman and the number of judicial review applications as their indicator of service quality, Hood and Dixon find that both have increased over the thirty years of NPM innovation in the UK. Bowman et al. (2015) point to a pattern of routine failure in which the co-dependent state and corporate sector shift the blame to a weak surveillance and monitoring system and a supposed lack of knowledge within the core executive (Bowman et al., 2015, p. 30). Perhaps the most toxic effect of outsourcing is the colonization of the public sector by the financial logic of corporate conglomerates. Most private vendors are part of an opaque conglomerate of holding companies and investment vehicles. These conglomerates are part of the world of equity markets and global finance. Outsourcing companies are forced into a game of debt-funded acquisitions to boost shareholder value. The investment firm that owns the outsourcing firm provides the debt for the acquisitions and sets artificially high margins that are booked as internal debt and weaken the balance sheet of the subsidiary. Com-

monly the subsidiary pays out high dividends to the parent company, which are financed by loans that raise the debt level of the outsourcing company, lower its earnings before interest and tax, and effectively result in reduced corporate tax liabilities (Bowman et al., 2015, p. 87). The upshot of this is a huge transfer of taxpayer's money to the owners and shareholders of the outsourcing corporates and their parent companies.

6. The Precarious Politics of Public Innovation

What have we learned about public innovation, as it unfolds 'on the ground'? We draw four lessons from the argument and examples in the preceding sections. The fact that public innovation happens everywhere, at all times and with different intentions, as we saw above, has two important implications for the academic analyst. First, it changes the very idea of innovation. Innovation is less 'intentional development' and more practical, pragmatic, and usually local, problem solving. Recognizing the pragmatic nature of public innovation, Sørensen and Torfing speak of a "complex, nonlinear, and often messy" process (although they do project four distinct phases onto this "messy" process; 2011, p. 852). The language of practice is helpful here. If a policy intervention is seen as a projection of intention into an unknown, and often unknowable, future, then the effects of that intervention are the result of backtalk, the agency of the material-economic-political world. Most policy sectors, as we have seen, are subject to the Law of Large Solutions. The world has a complexity that far exceeds human cognitive capacities. Not surprisingly, the effects of an innovative effort differ from the original promises and expectations; they fall short, are seen as disappointing or, in case of perverse unintended consequences, as a policy failure. This gives rise to many different and well-known political responses: a reformulation of goals, blame shifting, or controlling the political message through spin doctoring (Bowman et al., 2015; Hood & Dixon, 2015, p. 11; Stone, 1997, p. 190). In some cases, officials embark on an intervention that purports to improve the way policy is made or administration organized. This, often with hindsight, is recognized as a public innovation, but for the purposes of this analysis, we interpret it as a reaction to the resistance that was provoked by the original policy intervention. In practice terms: the resistance "denotes a failure to capture the agency of the world" and the innovation represents an accommodation to come to terms with this resistance. The language is Pickering's (1995), who pictures this reciprocal process of intervention, resistance and accommodation as a continuous, and inescapable, dialectic (1995, p. 23).

It is at this point that another important lesson from the preceding analysis weighs in. In the realm of politics and governance the dialectic of resistance and accommodation is a dispersed interactive process in which an unknown number of actors struggle with the agency of the world and of each other. This subjects this dialectic to endless processes of gaming and trying to get the better of the other's interventions. All these micro-activities are ever so many moments of accountability, where actors assess the consequences of the change that is imposed on them and decide to support, resist or adapt to it (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2003). Eventually, this dance of resistance and adaptation results in unforeseen and unforeseeable outcomes, as its endless chain of action and reaction ripples through the political and social sphere. This is where intention and outcome meet. One actor's innovation is another actor's invitation to move into a field and neutralize a threat to one's dignity, freedom, cherished life, work routines, moral worth or community cohesion, or redefine it as a business opportunity and extract unjustifiable profits. So, the second lesson is that we should not discuss public innovation without taking its outcomes into consideration. This implies that the analyst, in addition to, or instead of, acting as an advocate, must act as a critical interpellator, similar to the examples we gave in section two. Critical interpellator implies that the analyst collects data and indicates where they are not available, follows the money (Bowman et al., 2015) to the point where the strategic decisions are made, and traces the effects of an innovation to the point where the power to decide resides and the gains of the innovation are harvested.

Third, the examples reveal another important, this time substantive, lesson about public innovation: the fallacy of moral equivalence. In section three we were critical of a certain essentialising tendency that we observed in some of the literature on public innovation. As we have seen, public innovation is defined so broadly and harbours such a wide variety of interventions within its conceptual boundaries (Hartley, 2005) that it is risky to ascribe significant commonalities to it that define the category of innovation in a uniform and coherent way. As we saw when discussing the outcomes of innovation, one actor's innovation is another actor's loss. Different actors in the intervention enterprise have different interests and intentions. For example, public innovations that involve corporate actors run a serious risk of being compromised by the logic of profit and shareholder value. Several mechanisms create this corrosive influence. Not only are public officials no match for the deep resources and expertise of corporate actors, but also the public prestige and the lure of generous remuneration of the corporate sector are hard to resist. Apart from the ethically dubious spectacle of ex-government officials taking lucrative jobs in the very industries they once oversaw, this a priori favourable attitude towards business explains some of the dynamics that led to the fatal co-dependence between government and the public service corporations that Bowman et al. observed (2015, p. 7). Once companies have obtained the lucrative franchises, the loss of the organizational and intellectual resources for adequate service delivery proceeds quickly. On a deeper level, the values and practices of the corporate world are inimical to those of the public sector.

This has serious consequences for the public sector as we have seen. Not only does it lead to a transfer of tax payers' money to the corporate sector, but also to a decline in the quality of service delivery, the replacement of social by financial innovation, a hollowing out of administrative expertise, and an erosion of political transparency and accountability.

Moreover, this transparency and accountability deficit has acute implications for public engagement in civic life. Colin Crouch's (2004) *Post-Democracy* captures how corporate influence in policy making, institutionalized through delegation of important resource decisions to unelected agencies, hollows out the public sphere (see also, Wolin, 2008). Since citizens can no longer see why they ought to engage with public debate, they retreat, either into the private activity of consumerism, or to 'everyday' forms of protest and social media fuelled "connective action" (Bennet & Segerberg, 2013). This results in a growing inequality between those who are able to navigate the complex structures of distributed governance and service delivery and can make their voices heard (the well connected higher middle class), and those who do not and have become marginalized from crucial decisions that impact on their lives (the disconnected 'precariat'). Public 'innovations' can be utilized to empower some more than others in public management, and the already well-connected often accumulate more power, while the poorly connected lose out to a greater degree.

Perhaps most importantly, the colonization of the public sector by corporate values and practices results in a loss of the very spirit of the public sector. In proximate terms this amounts to a loss of public value; in more distal, but ultimately more significant terms, in the loss of a moral vision of a just and equal society in which everyone regardless of their ethnicity, religion, gender or economic position, finds security and the concomitant possibility to develop and improve themselves. In terms of democratic governance, public and corporate interests do not mix, whether it concerns health care, public transport, libraries, prisons or universities. The money nexus, with its core values of efficiency and 'value for money', drives out most that is central to the values and practice of the public sector and, ultimately, of democracy.

Where does this leave us with regard to the ideal and prospects for public innovation? We do not deny, of course, the necessity, and possibility, of improvement in collective decision-making and service delivery, but we frame this process differently. What we propose is a process of guided change that is much more democratically embedded, distributed, pragmatic, interactive and, therefore, precarious. Wildavsky's advice to circumvent the Law of large Solutions is a form of incrementalism. ("the way to solve large social problems is to keep them small"; Wildavsky, 1979, p. 63). In this spirit we argue for a pragmatist approach to public innovation (Ansell, 2011; Bourgon, 2011). 'Innovation' is intrinsic to practices of governance. It can be triggered by ideals or failure, by crises, challenges or political expedience. But no matter its impetus, it always involves a subsequent alignment of intention and consequence. Innovation is dispersed and socially distributed. Even if an identifiable state actor triggers an innovation, it evolves through the actions and reactions of a large number of actors. It is not uncommon, as experiments in collaborative governance demonstrate, that innovations emerge in the civic sphere, and transfer to political society. In such a situation a pragmatist approach to innovation involves three "generative conditions" that facilitate 'evolutionary learning": a "problem-driven perspective", reflexivity about the trajectory of our interventionist experiences, and the necessity of deliberation, or the reciprocal communication that is necessary for "adjudicating differences" between different actors, producing jointly constructed meanings and coordinating joint action (Ansell, 2011, pp. 11–12).

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Conflict of Interests

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Article

Everyday Radicalism and the Democratic Imagination: Dissensus, Rebellion and Utopia

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Abstract
The prevalence of social injustice suggests the need for radical transformation of political economy and governance. This article develops the concept of 'everyday radicalism', which positions the everyday as a potential site of social change. Everyday radicalism is based on three main elements: dissensus and a rupture with dominant practices; collective rebellion and the creation of alternatives on a micro-scale; and the connection of these practices with utopian ideas to be able to develop strategies for social justice. The potential application of everyday radicalism is illustrated through a case study of a women's social intervention in Manchester. The article aims to show how everyday radicalism has the potential to contribute knowledge towards the transformation of everyday life and the institutions that govern society.

Keywords
democracy; governance; political economy; prefigurative; radical; utopia

Issue
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1. Introduction

The need for radical social and political transformation feels as distant as it does urgent. We are living in times of austerity, increasing inequality, a retrenchment of democracy, the rise of far-right nationalism, and ecological catastrophe. Streeck (2016) argues that the coming collapse of financial capitalism will result in a multitude of disorders and instabilities. Morin (1999) has identified this as 'polycrisis', in which all these crises are inextricably connected and in turn contribute to each other. Morin emphasises that a fundamental and multilevel re-definition of political economy and governance is needed. Such a profound change requires the radical transformation of everyday life and the institutions that govern society. Walby (2015, p. 7) maintains that the conflict between democracy and capitalism can only be resolved through a deepening of democracy. This resolution must include a democratisation of everyday life, in which competition is replaced with cooperative relationships (Bookchin, Bookchin, & Taylor, 2015).

Marginality that is produced as a result of policy is experienced by people in their everyday lives. For instance, the intensification of punitive social policies following the financial crisis of 2007–2008 (Blyth, 2013; Bruff, 2014), have been experienced through daily struggles of hunger, poor health, unemployment and insecurity. There is a gendered and racialised political dimension to this injustice, which increases existing inequalities (Bassel & Emejulu, 2017). As well as a site of injustice, the everyday can also be a source of resistance and a resource for critical social science. This article argues that knowledge of everyday resistance can inform a broadening of the democratic imagination, expanding the possibilities for more socially just forms of democracy.

The local level is closest to the 'arenas of everyday life in which people are able to resist power and construct their own voice' (Gaventa, 2006, p. 28). The 'starting point for participation and democracy', according to Sitrin and Azzellini (2014, p. 67), 'is the local'. It is at the municipal level where institutional politics are most closely connected to people's daily lives. Municipal gov-

ernance is deeply embedded in the politics of everyday life, in terms of neighbourhood, education, culture, services and jobs. Yet even at a municipal level where there are more possibilities for radical forms of governance, everyday experiences are often neglected from the policy-making process.

The marginalisation of everyday knowledge from governance contributes to what Jacques Rancière has termed 'passive equality', in which publics outside of the structures of decision-making are assigned roles as passive objects (May, 2011). The marginalisation of everyday knowledges from governance has implications for the power relations in society and the types of actors who hold the position to shape the framings and practices of democracy. The elite and technocratic framing of the future means that democratic innovations are limited within the system. This limitation happens because the actors who have the power to shape policy are part of the status quo. The neglect of everyday knowledge isolates policy-making from experiences of marginality and means that policy is restricted within the frameworks that maintain the existing political economy of capitalism.

Radical democracy provides a more expansive ambition for politics than the technocratic management of the dominant political economy that characterises contemporary forms of governance. Little and Lloyd (2009, p. 1) identify three common features of radical democracy: first, that democracy is understood as an open-ended and contestable process; second, that civil society, rather than the state, is the main site of democratic struggle; and finally, that democracy should be seen not simply as a form of government or set of institutions, but rather the practice of politics by different publics.

Civil society is identified through radical democracy as the foundation for a renewed public sphere, which can serve as the basis to radically transform social relations and open up institutions to political contestation. This contestation means that democracy is said to exist in an open state which necessitates 'disruption and renewal' (Little & Lloyd, 2009, p. 3). Bang (2005, p. 180) argues for more constructive engagement with 'ordinary politics', which are expressed by civil society at a local level. New ideas and approaches to address social problems can be developed through placing greater value on the ideas, assets and capacities of publics (Durose & Richardson, 2015, p. 43). Through engagement with these ideas, it is possible to test and expand the 'democratic imagination'.

The potential for learning from civil society currently remains unfulfilled. There is an absence of meaningful connection between 'ordinary politics' and formal governance as the innovations that take place outside of institutions are often neglected by policy-makers. This disconnection happens even when measures to increase participation have been followed. Bang (2005) identifies the rise of 'expert citizens' who have become an established part of governance arrangements as part of a shift to make governance more participatory. The democratic benefits of this involvement have often not been realised as expert citizens have become increasingly disconnected from the communities that they are put forward to represent. Bang contrasts expert citizens with the idea of 'everyday makers'. Everyday makers are defined as people who get involved in local, concrete and Do-It-Yourself (DIY) projects that make an immediate difference to people's lives and can positively impact the local community in a tangible way. These practices can be described as DIY social action (Richardson, 2008). Bang (2005, p. 180) argues that the rise of expert citizens and the relatively marginalised position of everyday makers in governance means that opportunities for learning from everyday politics are missed.

There is scope to improve the capacity of public policy to address social problems through connecting with the practices of everyday makers. The knowledges and new ideas that are produced through the practices of everyday makers can be used to expand the boundaries of public policy. Social science can contribute to the broadening of the democratic imagination through relating theories of radical democracy and scholarship on everyday life to the practices of everyday makers.

Gardiner (2010, p. 231) identifies two largely divergent approaches to the study of everyday life. One approach is about understanding the textures of lived experience, while he characterises the other approach as being an:

> overtly political project that aims to interrogate daily life in a critical fashion, to identify the various alienations and subjectification felt to be located at the heart of our experience of capitalist modernity, as well as to realise as fully as possible the emancipatory potential that is felt to inhere in the everyday.

Gardiner identifies the radical potential of the everyday through this second approach, but leaves a problematic in terms of how the everyday can be politicised to contribute knowledge for radical democracy. This article will argue that relating theories of radical democracy to the practices of everyday makers can contribute knowledge for democratic innovation. At the same time, this interaction can ensure that theories of radical democracy remain resonant with contemporary struggles for social justice. A concept of everyday radicalism will be articulated that can serve as a basis for developing theoretically-informed knowledge of practice to inform the transformation of everyday life and the institutions that govern society. Everyday radicalism will be illustrated through a case study of a women's project in Manchester, England.

2. Assembling a Conceptual Framework for Everyday Radicalism

Wright (2010, p. 108) argues that social theory alone cannot be used effectively or democratically as a basis to construct alternative futures, as the process of social

change is too complex and contingent on local circumstances. A more open-ended approach to developing radical democracy is required that connects theory and practice. This approach must be adaptable, emergent and resonant with contemporary injustices. Relating theories of radical democracy to the practices of everyday makers can contribute towards a social science that is normatively based, empirically focused and which is guided by a practical purpose of overcoming injustice. The following section draws together theories of radical democracy to inform everyday radicalism. The concept of everyday radicalism is based on the ways in which social action creates a rupture with the everyday; how collective rebellion can articulate an alternative way of 'doing'; and how the combination of critique and alternative practice can form the foundation for prefigurative thinking about transformative social relations.

An understanding of the ways in which DIY social action firstly breaks with the status quo is necessary to develop a foundation for expanding the democratic imagination. The first element of everyday radicalism considers the ways in which there is a rupture from the dominant mode of political economy. The idea of 'dissensus' articulated by Rancière is particularly illuminating in opening up possibilities for understanding this basis of everyday radicalism. Rancière emphasises that 'politics begins and ends in a dissensus' (May, 2011). Dissensus is the moment when the dominant discourse becomes disrupted. This disruption provides an immanent critique of social relations. Through practices that reject the consensus of the status quo, dominant discourses are unsettled, and everyday social relations are questioned. This disturbance in the sediment of the status quo is necessary if alternative practices are to be constructed. To understand how such practices can provide the basis for transformation to established social relations, it is critical to figure out what constitutes the original point of rejection and provides the basis of departure.

For Rancière, dissensus does not happen in particular places; he argues that to do so would be to 'reduce politics to exceptional and vanishing moments of uprising' pointing out that 'the mere enactment of the political principle rarely—if ever—appears in its purity' (Rancière, as cited in Bowman & Stamp, 2011, p. 5). Dissensus can therefore take place in the everyday practices of people who are resisting marginalisation, in locations that are not expected, nor traditionally conceptualised as holding radical potential. These occasions of democratic politics can be connected to Lefebvre's theory of 'moments'. Highmore (2002, p. 115) describes these moments as 'instances of intense experiences in everyday life that provide an immanent critique of the everyday [to] provide a promise of the possibility of a different daily life [that] puncture the present'. Through an intervention that symbolically and materially deconstructs everyday life, there is an increased awareness of new possibilities. This awareness opens the democratic imagination to the landscape of a better world in the distance. The creation of alternative practices must begin with a rupture from the existing world, even if this occurs only in a temporary manner.

A rejection of the present opens possibilities for a different form of everyday life, which sets the foundation for the second element of everyday radicalism: collective rebellion. Through an analysis of migrant participation in city life, Hall (2015) introduces the concept of 'everyday resistance', in which the social becomes integral to political struggle. For Holloway (2012, p. 4), the actors involved in the struggle against injustice extend far beyond social movement activists to include 'ordinary rebels'. What holds most promise for Holloway (2012) is the refusal by these rebels to participate in everyday capitalist relations and the ways in which this refusal is brought together with the creation of an alternative way of 'doing'.

Holloway's (2012) idea of ordinary rebels opens the range of potential locations for social transformation. There is a value in locating the possibilities for social change in marginalised communities. Harding (1991, p. 130) notes that the everyday struggles of women (and other marginalised groups) are a valuable source of knowledge for 'strategies of political resistance to oppression and domination'. Harding contends that history has shown that these forms of daily resistance against injustice have often been more important than formal political institutions in securing better conditions and delivering social change. When everyday resistance is assembled as part of collective action through people cooperating to create something different, this becomes transformed into a collective rebellion. As Camus (2013, p. 28) argued, 'from the moment that a rebellion begins, suffering is seen as a collective experience, as the experience of everyone'. *Individual* resistance therefore becomes *social* rebellion.

A final component of everyday radicalism is still required to elevate collective rebellion into a clearer basis for social and political transformation. The notion of prefigurative politics can inform how this might happen. Prefigurative politics are based on 'social experiments' that critique the status quo and implement radically democratic practices to offer alternatives (Cornish, Haaken, Moskovitz, & Jackson, 2016). Yates (2015) introduces the idea of prefigurative politics as a contestation of power in everyday life. Yates (2015, pp. 13–14) identifies five dynamics of pre-figuration: experimentation in alternative approaches to social life; developing new codes of collective conduct for interactions between participants; an intervention that temporarily or symbolically changes the material environment; the diffusion of ideas that go beyond the immediate group; and through the development of new ideological 'perspectives' based on imagining, learning and playing with different positions.

Connecting prefigurative politics with DIY social action holds transformative potential. Srnicek and Williams (2016, p. 502) note that the range of community initiatives delivered by the Black Panthers should be con-

sidered radical because they were responding to people's immediate needs of survival, but also that critically the initiatives were situated as part of a wider struggle to create new means of social reproduction against capitalism, racism and imperialism. What can appear as micro-actions that make a local difference can be re-conceptualised through a lens of prefigurative politics to articulate a more socially just vision for the future.

Prefigurative politics contain a strong utopian dimension. Sliwinski (2016, p. 433) notes how contemporary scholarship brings forward the location of utopia, closer than its previous positioning as a faraway place (Cooper, 2014; Levitas, 2013; Srnicek & Williams, 2016; Wright, 2010). Wright's (2010) work on 'real utopias' opens up the possibilities for social change emerging out of alternative practices and collective interventions that are already happening at a smaller scale. These practices attempt to create new sets of social relations and can be developed and scaled up (Wright, 2010). Cooper (2014) provides an idea to strengthen the connection between utopia, prefigurative politics and social change: that we can learn from sites of alternative social action (which she calls 'everyday utopias') and the new sets of values they bring into the present. Micro-actions that practice alternative social relations can therefore be seen to have both practical and *imaginative* purposes. Cooper (2014, p. 11) argues that utopian imaginations can invigorate radical politics through the 'capacity to put everyday concepts, such as property, care, markets, work and equality, into practice in counter-normative ways'. By reconceptualising the dominant frameworks that shape social relations, the existing political economy can be defamiliarised. This destabilisation and re-conceptualisation of social life can expand the 'democratic imagination'. By imagining and enacting alternative practices, the possibilities of constructing them in the future become more likely and well-thought out.

This section has developed a theoretical framework of everyday radicalism based on how DIY social action can provide a rupture with dominant practices to provide a critique of the status quo; how these practices can be seen to constitute a collective rebellion and the creation of an alternative; and the ways in which this 'other doing' can inform strategies for social justice. The next section will show how everyday radicalism can be related to the practices of everyday makers through a case study of a women's project in Manchester, UK.

3. Mums' Mart: A Case Study to Illuminate Everyday Radicalism

To illustrate the potential relation of everyday radicalism to the practices of 'everyday makers', findings from a research project with a women's group in Wythenshawe, Manchester, are drawn upon. Wythenshawe was developed from the 1920s as the largest municipal estate in Europe to house people being moved from the slums in the centre of the city. It was designed by city planners as a utopia. The local Cooperative Women's Guild (as cited in Boughton, 2016) described Wythenshawe as being part of:

> the world of the future—a world where men and women workers shall be decently housed and served, where the health and safety of little children are of paramount importance, and where work and leisure may be enjoyed to the full.

The research was conducted at the United Estates of Wythenshawe (UEW). The UEW is a community group in Benchill, a local area in Wythenshawe, which is within the top one percent most 'deprived' areas in the UK. The identification of this 'deprivation' is based on the government Index of Multiple Deprivation which draws together statistics on local employment, income, health, education, housing, child poverty, and availability of local services. The top-down utopian dreams of the planners were clearly not realised.

UEW was established after a small group of everyday makers, led by local resident Greg Davies, converted a disused church into a community centre with a gym. The UEW supports a range of different activities. The most recent one of these is Mum's Mart, which was started by a group of women aged 18 to 72. The women came together with support from UEW to deal with their shared concerns of isolation, anxiety, and the limitations of living with a low-income. The women now meet every week to have a meal while their children play together. They organise monthly 'market days' to sell handmade products, things that they have bought at a lower price in bulk, as well as food and drinks. Through the markets the women raise money to take their families away somewhere for a short while, which they otherwise would not be able to afford. Members of the Mums' Mart have also taken part in an international exchange with the South African alliance of Shack/Slum Dwellers International.

The case study research was based on creating a short evaluative film over six months (https://vimeo.com/213951251). The study worked through an abductive approach to research, which is specifically geared towards the construction of theory, and is a less well-known approach to social science research. Abductive analysis involves a recursive process of double-fitting data and theories and focuses on finding new insights from the data to then inform the creation of new theories (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014, p. 179). Different lines of enquiry evolved throughout the research process as a result of iterative interactions between the theories that were developed at the start (based on radical democracy and everyday makers) and the emerging empirical data. New insights were sparked through this correspondence to inform the ideas behind everyday radicalism that are presented in this article.

Using film can capture the embodied aspects of everyday life that are often neglected from textual accounts. Becker (1974) notes how visual sociologists will

often avoid just waiting for 'something interesting' to happen. This increases the possibilities of including aspects of everyday life that might not necessarily have been in the researcher's original thoughts. As several of the women did not want to be filmed directly talking to the camera, the initial design for the documentary had to be adapted. Following this, cameras were given to participants for a trip that they made to Scotland. 13 disposable cameras were given out with simple instructions to try and photograph what Mums' Mart did.

The visual data produced through the research opened a new line of inquiry about the creation of spaces of rupture. This new insight on rupture was opened up as the photographs provided a clear contrast between mundane everyday life and the more memorable moments that stand out from the pictures. This flash of insight has been of critical importance in developing the concept of everyday radicalism. Interviews were done with 13 members of Mums' Mart. The aims of these interviews were to discuss reflections on the challenges that the participants experience daily and then explore the ways in which Mums' Mart was providing support to be able to address some of these.

The sections below will relate the practices of the Mums' Mart to the theories of everyday radicalism.

4. Moments of Dissensus: Breaking from Everyday Marginality

Everyday radicalism begins with a rupture from dominant social relations. This rejection of the present enables an immanent critique of the political economy. The case study explored how Mums' Mart was breaking from established everyday practices and discourses that are shaped by marginality. This marginality produces inequalities that are experienced through everyday life. The manifestations of these inequalities were identified by participants as a lack of access to spaces of social support, anxiety and insecurity, a lack of resources to participate in social life, and stigmatisation due to the participants' positions as working class mothers.

The following quote is from an interview with a Mums' Mart participant, a lone parent working in the care industry, talking about when she and Greg (the organiser of UEW), decided to set up the Mums' Mart:

> the reason Mums' Mart got set up in the first place was because I had a conversation with Greg, in the school playground, because I'd come out of school crying about some anxiety issues my son had. And it led us to a conversation about our kids and, I can't afford to take my kids out. He was saying that's what the kids need, a day trip out. And he said…there's a few mum's that I've spoken to who are, you know, a bit down and, they're in similar situations. Shall we all get together and have a meal? I got that support when I needed it. So, it's important to me to help other people, who need it.

This 'moment' could be seen to represent a break from the everyday life of the participant, who had spoken about working part-time in the care industry with low-pay and regular occurrences of financial insecurity. She had also shared the impacts of domestic abuse that she had experienced. The participant's rejection of struggling alone with the injustices of her everyday life can be analysed as both a critique of the present and the opening up of the possibilities for alternative spaces and social relations.

The story told by the participant conjures up a moment of rupture when she had reached the end of her tolerance and become unable, or unwilling, to put up with her social situation any longer. This moment marks both a rejection of the present and her everyday realities of not being able to take her children out anywhere, as well as the need to do something about it. Put simply, the participant was fed up and decided with someone else to try and make a change (within the limitations of her power that are set by the social and political context of her life).

This moment reflects what Holloway (2012, p. 19) might describe as a "no…backed by an 'other doing'" in which the 'no…is not a closure, but an opening to a different activity, the threshold of a counter-world with a different logic and a different language'. The idea of a threshold reflects the original point of rejection and the basis of departure that is intended by the idea of rupture.

One of the Mums' Mart participants, a mother of three children, noted the mundane challenges of everyday life she experienced:

> It's the repetitiveness of getting up, getting the kids ready, getting them to school, sort the house out, washing, ironing, going to work, coming home, getting the kids tea ready, bath, bed. It's constant. Every day it doesn't change. And that makes it mundane…there's nothing. There's nothing new. You know what I mean. Everything is the same, day in, day out, whatever you do. And there's nothing else to do. There's nowhere else to go. It can be challenging. When you've got young kids as well, and there's nothing to do with them. Then, what can you do? Everywhere else you go it's just too expensive. If you've got more than one child, you can't afford to do it. There's nothing in this area for people to do, so you need more money for transport, to get to where you want to be.

The mother's quote above shows some of the difficulties she experiences in her everyday life. Many of the participants from Mums' Mart spoke about being excluded from being able to do activities with their children; of the isolation of being the main carer; and about mental health problems that they experienced. These problems can reveal social injustice when viewed through a critical sociological reading of everyday life that problematises what might initially appear as mundane. The moment that Mums' Mart was established can be seen through the analytical prism of radical democracy as a

collective rejection against structures of inequality and patriarchy, although the participants did not expressly formulate it in such terms. The moment of Mums' Mart becoming established represents a practice of everyday politics, marked through a rejection of the 'mundane' every day that is shaped by structural forces of inequality and discrimination. This refusal opens the possibilities for an alternative experience of everyday life.

5. The Creation of Spaces of Collective Rebellion Against the Politics of Poverty

Everyday radicalism includes a dimension of the ways in which the practice of everyday makers can create an alternative way of 'doing'. Relating Mums' Mart to the concept of everyday radicalism, these practices can be seen as the beginning of a microscopic alternative against the politics of poverty in the UK. The dominant politics of poverty individualises blame for poverty and ignores the structural inequalities that are produced and reproduced through the political economy. As the impacts of structural injustices and inequality are largely neglected in public policy discourses, the problems of poverty become re-packaged and reframed as a problem of the deficits within people who are marginal to the political economy. Mothers living in poverty are a target for stigmatising discourses. Jensen (2012) argues that a key element of this 'culturalisation of poverty' can be seen around notions of 'poor parenting'. Jensen argues that through this pathologising narrative, poverty is constructed as the product of 'poor' conduct and behaviour, rather than the result of deeply entrenched systemic inequalities.

In contrast to the dominant politics of poverty, Mums' Mart provides a non-judgmental site of everyday support. The creation of a non-judgemental space through Mums' Mart came up in all the interviews, and was described by a participant of Mums' Mart who cared for her son with disabilities:

> That's the most important thing ever. Because even though people say they don't care what people think about them, they do. We're all worried that we're not doing the right thing. We're all worried that we're not parenting right you know, we're all worried that, you know people looking down on us…but nobody knows each other's circumstances, whereas here…everyone's got a different story. No one judges that person or that person, whereas outside of Mums' Mart, you don't tell everybody the ins and outs of your business.

The participants spoke about how being together creates networks of care that were previously absent in their lives. All the participants of Mums' Mart identified the value of shared experiences as the basis for generating solidarity and the creation of a non-judgmental space. Framed through everyday radicalism, Mums' Mart can be seen as a collective site of resistance to stigma. Jensen and Tyler (2015, p. 485) identify the need for a critical challenge to the 'hegemony of a hardening anti-welfare common sense' and argue that the experiences of people who are most directly affected should be paid particular attention. Learning from the DIY social action of Mums' Mart can provide both a critique of the present and a contribution to knowledge about an alternative practice that establishes (on a micro-level) a different set of social relations.

That Mums' Mart have created this space themselves is significant. Tyler (2013, p. 12) identifies the limitations of options that exist for many people living in marginalised communities; she argues that the possibilities for marginalised people to change their lives through mobility, work or even escape from the system are not generally open. Tyler characterises this through a sense of 'capture' in which people are trapped as perceived 'failed' or 'non' citizens. This entrapment drives people to rebellion and it is through this act that political agency is exercised. Everyday collective rebellion can be interpreted a deliberate act by everyday makers to change their world. The attempt to create an alternative everyday can collectively generate power and agency within marginalised communities. On a practical level, the participants from Mums' Mart create opportunities to be able to take their children away together by raising money through the market that they cooperatively established and run every month. The impact of collectively developing agency is explained by the participant who had the original conversations that led to Mums' Mart being established:

> With my own situation being through mental and emotional abuse, you know you're left feeling kind of worthless and rubbish. And doing the markets, it gave me purpose; it made me feel like I was doing something important. Helping other people and earning money for ourselves…that's important to me. I don't expect things to be given to me on a plate; I want to work hard for them.

Mums' Mart illustrates DIY social action that brings immediate improvements to the everyday lives of marginalised women and their families, while representing a practice of collective rebellion against material and symbolic injustices. Through the production of alternative social relations, the possibilities of conceptualising new futures are opened up, both for the women and beyond. Building on these practices as a basis to re-conceptualise dominant frameworks of political economy can potentially position Mums' Mart as a prefigurative space for marginalised women, which is created by marginalised women.

6. Mutual Education and Becoming Pre-Figurative

While Mums' Mart has not deliberately formulated their practices in prefigurative ways, it might be considered

that they are creating an alternative to the dominant political frameworks of injustice and stigmatisation on a micro-scale. Reflecting back on Yates' five conditions of prefigurative politics and relating them to the findings from the case study, Mums' Mart can be seen to be prefigurative in four of the dynamics: Mums' Mart are experimenting with alternative approaches to social life by creating a space in which marginalised women can participate more meaningfully in society through being able to enjoy things that are considered to be a part of a minimum standard of living; they are developing new collective interactions and norms between participants through the creation of therapeutic networks of care among previously atomised and marginalised individuals; they are temporarily and symbolically changing their material environment, opening up spaces for a new 'everyday' through establishing a market where they are cooperatively in charge and going to places they would otherwise not be able to visit beyond their estate; and they have connected with organisations beyond their immediate group across the UK and with Shack/Slum Dwellers International.

The only dynamic that is missing from the conditions for prefigurative politics that Yates defined is that unlike defined 'prefigurative groups', Mums' Mart do not explicitly 'host, develop and critique political perspectives, ideas and social movement frames' (Yates, 2015, p. 14). For Yates it is the inclusion of 'perspectives' that distinguishes prefiguration as a political approach compared to counter-cultural projects that lack 'either a collective vision or preparedness to act in order to change wider society'. While the Mums' Mart participants have not explicitly or strategically developed a collective vision to change society, this does not mean that they do not have critical political perspectives that are collectively shared and practised. The re-conceptualisation of social life practised on a microscopic scale by the Mums' Mart can be seen in terms of distributed and generative relations of power based on cooperation, a feminist ethic of care, solidarity and considerations of social equality. Mums' Mart represents the beginning of a shared set of practices that reflect a collective vision, which can be developed as a basis of prefiguring a more just future.

There is potential to open up sites of mutual education between everyday makers and radical scholars to explore and connect ideas, knowledges and experiences. Radical pedagogical approaches articulated by Freire (1970) based on participatory approaches to support investigation, education and action can be applied with everyday radicalism. An adaptable concept of everyday radicalism can provide a basis for generative dialogue with everyday makers that can bring together theories of radical democracy with experiential knowledge and narratives of making tangible impacts on society. Through meaningful engagement, the practices of everyday makers can potentially become prefigurative and generate knowledge to inform the democratic imagination, while theories of radical democracy can be iteratively developed. This dialogic encounter between theory and practice is the next stage in the conceptual development of everyday radicalism.

7. Conclusion

Mums' Mart has been described in this article as a collective practice by women who face similar challenges as a result of marginality. The women have begun to form therapeutic networks of care to reduce isolation and support each other. Their collective practices reflect the development of everyday social solidarities, which form the basis of Mums Marts' more cooperative approach. These cooperative relationships stand in distinction to the competitive and individualised social relations inherent the dominant mode of political economy. Mums' Mart provides an illustration of how everyday makers can provide an alternative to the status quo on a micro scale.

This article has argued that the DIY social action of 'everyday makers' can be related to theories of radical democracy to contribute knowledge for the development of social and political alternatives beyond the immediate context in which they are operating. A framework for everyday radicalism has been introduced to inform and shape this knowledge production. Everyday radicalism begins with an understanding of the elements of rupture that break away from conventional practices of everyday life, and the ways in which this serves as a critique of the present and an opening into alternative worlds. The second component of everyday radicalism is collective rebellion, explained as social activity that constitutes a deliberate act to change the immediate world in tangible ways and generate new forms of agency and power. Finally, the critique and development of an alternative has been connected to ideas of prefigurative politics to provide a basis for generating further dialogue that can inform the democratic imagination.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Self-Organisation and the Co-Production of Governance: The Challenge of Local Responses to Climate Change

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Abstract
The arena of locally embedded and engendered responses to climate change offers a particularly fruitful and challenging space in which to scrutinise the encounters between established forms of governance and knowledge as they become entwined with locally generated forms of self-organisation. The issue of climate change offers a particularly fertile case for study because to date it has largely been dominated by state and market-based responses and associated forms of governance selectively articulated with knowledge generated through scientific and expert modes of knowledge. The central focus of the article is on identifying the variegated forms of understanding associated with the groups we researched and how they drew upon/utilised knowledge (knowledge-in-action) vis-à-vis the governance of ecological politics and environmental governance. The article draws on case studies of self-organising locally based groups in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom that are addressing climate change, in a broad sense, within their locality. These groups represent a range of responses to the issue and associated modes of action, exhibit different levels and forms of 'organisation' and may challenge more established forms of governance and knowledge in different ways.

Keywords
climate change; comparative; governance; Q-Sort method; self-organisation; urban; urban governance

Issue
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1. Introduction

In this article we address the issue of how forms of locally generated self-organisation interact with (or do not) existing forms of state and market-based forms of governance on ecological issues covering a variety of 'green' politics like energy supply, agriculture or sustainable communities and neighbourhoods. We deal with the associated knowledge forms they incorporate and establish to co-produce their own knowledge and forms of governance. In particular we consider how locally embedded and engendered self-organised responses to climate change encounter and interact with, or relate to (perhaps negatively), established forms of governance and knowledge. Our central focus is on identifying the variegated forms of knowledge associated with our groups and how they draw upon/utilise that knowledge (knowledge-in-action) vis-à-vis the governance of ecological politics and environmental governance.

The empirical context for this article draws on the on-going research of the SELFCITY research project.[1] This project explicitly set out to investigate how selected urban and regional place-based forms of self-organisation (cf. Boonstra & Boelens, 2011) develop new forms of 'collective governance' and action. We sought to understand how they contribute to the enhancement of innovative societal capacity and the potential for societal transition in the face of climate change.

The article is structured as follows: we first briefly review the literature on self-organisation, governance and knowledge before then moving on to outline the methods used in our research, and finally to consider the implications of our, still incomplete, research for the issues raised above.

2. Self-Organisation, Governance and Knowledge

The literature on governance is massive and we cannot review it here, but generally speaking the approach aims to describe and comprehend changes in the process and meaning of governing. The emphasis is on network forms of governance in multi-actor arrangements and processes of self-governing (see Kooiman, 2002, pp. 71–73). From this perspective governance is a means of coordinating social action organised around vertical, horizontal and cooperative mechanisms in contrast to traditional state intervention and control from above. Thus governance signifies alterations in the institutional arrangements for the coordination of action (Newman, 2001, p. 26) and the role of government in this process becomes contingent (Pierre & Stoker, 2002, p. 29). Governance represents a way of organising social action through vertical, horizontal and cooperative mechanisms in contrast to more traditional hierarchical forms such as bureaucracy (Börzel & Risse, 2010; Dardot & Laval, 2013; Rothfuß & Korff, 2015; Shamir, 2008).[2] However, it is important to bear in mind that the concept is used somewhat differently according to national and political contexts and we need to be cognisant of the argument developed by van Kersbergen and van Waarden (2004) that governance offers a linguistic frame of reference in which to understand complex patterns of collective action and associated changing processes of governing that encompasses various forms and procedures for coordinating action (e.g. hierarchical, horizontal).

By contrast focussing on self-organisation may be seen as an approach which seeks to understand notions of social norming, social learning and social change within communities/groups and their forms of organising and acting in response to locally encountered and constructed problems (Seyfang & Smith, 2007). It is a way of institutionalising new social relationships deriving from (or establishing) a variety of local networks (Atkinson, Dörfler, Hasanov, Rothfuß, & Smith, 2017), which offers potential new pathways for the emergence of 'alternative forms of governance'. It is achieved through encounters, perhaps of a serendipitous nature, that lead to the identification of mutual interests, positions and relations based on shared knowledge, values and norms (see Mayntz, 2006; Ostrom, 1990; Ostrom, Burger, Field, Norgaard, & Policansky, 1999); in our case about the nature and future chances of tangible sustainable efforts. While Ostrom et al. (1999, p. 278) show the concept itself is not new, particularly when it comes to managing collective (or common-pool) resources, in contrast to their approach we would argue that self-organising is a key element in an open and non-linear process based on and mediated by a mutual intentionality through dynamic micro-level interactions with structural forces that operate as a potential driver for sustainable transformation of societies. Thus, we argue that the emphasis on governments or markets has not produced significant changes in adaptation to a sustainable future in general and more specifically to climate change and that the role(s) of local forms of collective self-organisation have been neglected (see Klein, 2014).

These interactions *may* generate trust derived from newly established individual relationships which, over time and through further interactions, become articulated through collaboration that can create a form of 'collective intentionality' (cf. Hasanov & Beaumont, 2016; Searle, 2006). Here trust emerges from repeated reciprocal encounters between people within specific organizational, social and spatial settings and, where this reciprocity occurs, takes on a self-reinforcing character. Self-organisation is therefore the process by which social relations, common in loose networks, are stabilized through the collective definition of mutual interests, positions and aims. This can become an alternative, 'new' way of (local) governance based on collective practices 'in addition to' or 'beyond' existing trajectories of political and social engagements, typical of parties, associations, (voluntary) welfare work, etc. It is based on 'self-made' bottom-up policies at a local level, offering the *potential* to influence sub-national intermediates (i.e. those closest to it) of the wider political system.

Self-organisation can take on many different forms as it develops within local contexts in response to locally experienced and defined 'problems'. Given this, in terms of an attempt to identify an 'overarching definition' of self-organisation, we need to exercise caution. There are multiple ways of defining self-organisation that are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Two examples will suffice to illustrate this: Nederhand, Bekkers and Voorberg (2014, p. 2) describe self-organisation as a 'collective process

[1] SELFCITY (Collective governance, innovation and creativity in the face of climate change; see www.selfcity- project.com) is a three-year research project under the umbrella of JPI Climate with partners from Germany (University of Bayreuth), the Netherlands (University of Groningen) and the United Kingdom (University of the West of England, Bristol). The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect those of the funding organisations or the other members of the research team.

[2] However, we should point out that this does not rule out that the move to governance may lead to centralised, hierarchical exclusionary ways of organising or that bureaucracies cannot evolve to become more flexible and open (cf. Atkinson & Klausen, 2011).

of communication, choice, and mutual adjustment of behavior resulting in the emergence of ordered structures'; while for Boonstra and Boelens (2011) it is the absence of government involvement and thus of external control (see also Boonstra, 2015). As we focus on forms of self-organising which, in some cases,[3] have consciously chosen not to engage with established forms of governance, we found that they did this to demonstrate that there are alternative ways of organising society. Meerkerk, van Boonstra and Edelenbos (2013) point out that self-organised initiatives represent a challenge to existing governance structures, yet evolve together within existing institutional settings. In our research we discovered that some of the initiatives we researched and engaged with explicitly wanted to achieve a certain level of autonomy and independence from—in their view sometimes unsatisfying, instrumental and ineffective—modes of existing 'green policy', which is usually characterised by state or market lead attempts, such as supporting 'green', sustainable technology (solar panels, e-mobility, etc.).

In terms of our approach, while acknowledging the value of the examples provided above and the need to build upon them, the most fruitful way of doing this and of understanding these motives and intentions for self-organising is a twofold one. On the one hand our research approach is praxeological and seeks to identify the particular interests and aims people pursue, and understands these 'performances' as a certain form of practice, a way of leading a sustainable life at a concrete, local and everyday level. We attempted to reconstruct the mechanisms noted above that led to the emergence of self-organisation along with the associated forms of meaning and knowledge that were developed and deployed to identify particular courses of action appropriate for the local contexts they operated in.

Thus the process of self-organising is a dynamic one that takes place (if it takes place) in response to the development of shared local understandings of issues and how to address them. Empirically it is important to focus on the way groups achieve this (the level of practice and how to organise/assemble things) and how they develop a certain form of local power, of competence and influence (the level of micro-governance—how do they attract people, achieve change in the local context). On the other hand, we drew on a discursive method by using the Q-Sort method to identify groupings of 'attitudes' that represent particular 'types of activism' within each of the groups and the associated discourse/narrative participants deployed to explain their choices for their specific engagement (see the following section).

Put simply the implications of the above are that self-organisation *may* pose a challenge to existing forms of governance or an alternative to them; how then does self-organisation relate to systems of governance? Within the existing literature there has been a focus on how state, market and civil society sectors are articulated with a growing emphasis on networks which represent a plurality of actors and the organisational forms this takes (see Kooiman, 2002, pp. 71–73). By following Burris (2004, p. 336) who defines governance as 'the management of the course of events in a social system', it 'involves looking at context-specific, historically contingent and fundamentally political processes of the establishment, the operation, the negotiation and contestation of social institutions and how these are constantly 'brought to life' through social practices' (Etzold, 2013, p. 38). The concept of governance involves the purposive efforts by both state and non-state actors to 'steer' society towards the pursuit of particular goals and interests (see Kauffman, 2016; Kjaer, 2004).[4]

How then does self-organisation relate to these idealised two poles of governance? As self-organisation is a means of action 'from below', it emphasises interaction and discussion between participants leading to the identification of relevant (local) issues. This usually leads to the formation of an accompanying 'discourse/narrative' of problem definition (although this may be implicit rather than explicit), because those engaged need to develop a more or less common ground of conviction and knowledge regarding how to do things differently. As this may challenge and subvert existing governance forms it provides alternative ways of doing things, it potentially offers new ways of 'governing from below' that reflects local contexts and understandings of problems. So the initial mutual interest of some people to organise things in a different way links common convictions with the need to develop new forms of localised practice, which may produce new forms of shared (local) knowledge, albeit not in the codified form typical of scientific or professional type, but of a more tacit, incorporated and personal nature (Polanyi, 1958).

To be brief, for us knowledge is concerned with processes of sense making, the development and enhancement of capacities to act, and decision-making procedures. This also involves comparisons and assessment of the 'costs' (albeit not in terms of cost-benefit analysis) of action (or inaction), but it also involves judgements and values in relation to these assessments. In essence we are advocating a pragmatist perspective in which knowledge is always related to social processes of communicative interpretation, and associated narratives, which has as its objective the development of a shared understanding of how to enhance our capacity to 'do things'. Increasingly the literature has recognised a variety of forms of knowledge (Andersen & Atkinson, 2013; Matthiesen, 2005, 2009; Matthiesen & Reisinger, 2011), ranging from scientific, professional to everyday and local. Our concern is with identifying the forms of everyday and local

[3] As will become clear later some of our groups do choose to engage with existing forms of governance.

[4] Moreover, in addition to political modes of governing societies are also governed by the 'invisible hand' of the market which also allocates (societal) resources and structures the scope for what is deemed possible in terms of action. Although this will vary between societies depending upon the social values and mores in which market systems are anchored.

knowledge developed and drawn upon by the groups we engaged with.

3. Research Methods and Results

The SELFCITY project carried out research on three self-organising groups in Germany, two in the Netherlands and two in the United Kingdom. These groups were selected on the basis that they were consistent with the definition of self-organisation that we developed based on the literature review carried out in the first phase of the research. Based on this we sought to cover a range of self-organising activities that reflected the wide variety of groups involved in addressing climate change in its various manifestations at local level. Thus no claim is made that these groups are necessarily 'representative' in terms of a traditional sampling frame; merely that they characterize the variation of such self-organising groups that include climate change within their activities, albeit combined with other activities related to sustainability and social interaction.[5] The way we have approached this is to take the position that there is no one-way to address climate change, that local context, and the problems/issues and how they are problematised, affecting each context, vary both nationally and locally. In other words the groups do not exist in splendid isolation from the wider national, regional and local situations in which they exist and these shape/structure the context in which they operate. We would argue that is consistent with the variegated notion of self-organisation we have adopted. Moreover, climate change can comfortably exist within a wider spectrum of issues about how to live in a sustainable way.

Given the wide-ranging definition of self-organising that we adopted the initiatives we included in the research were diverse, including: a 'transition town', two energy coops, a 'transition house', a free café, a climate change group and an ecological garden. All did, however, meet our working definition of self-organisation and were, albeit in different ways, concerned with addressing climate change, although in a number of cases this was one among a number of aims.

The part of research we focus on here was concerned to reconstruct the variety of motives inspiring people to engage in the respective groups. This was based on the use of Q-Sort methodology which involved a statistical analysis of attitudes towards ecological issues, based on quantitative Q-Sort methodology (see Barry & Proops, 1999; Jeffares & Skelcher, 2011; Watts & Stenner, 2005). To the best of our knowledge no other research into climate change has deployed this approach, although Fischer, Holstead, Hendrickson, Virkkula and Prampolini (2017) have carried out broadly similar research to distinguish individual attitudes in community groups addressing low carbon initiatives (we will return to their findings in the Discussion and Conclusion section).

The primary reason for using this approach was that based on the project's research questions Q-methodology would allow us to explore the position that self-organisation occupied in the broader societal response to climate change; distinct from state and market led responses (including state led responses that foreground traditional ideas of participation). We then hypothesised that 'self-organised' groups will interpret the challenge of climate change in a particular manner and will have a certain degree of agency in responding to this challenge. We used the method to explore these interpretations along with (normative and empirical) ideas of agency and response. Thus allowing us to investigate questions such as: How do self-organised groups think about their role in the response to climate change—is this complementary to 'mainstream' state and market efforts, or does self-organisation respond to needs and aspirations that would otherwise be marginalised or excluded? Does it provide alternative ways of organising that challenge existing forms of governance?

It is important to note that Q-Sort is a mixed methodology. It is based on 'qualitative decisions' made by researchers in terms of reviewing the relevant literature and on this basis defining the 'problem/issue' and deriving the statements to be used in the investigation of the attitudes of participants. It then uses factor analysis to analyse the range of statements and organise them into 'sorts' or 'types'.

Q-Methodology seeks to identify personal attitudes towards certain topics (such as sustainability or climate change), which is related to and are derived from the 'concourse';[6] this emerges from the way respondents select and group typical answers and attitudes. These answers and attitudes are derived from selected literature in the field which we put on 47 cards that the interviewees were asked to consider and then arrange across a scale to reflect their personal relevance. They were also asked to explain their choices. The whole method as a research cycle is grounded in a process of five basic steps: (1) representing the concourse (scope of debate) as a series of statements, (2) sampling the statements, (3) constructing a sample of respondents, (4) conducting the Q-Sort interviews and (5) factor analysis with interpretation.

[5] Additional work based on the European Social Survey (http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/data) also highlighted the fact that there were different rates of and attitudes towards volunteering between the three countries. Volunteering was used as a proxy of the propensity of individuals to come together and to participate in activities to address issues such as climate change. Thus the use of Q-Sort was intended to further, and more specifically, investigate attitudes towards climate change (and sustainability) in our groups and any cross- national differences between them (although we do consider the latter in this article).

[6] The concourse refers to the range of debates/issues around a particular topic, in our case climate change. This was done through an exhaustive review of the academic and policy literature. On this basis a series of 'short statements' were constructed that reflected the range of debates/issues in the literature. The concourse is of course the key sample and we are investigating the attitudes of individuals within our groups towards the concourse. Both core and peripheral members of the groups were invited to participate in order to capture the full range of those involved from our groups and to see if there were variations between them.

Jeffares & Skelcher (2011, p. 6) describe Q-Sort in the following terms:

> Q methodology involves each participant in the sample (the P sample) sorting a series of statements (a Q sample) representative of the breadth of debate on an issue (the concourse) into a distribution of preference (a Q-Sort) from which statistically significant factors are derived.

We carried out a pilot study of the statements to ensure they were relevant and comprehendible statements, made amendments on the basis of the study and these were then selected to be used with our participants. In the Dutch case the English version of the statements were used while in the German case these were translated by members of the German research team. Overall, the three research teams were able to collect 89 Q-Sort-interviews, ranging from 10–20 cases per initiative. Participants were asked about why they selected particular statements and placed them in positions on a scale and these discussions were recorded.

By using Q-Sort we sought to identify groupings of 'attitudes' that represented particular 'types of participants' within each of the groups and the associated discourse/narrative participants deployed to explain their choices. In addition the results from all three countries were brought together and additional statistical analysis carried out to identify commonalities and differences in response between countries, but also to attempt to identify 'common cross-national types'. Thus the Q-Sort process produced two kinds of data: a pyramid of response preferences (i.e., respondents order 47 statements into a pyramid of preferences) and interview recordings (notes and recorded interview) where respondents explain why they selected statements that were most/least important to them. This explanation then provided insights into their wider understanding of the issue(s) and the extent to which it was 'consistent' or made up of potentially 'contradictory' attitudes. Figure 1 shows the steps in our analysis.

Given that we have sought to link particular discourses to the Q-Sort analysis we need to briefly state how we define 'discourse'. Firstly, we need to recognise that the term 'discourse' does not refer to a unified body of work, there are a wide variety of theories of discourse (see Atkinson, Held, & Jeffares, 2011, for an overview). Furthermore, following Jameson (1989), we see narrative as a key epistemological category through which we gain knowledge of the world in the form of stories. Narratives are a way of presenting and re-presenting the world, or particular aspects of it, in a textual form that understands the world in a particular way. However, we should not take these 'stories' at face value, we need to consider how such individual narratives are related to wider social and power structures in society.

Based on the statistical factor analysis of the responses from the groups in our three countries and the qualitative reconstruction of meaning structures obtained through the accompanying discussions about why respondents decided to place particular statements in their position on the scale, four 'distinct types' of self-organising emerged:

- *Radical Green.* This group displayed attitudes that were radical and 'anti-systemic' (i.e., they blamed capitalism and 'global elites' for the current ecological crisis), embodying a critique of neo-liberalism and a challenge to the authority of the state. There was an explicit rejection of the state and a desire to develop alternative governing structures from below. They also viewed the environment as a 'public good', not to be exploited for profit. In addition they questioned the forms of knowledge deployed by governing elites to justify their actions. Furthermore, they considered that decisions were too often made about a local community by elites far away and with no commitment to or even knowledge of the places they affected. Thus they placed considerable emphasis on alternative knowledge forms and 'local knowledge'—i.e., which were produced locally through people's

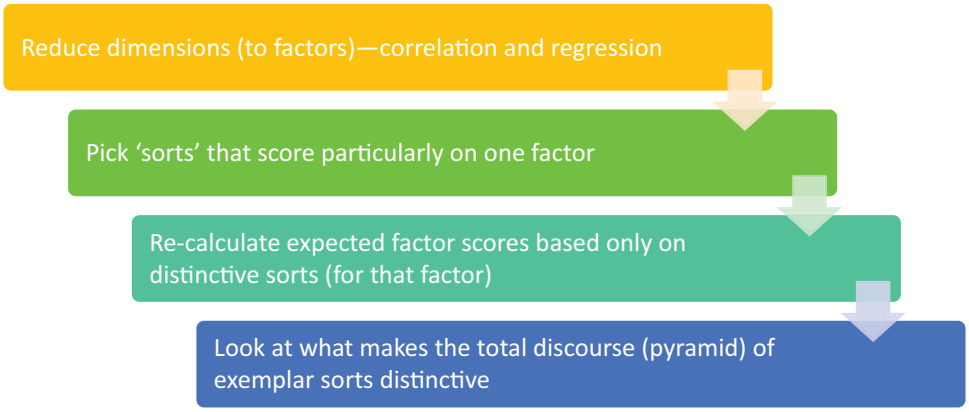

Figure 1. Steps in Q-sort analysis.

everyday experiences and understanding of how climate change impacts locally. It is not too great a stretch to suggest that they saw the prevailing dominant knowledge as selective products designed to support the existing (capitalist) system. There is an underlying assumption that the current capitalism system of production and consumption is the cause of the current ecological crisis and that it will inevitably collapse. Thus developing alternative ways of producing and consuming was seen as a way to protect local communities against this and lay the basis for an alternative society developed from below.

- *Consensus Builders*: Their focus was on working with/engaging with the existing system of governance to bring about change through consensus building. There was no desire to create a new system rather the aim was to ensure that ecological issues were at the heart of the policy agenda and the 'collective intentionality' of all those engaged in action to address ecological issues whether from the public, private or civil society sectors. Nor was there a rejection of the market, again the emphasis was on ensuring that ecological issues were addressed by market forces in the sense that they be central to the decision-making structures of investors, firms and consumers (i.e., at the heart of both production and consumption). This embodied an Ecological Modernist approach (see Mol & Spaargaren, 2000), a belief that technological developments could address issues such as climate change within a market framework and a desire to mainstream these changes in production technologies (i.e., create a 'green economy'). Nor did this entail a belief that living standards, in Western societies, needed to be limited or actually reduced. There was very much a focus on the development of 'win-win' scenarios whereby all sectors of society could benefit from the development and use of green technologies. Whilst not rejecting existing forms of knowledge there was an argument that these forms of knowledge need to be supplemented by new 'green' forms of knowledge arising from new technological niches and that they needed to be institutionalised in the thinking and action of both the state and market sectors. Similarly, whilst there was no outright reject of prevailing governance forms there was a recognition that more flexible governance forms needed to be developed that both supported the development of 'green technological niches' and facilitated the dissemination of these technologies and their embedding in the actions of states and markets.
- *Eco-egalitarian*: This approach was based on the notion of 'Green Limits to Growth' allied with an emphasis on social justice. Thus there was a recognition that the current system of production and consumption was unsustainable and needed to be changed (some respondents argued it need to be changed radically). Implicitly this entailed an argument that new knowledge forms associated with the above needed to be mainstreamed, in some cases this was thought to require the displacement of existing dominant notions of profitability and consumption and ideas of ever increasing levels of consumption as being a 'good thing' because it was a driver of, unsustainable and inequitable, economic growth. Moreover, it requires a wide-ranging rethink of features central to current production systems such as 'built in redundancy' of products and continuous minor upgrading of consumer products (e.g., smart phones) to encourage consumers to dispose of 'old' products and replace them with new ones. In terms of engaging with prevailing systems of governance a variety of attitudes were present: ranging from what might be described as 'reforming' to 'rejection'. At least implicitly this entailed a reduction in Western living standards in order to distribute growth more equitably globally. It also required the development of new production technologies that were ecologically friendly and that those living in the Global South should benefit from any such developments. This 'type' shared some similarities with both *Radical Greens* and *Consensus Builders*, but their placing of the statements and explanations were sufficiently different and coherent to justify their classification as a distinct 'type'.
- *Community Builders*: This group did exhibit a number of *Radical Green* ideals (such as a view that the existing system of production and consumption was part of the problem), but emerged as distinctive through their conviction that local collective action is primarily concerned with constructing a sense of 'togetherness' which is a 'good thing' in its own right and that creating a 'sense of place' is a central part of local collective action. Here the main focus was on local action and the construction of communities of place and interest. There was an overwhelming focus on bringing about change at the local level as a way of demonstrating the possibility of alternative 'ways of doing things' and living. The forms of thinking and practice they identified ranged from an emphasis on locally grown food, to local food and resource sourcing by businesses (e.g., shops/businesses should display the provenance of the goods they sold/supplied) to the development of locally based distribution systems and the development of new forms of ecologically friendly (local) systems of production. Here local knowledge forms generated by everyday experiences and 'learning by doing' were given a privileged status and dominant knowledge forms were viewed with suspicion. What was lacking was a thorough going critique of these forms and the provision of a formalised body of alternative

> knowledge. At least implicitly there was a strong suspicion of existing forms of governance and in some cases an explicit desire not to engage with them, in some cases there was an outright rejection because prevailing governance forms were seen to be 'part of the problem'.

While three of the groups do share certain 'radical' attitudes towards climate change significant differences remain between them in terms of how they understand climate change and the way(s) it can be addressed. Moreover, these four groupings do begin to allow us to identify distinct discourses and accompanying narratives which offer different ways of addressing climate change and relating to the prevailing modes of governance in their situations. What most groups do share is the view, that current climate change policies are regarded as too abstract, or too 'far away' from their practical everyday experiences to be of use to them; therefore 'doing sustainability' is seen as more important for their practices—by this we mean that they are primarily oriented towards doing things rather than seeking to theorise about it, although the *Radical Greens*, *Eco-egalitarians* and *Consensus Builders* did, at least implicitly draw on a more 'theoretical' body of knowledge to justify their positions. While *Community-Builders* placed a much greater emphasis on local knowledge generated by everyday experiences, and 'learning by doing'; for them these forms were considered more appropriate and relevant to the issues of (local) climate change and sustainable lifestyles than other forms of knowledge.

However, it should not be assumed that all the individual members of the four groupings shared a common action frame of reference and that they acted according to a 'strict logic' consistent with the overarching group description we have given. In some cases groups were more homogeneous, with their membership falling overwhelmingly into one of the four groupings. Other groups included a mix of individuals expressing these attitudes and in these cases groups specifically avoided discussing wider issues choosing to focus on the 'immediate task at hand' (i.e., the main objective they had been founded to achieve—an example is the German energy coop) to side-step debates that might undermine the group's coherence.

The 'types' identified also demonstrated their distinctive traits vis-à-vis action. For instance, the *Consensus Builders* are willing to engage with existing forms of governance with the intention of bringing about change through processes of 'ecological modernisation', perhaps based on niches developing new technologies and forms of action that demonstrate they can be profitable and therefore to show how things can be done 'better' by utilising green technologies. By doing this it is possible to build a consensus around them that will lead to the mainstreaming of green technologies and associated 'ways of doing things'. This also has implications for forms of engagement with other stakeholders, in particular the market sector, which needs to be convinced to use such technologies. But it also requires support from government in terms of regulation and the use/allocation of resources to support these developments.

In contrast, the *Radical Greens* seem to be intrinsically driven by ethical norms and 'sustainable practices' in a broad sense (inclusion, consensual decision-making, money-free space, vegetarian/vegan nutrition, etc.). Some members describe their initiatives as 'laboratories for utopias'. They claim not to be 'eco-political' in a classic sense, but see themselves as implicitly political by practicing an ecological, non-capitalist way of life in their own created 'interstitial' spaces for freedom through collaboration and by practicing a non-esoteric 'being-together'. The form of governance here was collaborative, deliberative and experimental; it aimed to demonstrate alternative ways of organising.

Somewhat differently *Eco-egalitarians* are engaged in practices which secure or enable autonomy. For instance members of a solidarian agriculture sub-group sought to develop a collective 'feeling' that they were able to exist 'independently from the system'; they were searching for a form of 'authenticity' by acting and communicating with one another. It was not enough for group members to have the 'right' moral convictions, they wished to see them *practically* at work when they collaborated with one another. For them this represented 'evidence' that a more just, environmentally-friendly way of living is possible by relying on the 'practicing body' (gardening, cultivating). The range of leadership here varied between 'non-hierarchical' to respectful-charismatic. The 'art of collaboration' is central to their collective intentionality and how they understand 'ecological governance' in terms of developing new pathways to address what they see as fundamental human needs (nutrition, housing, psychological well-being, etc.).

The *Community Builders* focussed on place and how to develop new ways of governing local communities through a 'deliberative' trial and error process, but essentially a form of governance that was non-hierarchical and inclusive. However, the overall focus was inward looking. Unlike the evidence reported in some other studies (e.g. Hadden, 2015; Kauffmann, 2016) they had little or no desire to engage with existing forms of governance or to transform it. On the other hand, as noted by Hadden (2015) and Kauffmann (2016) in their work, they challenged/questioned existing dominant knowledge forms and definitions of the problem being much more concerned with locally generated knowledge based in everyday life, 'learning by doing' and local production and consumption. Despite this questioning they did not seek to transform the wider knowledge landscape or problem definition believing that the existing system had 'failed' and their objective was to provide a practical demonstration that it was possible to develop alternative 'ways of living' and organising.

In terms of their degree of organisation and professionalisation our groups once again displayed consider-

able variation ranging from 'highly organised and professionalised' (most notably the *Consensus Builders*) to much more 'loosely structured' and 'amateur'. The more organised and professionalised groups tended to have a clearer, arguably more hierarchical, organisational structure and a focus on achieving particular tasks. For instance, three of these groups were registered charities with a board of trustees and received financial support from a variety of sources including local government. Some sought to influence local policy debates on climate change through the provision of locally tailored scientific knowledge and ways of measuring the impacts of climate change on the locality and action programmes to address it.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

While, as far as we have been able to ascertain, no other study focusing on self-organised local responses to climate change has used the Q-Sort methodology to identify individuals attitudes and then on the basis of factor analysis attempted to identify particular groupings with an associated discourse/narrative or to consider the attitudes of groups vis-à-vis existing forms of governance, there have been other studies of sustainability that in a broader sense have sought to identify different individual attitudes within local groups. The most pertinent of these was carried out by Fischer et al. (2017); their focus was on what they described as the diverse views held by individuals in community groups addressing low carbon initiatives, the 'everyday politics' of the groups and how this related to 'processes of societal transition' which is close to what we were concerned with in the SELFCITY project. A key focus of their research was: 'the question of how such shared and coherent expectations develop and are negotiated in practice is hardly ever addressed in the recent literature on social aspects of sustainability innovations' (Fischer et al., 2017, p. 3) which broadly compliments our concern with self-organisation. Basically they identified what can be termed a range of, potentially dissonant, 'world views' (these might reasonably be described as discourses) held by members of the groups they studied. For instance some members of the groups wished to adopt a more 'confrontational' (i.e., overtly political) attitude whilst others wished to be apolitical and avoid confrontation when it came to arguing for change. This was likely to influence how they viewed engagement with existing forms of governance. Similarly the issue of organisational structure and ways of working differed considerably within and between groups. Some members clearly wished to work with other groups and networks whilst others wished to retain the groups' independence. This in turn influenced how they viewed working/engaging with existing forms of governance (including local authorities). As in our groups the different initiatives studied by Fischer et al. (2017) adopted a range of different ways of negotiating these dissonant 'world views' ranging from open discussion to tacit agreement not to confront them. This in turn produced various, sometimes unresolved, tensions within the groups, in some cases leading members to leave groups. How these tensions were resolved (or not) is also likely to have influenced how the groups engaged (or did not) with governance systems (although this was not an explicit focus of their paper).

What might be stated at this stage of our research and for all our initiatives was a commonly shared (though not always made explicit), and of varying intensity, conviction or world-view that they had lost trust in the way(s) in which existing institutionalised politics addressed climate change, although the *Consensus Builders* clearly did not believe the 'system was broken'. A fundamental reason for these individuals to come together and 'get involved' therefore seems to be varying degrees of distrust of existing market or state led 'solutions', which they regarded as ineffective and/or 'abstract', being too far away from the local level and their everyday lives and thus unable to bring about any substantial changes that they could recognise as relevant to them. Therefore, at least in three of the 'types', they have sought to follow a different, less hierarchically ordered, course of action based on 'deliberative politics' (Macedo, 1999) and practices to reach their goal or at least set up pathways to do so. This approach compliments and supports new findings in critical studies on climate change that argues there is a widespread discontent with leading actors and initiatives seeking to tackle global warming (Stevenson & Dryzek, 2014).

A second aspect, which arguably constitutes common ground for all our self-organising groups, and perhaps more generally, is the level of social integration they offer (or aspire to). Each of the groups assembled a range of people from different backgrounds who, while sharing broadly similar ideas about climate change, might not be found together under other circumstances, i.e., they cut across traditional social divisions/boundaries. Thus we would contend that our results indicate the existence of a 'cross-milieu', integrative and egalitarian effect of engaging in such groups, which may display promising new ways to channel aspirations, however vaguely defined, for fundamental societal change and for a sustainably shaped direct (co-existent) and proximate (social and biological) environment.

In terms of the implications for their own self-governance forms the above suggests a desire to develop more deliberative and non-hierarchical forms of organising and taking decisions. Indeed we observed this in several of our groups, although the more 'professionalised' the group there was a tendency to utilise more traditional forms of organising particularly where they engaged with external organisations from whom they received funding (the *Consensus-Builders*, who favoured an eco-modernisation approach, tended to fall into this way of organizing). The very act of such engagement required them to develop relevant accounting practices that conformed to the regulations governing the relevant funds along with the language and problem conceptualization

of those with whom they engaged (see Atkinson, 1999, on urban regeneration). This in turn required 'responsible' individuals to be identifiable and decisions to be taken accordingly.

In terms of knowledge our research revealed a general suspicion, if not outright rejection, of dominant knowledge forms among three of the groups the Q-Sort analysis identified. While *Consensus Builders* were concerned to utilise new ecological forms of scientific and technological knowledge to develop new niche technologies, again consistent with their adoption of an eco-modernisation approach. What remains unclear is how the forms of knowledge generate by self-organising groups can be incorporated into wider governance and decision-making structures, i.e., to transcend their particular context. Among our groups only the *Consensus-Builders* displayed the willingness or the capacity to engage found in the groups studied by Hadden (2015) or Kauffman (2016). The other groups lacked the network ties identified by Hadden (2015) as being so important to influencing wider (global) policy on climate change. Although as Hadden (2015) notes, ironically, the very act of participating in these wider networks, along with the gaining of additional expertise and knowledge, had a negative impact on their ability to actually influence these debates and policy. Perhaps this reflects a wider dilemma for such groups; the more they become involved in these wider networks the more their autonomy is decreased. Thus they face the conundrum of how can their ways of organising engage with prevailing forms of governance to bring about change without their self-organising forms being regularised and incorporated in the process. It is perhaps 'easiest' for the *Consensus Builders* to do this because they do not wish to challenge the existing system, merely to modify it. The other groups, to varying extents, identified fundamental flaws in the prevailing system that are difficult to accommodate within their operating ethos and thus chose to work 'at a distance'.

Finally in general terms it is clear that apart from the *Consensus-Builders* there was little appetite among the groups we studied to directly confront and change existing forms of governance and knowledge in the relevant arenas. They seem to have decided, deliberately or otherwise, to maintain their 'autonomy' by working in their own way(s) at local level and not to overtly confront the dilemma of how to transcend their local context—i.e., become networked. The 'model' of action appears to be 'demonstrative' and experimental—seeking out new, practical everyday solutions to localized manifestations of climate change.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

Counter-Governance: Citizen Participation beyond Collaboration

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Abstract
The theory and practice of urban governance in recent years has undergone both a collaborative and participatory turn. The strong connection between collaboration and participation has meant that citizen participation in urban governance has been conceived in a very particular way: as varying levels of partnership between state actors and citizens. This over-focus on collaboration has led to: 1) a dearth of proposals in theory and practice for citizens to engage oppositionally with institutions; 2) the miscasting of agonistic opportunities for participation as forms of collaboration; 3) an inability to recognise the irruption of agonistic practices into participatory procedures. This article attempts to expand the conception of participatory urban governance by adapting Rosanvallon's (2008) three democratic counter-powers—prevention, oversight and judgement—to consider options for institutionalising agonistic participatory practices. It argues that these counter-governance processes would more fully realise the inclusion agenda that underpins the participatory governance project.

Keywords
agonism; collaborative governance; counter-democracy; counter-governance; participation; participatory governance; urban governance

Issue
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1. The Collaborative Turn in Urban Governance

The theory and practice of urban governance in recent years has undergone both a collaborative and participatory turn (Bingham, 2006; Fung, 2004). In many ways the two are very much connected. Ideas of collaborative governance have become inextricably linked to hopes for increased citizen participation in policy-making (Bussu, in press). Though originally rooted in "neo-corporatism" (Osborne, 2006), a concern to bring "multiple stakeholders together in common forums with public agencies" (Ansell & Gash, 2008, p. 543), it is the citizen as stakeholder that has particularly captured the imagination. Incorporating citizens or local communities as partners in the policy-making process is intended to address democratic malaise by repairing the relationship between citizens and the state. It has been conceived as a response to the dual problems of citizens' declining interest and participation in democratic politics and the lack of responsiveness of policy outcomes to citizen and community needs (Barnes, Newman, & Sullivan, 2007; Geissel & Newton, 2012). This new urban governance approach has therefore become bound with a concurrent deliberative and participatory democratic project. Governance theorists have made "empowered participation" a defining tenet of the new approach (Torfing & Triantafillou, 2013), and stressed how "collaborative governance is characterized by dialogue and deliberation" (Bingham, 2006, p. 817). Moreover, participatory and deliberative democrats interested in deepening citizen participation have made collaborative governance initiatives a prominent category in typologies of democratic innovations (Geissel & Newton, 2012; Smith, 2005).

This strong connection between collaborative and participatory urban governance has meant that citizen participation has been conceived in a very particular way: as varying levels of partnership between state actors and citizens. The urban space is, however, both a site for the

formation of new collective solidarities and a site of deep and enduring conflicts, for instance; increasingly sharp conflicts over the possession of space between local residents and global capital (Sassen, 2011). "Immovable resistance" is a frequent issue for urban governors; one for which the institutional response is often vilification of resistance or an attempt to bypass it, in the process exacerbating the conflict (Inch et al., 2017). How to constructively engage with citizen resistance is thus an important problem for the practice of urban governance. Agonistic democracy, with its focus on transforming antagonistic relations between implacable adversaries into agonistic relations between legitimate opponents (Mouffe, 2000a), holds some promise in this regard. Nonetheless, participatory urban governance, with its focus on partnership through collaborative dialogue and deliberation, gives little guidance on how citizens can engage in agonistic practices in the face of enduring conflicts.

This article addresses this lacuna by adapting Rosanvallon's (2008) three democratic counter-powers—*prevention*, *oversight* and *judgement*—to consider options for institutionalising agonistic participatory practices in urban governance. In elaborating these forms of counter-governance it is demonstrated how participatory urban governance's over-focus on collaboration has led to: 1) a dearth of proposals in theory and practice for citizens to engage oppositionally with institutions; 2) the miscasting of agonistic opportunities for participation as forms of collaboration; 3) an inability to recognise the irruption of agonistic practices into participatory procedures. It is further argued that this has had the effect of curtailing the inclusion agenda that underpins most participatory urban governance initiatives, since they have failed to consider unequal influence after the point of the decision and force citizens into a particular relation to institutions, privileging those who want to collaborate over those who want to contest. Institutionalising additional, counter-governance opportunities would mitigate these defects and broaden inclusion.

2. The Agonist Challenge to Collaborative Governance

"Collaborative governance" is used as a shorthand throughout this article to refer to a family of approaches that have been variously termed *collaborative governance* (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Bingham, 2006), *co-governance* (Smith, 2005; Talpin, 2012), *New Public Governance* (Osborne, 2006), and *co-production* (Bovaird, 2007; Durose & Richardson, 2016). This family of approaches is often presented in paradigmatic terms, as possessing its own distinct values and practices. The New Public Governance has been situated as an alternative political-administrative system to Classical Public Administration and the New Public Management (Osborne, 2006; Torfing & Triantafillou, 2013). Similarly, collaborative governance is viewed as a replacement for older adversarial and managerialist forms (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Bingham, 2006), and Archon Fung has described participatory urban governance as "a third path of reform that takes its inspiration from the traditions of civic engagement and participatory democracy rather than public-management techniques or competitive markets" (2004, p. 9). So what characterises this new approach?

The common core of these approaches is the way in which the social relations between actors in governance processes are conceived. Collaborative governance, as the name would suggest, is intended to be collaborative. Ansell and Gash's influential definition stipulates that it is characterised by collective and deliberative processes of two-way communication with the aim of arriving at consensus decisions (2008, p. 546). Citizens and officials come together in processes of collective problem-solving and mutual learning, in which discreet but additive knowledge and expertise results in win-win solutions (Durose & Richardson, 2016). Relations between them are not adversarial or competitive; they are based on interdependence, trust, reciprocity and non-domination (Durose & Richardson, 2016; Torfing & Triantafillou, 2013). Opportunities for citizens to participate in governance are therefore conceived and structured in a particular way: citizens are discursive partners, both with each other and with public officials, in a solidaristic search for shared solutions to shared problems.

The elevation of collaboration, characterised as shared endeavour through trust, reciprocity and non-domination, to a paradigmatic value means that collaborative governance has a complicated, often confused, relation to conflict. Collaboration is presented as an alternative to adversarialism and competition. Its advocates do not deny the existence of conflicts and competing societal interests, but these are something to be overcome through collaboration. Collaborative governance is, for instance, in the odd position of claiming it is a remedy for declining trust in public institutions—a way to rebuild the relationship between citizens and state—whilst it also "demands respect for different forms of expertise, nuanced facilitation and relationships of trusts" (Durose & Richardson, 2016, p. 200). As such, it is dependent upon the thing it is intended to produce. It is possible that institutionalising processes that demand trust will generate trust; that behaviour will transform attitudes; and that such processes will act as exemplars, radiating out trust to the rest of the political system. However, it is just as likely that, in the absence of trust, trust-based procedures will founder upon underlying conflicts. This is particularly problematic in a "society of generalized distrust" (Rosanvallon, 2008, p. 11), where reported levels of trust in institutions and other citizens is low and declining, and where increasing diversity is multiplying the potential bases for conflicts.

The implicit assumption that collaboration can overcome any conflict is indicated by the fact the collaborative governance literature gives little serious analysis to how to proceed when irreducible conflicts break out. Durose and Richardson do briefly discuss the issue, retreating from consensus to Dryzek and Niemeyer's

idea of "meta-consensus" (2016, pp. 188–190). Nonetheless, this is unsatisfactory for co-governance processes that claim to be about shared decision-making. Meta-consensus is not a decision, but simply an agreement on the basis of disagreement. Nor does it necessarily bring us closer to a decision; elucidating the basis of a conflict may in fact sharpen the conflict rather than foster its resolution. Meta-consensus is not then an alternative coordination mechanism to consensus, it is no coordination mechanism at all. New participatory governance approaches thus seem to be beset by the perennial problem of radical participatory organisation: in the face of irreducible conflicts there is no means of coordination beyond splintering into new sub-groups.

Agonists have a very different conception of social relations. A democratic space is one in which actors face each other as opponents, not as partners. For agonists, "politics is the continuation of war by other means" (Foucault, 2004, p. 15). The democratic project is not a search for shared solutions to shared problems but one of turning enemies into adversaries who mutually recognise each other's legitimacy to inhabit the political space (Mouffe, 2000b, 2013). Conflict and power are constituent elements of a political relation, not something that can be overcome through politics. The idea that the pursuit of consensus untainted by coercion should be a regulative ideal for assessing the legitimacy of decision-making is also rejected, "we have to accept that every consensus exists as a temporary result of a provisional hegemony, as a stabilization of power, and that it always entails some form of exclusion." (Mouffe, 2000a, p. 17). Every decision, even those arrived at through deliberation, necessarily results in the exclusion of some interests, values and identities in favour of others. Any decision is foreclosure of other possibilities. These exclusions are then continually renegotiated, so that a decision is only a temporary cessation of ongoing processes confrontation. If we acknowledge this conception of decision-making as a process of exclusion, moreover, a process of exclusion structured by power, then it becomes paramount to consider the institutional avenues by which those exclusions can be challenged. Whereas collaborative governance has primarily focussed on making decision processes more inclusive, the agonistic perspective points us to the need to also democratise avenues for challenging decisions.

Agonists have recognised the importance of creating these institutional avenues, "to make room for dissent and to foster the institutions in which it can be manifested is vital for a pluralist democracy" (Mouffe, 2000a, p. 17). Nevertheless, agonism has been described as having an institutional deficit (Lowndes & Paxton, 2018). Unlike deliberative democrats, who have invented a range of procedures intended to manifest deliberative democratic principles, agonists have been much more circumspect in proposing agonistic institutional arrangements. This is partly a result of the poststructuralist tradition of deconstruction. Agonist democracy is "deconstructive, rather than constructive. It focuses on the shortcomings and limitations of other approaches and is suggestive of alternatives but refrains from specifying them in any but the most abstract form" (Norval, 2014, p. 77). In addition, in the instances where radical pluralists have touched on the empirical, this analysis has tended to focus on the extra-institutional: the counter-power of civil society (Rosanvallon, 2008); strategies for insurgent political parties (Mouffe & Errejón, 2016); or citizens' informal agonistic practices in the spaces between institutions (Wagenaar, 2014). This appears to be a function of radical pluralists' belief that political science and philosophy has a tendency to focus too narrowly on government institutions and "to exclude and ignore all those wider relations of governance through which individuals and groups are subjected and constituted as actors and political agents" (Griggs, Norval, & Wagenaar, 2014, p. 30).

Recent work has challenged the idea that agonism is incompatible with institutionalisation. Lowndes and Paxton (2018) attribute this to two false premises based on an outdated conception of political institutions. The first is that institutions are a fixed and stable expression of shared values. The second, a corollary of the first, is that to institutionalise is necessarily to reify and universalize those values. The *critical institutionalist* conception of institutions as contingent means:

> The key tenets of agonism actually resonate with contemporary developments in institutionalist thinking; indeed, they provide theoretical resources with which to extend such developments further. Rather than a paradox, we find a productive tension. (Lowndes & Paxton, 2018)

The next section of this article employs the theoretical resources of agonism to go beyond the dominance of the collaborative governance approach to theorising participation in urban governance. Using Rosanvallon's (2008) three democratic counter-powers as a framework it explores new ways for citizens to adopt an agonistic relation to institutional actors and engage in counter-governance. Moreover, it suggests some ways that existing practices of participation should be recast in agonistic terms.

3. Three Options for Institutionalised Participatory Agonism

Agonistic practices have been designed into democratic institutions since their foundation. Modern democracies often arose out of circumstances of extreme conflict. Institutional design was sensitive to the twin fears of mob-rule and autocratic monarchy. James Madison, describing the federal institutions of the nascent US, explicitly justifies the separation of power between executive, legislature and judiciary in agonistic terms. The intention was to arrange "opposite and rival interests" in constant tension, "by so contriving the interior structure of the government as that its several constituent parts

may, by their mutual relations, be the means of keeping each other in their proper places" (Madison, 1788). Even in the UK, where democratic institutions developed through gradualist reform, agonistic practices still abound. The weekly ritual of Prime Minister's Questions is a prominent example: the leader of the opposition, confronts the government in an adversarial rhetorical contest. Legal trials are another example of widespread institutionalised agonism: prosecution and defence face-off as opponents in a structured contest over truth. All of these instances of enduring agonistic institutions are, however, examples of elite contestation. They show that institutionalising agonistic practices is possible, yet tell us little about the prospects for institutionalising a more participatory agonism.

This article is concerned with participatory agonism; when actors within a participatory space recognise each other as opponents, thus their relations are oppositional rather than collaborative. This agonistic relation can be constituted in multiple ways. The above are examples of horizontal agonism between elites, and one can similarly find horizontal agonism between citizens. The specific focus of this article is, however, a certain type of vertical agonism: citizen opposition to institutional power. Rosanvallon (2008) proposes three counter-powers that can be wielded against institutional power, which he terms *oversight*, *prevention* and *judgement*. Each posits the people in an agonistic relation with institutional actors, so that counter-democracy broadens the minimal democratic conception of the people as electors to encompass "the people as watchdogs, the people as veto-wielders, and the people as judges" (Rosanvallon, 2008, p. 17).

Urban governance is a good starting point for exploring these popular counter-powers since their historical manifestation was predominantly at this level. They were often directly institutionalised in Ancient city states and medieval towns, whereas the rise of the modern democratic nation state either subsumed such powers into parliaments or dispersed them into an informal social sphere (Rosanvallon, 2008, Chapter 3). In medieval European towns ordinary citizens were tasked with monitoring and constraining the abuse of administrative power through auditing town accounts, and this became a core component of notions of citizenship (Rosanvallon, 2008, p. 77). The practice has long roots stretching back to Ancient Greek cities, which for Aristotle were democratic to the extent that citizens scrutinised the work of magistrates through positions as overseers, auditors, supervisors and ombudsmen (Rosanvallon, 2008, p. 85). These forms of public audit typify the kind of institutionalised participatory agonism that this article defines as counter-governance. Counter-governance concerns mechanisms for citizen opposition or contestation constituted with a direct and formal relation to power, such that these become an explicit organising principle for the coordination of state activity. This differentiates it from Rosanvallon's conception of counter-democracy, which encompasses informal power such as protest.

3.1. Prevention

Prevention is the power to obstruct. If government is the positive power to decide upon collective projects, prevention is its negative counterpart. Its most visible manifestation in democratic institutions is the power of the second legislative chamber to block legislation. The notion of popular prevention through the right to resist, founded in the people's capacity for insurrection, predates citizens' rights to vote or participate in government. Early democratic theorists attempted to devise an institutional alternative for insurrection based on a complex notion of popular sovereignty that combined both positive and negative elements (Rosanvallon, 2008). There is a resonance between this negative power of prevention and agonistic democracy as the institutionalisation of dissent (Mouffe, 2000a; Norval, 2014) The agonistic perspective on decision-making provides a clear rationale for the importance of avenues to obstruct or oppose decisions. If decision-making is an active process of creating inclusions and exclusions, then it is impossible to determine *ex ante* the significant cleavages upon which conflicts will be founded. It is therefore important for those who recognise their exclusion *ex post* to have means to seek redress. Nonetheless, Rosanvallon sees popular prevention disappearing from democratic institutions as liberal conceptions of democracy began to predominate, so that it is now exercised primarily through industrial strikes, civil society protest and parliamentary opposition.

There have been few calls by advocates of participatory urban governance to strengthen citizen participation in these *ex post* forms of prevention, despite the fact that institutionalised popular prevention is virtually non-existent in urban governance. It is instructive, for instance, to examine Bingham's (2006) outline of new urban governance processes: citizen participation abounds in "upstream" processes of will-formation and decision-making, but is absent from "downstream" processes of disputation. Overview and Scrutiny Committees are the main accountability body responsible for investigating the policies and implementation of English city governments. The Local Government Act 2000 divided city councils into two functions: Executive and Overview and Scrutiny. Overview and Scrutiny Committees thus comprise of the city councillors who do not form the council executive. They hold the primary mechanism of prevention, the power to call-in executive decisions, delaying implementation whilst a decision is scrutinised and a recommendation on whether it should pass, be amended or withdrawn is made. Whilst it is constitutionally possible for call-in to be triggered by the public, only 2% of English local authorities allow the public to perform this role (Cave, 2014). Even this weak prevention power—the executive is not obliged to follow any recommendation—thus mostly remains an elite rather than a participatory mechanism.

Given that call-in is the nuclear option in city government, only activated when there are serious con-

cerns of impropriety, it is necessary to consider means for citizens to object to milder infractions. One potential means to obstruct is through petition. The internet has facilitated the exponential growth of reactive petitions through a plethora of new petitioning platforms. There have even been moves to institutionalise these processes by connecting them directly to national legislatures, for instance, in the UK and Finland. Nonetheless, this has obscured the original conception of petitioning, which was as a means for those wronged by institutional power to present their claim for redress. There was no requirement that an individual must demonstrate political support with a welter of signatures. A single signature was enough (as it still is in Scotland). As such, in early democracies, petitions provided a mechanism for minorities and the unenfranchised to access lawmakers and seek redress (McKinley, 2016). Popular prevention is both underutilised and underpowered in today's urban governance. An agonistic perspective directs us towards strengthening these powers. A city-level right to petition and expanding citizen participation in call-in are two ways those who find themselves excluded by a decision could challenge it.

3.2. Oversight

Oversight is the surveillance of power to prevent its abuse. Rosanvallon (2008) gives the people as watchdogs three principal tasks: *vigilance*, which is control through constant and comprehensive active attention of society to institutional action; *denunciation*, the identification and publicising of the violation of community norms; and *evaluation*, analysis of institutional competence through technical assessment of quality and efficiency. His account is of a mostly mediated form of surveillance, focussing on oversight through the media, social movements, non-government organisations and independent quasi-governmental agencies. It falls short of an account of direct citizen participation in institutionalised processes of oversight. Nevertheless, oversight is the one form of counter-governance where citizen participation is proliferating.

In the UK recently there have been a wide range of initiatives to try to directly involve citizens in the oversight of urban governance and public service institutions. The creation of Overview and Scrutiny was accompanied by mechanisms that draw on citizen vigilance. Citizens are able to propose topics for scrutiny as well as submit questions and evidence to scrutiny reviews (Dearling, 2010; Stoker, Gains, Greasley, John, & Rao, 2007). Vigilance has been accompanied by opportunities to become involved in evaluation as a "co-optee" on scrutiny committees. Co-option is not common, but Bristol City Council and the London Borough of Waltham Forest retain pools of citizens to act as co-optees (Dearling, 2010).

Citizen oversight of the executive has been matched by opportunities to oversee local public services. There has been an expansion of citizens' roles in technical evaluation, through direct involvement in audit and inspection. One of the core functions of Healthwatch, which draws its name from the "watchdog" metaphor, is enabling people to hold local services to account by monitoring and reviewing provision (Local Government Association & Healthwatch, 2013). It uses various tools to discharge these functions and understand quality of performance from local people's perspective, including "enter and view" inspections, "patient-led assessments of the care environment", and "15-step challenge visits" (Gilburt, Dunn, & Foot, 2015). Likewise, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) now advertises for "experts-by-experience" to assist inspections of health and social care services.

Countries with endemic corruption problems are experimenting with citizen denunciation, creating anonymous mechanisms for informing on corrupt city officials, such as Sierra Leone's *Pay No Bribe* and India's *I Paid a Bribe* platforms.[1] UK citizens have not been encouraged to inform on city officials, though they have been encouraged to denounce neighbours fraudulently claiming social security through the creation of a National Benefit Fraud Hotline.

The problem with oversight, unlike with prevention, is not then an absence of opportunities. The dominance of the collaborative governance approach for thinking about participation, however, has meant that in practice citizen oversight is often presented as another opportunity to collaborate. CQC's call for "experts-by-experience" employs just such a collaborative governance trope. The role of the citizen as a partner with professional inspectors is emphasised, rather than the agonistic relation to those who will be inspected. Even the inspector–inspectee relationship is now cast in partially collaborative terms through the notion of the "critical friend" (see Centre for Public Scrutiny, 2005; Gilburt et al., 2015), tasked both with holding to account and working constructively to improve effectiveness. This has had some interesting effects. Local Healthwatch organisations, for instance, have struggled to reconcile these opposing functions, instead opting to act as critic or friend, but not both (Gilburt et al., 2015). Oversight is not a friendly activity, it is agonistic. The best overseers are suspicious and forensic not collaborative. Recognising the difference between agonistic and collaborative practices could help to prevent the kind of dissonance experienced by Healthwatch. It could also point to a different imperative for citizen recruitment. Collaborative governance, with its concern for mutually respectful, collective preference formation, is often wary of involving "the usual suspects" with an axe to grind. Agonists instead advise us to mobilise the passions (Mouffe, 2000a). Citizens with a legitimate grievance against an institution may not be the best candidates for partnership working, but they may prove to be the best watchdogs.

[1] See https://www.pnb.gov.sl and http://www.ipaidabribe.com

3.3. Judgement

Popular judgement concerns the capacity of citizens to constrain institutional action by testing it against community norms of governing. In ancient Athens, for instance, tribunals of citizens, selected-by-lot, could strike down the decisions of the Assembly as unconstitutional. Rosanvallon (2008) sees two trends in modern democracies that have eroded this once central function of citizenship. The pronounced functional separation between the judicial and political means that the judiciary has absorbed these responsibilities. In addition, the liberal democratic association of democracy with the act of voting has erased the separation between judgement and authorisation. The vote becomes both an *ex post* judgement of the incumbent government and an *ex ante* authorisation of the new regime, without us ever knowing which predominates. Nonetheless, citizen judgement as members of a legal trial jury remains the most common form of popular participation in the business of the state, thus it is surprising that citizen judgement has not had a more prominent place in theories of citizen participation (Dean, 2017).

The only widespread citizen judgement in local governance is a direct democratic innovation that is little remarked upon within the collaborative and participatory governance literature: recall. Recall is a feature of urban administrations in a number of countries from Poland to the Philippines (Shah & Chaudhry, 2004), and the majority of the more than 100 recall elections that occur annually in the US affect city officials, predominantly city councillors and school board members.[2] As Rosanvallon notes, recall is one form of voting that does not conflate judgement and authorisation, and is closer to an indictment than an election. Citizens solely render a verdict on the behaviour of the representative, hence act more like judges than electors (Rosanvallon, 2008, p. 209).

The popularity of deliberative mini-publics occasionally leads to their somewhat unconventional use as quasi-judicial processes of adjudication on controversial issues (Dean, 2017). Two such urban governance cases that have been thoroughly documented are: the use of a citizens jury to breakthrough a deadlock resulting from local opposition to the proposed restructuring of health services in the English city of Leicester (Parkinson, 2004), and a citizens assembly launched in response to a stalemate when residents of Vancouver mobilised in opposition to a City Council neighbourhood plan that they viewed as unduly influenced by property developers (Beauvais & Warren, 2015). Nevertheless, as deliberative democratic innovations, these cases are analysed in deliberative democratic terms and their potential agonistic function is underappreciated. Despite noting their roots in local opposition to institutional action neither Parkinson nor Beauvais and Warren consider that their cases could be fulfilling a need for popular judgement. Beauvais and Warren, for instance, instead view their case as an attempt to fix a broken communication link within the local administration.

The irruption of agonistic practices is seen as a democratic threat. Parkinson argues the use of mini-publics for adjudication by randomly selected citizens is a threat to deliberative democratic norms since it excludes active citizens from processes of reflective preference transformation. An agonist might share Parkinson's concern about this exclusion of active citizens, though for a different reason. The randomly-selected citizens of a citizens jury usually also play the roles of prosecution and defence, expected to quiz expert witnesses from different angles of the debate. There is a risk that, given these citizens are specifically selected because they are not active in the agonistic confrontation, this process abstracts too far from the conflict, and thus the jury will make proposals that are unacceptable to both sides. It is notable that this tension is manifest in the practice of Beauvais and Warren's case: local partisans who had been instrumental in opposing the rejected neighbourhood plan forced the organisers to compromise on random selection for the citizens' assembly to draft the new plan. Again, the authors view this as a threat to democratic norms of inclusion. These examples indicate two potential benefits of a greater attention to an agonistic perspective. It would provide the conceptual tools to appreciate when participatory processes take on an agonistic dimension and situate such practices in competing democratic norms, rather than viewing them simply as a democratic threat. In addition, it can assist the design of more appropriate institutional innovations, so that mini-publics are not used for rendering popular judgement despite question marks over their suitability for this task from deliberative and agonistic perspectives.

4. Conclusion

There have been few proposals in urban governance theory or practice for democratic innovations that enable citizens to contest institutional power. Citizens' powers of popular prevention and judgement are virtually non-existence. The agonistic character of oversight has been neglected, instead miscast as another opportunity for collaboration. The notion of counter-governance, characterised as institutionalised participatory agonism, provides a lens for redressing these dysfunctions of the dominance of collaboration in conceiving of participatory urban governance. However, this article should not be read as a proposal to replace collaborative governance with a new counter-governance paradigm. Citizens and city officials will always be potential partners and potential adversaries. Collaborative governance will thus in many cases be wholly appropriate, but its claim to paradigm status as a comprehensive mode of governing occludes certain other organisational possibilities. It is far from clear that collaboration is always the most appropriate mode of interaction between citizens and city

[2] See https://ballotpedia.org/Political_recall_efforts and http://recallelections.blogspot.co.uk

officials, particularly when their interests diverge. We should remember that historically the term also has its negative connotations: collaboration can mean working together as equal partners but also acquiescence in oppressive power.

The over-focus on collaboration has restricted in two ways the laudable inclusion agenda that underpins many efforts at participatory urban governance. The first is that there has been a proliferation of attempts to include citizens in "upstream" deliberations pre-decision (Bingham, 2006) in order to diversify influences over public decisions, however; agonists' insight that the decision itself creates exclusions, means we need to also consider unequal influence after the decision. The institutionalisation of means for *ex post* citizen contestation of institutional action would go some way to broadening inclusion. It could help to improve a long-standing problem of collaborative governance initiatives: that they often result in frustration for participants as competing institutional imperatives thwart implementation (Lowndes, Pratchett, & Stoker, 2001; Newman, Barnes, Sullivan, & Knops, 2004) or authorities cherry-pick proposals that fit existing agendas (Font, Smith, Galais, & Alarcon, 2017). Properly constituted forms of citizen prevention, oversight and judgement could reduce officials' discretion to side-line citizens' priorities.

Constructing almost all participation opportunities in collaborative terms forces those who want to participate into a particular relationship with the state: they must accept the state as a partner for collaboration. This may at times be inappropriate, as it neglects the violence that institutions sometimes do to citizens, particularly the poorest citizens. It is not reasonable to ask someone on the verge of being ousted from the neighbourhood where they grew-up by a gentrifying regeneration programme to accept the officials pushing the plan as partners for collaboration. Such experiences often create an energy amongst those affected to become involved to prevent government failing them and others like them. Collaborative initiatives are unlikely to prove very attractive to those who have a deep grievance. Agonistic processes that "mobilise the passions" (Mouffe, 2000a) and enable them to enter into an oppositional relation with institutions would be more likely to harness this energy to improve governance for those whose needs are often overlooked. This is the second way that expanding agonistic participation in urban governance could make it more inclusive.

This article has provided three directions for thinking about how counter-governance could expand our conception of participatory urban governance, but it is only a starting point. Institutionalising participatory agonism is unlikely to be straightforward, and requires a great deal of further theoretical development and empirical research. Prevention, oversight and judgement hold promise for constructive engagement in the face of the conflicts that often characterise contemporary urban governance, but whether they do in fact work is an empirical question. Participation is often proposed as a remedy for the failures of representative processes (Fung, 2006), however; counter-governance mechanisms will also create new tensions with representative modes of governing. If poorly configured, their introduction could result in a sclerotic urban governance in which it is impossible to achieve anything. Mobilising the passions, for instance, may be functional for processes of oversight, but less so for prevention and judgement if it blocks all decisions, including those made in good faith.

It must also be remembered that not all citizen resistance to institutional power is laudable. In the US, for example, there are instances of white families opposing school redistricting reforms that aim to increase socio-economic and racial diversity (Inch et al., 2017). Understanding how to prevent elite domination of forms of counter-governance, particularly their potential for undermining legitimate decisions arrived at through representative democratic processes, will be a key question. Some ideas can be borrowed from the more mature participatory governance literatures, for example; selection of participants by sortition has been a common feature of deliberative innovations in order to prevent interest group domination and improve inclusion. Interestingly there have been proposals to appoint the aforementioned co-optees to Overview and Scrutiny Committees by lot (Centre for Public Scrutiny, 2005). New thinking will also be needed. One proposal by Lucie Laurian is that planning should have an inbuilt bias towards those with least choices, giving them a veto over plans that violate sites they hold sacred (Inch et al., 2017). This would be one way to orient forms of prevention towards inclusion.

There is also potential for expanding institutionalised participatory agonism beyond prevention, oversight and judgement. As aforementioned, this article is limited to citizen-state conflicts. Yet conflicts can be articulated along many dimensions, for instance; they can be between citizens, within institutions, or multi-faceted rather than dichotomous. As such there is a need to elaborate how agonistic processes can deal with different kinds of conflicts. How collaborative and agonistic practices may usefully be combined in order to complement each other also remains a topic for further theoretical and empirical exploration. It would seem unlikely that there will be a single model for all seasons; institutional design needs to take account of context. In circumstances of high trust and a shared vision between citizens and officials then a collaborative partnership may be possible and agonistic checks unnecessary. When distrust and conflict prevail the presence of robust mechanisms for oversight and prevention may be a prerequisite of carving out a space for collaboration. Such combinations are likely to be contingent, negotiated amongst the actors involved, still; it is useful to understand which types of design might achieve which ends. The pursuit of these questions and the development of a fuller understanding of how to institutionalise participatory agonism will furnish a more comprehensive set of tools for revi-

talising urban governance to negotiate the conflicts that pervade the 21st century city.

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Article

Organising for Co-Production: Local Interaction Platforms for Urban Sustainability

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Abstract
Urban sustainability is a wicked issue unsuited to management through traditional decision-making structures. Co-productive arrangements, spaces and processes are inscribed in new organisational forms to bridge between diverse forms of knowledge and expertise. This article suggests that *local interaction platforms* (LIPs) are innovative responses to these challenges, developed in two African and two European cities between 2010 and 2014. Through elaborating the design and practice of the LIPs, the article concludes that the value of this approach lies in its context-sensitivity and iterative flexibility to articulate between internationally shared challenges and distinctive local practices. Six necessary conditions for the evolution of LIPs are presented: anchorage, co-constitution, context-sensitivity, alignment, connection and shared functions. In the context of increased uncertainty, complexity and the demand for transdisciplinary knowledge production, the *platform* concept has wider relevance in surfacing the challenges and possibilities for more adaptive urban governance.

Keywords
boundary spaces; co-production; collaborative governance; hybridization; local interaction platforms; Mistra Urban Futures; transdisciplinarity; urban experimentation; urban sustainability

Issue
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1. Introduction

The Zero Draft of the New Urban Agenda for Habitat III notes how population growth poses massive systemic challenges: "the battle for sustainable urban development will be won or lost in cities…there is a need for a radical paradigm shift in the way cities and human settlements are planned, developed, governed and managed" (United Nations Habitat III Conference, 2016, p. 1). Urban sustainability is a wicked issue, requiring the knowledge and skills of multiple disciplines, sectors and stakeholders. This perspective is rooted in the idea of co-production and is symptomatic of the wider contextualisation of science and need to value and incorporate knowledge production processes beyond the academy (Durose & Richardson, 2015; May & Perry, 2017a). Developing strategic solutions to urban sustainability problems is a "quintessential epistemic mess" (Bulkeley & Betsill, 2005) which urban coalitions need to manage, where causes and consequences are embedded within multi-

ple layers of urban society. Addressing urban sustainability problems requires capacity to integrate and manage a huge range of intersecting forms of global and local knowledge to develop appropriate policy responses, instruments and interventions (Moser, 2013).

As traditional siloed organisations are unable to solve their internal conflicting goals, coordinating mechanisms are needed (Head & Alford, 2015). Dealing with wicked issues and strategic messes at the urban level has encouraged experimentalism to address this challenge (May & Perry, 2016a). Numerous initiatives have sprung up in different contexts with the common goal of creating "third" or "boundary spaces" requiring collaborative governance arrangements (Ansell & Gash, 2007). Practice is leading theory, meaning that such boundary experiments become rich sites for inductive learning. There remain gaps in the literature about the value of different organisational responses to foster transdisciplinary learning through cross-boundary working, the conditions which support or hinder innovative mechanisms and the wider challenges and implications for urban governance.

This article contributes to understanding organisational mechanisms, issues and conditions shaping responses to complex urban sustainability challenges. It does so through an inductive analysis of *local interaction platforms* (LIPs), as a new mode of organising knowledge and expertise beyond the academy. LIPs are an innovation of the Mistra Urban Futures centre, a sustainability research and practice centre headquartered in Gothenburg, Sweden. The core mission of the Centre is to generate and use knowledge to support transitions towards sustainable urban futures through transdisciplinary co-production at local and global levels. The primary organisational mechanism for delivering the vision and mission was to set up an international network of LIPs to bridge between different stakeholders and recombine diverse forms of expertise to address urban challenges. LIPs were established in Gothenburg (Sweden), Greater Manchester (UK), Kisumu (Kenya) and Cape Town (South Africa).

Through drawing on the design and practice of these LIPs between 2010 and 2014, the research reveals a central challenge in organisational responses to urban sustainability: the need for flexibility to respond to diverse and changing urban contexts and to broker between global and local forms of knowledge. Our work suggests that LIPs are innovative responses to this challenge, allowing for context-sensitivity and iterative flexibility to articulate between internationally shared priorities and distinctive local practices. LIPs have evolved thanks to similar necessary conditions at each platform: anchorage, co-constitution, context-sensitivity, alignment, connection and shared functions. This commonality across African and European city-regions points to the wider relevance of the "platform" concept for urban decision-making in the context of increased uncertainty and complexity and the demand for transdisciplinary knowledge production (May & Perry, 2017b).

2. From Wickedness to Experimentalism and Institutional Innovation

The term "wicked" issue was coined by Rittel and Webber back in 1973, as they concluded that contemporary intelligence was insufficient to the complex task of planning across multiple domains, given the pluralities of interests and objectives involved. Whilst science is about "taming", planning problems are getting wilder and more "wicked" (1973, p. 160). The rise of such issues is associated with the contextualisation of science in society and the wider advent of the "risk society" (Beck, 1992). Conditions of risk, uncertainty and complexity have led others to talk about "messes", a term used to characterise systems of problems which need to be addressed (Ackoff, 1979, pp. 90–100). Complex problems have little consensus on how to solve them and often take place in contested and negotiated policy arenas. There are also irreconcilable tensions in how to respond to economic, social and ecological grand challenges, which have not been mediated or resolved by international or national governments, and are passed to cities and local governments to manage.

The complexity of urban issues, in which cities are both sites and solutions to intractable global challenges, means that both "wickedness" and "messiness" characterise the current urban moment, leading to demands for different forms of expertise and knowledge (Polk, 2015). These forms of expertise lie across disciplines, sectors, institutions and communities, giving rise to an emphasis not only on inter- but also transdisciplinarity (Lang et al., 2012). Transdisciplinary knowledge production requires co-productive processes, which take seriously the question of integrating different sources of knowledge and expertise. Co-productive "boundary spaces" are said to enable the knowledge and expertise of different participants to be recognised based on respect, openness and deliberation, requiring that "contributions from specific disciplines and social actors are not privileged over what other disciplines and social actors contribute" (Pohl et al., 2010, p. 217).

We have witnessed the rapid growth of different organisational forms and co-productive partnership arrangements at the urban level, many of which include universities as strategic partners. Against the backdrop of the "partnership paradigm" (Glasbergen, Biermann, & Mol, 2007, p. 3), university–city partnerships have been developed in multiple contexts and in different forms (Trencher, Bai, Evans, McCormick, & Yarime, 2014). Whilst diverse in their function, scale and scope, there are three common trends. The first is the shift to more collaborative governance where multiple stakeholders come together in common forums to engage in consensus-oriented decision-making (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p. 543). Classical problems of the commons are solved, according to such theories, through collaborative institutional arrangements as complementary structures dealing with improved sustainability in the urban

field (Ostrom, 1990). The second is an emphasis on experimentation. There is a plurality of urban experiments, which have been variably interpreted. Experimental initiatives can be ways of managing risk and dealing with uncertainty (Evans, 2016; May & Perry, 2016a). With limited resources and time, the experiment acts as a pilot prior to rolling out approaches or solutions across different sites (Bulkeley & Castán Broto, 2013). The third trend in university–city partnerships is a reassertion of the importance of spatial context as a testbed for new technical and social innovations (May & Perry, 2017b). This relates to a rejection of the idea of best practice models transplanted around the world without sensitivity to context (Patel, Greyling, Parnell, & Pirie, 2015).

Collaborative governance, experimentation and context-sensitivity are essential preconditions in the search for solutions to complex epistemic messes and wicked urban problems (Ansell & Gash, 2007). Collaborative partnerships are characterized by multiple partners exercising power in the decision-making process, pooling resources, operating under a consensual decision frame and harmonising activities (Kernaghan, 1993, p. 62). There is a need for new types of learning that can promote social and technical innovation, through the systemic search for new and effective processes, methods and tools for multi-level and multi-stakeholder governance (Pelling, High, Dearing, & Smith, 2008). Whilst within technical and post-austerity discourses we see the drive for innovations that can be "rolled out to the market", sustainability discussions emphasise *transition*, requiring institutional reconfiguration and different kinds of social and sustainable innovations (Grin, Rotmans, & Schot, 2010; Voß & Bornemann, 2011).

Theory is catching up with practice. Three key questions remain underexplored in the literature: how do different initiatives respond to the need for collaborative governance, experimentation and context-sensitivity? What are the common conditions across different contexts, which shape organisational responses? What can we learn from new organisational responses about the issues and challenges in co-producing knowledge for sustainability? We respond to these research questions through an inductive analysis of the design and practice of LIPs.

3. Methodology

Mistra Urban Futures is a Centre with headquarters in Gothenburg created in response to the need for new organizational forms that could blend knowledge and expertise within and across urban contexts (Polk, Malbert, & Kain, 2009). It was founded on the premise that bridging knowledge gaps entails boundary breaking, alongside the need to develop the capacity to learn systematically from different localized development processes in a comparative framework. Four pillars underpinning knowledge production in the Centre were defined (Figure 1).

LIPs were formed in Gothenburg ("GOLIP" in Sweden), Greater Manchester ("GMLIP" in UK), Kisumu ("KLIP" in Kenya) and Cape Town ("CTLIP" in South Africa). The selection of city contexts was based on the criteria of secondary, intermediate cities in different contexts, with pre-existing histories of collaborative working with Gothenburg. The local partners in Gothenburg had a strong track record of cooperation drawing on the post-industrial traditions of the harbour city, being home to large industry firms such as Volvo, Ericsson, SKF and AstraZeneca (Polk, 2015). The Greater Manchester platform was anchored in the Centre for Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures (SURF) at the University of Salford Manchester, which had also contributed to Mistra's pre-call evidence gathering process (Mistra, 2008). SURF had a record of working locally with policy-makers, businesses and community groups, through critical engagement with knowledge-based urban development initiatives. This had led to bilateral links between SURF and the GOLIP consortium in the years prior to the submission. In Kisumu, the establishment of the LIP built upon pre-existing relationships between Chalmers University in Gothenburg and East Africa, and the prior work of the Kisumu Action Team (KAT), initiated by the Mayor of Kisumu and comprising local informal stakeholder organisations, such as residents, public and private sectors, civil society and academia. The African Centre for Cities

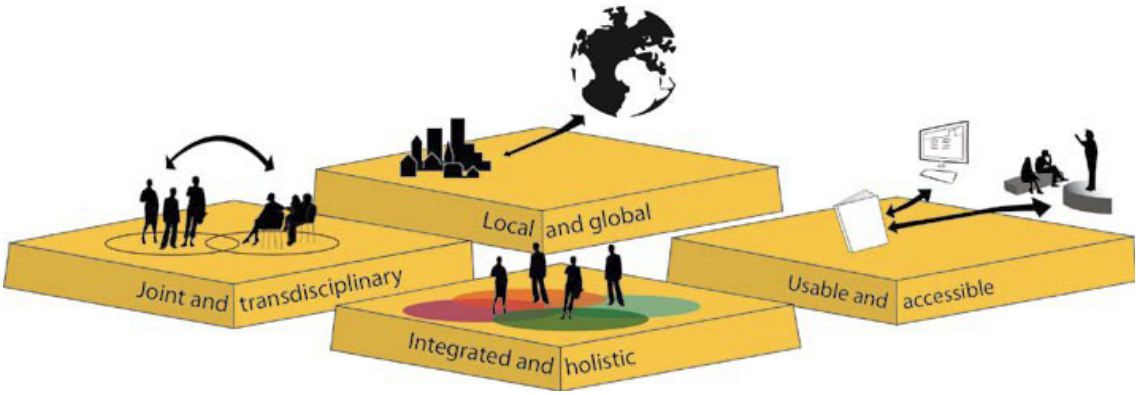

Figure 1. Principles of knowledge production. Source: Kain, Nolmark, Polk and Reuterswärd (2011, p. 18).

(ACC) at the University of Cape Town (UCT) had originally been part of a competing submission, but was asked by the co-funder, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), to join the Gothenburg consortium and anchor Mistra Urban Futures in the Global South along with Kisumu.

This article presents an inductive, comparative analysis of experiences across the LIPs in organising to address wicked urban sustainability challenges. It draws on secondary analysis of process documentation, group writing and interview exercises. The research is inductive in the sense that we analyse the design and practice of the four platforms (two in Africa and two in Europe) as cases to reveal broader conditions and challenges. This is assisted through each LIP having similar setting conditions and characteristics, given they have developed within a common framework. The initial call for a transdisciplinary centre in urban sustainability by the Mistra Foundation stipulated common criteria for partners: matched funds and public-university partnerships. Each LIP developed under the same guidelines and according to the same principles, but adapted and implemented these in different ways. Local and comparative projects were undertaken and analysed in their own right; at the same time a process of meta-learning and comparison to analyse lessons emerging from practice. Each LIP undertook its own process of formative evaluation internally through workshops and interviews, followed by commissioned independent evaluations at the local level. An independent international advisory group undertook a Centre-wide progress review in 2014–2015 (Mistra Urban Futures, 2015). Following this, the Directors of the LIPs undertook a collaborative writing exercise (Palmer & Walasek, 2016) and group interview (Norén Bretzer, 2016) to support meta-learning comparatively across the platforms.

Whilst the experiences of the LIPs deviate from each other, making strict control of variables difficult, there are advantages to this approach. Parallel processes of local and trans-local reflection enable a wide range of perspectives across different geographic scales and contexts. This aids rich and thick descriptions of cases (Geertz, 1973) as a first step prior to meta-comparative analysis. Internal reflexive learning by participants (May & Perry, 2017a) is cross-referenced with independent evaluations by experts outside the study field. Knowledge generated locally by researchers, deeply embedded in each urban context, is aligned and tested for comparative credibility and cogency. Whilst we have not deployed a strict comparative method, our approach of "double loop meta-learning" is consistent with the topic of the study (Argyris & Schön, 1974). To this extent, our methodology mirrors the urban world in which the platforms are located in the context of increasing urban complexity and the contextualisation of science in society (Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001). In the remainder of this article, we address our three research questions by setting out the collaborative governance arrangements of the LIPs, competing logics that have shaped the devolution and evolution of the LIP concept and the conditions under which each has developed. We then consider the wider implications of the platform concept for urban governance under conditions of uncertainty and complexity.

4. Learning by Doing: Inside LIPs

4.1. Mechanisms for Collaborative Governance

Co-governance and co-funding were two key principles for each LIP. This translated, in operational terms, into the need for shared ownership, joint leadership and a mixed economy of funding for each platform. In practice, the LIPs were organised and funded in different ways. Some LIPs formed multi-sectoral consortia, such as in Gothenburg, with coordinators representing their institutions within regular board-style meetings and decision-spaces. Some LIPs anchored more firmly within existing research environments in universities, whilst others sought to distance themselves from specific organisational affiliations. This was also a practical consideration linked to the ability of different institutions to receive, manage and audit funding. For instance, like GOLIP, KLIP involved formal collaboration between two universities (Maseno and Jaramongi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology). However, their direct influence was minimised by the creation of an independent Trust. The perception was that: "it would have been very difficult to persuade the partners to come to one of the participating universities for meetings; they would have thought it was a university-driven agenda" (Group Director interview, 2016). Unlike GOLIP and CTLIP, where collaborative governance translated into strong relationships between public institutions, the partnerships in Kisumu and Greater Manchester aimed more explicitly to build greater participation from residents and civil society into their programmes of work.

Co-financing was a condition of receiving funding from the Mistra Urban Futures centre. As the original applicant, the Gothenburg consortium developed during the bidding phase; considerable in-kind and cash resources had already been secured from partners. The consortium was also successful in securing funding from the SIDA. Both arrangements had consequences for the way in which finance could be allocated towards the LIPs. For instance, the Centre had hoped to move to a system of basket funding, but instead had strict rules regarding the use and accounting of different sources of finance. This involved high levels of bureaucracy for each financial stream and shaped the construction of local partnerships.

Two examples illustrate this co-constitution between context, structures and funding mechanisms. First, KLIP and CTLIP were the only legitimate recipients of SIDA funding and subject to regular auditing, reflecting a more traditional donor-client relationship. Receiving split funding from two funders meant meeting different, and sometimes competing, expectations relating to climate

change adaptation and mitigation and local policy relationships (from the Mistra Foundation) and poverty reduction across Africa (from SIDA). Second, whilst receiving lower levels of cash funding and subject to interim cuts in allocations, GMLIP was able first to align and then attract relatively flexible external UK research council funds to match their involvement in the Centre. This was particularly important in a context of austerity, which had created huge organisational uncertainty, personnel churn in local government and savage budget cuts. Uniquely, in GMLIP an initial transfer of resources secured the engagement of policy officials and other partners to incentivise engagement at a time of rapid flux. A more networked model for the GMLIP developed, compared with the structured relationship between ACC and the City of Cape Town, which formed the central axis for CTLIP.

For GOLIP the situation was complicated. GOLIP was significantly larger than the other LIPs, based on the original intention to have a large central research centre with smaller international platforms for collaboration and networking. However, the distinction between the GOLIP and the Centre itself was initially blurred, both financially and operationally, leading to muddy lines of accountability and strategic direction. A key asset of GOLIP was high levels of in-kind resources, taken to signify buy-in and commitment from partners, as well as the allocation of nodal "coordinators" from each institution. However, this led to tensions in practice undermining the cooperative ethos, as highlighted during the group LIP Directors' interview: "the in-kind is really the main strength of the platform…but when you start transferring money, then it becomes difficult; then you need to have contracts, and it creates relationships that you might not want…hierarchies and structures" (Group Director interview, 2016).

4.2. Between Local and Global: Logics of Scale

LIPs developed local projects based on established partnerships, existing priorities and identified needs. In GOLIP, the structures and financing allowed for representation by different partners as equals, with no preferential position for the academic institutions, despite Chalmers' official position as host. This reflected the spirit of the Centre, but also meant a greater risk of competition for funds and increased difficulty of achieving coherence across a large and diverse portfolio. Comparatively, in GMLIP, the funding model reinforced the institutional power of the university and positioned academics as intellectual leads. However, this was not contested by city-regional partners, who experienced the platform in a free and creative way. Given the turbulent environment in which they worked, city partners welcomed the absence of responsibility or commitment for more active management. A smaller number of linked projects were subsequently developed with each partner at the GMLIP, where there was good fit between local issues and the Centre's research and practice agenda. In Kisumu, the focus was on two large projects around market places and sustainable tourism, delivered by Masters and PhD students to build research capacity for the future. CTLIP aligned with and supported multiple projects and partners, whilst also anchoring the platform in a new Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) with the City of Cape Town. The KTP involved embedding PhD students in local government departments and exchanges with policy officials. As such, the projects at the different LIPs show little similarity. This flexibility and diversity was seen by the LIPs (and eventually by the Centre following the midterm evaluation) as a key strength, enabling them to articulate, reflect and challenge local contexts (Mistra Urban Futures, 2015).

Variations in the co-financing and structuring of the LIPs circumscribed the ability and legitimacy of the Centre to formulate and impose a common programme of work. At the same time, two major comparative projects were developed to respect context-sensitivity and also draw lessons from across international urban contexts. These projects provided a highly valuable role in bringing LIP teams together to work on shared concerns. A common project, Governance and Policy for Sustainability ("GAPS"), was initiated in 2012 to support the development of the Centre (Marvin & May, 2017). This was "a substantive vehicle" for better understanding the national and city-regional contexts in which more progressive sustainable urban development could be seeded (Marvin & May, 2017). The purpose of GAPS was to constitute a baseline for comparative learning and to understand issues in different contexts, in order to inform the development of the scientific programme for the Centre. A second pilot project focusing on the implementation of the Urban Sustainable Development Goal ("USDG project") was introduced across the LIPs in 2015. Like GAPS, the USDG project was managed centrally, but implemented locally. In both cases, whilst the broad questions and research template were largely defined by the project leads, implementation, data gathering and reporting was led by local researchers responding to local opportunities and constraints. In representing the work, synthetic articles, special editions and stand-alone articles sought to bring coherence to the analysis with a focus on comparative learning, rather than the imposition of a strict comparative method (see for instance, Davison, Patel, & Greyling, 2016; Perry & Atherton, 2017; Simon et al., 2015). The non-prescriptive approach to the mechanisms for LIPs to organize at the local level acknowledged the shortfalls of "best practice" approaches. In comparative work: "what can be replicated are the approach and the philosophy behind it but not the procedures and activities" (Shami, 2003, p. 80).

The result of the evolution of the LIPs has been a rebalancing of structures of power between the Centre, the GOLIP and other partners over time. In this first phase, it was not always clear whether the Centre was based on the roll-out of the GOLIP model across other

platforms, or whether GOLIP was first-among-equals. Whilst originally assumed to be satellites to Gothenburg and implement their methods, each LIP became equal partners, if not equal financial recipients, in the design and development of the Centre. This outcome reflected resistance to a one-size-fits-all model imposed on the LIPs, given the irrefutable logic of local contextualisation, driven by co-production, co-financing and partnership arrangements. As one LIP Director noted, "it's co-production out there and command and control in here" (Group Director interview, 2016). This produced tension in the design and organisation of the Centre; early efforts to regulate and control centrally were pushed back by the non-Swedish LIPs, particularly Greater Manchester and Cape Town. This surfaced the evident need to balance local context and power with central control and alignment. As a result, whilst the LIPs operated with high levels of flexibility and adaptability to enable co-productive boundary spaces in each urban context, the balance between global and local favoured the latter. In the end most projects reflected a common orientation towards locally-generated processes and practices for urban sustainability transformations.

4.3. Six Conditions Shaping Organisational Responses

As is common in many collaborative partnerships, the LIPs grew from existing and established relationships in each of the four cities (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p. 550). In all cases, "the soil was fertile and had been cultivated for some substantial years before the Mistra Urban Futures initiative came around" (Group Director interview, 2016). Whilst they are asymmetrically structured and financed, this inductive analysis of the development, governance and function of the LIPs reveals six necessary conditions shared in common: anchorage, co-constitution, context-sensitivity, alignment, connection, shared functions (see Table 1).

LIPs are *anchored* between universities and the public sector although this takes different forms and has varying consequences. All participants provide meaningful commitment through finances, resources, time in-kind or space. Depending on context and need, these interactions included public agencies, research institutions, private actors and civil society representatives in varying degrees. Relationships with universities are present in all cases, but the extent of anchorage in research environments affords different risks and benefits in terms of institutional embeddedness, but also entanglements with already privileged spaces of knowledge production. For both CTLIP and GMLIP the source, flows and expectations of the funding model resulted in a greater reliance on University cash and in-kind match funding, which in turn led to a process of institutional enmeshing of LIP processes and structures into the respective research centres of ACC and SURF. Private sector partners have tended to play ancillary roles to the public sector.

LIPs are *co-constituted* and evolve organically with and in response to their local context. For example, in both Kisumu and Greater Manchester, the timing of the Centre's development coincided with periods of political change. This shifted policy priorities, for instance, through processes of devolution and structural change. Geography and size also played their part; in practice, there were different partnership arrangements and levels of complexity in working at different scales. Some LIPs focused on the urban-rural region (Kisumu, population 440,000), some on the city–county–region (Gothenburg, population 1.6 million and Greater Manchester population 2.7 million) and some on a single local authority in the context of pan-African links (Cape Town, population 3.7 million).

LIPs are *context-sensitive* and seek not only to produce excellent but also relevant knowledge (May & Perry, 2016b) through building legitimacy, salience and credibility locally and constructing networks of different actors to address sustainability challenges. "Sustainable urbanisation" provided a springboard for all partnerships and the primacy of impact and relevance from funded projects and programmes motivated all the LIPs. However, there were variable articulations of what this meant in practice. The post-apartheid and post-colonial legacies were dominant tropes for Cape Town and Kisumu, shaping platform design and project evolution in terms of alignment with development agendas, economic growth (Kisumu) or the transformation agenda (Cape Town).

Table 1. Necessary conditions for LIPs.

Anchorage	Meaningful commitment from higher education and public sector partners
Co-constitution	Flexible and adaptive partnership structures which evolve over time according to geographic, administrative and political factors
Context-sensitivity	Research and practice agendas which reflect local sustainability issues and challenges
Alignment	An ability to align and embed local sustainability challenges within multi-scalar frameworks, including at metropolitan, national and international levels
Connection	Common projects and processes which enable cross-LIP learning and support the transition from particular to generalizable theories and practices
Shared Function	The creation of boundary and interstitial spaces for interactions between sectors and disciplines

In the post-industrialising contexts of Gothenburg and Greater Manchester, city and regional initiatives had focussed on the development of innovation ecosystems and university–industry–government partnerships. As noted above, despite an initial expectation that the GOLIP approach would be rolled out as a common blueprint for the LIPs, delicate and sensitive adaptions to local contexts were necessary to gain legitimacy.

Local sustainability challenges are commonly *aligned* at multiple scales, through articulating between local issues and national and global sustainable development agendas. One example is the development of work within the Cape Town LIP within a pan-African context, related to SIDA's poverty reduction aspirations. The nesting of local within comparative projects, supported by the framework of the Urban SDG project, enabled the relationship between embedded local and internationally comparative work to be balanced. Such mechanisms also provide ways to ensure LIPs are connected to each other through common projects and comparative learning processes. This connection is essential in enabling knowledge developed locally to move from the particular to the general through the development of comparative insights, practices and theories.

Finally, the platform concept also has a *shared function* and value in practice as a jointly constituted space. LIPs provide a meeting arena where local, regional and state representatives can interact with academic researchers, outside their home-organisation restrictions. LIPs have been variably described as a "space and an opportunity for these stakeholders to come and share ideas, knowledge, challenges, experiences and even solutions that can drive sustainable urban development", as a "space in which we allow this to happen, outside of the ordinary processes that go on within each partner" (Group Director interviews, 2016). To this extent, following Ansell and Gash (2007), the institutional design of Mistra Urban Futures does not replace ordinary governmental agencies, but provides complementarity via the provision of spaces in-between of, or interdependent on, these agencies.

4.4. Discussion

The Mistra Urban Futures' LIPs are examples where "collaborative governance has emerged as a response to the failures of downstream implementation and the high cost of politicization of regulation" (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p. 544). Participating partners at each platform work towards problem definitions, shared understandings, mutual trust, recognition of diversities, and a common learning process that can translate into practical benefits. In the struggle to govern the commons, Dietz, Ostrom and Stern (2003) note that ideal conditions are rare and stable institutional arrangements are unsuited to dealing with rapid change. Governing in complex systems requires three strategies: analytic deliberation, nesting and institutional variety. We argue that the LIP model is a distinctive response to these issues working with and between "dialogue among interested parties, officials, and scientists; complex, redundant, and layered institutions; a mix of institutional types; and designs that facilitate experimentation, learning, and change" (Dietz et al., 2003, p. 1907). To this extent, the LIPs are co-productive boundary spaces, in the spirit of experimentalism. The value of this organizational form is two-fold: first, in privileging the creation of different spaces for interaction through which diverse processes and project types can evolve; second, in moving from a dualistic framing of the global and the local towards one that emphasizes hybridity and inter-relationality.

A common challenge faced by co-productive partnerships relates to the contradictory logics of *bounding and enclosing urban space* and *contextualisation*. To meet demands for accountability and certainty in complex multi-stakeholder partnerships, formal partnerships and processes are adopted. These often mirror fixed organisational structures, where tightly regulated decision spaces, geared towards consensus, replicate traditional decision-making fora. For certain urban experiments, controlling the environment is central to define the limits of what is in and out, and regulate spaces of knowledge production through processes that simultaneously open and close themselves to the possibilities of blending different forms of expertise and knowledge (Voß & Bornemann, 2011). The risk is that, whilst recognising the importance of the need for context sensitivity, collaborative partnerships and experiments may reduce flexibility and responsiveness, seeking to fix the urban condition by getting the right people around the table or isolating specific variables and issues.

At the same time there are tensions in how the logic of contextualisation manifests in practice. The urban context is simultaneously valued and devalued. It is recognised as constituting the conditions in which experiments unfold, and as central in shaping and defining specific problem spaces. Context matters, but should not overdetermine or ignore the multi-scalar interconnections and embeddedness of the city within wider systems of production and exchange. Local contextualisation may run the risk of global disconnection, as if cities were bounded objects out of time and space. Lawhon and Patel (2013) caution that a consequence of the devolution to the local and its resulting dislocation is the occlusion of questions of global responsibility and justice. The experimental and contextual turn cannot isolate from multiscale and interconnected space and need for generalizable as well as particular knowledge. On the other hand, cities are also positioned as little more than testbeds for experiments that can be rolled out to other contexts following the traditional "best practice" approach (Patel et al., 2015). Here the global transcends the local in the search for governance fixes to complex sustainability challenges.

LIPs are one response to these challenges, innovations in the social organisation of knowledge (May &

Perry, 2016b). The experience of the LIPs suggests that platforms are ways of organising that allow for diversity and plurality in relationships, offer different kinds of spaces, defined variably as "safe", "unaligned", "neutral" or "deliberative". They provide interstitial mechanisms for social learning across and with partners, bridging the local and the global. Context-sensitivity and iterative flexibility enable platforms to articulate between internationally shared priorities and distinctive local practices. Further, we have argued that the necessary conditions for the formation of the LIP are: anchorage, co-constitution, context-sensitivity, alignment, connection and shared functions. Their value is in working with, rather than seeking to protect from, the uncertainty and complexity of urban governance, moving beyond the single bounded experiment towards international connectedness.

5. Unbounding Experimentalism

Co-production is a response to procedural and epistemic deficiencies. This includes, on the one hand, recognition that existing forms of urban governance and elite decision-making processes are insufficient to address contemporary multiple-problem challenges and, on the other, that implementable solutions in practice cannot develop without drawing on distributed forms of expertise beyond the usual technocratic fix. These epistemic and procedural deficits have given rise to a wave of new governance arrangements, urban experiments and place-based initiatives in efforts to redesign structures and processes for addressing intractable urban challenges. This article contributes to re-imagining how urban governance can be more fit-for-purpose through opening such new interstitial spaces for social innovation and learning within co-productive boundary space.

LIPs are one response to developing fit-for-purpose partnership forms for addressing wicked issues and epistemic messes. They have wider relevance in contributing to urban governance debates for two reasons, as outlined above. First, it is increasingly recognised that cities require adaptive governance and new forms of leadership and partnerships for cross-sector working. In a context where the challenge is to respond urgently to multiple crises, flexibility and responsiveness are key attributes of successful governance arrangements. The early experience of the LIPs suggests they offer a flexible and adaptive organisational form which fosters co-productive processes in rapidly changing and complex urban governance environments. Second, whilst there has been a much-needed turn to context-specificity and locally-relevant work, this has been accompanied by equal concern about the fetishization of the local and dangers of the "local trap" (Purcell, 2006). Through their evolution, LIPs are seeking to balance between global and local pressures in the search for both global relevance and sensitivity to context.

Three further areas for study and practice emerge. First, it is important to understand more about the dynamics of boundary work in practice. Whilst much of the literature has contributed to evaluating concepts and models of new boundary organisations, there has been less focus on the mechanisms and tools for building capacity and the practices of linking between knowledge and action. This means that practical guidance on how to govern adaptively is under-developed (Wyborn, 2015). Second, the politics of co-production needs greater attention (Flinders, Wood, & Cunningham, 2016). There has been insufficient critical examination of the presumed "neutrality" or "safeness" of new boundary spaces. Language used to describe the nature of these spaces varies widely across cities and partners. Patterns of inclusion and exclusion, political orientations and processes of inclusion and exclusion are hidden but palpable. For the LIPs both issues are ongoing concerns. In 2015, following the successful mid-term evaluation, a further four years' funding was allocated. Having built "co-productive capacities" on the ground (Wyborn, 2015), the next step is to support reflexive analysis and double-loop learning processes which illuminate the practices and politics of participation across the platforms. A further challenge is to build on the distinctive make-up of the Centre to contribute to both methodological and substantive debates on how to realise more just cities. This requires innovative project designs which rethink the processes and practices of co-productive and comparative urban research.

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Conflict of Interests

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Commentary

Governance Lessons from Urban Informality

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Abstract
We locate this issue's papers on a spectrum of radicalism. We then examine that spectrum, and the governance mechanisms described, through the lens of a significant arena of urban counter-planning: the urban informal economy. Drawing on our own research on self-organization by informal workers and settlers, as well as broader literatures, we suggest useful lessons for reinventing urban governance.

Keywords
bottom-up; counter-planning; governance; informal economy; informality; radicalism; social movements; top-down; urban planning

Issue
This commentary is part of the issue "Co-Producing Urban Governance for Social Innovation", edited by Liz Richardson (University of Manchester, UK).

1. Introduction

Starting from critiques of urban governance, the five articles in this issue formulate varied alternatives. In this commentary, we first locate the papers on a spectrum of radicalism. We then examine that spectrum, and the governance mechanisms described, through the lens of what is arguably the largest area of urban counter-planning, bottom-up planning, or co-production of governance: the urban informal economy. Drawing on our own research on self-organization by informal workers and settlers, as well as broader literatures, we suggest useful lessons for reinventing urban governance.

2. The Radicalism Spectrum

The five papers' alternative models of urban governance can be characterized by their degree of radicalism or rupture from technocratic, top-down state administration. Wagenaar and Wood (2018) radicalize the concept of public innovation by challenging the importation of corporate logic to the public sphere and by defining citizens as well as the state as potential innovators, but ultimately they introduce citizen innovation as a complement to state action. Perry, Patel, Bretzer and Polk (2018) go farther, spotlighting local interaction platforms that assemble varied stakeholders to co-produce knowledge and strategy for urban sustainability. Dean (2018) takes the ruptural step of categorizing citizen *conflict*, as well as collaboration, with the state, as a form of participation in governance. Silver's (2018) "everyday radicalism" moves beyond dissensus to rebellion and utopian prefiguration. Finally Atkinson, Dörfler and Rothfuß (2018) classify climate change-directed self-organization into four categories spanning the full spectrum from consensus-builders comfortably engaged with the state to radical greens bent on utopia-building.

3. Movements of Urban Informal Actors

The broad variety of informal activities in U.S. and Latin American cities has been widely noted (Mukhija & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016; Portes, Castells, & Benton, 1989). Much has also been written on how the neolib-

eral restructuring projects of the last few decades, characterized by the state's retreat from regulating labor and housing markets contributed to the growth of informal sectors, spaces, and practices in which these actors operate. Our concern, however, is with understanding informal actors' contributions to *governance*: understanding how, in the current period of development, displacement and disinvestment, workers and settlers in these cities have often succeeded in winning recognition for their rights of access and possession despite breaching laws and regulations. For instance, Los Angeles construction day laborers, Mexico City street vendors and Bogota waste recyclers defend their right to ply their trades in urban spaces that are by law off limits to them (Rosaldo, 2016; Sarmiento, de la Garza, Gayosso, & Tilly, 2016). In Latin America newcomers to the city extra-legally seize land to build informal settlements that later win state recognition. How do they accomplish these things? At times they simply take advantage of gaps in the enforcement capacity of the state, but we are interested in cases in which they *confront*, rather than evade, the power of the state, yet succeed nonetheless.

To begin, we point out the nature of the threat to these actors is tied to a shared feature across this wide and varied geography, their state-sanctioned exclusion from formal labor and housing markets. As they are often immigrants in American cities or rural-to-urban migrants in Latin American cities their exclusion is codified in part by immigration policies and other state policies which determine the legality of their presence in the city, in part by policies specifying the boundaries of legal market activity. The strategies, arguments, and actions these workers and settlers deploy to meet their economic and housing needs are thus also necessarily political because they are not, or not principally, waging claims against employers and landlords but in fact subverting state power and negotiating the legality of their very presence in the city. Generally, a principal goal for these actors, then, is to resist displacement, maintain autonomy in their territory, and gain the right to use land and urban space in socially and culturally specific ways.

We find a convergence around two increasingly common strategies. A first strategy involves demonstrating social-cultural attachment to their labor and housing practices and a territorial identity, which can become sources of symbolic power (Chun, 2009) in confrontations with the state or private property-owners. Crucial to this resistance has been self-organization, most often outside of formally recognized labor unions and political parties, not only to organize worksites and neighborhoods but to "jump scales" and organize in policy domains ancillary to the formal labor and housing markets (Evans & Kay, 2008; Gastón, 2017). The aim here is an attempt to deflect existential threats such as deportation and displacement. These localized practices can be amplified through the construction of counter-publics (Fraser, 1990), networks of varied sympathetic actors.

Self-organization thus creates basic legitimacy and credibility (of the promise of votes or other support, or threat of protest). These organizations tend to be small, with modest economic clout, and much of their activity can be qualified as pre-figurative and aspirational, emphasizing the empowerment of their constituencies through programmatic interventions. However, in certain cases, urban informal workers and settlers have developed new tactics and discourses to interact with the public-at-large, and project political power via alliances with more powerful political actors. Figure 1 illustrates this process schematically.

Examples include the worker centers found in Lons Angeles and New York which have become cornerstones of the immigrant rights movements in the U.S., the street vendor associations in Mexico City organizing for indigenous rights, and the popular housing organizations in Bogota organizing for *los desplazados*, migrants displaced to the city by the decades long civil war. Mexican street vendors cite the pre-Hispanic indigenous origins of their practice, the *tianguis* open-air markets held for centuries in the population centers of Mesoamerica. On this basis, these street vendors appeal to the constitutional rights afforded to indigenous communities and the preservation of their cultural autonomy. Housing rights activists in Colombia similarly invoke constitutional rights afforded to *desplazados* in defense of their ability to build informal settlements in the periphery of cities like Bogota. In Los Angeles, construction day laborers have harnessed laws protecting free speech and the familiar meme of the enterprising immigrant in order to win the right to

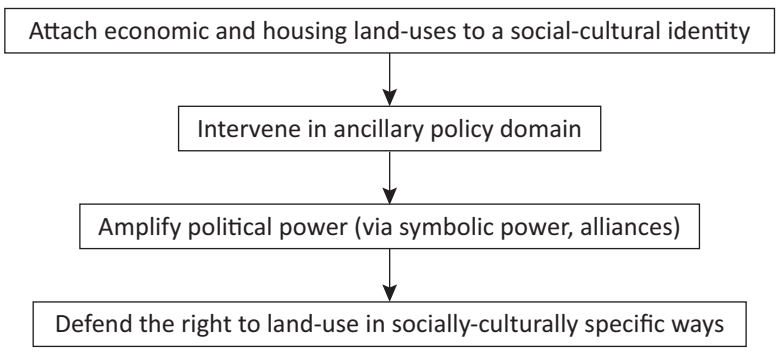

Figure 1. How excluded urban actors win rights.

solicit work in public spaces and even private ones (such as the parking lots of home improvement stores). Los Angeles' street vendors recently followed suit, winning decriminalization of street vending in the city, meaning local police can no longer arrest street vendors and charge them with offenses which previously could lead to deportation.

A second, more emergent strategy informal workers and settlers adopt is the recognition, anticipation and appropriation of developmental discourses tied to environmental concerns. Today urban redevelopment projects in these cities, and more generally large-scale private investments in urban centers, are framed in terms of their social and environmental impacts. Developers and investors have become adept at formulating public relations strategies which stress their contribution to "smart" growth, and "sustainable" and "socially inclusive" development. And while these investments carry potentially dislocating effects, we find the workers and settlers we consider here are also learning to identify the threats and opportunities implied by these discursive strategies. For example, informal settlers in Bogota who have "invaded" peripheral lands categorized in land-use maps as protected forest reserves argue their housing practices, informed a particular social-cultural relationship to land, represents a more environmentally sensitive and balanced interaction with the natural environment. Their alternative is counter-posed to those proposed by developers often high-rise residential towers which ostensibly aim at reducing the city's housing deficit and land scarcity problem. In New York and Los Angeles day laborers and street vendors also make counter-arguments such as emphasizing how their economic activity better addresses the city's efforts to "activate" public spaces and leverage the economic potential of planning strategies such as transit-oriented development. These arguments, which combine social-cultural and technical discourses, are presented as alternatives to dominant paradigms of development and investment patterns.

Ultimately, both strategies, shifting across policy domains and coopting "sustainable development" discourses, can be understood as a reaction to the threat of dislocation and displacement, and therefore a relatively passive assertion over particular uses of urban space and territory. Their success is defined by their ability to limit or redirect the reach of state policies in particular spaces, and to persist their activities. In other words, these workers and settlers have as post-colonial theorist Asef Bayat (2000) puts it "quietly encroached" on urban territory and resorted to political lines of action from a defensive posture. However, to the extent they have been able to create counter-publics, establish and nurture alliances with more powerful political actors and institutions such as mainstream labor unions, political parties and locally elected officials, they are successfully intervening in policy domains. One such policy is immigration law which governs and regulates not only movement through urban territories but also participation in urban labor and housing markets. In this manner, they are successfully amplifying their power to shape and restructure existing forms of urban governance in these cities—with the potential to push the frontiers of that power even farther.

4. Lessons for Governance

Reflecting on the issue's discussions of governance in light of collective action by urban informal actors points to five lessons.

First, *governance of **markets** is a central urban governance arena*. Informal actors reorganize markets for labor, land and other resources. However, discussion of markets is sparse in this issue's articles, despite their context of market-centered capitalism.

Second, our informal actors are compelled to engage with the state, despite evasion of state regulation being definitional to informality, suggesting that *even those seeking to opt out of state-led processes often must contend with the state*. This lesson seems particularly relevant regarding Atkinson et al.'s (2018) three groups (out of four) of climate change activists that chose autonomy relative to the state.

Third, though a radicalism spectrum is conceptually useful, *real world organizations often move across the spectrum, and combine strategies from across the spectrum*. Histories of day laborer or waste picker action amply document this. We should not reify our radicalism quaternary any more than the top-down/bottom-up binary.

Fourth, *utopia is a tall order, but self-organization according to a dissident logic can move people toward prefiguration*. Despite the limited objectives of these organizations, at times they achieve collectivity that transcends traditional social relations—mirroring Atkinson et al.'s (2018) and Silver's (2018) groups rooted in pragmatism but nonetheless inspired to reach for utopia.

Finally, however, *self-organization according to a dissident logic comes in many varieties*. While some movements of urban informal actors prefigure radical utopias, there are also mafia-style Mexican street vendor associations replicating state command structures and corruption; informal settlements' parallel land markets can reproduce the inequalities and rent-seeking of formal markets. We should therefore avoid glorifying or otherwise essentializing "communities" or "citizens" and their forms or participation.

5. Conclusion

We typically discuss alternative urban governance models as ways to solve large, complex problems—budgeting, resilience and sustainability, infrastructure planning—but cases are usually small and often experimental. Informal urban workers and settlers are tackling local micro-problems—earning a livelihood, finding a home—but doing it at scale in cities across the globe. Urban scholars would do well to continue learning from these experiences.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Hugo Sarmiento is a doctoral candidate in urban planning interested in applying a critical perspective to the study of housing and economic development especially as it relates to environmental policy such as climate change and risk management. His work is guided by a political and economic frame, and the central notion people and their cultural practices are the basis for building more socially and environmentally just cities. Hugo has a special interest in Latin American urban geographies having completed projects in Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia and Brazil. Currently, his dissertation work examines social mobilization and grassroots resistance to housing resettlement programs in Colombian cities concerned with adapting to the effects of climate change.

Chris Tilly, Professor of Urban Planning at UCLA, studies labor and inequality in the U.S. and global context, with a particular focus on bad jobs and how to make them better. Tilly's books include *Half a Job: Bad and Good Part-Time Jobs in a Changing Labor Market*; *Glass Ceilings and Bottomless Pits: Women's Work, Women's Poverty*; *Work Under Capitalism: Stories Employers Tell: Race, Skill, and Hiring in America*; *The Gloves-Off Economy: Labor Standards at the Bottom of America's Labor Market*; *Are Bad Jobs Inevitable?*; and *Where Bad Jobs Are Better: Retail Jobs across Countries and Companies*.

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