

©Copyright 2020  
Gregory T. Woolston

Reading the “White Spatial Imaginary”  
in the Redevelopment of Yesler Terrace

Gregory T. Woolston

A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Science in Architecture

University of Washington

2020

Committee:

Brian McLaren

Mark Purcell

Megan Ybarra

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:  
Architecture

University of Washington

**Abstract**

Reading the “White Spatial Imaginary”  
in the Redevelopment of Yesler Terrace

Gregory T. Woolston

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:  
Associate Professor Brian McLaren  
Department of Architecture

This thesis considers the ways built environment practitioners, namely urban planners, architectural designers, and real estate developers, imagine the spaces they plan, design, and develop. In particular, it examines the built and social consequences of said imaginings through a case study of the redevelopment of Seattle’s Yesler Terrace. Its policies and buildings are very much a discourse, the rhetorical meaning of which is made apparent through an *against the grain* reading of the various documents involved in their production. Using a critical discourse analysis, the thesis follows George Lipsitz (2007, 2011) and Anna Livia Brand (2018b) to argue that Yesler is a built expression of the “white spatial imaginary” through the ways its documentation selectively writes history, reproduces commercialized multiculturalism and environmentalism, and forms identities in and out of place. In this way, the thesis expands the notion of the white spatial imaginary into other parts of the built environment using evidence from an overlooked archive.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
List of Figures . . . . .	ii
Chapter 1: Introduction . . . . .	2
1.1 The White Spatial Imaginary . . . . .	4
1.2 Critically Reading Yesler Terrace’s Redevelopment . . . . .	10
1.3 Racial Formation in Built Environments . . . . .	18
Chapter 2: Yesler <del>Yesler Terrace Profanity Hill</del> <i>Little Crossing-Over Place</i> . . . . .	22
2.1 <i>Little Crossing-Over Place</i> . . . . .	24
2.2 Profanity Hill . . . . .	28
2.3 Yesler Terrace . . . . .	39
Chapter 3: Writing History . . . . .	44
3.1 “No response was received from the Duwamish Tribe.” . . . . .	48
3.2 “[T]he steam plant will be the only historic structure on the site.” . . . . .	54
Chapter 4: Producing Culture . . . . .	62
4.1 “Home in Harmony” . . . . .	67
4.2 “Nurture Meets Nature” . . . . .	72
Chapter 5: Forming Identity . . . . .	78
5.1 “Fit naturally into the community.” . . . . .	83
5.2 “[K]ind of like South Lake Union.” . . . . .	89
Chapter 6: An Other Architecture . . . . .	95
Redevelopment Documents . . . . .	101
References . . . . .	105

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Rowhouses at Yesler Terrace before Demolition, May 2019 . . . . .	1
2	Conceptual Renderings of the Area . . . . .	15
3	Area of Redevelopment . . . . .	17
4	Plan of Seattle, 1855-1856 . . . . .	26
5	Mill Street, 1870s-1880s . . . . .	28
6	Mill Street, 1898 . . . . .	29
7	Seattle’s Japanese District, 1930s . . . . .	31
8	Tazuma Ten Cent Store and the Black and Tan, 1920s . . . . .	32
9	Kunitsugu Family of 515 Yesler Way, 1920s . . . . .	34
10	Housing on Profanity Hill, 1940 . . . . .	35
11	Housing Exhibition, 1940 . . . . .	37
12	Construction of Yesler Terrace, 1940-1941 . . . . .	38
13	Map and Survey from 103 12th Avenue . . . . .	51
14	Potential Views from New Construction . . . . .	53
15	Timeline from 1000 East Yesler Way . . . . .	56
16	Spatial Patterns from 1000 East Yesler Way . . . . .	60
17	Batik Seattle Marketing Website . . . . .	68
18	Public Art and Accent Color at 209 12th Avenue South . . . . .	71
19	Seattle Cypress Marketing Website . . . . .	74
20	Green Amenities at Yesler . . . . .	75
21	Streetscape at 104 12th Avenue . . . . .	79
22	Evidence of Community/Public Outreach . . . . .	85
23	Photographs of Existing Residents . . . . .	87
24	Interactive Maps for Anthem on 12th . . . . .	90
25	Spatial Prescriptions at 123 Broadway/Batik Seattle . . . . .	92

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I acknowledge that I live, study, and work on the traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples, and specifically the lands of the Duwamish people, who continue to inhabit this space today. I would also like to acknowledge these strange and unjust times. About two months into writing, the COVID-19 pandemic quickly spread through the United States. Due to this country's systemic racism, it has disproportionately affected people of color: Black people are dying at and Latinx and Asian American peoples are infected at higher rates than expected based their proportions of the population. In the southwest, the number of infections and deaths among Native peoples is significantly higher than expected based on their share of the population. These months have also been marked by police violence against Black people, including the murders of Manuel Ellis in Tacoma, Breonna Taylor in Louisville, and George Floyd in Minneapolis, which follows years, decades, and centuries of violence against Black people in the United States, as well as other violences against Native, Latinx, and Asian American peoples. These violences maintain white supremacy, a system from which I benefit. I will do everything I can to help dismantle it.

In comparison to the direct action taking place today in response to these injustices, this thesis feels like very little. However, I hope it reveals some of the violences of the contemporary built environment in Seattle. I am indebted to inhabitants, activists, and organizations throughout the city, whose actions and knowledges continue to inform my critiques. I would also like to thank my reading committee, Brian McLaren, Mark Purcell, and Megan Ybarra, for their support and feedback throughout this thesis process, as well as Alex Anderson and Lauren O'Connell for their comments on earlier drafts. Finally, thank you to my family, and especially my partner, Amrita Mazumdar, for their continuous support.



Figure 1: Rowhouses at Yesler Terrace before Demolition, May 2019

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

[T]he function of art is to do more than tell it like it is—it's to imagine what is *possible*.

*bell hooks*

I first encountered this statement on two sides of a rowhouse in Seattle. An abbreviated version of the quote was painted in English on one side of the building and translated around the corner (Figure 1). The quote comes from a wide-ranging interview between bell hooks (1994) and Re/Search Publications on what it means to “[inhabit] multiple, diverse, and sometimes contradictory locations,” rather than existing as “a unitary self—a fixed identity (244).” She specifically asks, “Why do we have to wipe out Otherness in order to experience a notion of *Onewness* (279)?” One way in which such erasing occurs is through media representation. Films and other performances generally react to “prevailing archetypes,” thus leaving the status quo unchallenged (281). “Whereas actually, we need some wholesale reenvisioning that’s outside the realm of the merely reactionary!” hooks argues (282). The statement above is thus part of the call to imagine and create beyond the identities determined and prescribed by dominant actors.

The rowhouse on which hooks’s words are written was part of Yesler Terrace, a public housing development just east of Pioneer Square and Downtown Seattle. It was demolished in 2019, as part of the Seattle Housing Authority’s (SHA) ongoing redevelopment of the area. This redevelopment will transform Yesler Terrace into Yesler. It involves razing the low-rise housing for low-income residents to make way for mid-rise and high-rise apartment buildings, priced for residents of various income levels, but primarily those who can afford market-rate rents. For now, the area contains a mix of empty lots and new construction.

The landscape will continuously change as the neighborhood is built out over the next decade. Along Yesler Way, signs announce the SHA's intentions: "Renewing Yesler's Promise," "Replacing old low-income housing with new," "Building homes for all," and "Creating new parks, community gardens & more." These signs contrast with the statement by hooks—they are only written in English despite the many languages of the neighborhood's residents, and they speak in terms of "all" and "community" as if it were a commonly accepted identity. Indeed, the signs reveal hooks' (1994) concern "where subjectivity is flattened out in the interest of harmony or a unitary political vision (244)." The painted statement questions and critiques the imaginings of spatial planners, designers, and marketers in particular—are built environment practitioners "tell[ing] it like it is" or "imagin[ing] what is *possible*"?

This thesis considers the ways in which built environment practitioners, namely urban planners, architectural designers, and real estate developers, imagine the spaces they plan, design, and develop. In particular, it examines the built and social consequences of said imaginings through a case study of the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace. With the production of any new building (or neighborhood) comes an archive of documentation that precedes, accompanies, and outlives its construction. With their descriptions, surveys, maps, diagrams, drawings, and renderings, these documents involve research of the landscape, as well as detail a policy or design that reflects this research into the future. In this way, infrastructure and buildings are very much a discourse, and I argue we can better understand their rhetorical meaning through an *against the grain* reading of the various documents involved in their production. Documentation of this sort is not often considered for analysis, while critical discourse analysis as a method is fairly uncommon in built environments research. This project takes on this archive and approach and presents it as an example for future analyses. In the case of the redevelopment, I follow George Lipsitz (2007, 2011) and Anna Livia Brand (2018b) to argue that Yesler is a built expression of the "white spatial imaginary" through the ways its documentation selectively writes history, reproduces commercialized multiculturalism and environmentalism, and forms identities in

and out of place. In this way, the thesis expands the notion of the white spatial imaginary into other parts of the built environment using evidence from an overlooked archive. This critique is supplemented by examinations of whiteness and imagination by Toni Morrison (1992), Martin A. Berger (2005), and Dianne Harris (2013), and it is further informed by critical approaches to history (Said 1978; Smith 1999), culture (Hall 1991, 1992, 2000; Ahmed 2012), and identity (Fanon 1967; Browne 2015). The project demonstrates one way in which these writings and perspectives can frame an analysis of the contemporary built environment, encouraging further work on the relationship between social constructions and physical constructions, and in particular, how the built environment reflects and reproduces whiteness in the United States.

### 1.1 The White Spatial Imaginary

Defining and critiquing whiteness are not new in scholarship or literature (Du Bois 1920; Hughes 1934), and writings on whiteness from different disciplines have grown significantly over the past three decades (Frankenberg 1993; C. I. Harris 1993; Bonilla-Silva 2003; Moreton-Robinson 2015). The understanding with which I approach this project builds in particular on Lipsitz's (2007, 2011) "white spatial imaginary," which Brand (2018b) recently expanded in her critique of urban planning. In considering this relationship between whiteness—the system that privileges white people through producing *Others*—and imagination—how this system is in part reproduced through creative practices—I am also indebted to Morrison's *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992), Berger's *Site Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture* (2005), and Harris's *Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Constructed Race in America* (2013). These three works read texts, namely the literary canon of the United States, landscape photography and architectural eclecticism, and postwar housing, for how they imagine whiteness and *Others*. Through critical discourse analyses, Morrison, Berger, and Harris respectively reveal how the texts are actually produced by and reproduce whiteness.

Following his article “The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race” (2007) in *Landscape Journal*, Lipsitz’s *How Racism Takes Place* (2011) “argues for the importance of acknowledging the degree to which our society is structured by a white spatial imaginary and for confronting the serious moral, political, and social challenges mounted against it by a black spatial imaginary (13).” The white spatial imaginary “idealizes “pure” and homogeneous spaces, controlled environments, and predictable patterns of design and behavior (29).” Lipsitz traces its development from colonialism, during which colonizers tried to achieve this “purity” through “conquest, genocide, and Indian removal (29),” through segregation due to “[h]ousing and lending discrimination, the design of school district boundaries, zoning regulations, policing strategies, the location of highways and transit systems, and a host of tax subsidies (6)” in the 20th century, and to the gated communities and private homeowner associations of today. These include “planned-unit developments, condominiums, cooperative apartment houses, planned-unit developments of single family houses, and other forms of mass-produced and corporate-sponsored common interest developments (2007: 13).” Such spaces enable the “exclusion of nonnormative others and the maximization of the exchange value of their houses (2011: 30).” Their services and amenities abound, in part by concentrating nuisances and hazards elsewhere (36). As such, the exchange value grows, imagined as “a reflection of the moral worth of white people (28),” attributed to personal success, and transferred across generations. The background to this imaginary is “the construction of a devalued and even demonized Blackness (37),” through which Black people living in the city are blamed for its decline and poverty, rather than the past forty years of neoliberal forms of governance. Nevertheless, according to Lipsitz, “Black people turned segregation into congregation (51).” Limited from benefiting from exchange value, they have “augmented the use value of their neighborhoods by relying on each other for bartered services and goods, by mobilizing collectively for better city services, by establishing businesses geared to a local ethnic clientele, and by using the commonalities of race and class as a basis for building pan-neighborhood alliances (56).” This takes the appearance of beauty parlors “host[ing]

freedom schools and function[ing] as meeting places for strategic discussions (58),” as well as parades facilitating freedom of movement and providing free music to “[create] democratic spaces for cultural production, distribution and reception (63).” For Lipsitz,

[t]he Black spatial imaginary views place as valuable and finite, as a public responsibility for which all must take stewardship. Privileging the public good over private interests, this spatial imaginary understands the cost of environmental protection, efficient transportation, affordable housing, public education, and universal medical care as common responsibilities to be shared rather than as onerous burdens to be palmed off onto the least able and most vulnerable (69).

Brand (2018b) brings these arguments into the built environment, noting how the “white spatial/racial/colonial/plantation/post-colonial/post-emancipation/neoliberal imaginary” is maintained through urban planning, policy-making, and design (269). “Plan making is imaginary. It is envisioning a future that details—both through words and images—who will inhabit where. It is a pronouncement of inclusion and exclusion—both of bodies, but also of racialized landscapes,” Brand argues (271). For example, in the plan to transform New Orleans’s Lower Ninth Ward into a wetland, “who is erased? what is erased and what is reconstructed? what was and is imagined (269)?” According to Brand, if urban planners are to challenge the white spatial imaginary, they must “question when words like *blight*, *renewal*, *revitalization*, *redevelopment*, and *resilient* surface to rid non-white bodies of their claims to space, history, labor, love, time, otherness, memory, and beauty (272).”

I start with these descriptions by Lipsitz and Brand in order to examine how the white spatial imaginary infects the production of the new built environment at Yesler Terrace. As will soon become apparent, the redevelopment entails a significant sale of public lands to private developers, following the patterns outlined by Lipsitz. Moreover, as Brand critiques, the term *redevelopment* is indeed being used to justify the movement of low-income people of color into new building typologies, surrounded by a much larger, wealthier, and whiter population. This thesis, however, will also look for the white spatial imaginary in specific texts of urban planners, architectural designers, and real estate developers. These documents

will be examined for the ways they write history, produce culture, and form identity, as well as how these creations are informed by and reproduce whiteness in the built environment. As such, I will summarize the respective works of Morrison, Berger, and Harris for the ways they critically read literary, artistic, and architectural creations for whiteness.

In *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, Morrison (1992) reads the literary canon of the United States, namely works by Willa Cather, Mark Twain, Edgar Allen Poe, and Ernest Hemingway, for *American Africanism*, or “the ways in which a nonwhite African-like (or Africanist) presence or persona was constructed in the United States, and the imaginative uses this fabricated presence served (6).” Morrison considers these works as a *writer*, and she is most concerned with each author’s imagination, for “[t]he ability of writers to imagine what is not the self, to familiarize the strange and mystify the familiar, is the test of their power (15).” Nevertheless, characters can be particularly reflexive, revealing “the fears and desires that reside in the writerly conscious (17).” As the literary canon constructed “a new white man” for the United States (15), which was imagined as a place of “history-lessness, a blank page waiting to be inscribed (35),” Black characters enabled writers to literally *play in the dark*. Morrison argues, “American Africanism makes it possible to say and not say, to inscribe and erase, to escape and engage, to act out and act on, to historicize and render timeless. It provides a way of contemplating chaos and civilization, desire and fear, and a mechanism for testing the problems and blessings of freedom (7).” Whether it is in the way slavery was used to emphasize freedom (33) or how a setting of “rawness and savagery” was used to present the gentleman of the New World (44), an *Africanist* presence was employed as a shadow accompanying whiteness, “a fabricated brew of darkness, otherness, alarm, and desire (38).” Its presence in the literature provided “the opportunity to conquer fear imaginatively and to quiet deep insecurities (37).” Morrison reveals how the use of *American Africanism* in literature helped construct whiteness in the United States.

Following Morrison’s critique of literature, Berger (2005) considers whiteness in visual culture in *Site Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture*, “prob[ing] beneath the

narrative surfaces of images (8),” like genre painting, landscape photography, museum architecture, and silent cinema. His readings of landscape photography and museum architecture are especially relevant for this project. In his analysis of landscape photography, Berger uses an 1867 photograph by Carleton Watkins, titled “The Yosemite Valley from the Best General View,” to question what makes this view “best” and present the value system with which whiteness represents the landscape. These values are revealed through the elements named on settlers’ maps from the late nineteenth century—monumental, “geological wonders” and built additions, like trails, bridges, and hotels (55)—and their relationship between nature and development at that time—beautiful views without the presence of Native peoples (62). Berger states, “Whereas Native Americans’ names for the valley’s features consistently referred to legendary events, to activities specific to a region, and to the location of native plants and animals, European-Americans’ names commemorated people, anthropomorphized the landscape or likened geological formations to architectural structures (55).” The names tied geology to masculinity to architecture, encouraging further transformation through development. “Providing that the largest and most monumental geological forms of a region were preserved—along with the vistas that allowed them to be visually consumed at a glance—most Americans had no objection to that area’s subsequent development,” Berger explains (62). In his analysis of museum architecture, Berger examines the architectural eclecticism of Furness and Hewitt’s Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (1871-1876) in Philadelphia, asking “[w]hy elite, Christian European-Americans used architectural styles associated with an inferior group (96).” Like writers for whom the country was “a blank page waiting to be inscribed,” some architectural designers refused to recognize any regional precedents; rather, they designed using a “selective borrowing from the most valued styles of the past (105).” Eclecticism enabled them to “absorb and assimilate racially inferior forms and traits before transforming them into something representative of white culture,” Berger argues (108). In other words, the style enabled architectural designers to rescue valued styles of the past from contemporary *Others* and claim said styles for

whiteness through new designs. Moreover, like writers revealing desire through *American Africanism*, eclecticism also permitted “revel[ing] in architectural, ceremonial, and artistic fantasies of a racial other that expanded whiteness without coupling them to a living people who were habitually disparaged (114).” Through such analyses, Berger shows how whiteness is written into visual culture, as well as how visual culture reproduces whiteness.

In *Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Constructed Race in America*, Harris (2013) adopts the approaches of Morrison and Berger for a critical analysis of the built environment, making it most valuable for this thesis. Like the literature and visual culture considered above, suburban housing constructed between 1945 and 1960 has not been thoroughly read for the ways it reproduces whiteness. Working from an archive of magazines, trade journals, advertisements, household objects, and homes, Harris examines “the ways textual and visual representations of those houses continuously and reflexively created, re-created, and reinforced midcentury notions about racial, ethnic, and class identities—specifically, the rightness of associating white identities with homeownership and citizenship (1).” As both conceived through architectural renderings and advertisements for decor and lived through its rooms and landscape, the postwar home presents “a blueprint for the spatial requirements of white, middle-class, and heternormative domesticity (54).” This rhetoric only further emphasized who could be a homeowner at a time when Black, Asian, and Jewish people were being excluded by government, banking, and real estate agencies from freely purchasing homes. Even more significant, Harris reveals, is how this blueprint of whiteness was designed in opposition to those domestic spaces associated with “lower-class and nonwhite lifestyles and Depression-era conditions (48).” She explains, “These contrasts—clean/dirty, spacious/crowded, private/public, tidy/cluttered—facilitated the establishment of white identities by creating their opposites (38).” Such racial formation is particularly dangerous in the built environment, for landscapes “appear to be completely natural, God-given, and therefore neutral . . . [an] unnoticed background to our everyday lives (31).” In this way, social constructions can be reified through physical constructions, with little critical

consideration. Harris's work reveals the underlying whiteness of the texts and spaces of postwar housing, as well as encourages further study of the relationships between the imaginings of whiteness and the production of the built environment.

Considered together, Morrison, Berger, and Harris reveal how whiteness is constructed relationally, defining and valuing what it is through imagining and devaluing what it is not. Harris (2013) is particularly clear on this point: "If the formulation of whiteness varies according to time and space, it is nearly always constructed against and through a set of imaginary notions of what it might mean to be other (18)." In creative texts, like literature, art, and architecture, imagined *Others* provide whiteness with characters, spaces, and stories with which it can play in order to define (and redefine) itself in its best interest. The examples also reveal the unseen level at which whiteness functions in these texts—it takes a critical reading of the processes and contexts of their production to uncover how they are produced by whiteness, as well as the ways they reproduce whiteness. This thesis adopts these critical reading methods to reveal how the white spatial imaginary, with its particular histories, cultures, and identities, is reproduced in redevelopment documents from Yesler Terrace.

## 1.2 Critically Reading Yesler Terrace's Redevelopment

The works summarized above reveal how one can critically read texts—literature, photography, architecture, advertisements, objects—for meaning beneath their presented narrative. Morrison, Berger, and Harris read *against the grain* for "social power, power abuse, dominance and inequality (e.g. those of class, gender, race, age, etc.) as they are enacted, sustained, legitimated or challenged by text or talk (van Dijk 1994: 435)." Tuen A. van Dijk (1993) continues, such readings account for the "intricate relationships between text, talk, social cognition, power, society, and culture (253)." More explicitly, critical discourse analysis "may be defined as fundamentally concerned with analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimized, and so on by language use

(or in discourse),” according to Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (2001: 2). Michelle M. Lazar’s (2007) definition of feminist critical discourse studies is also helpful here; it aims “to show up the complex, subtle, and sometimes not so subtle ways in which frequently taken-for-granted gender assumptions and hegemonic power relations are discursively produced, sustained, negotiated, and challenged in different contexts and communities (142).” As a practiced method, the critical discourse analysis of this thesis involves (1) establishing an archive of redevelopment documents, which I will contextualize and outline below, (2) categorizing the documents based on the ways they write history, produce culture, and form identity, and (3) collecting discursive statements from said documents. Like any method, critical discourse analysis is not without its limitations. Such an analysis can only speak to what built environment practitioners have imagined in their documents, as opposed to what they are imagining as people. For example, an architectural designer might have thought about their project in one way, only to have a design review board or real estate developer present it another way. It is difficult (and in the case of this archive, impossible) to capture such nuances through a critical discourse analysis. Perhaps more so than other methods, my research interests and questions also direct how the documents are read, and these readings are similarly affected by my own biases and assumptions. That is to say, another researcher could perform a critical discourse analysis on the same archive and read it in an entirely different way. If the aim is to destabilize discursive power, though, this limitation is not necessarily a flaw—like any text, academic scholarship must be continuously questioned for the ways it is inscribed by and reinscribes power. Moreover, critical discourse analysis is particularly effective in revealing how power is constructed through texts in a way that other methods, like interviews or observation, are not. In this thesis, I argue that hegemonic power relations, and more specifically, the white spatial imaginary, are present in the built environment and can be best analyzed through a critical discourse analysis of the documentation involved in its production. These documents, such as the plans and proposals submitted to municipal officials and the advertisements marketed to larger publics, represent an understudied archive which can help to reveal the

intentions, assumptions, and biases with which buildings, neighborhoods, and cities are made. For this thesis, a small archive of urban planning (Table 1), architectural design (Table 2), and real estate (Table 3) documents from the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace has been compiled.

There was discussion of Yesler Terrace's redevelopment as early as 2004, amid the ongoing redevelopments of Holly Park, Rainier Vista, and High Point, three neighborhoods also managed by the SHA. Based on these projects, the narrative appears to have been largely written from the beginning: the housing at Yesler Terrace was aging and in need of significant improvements, which the underfunded SHA could not afford to make. "Money to pay for these improvements could be raised by selling some of the acreage to private developers, who undoubtedly would want to situate homes to make the most of the westerly view of downtown, Elliott Bay and SoDo," Stuart Eskanazi (2004) explains in the *Seattle Times*. The planning process began two years later when the SHA Board of Commissioners formed a Citizen Review Committee (CRC), which "develop[ed] a set of definitions and guiding principles for redevelopment (2007a: 1)." Despite its name, the CRC was comprised of representatives of various organizations, commissions, authorities, and institutions. Of the 19 members of the CRC, only three appear to be directly representative of the existing residents of Yesler Terrace (one resident, one "alternate" resident, and a member of the Yesler Terrace Community Council). The perspectives of other residents were collected through various meetings between fall 2006 and November 2007, at which point the CRC defined four principles for redevelopment (2007a: 6-13)—social equity, economic opportunity, environmental stewardship and sustainability, and one-for-one replacement housing—and their corresponding planning concepts (2007b: 4-5)—community heart, main street, Broadway linkages, complete streets, leverage density, mixed-use activity, fit naturally, and open space. These ideas keep Yesler Community Center at the neighborhood's center, activate Yesler Way and Broadway into main streets and complete the street grid in the area, develop dense mixed-use buildings, and incorporate sustainable design and open space.

Table 1: Urban Planning Documents

Year	Document	Author
2010	Draft EIS	SHA, City of Seattle
2011	Final EIS	SHA, City of Seattle
2011	Development Plan	SHA
2012	Design Guidelines	GGLO Design, City of Seattle, SHA

Table 2: Architectural Design Documents

Year	Site	Author
2012	1105 East Fir Street	SHA, GGLO Design
2013	103 12th Avenue	Gracorp Capital, Spectrum, Mithun
2015	123 Broadway	Vulcan Real Estate, Runberg Architecture
2015	921 South Washington Street	SHA, SMR Architects
2016	120 Broadway	Vulcan Real Estate, Runberg Architecture
2016	125 Boren Avenue South	Mill Creek Residential, Weber Thompson
2016	200 9th Avenue	SHA, SRG, Pyatok
2017	209 12th Avenue South	Seattle Tenth LLC, Ankrom Moisan
2017	1020 South Main Street	Seattle Tenth LLC, Ankrom Moisan
2018	104 12th Avenue	Centric Partners, Clark Barnes, Karen Kiest
2019	110 10th Avenue South	SHA, Pyatok, Hewitt
2019	725 Yesler Way	Su Development, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson
2019	1000 East Yesler Way	Vulcan Real Estate, Encore Architects

Table 3: Real Estate Documents

Year	Website	Author
2019	Yesler	SHA
2020	Anthem on 12th	CWS Property Management
2020	Batik Seattle	Vulcan Real Estate
2020	Metroline Flats	Pinnacle Communities
2020	Modera First Hill	Modera First Hill
2020	Seattle Cyprus	Vulcan Real Estate

With these guiding principles established, the next phase of redevelopment consisted of what the SHA called “community workshops,” facilitated by the architectural firm CollinsWoerman. At these workshops, existing residents were organized in language-based groups (Amharic, Chinese, English, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese) and indicated their preferences among various images of the existing neighborhood and redevelopment alternatives. Participants mapped their favorite and least favorite parts of Yesler Terrace, considered different approaches to multi-family housing, and discussed job opportunities both during and after redevelopment, among other topics. With this “participatory research” in hand, CollinsWoerman was able to present what they considered to be relevant planning concepts and neighborhood studies, as well as suggest and evaluate several design concepts and conceptual renderings (Figure 2) by June 2009. “During this process, the planning team showed how physical elements of the site could be separated into seven variables that would influence site planning. Three distinct options for each variable were developed showing a range of possibilities. The individual options were then assembled into three preliminary concepts for evaluation purposes (CollinsWoerman 2009: 1).” These evaluations were based on both the “community workshops” and “input from other stakeholders and consultants (i.e. City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development, Transportation, Utilities, Seattle Design Commission, the development community, financial consultants, etc.).” This work of the CRC in 2006 and 2007 and CollinsWoerman in 2008 and 2009 very much informed the next decade of redevelopment documents, which are more closely examined in this thesis.

Following these guidelines and concepts, the SHA and its consultants published Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) in October 2010 and April 2011. Due to the large scale of the redevelopment project, an EIS was required to demonstrate a need for the project and the proposed alternatives, as well as present its environmental impacts (on plant and animal species, air and water, history and culture, and socioeconomics) and mitigation measures for said impacts. Both the Draft and Final EIS are fairly dense documents around 800 pages in length, in addition to multiple appendices on the various

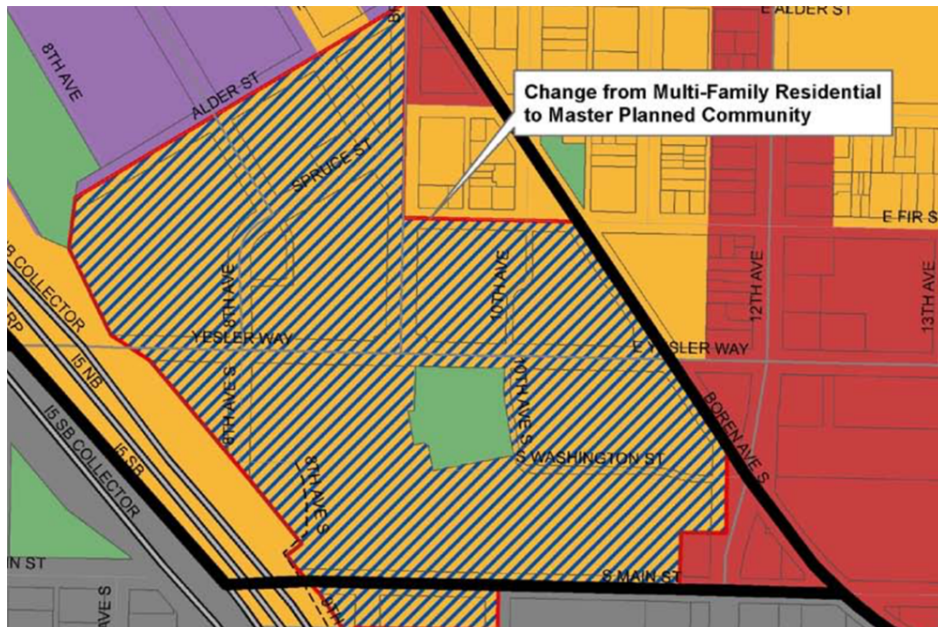


Figure 2: Conceptual Renderings of the Area (CollinsWoerman 2009: 19-23)

impacts. The Yesler Terrace Development Plan, a more concise and accessible document published by the SHA in May 2011, presents arguments for the project and its preferred alternative, a “highly visionary mixed-income urban community” with 5,000 housing units, 900,000 square feet of office space, 65,000 square feet of neighborhood services, 88,000 square feet of neighborhood retail, and almost 16 acres of parks and “semi-private open space” (4-5). To further enable this redevelopment, much of the site area was designated a “Master Planned Community” (Figure 3) by the Seattle City Council, “offer[ing] an opportunity to create a cohesive urban design throughout the entire development (Seattle Housing Authority 2011: 6).” In July 2012, the area was recommended a specific set of design guidelines, the Yesler Terrace Master Planned Community Design Guidelines, in order to achieve this cohesive design. “Like Seattle’s neighborhood design guidelines, the Yesler Terrace Master Planned Community Design Guidelines are a site-specific supplement to the Seattle Design Guidelines; both are to be applied together (GGLO Design, City of Seattle, & Seattle Housing Authority 2012: iii).” These guidelines outline priority issues, as well as approaches to and precedents for context and site, public life, and design concepts. Architectural designers use the guidelines, as well as their own contextual analyses and aesthetic preferences, to propose designs for spatial programs (e.g. housing, commercial) as specified by real estate developers. Their proposals, called “Early Design Guidance” or “Design Recommendation,” generally consist of maps and photographs of existing site and context conditions, diagrams of the proposed programs, and an outline of the relevant design guidelines, as well as renderings of three massing or design options, including a preferred “solution”. These packets are presented to the East Design Review Board for consideration, feedback, and approval before any physical construction can begin, and as such, the final design is very much a negotiation between architectural designers, real estate developers, and the design review board. At Yesler Terrace, most packets have been presented since 2015 and continue to be prepared, reviewed, and approved as the site is built out. After buildings are completed, they are represented by real estate developers through marketing websites for prospective residents. Developers use these websites to rent



(a) Full Redevelopment Site



(b) "Master Planned Community" Area

Figure 3: Area of Redevelopment (Seattle Housing Authority 2011: 6)

individual units, using a combination of pictures and videos of styled apartments, neighborhood maps with nearby employment and amenities, and narratives of what living there is like. New market-rate apartment buildings have their own websites, while the SHA describes all of its properties on a single website. All of these documents will be read for how they reproduce the white spatial imaginary in later chapters.

### 1.3 Racial Formation in Built Environments

Given the narrow focus of this project—the relationship between whiteness and the process of imagining the contemporary built environment—there is limited related work, and it is spread across urban planning, architecture and landscape architecture, and geography. Unfortunately, much of the work on race and space by scholars of the built environment does not question how race is constructed through built environments, while the work of scholars from the geography and other social sciences is, understandably, more focused on social environments. Nevertheless, I will outline some of the touchstones in each field, as well as highlight recent writings which are most closely related to this project.

Early work on race and urban planning was typically place-based and examined the relationship between race and urban redevelopment, such as the significant writings of John F. Bauman (1987) on public housing in Philadelphia and June Manning Thomas (1997) on redevelopment in Detroit. Several recent articles have started critiquing white imaginaries in a way similar to this project; these include writings by Lisa K. Bates, Sharita A. Towne, Christopher Paul Jordan, and Kitso Lynn Lelliott (2018) as part of *This is a Black Spatial Imaginary*, Brand (2018a) on urban redevelopment in New Orleans, and Libby Porter and Oren Yiftachel (2019) on settler-colonialism. Through an exhibition at Portland Community College’s Paragon Gallery and a collection of essays in *Planning Theory & Practice*, the contributors to *This is a Black Spatial Imaginary* (2018) consider “otherwise planning” as a way of “dismantl[ing] white and colonial spatial imaginaries (254).” Towne argues, “In cities built on exclusion new blueprints can be envisioned, and art, in conjunction with community organizing, can interrupt the continuum of a relentless white

spatial imaginary that builds its cities by undermining Black Life, and it can point us toward the spatializing of reparations and restructuring the places that we live (255).” Similarly, Brand (2018a) reads W.E.B. Du Bois’s “double consciousness” in residents’ perceptions and reenvisionings of urban redevelopment in post-Katrina New Orleans, arguing “the spatial aspects of blacks’ double consciousness counter redevelopment paradigms steeped in expanding capital and white privilege while intensifying the vulnerability of blacks’ land claims (4).” Finally, in their introduction to a special issue of *Settler Colonial Studies*, Porter and Yiftachel (2019) underscore the relationship between settler colonialism and urbanization. “[T]he racist imaginary deployed by colonizers of Indigenous peoples has worked to render the urban as a place *not Indigenous*, profoundly spatially and temporally disconnected from Indigenous histories and geographies, despite the obvious fact in settler-colonial societies that most cities and settlements sit on unceded territories,” they write (177). Such examples reveal how urban planning has written whiteness into built environments, as well as suggest new ways of both thinking and doing.

Practitioners, historians, and theorists of architecture and landscape architecture have contributed to a growing, though somewhat disjointed literature on race and architecture. These include works by John Michael Vlach (1993), Darell Wayne Fields (2000), Lesley Naa Norle Lokko (2000), Craig Evan Barton (2001), Mabel O. Wilson (2012), Mario Gooden (2016), Adrienne Brown (2017), and Charles Davis II (2019), as well as the new edited volume *Race and Modern Architecture: A Critical History from the Enlightenment to the Present* (Cheng, Davis, & Wilson 2020). However, the theoretical and methodological approaches of these works vary significantly from one another and this thesis, and most do not focus on the production of contemporary built environments. Rather, it is in two recent, alternative publications—Huda Tayob and Suzanne Hall’s (2019) curriculum and Pierre Bélanger’s (2020) manifesto—that the white spatial imaginaries of architectural design are most clearly questioned. Tayob and Hall’s (2019) open-access curriculum compiles an interdisciplinary bibliography of writings, films, and visualizations on race, space, and architecture organized into themes of centralising, circulating, domesticating,

extracting, immobilising, and incarcerating, to document the “ongoing process of racial ordering that is spatial and material (4).” They explain, “Buildings, highways, suburbs and townships are constitutive of how individuals become positioned in a vast spectre of racial segregation, tangible in the shape and the materiality of concrete and corrugated iron (2).” Declaring “no design on stolen land,” Bélanger (2020) and others similarly critique design as dehumanizing, dispossessing, whitewashing, alienating and excluding, subjugating, masking, laundering, and destroying, and instead argue for “ground[ing] territories with their treaties (127).” Building sites “are the spatial products of a violent structure and system of settler-colonialism that displaced and continue to dispossess Indigenous Peoples through 500 years of territorial injustices,” Bélanger writes (122). These two projects critique the role of architecture and landscape architecture in reproducing white, colonial imaginaries through built environments.

These recent works I have highlighted from urban planning, architecture, and landscape architecture largely draw on spatial approaches to race developed by social scientists, like Clyde Woods (1998), Laura Pulido (2000), Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2002), Katherine McKitterick (2006), Glen Coulthard (2014), and Audra Simpson (2014), which are expanding through the new research and activism of Black, Latinx, and Indigenous geographies. Their works unsettle whiteness, but more critically, they center the spatial experiences, understandings, and imaginings of Black, Latinx, and Indigenous peoples. In addition to informing the recent work of built environment scholars, some of this social science literature specifically considers the relationship between race and the built environment, namely that of AbdouMaliq Simone (2016), Juan D. De Lara (2018), and Brandi Thompson Summers (2019). Simone (2016) considers the concept of “generic blackness,” through which “the dangers of urban life are still attributed to particular kinds of bodies,” but “prevailing regimes of urban power can never fully apprehend or control” them (199). With changes in Jakarta’s built environment, “[m]any refer to the city as becoming too ‘black’. ‘Black’ becomes a catchall term for all that is wrong, non-modern, and inexplicable; all that must be clarified and straightened out (185).” At the same time,

generic blackness includes “sensibilities of care, of taking care (186),” in some ways reflecting the duality described by Brand (2018a) of New Orleans residents. More recently, in *Inland Shift: Race, Space, and Capital in Southern California*, De Lara (2018) examines struggles over “the warehouse, the diesel-poisoned body, the foreclosed home, the racialized state apparatus (2-3)” to reveal how racial capitalism shapes both built and other spaces in California’s Inland Empire, and Summers (2019) examines the physical toll of gentrification in Washington D.C., including “how blackness is aestheticized and deployed to fortify public order, organize landscapes, and foster capital (4),” in *Black in Place: The Spatial Aesthetics of Race in a Post-Chocolate City*. These sociological projects provide new approaches to and understandings of built environments, how they are tied to processes of racialization, and how said environments and processes are contested.

\*

The following chapters contribute to this related work by revealing the presence of the white spatial imaginary in the ongoing redevelopment of Yesler Terrace, as well as highlighting some of the ways inhabitants and organizers imagine “otherwise”. Chapter 2 examines histories of the redevelopment site in order to uncover how the white spatial imaginary has repeatedly reshaped this landscape, reproducing both whiteness and racialized *Others* and erasing different imaginaries in the process. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 respectively consider how whiteness is imagined through writing history, producing culture, and forming identity, and in turn how each of these processes informs the production of the built environment. These chapters supplement the theoretical framework above with writings by Edward Said (1978) and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), Stuart Hall (1991, 1992, 2000) and Sara Ahmed (2012), and Franz Fanon (1967) and Simone Browne (2015), before critically reading the redevelopment documentation. Chapter 6 concludes this thesis through examining spatial struggles in and around Yesler Terrace that offer new approaches to thinking and making built environments.

## Chapter 2

### **YESLER**

### **~~YESLER TERRACE~~**

### **~~PROFANITY HILL~~**

### ***~~LITTLE CROSSING-OVER PLACE~~***

Take a walk up Seattle's Yesler Way, and you will cross through several historical layers of space. Just south of what is now called Pioneer Square was a Native settlement called *Little Crossing-Over Place*. The settlement was situated on a promontory, separated from the land to the north by a tidal stream and to the east by a tidal lagoon. You can imagine this lagoon to your right as you reach Occidental Avenue South and its nearby alleyways. Following Yesler Way, pass the Smith Tower on your left, the Prefontaine Building on your right, and the Yesler Building on your left, and you will enter an area that used to be called Profanity Hill. As part of wider Nihonmachi neighborhood, and just blocks away from Black, Chinese, and Filipino spaces of South Jackson and King Streets and Jewish spaces further up Yesler Way, Profanity Hill was home to a diverse group of neighbors, including Japanese, Black, and mixed-race families, single people of different races and ethnicities, and folks of various ages. However, many of their domestic, commercial, and community spaces were razed to make way for the construction of Yesler Terrace between 6th and 12th Avenues. Over time, this new neighborhood, a public housing development of low-rise rowhouses with individual yards, became home to primarily Black and Asian peoples, significant portions of whom were women and youth under 18 years old. Like *Little Crossing-Over Place* and Profanity Hill, however, these rowhouses are no longer apparent. At the top of the hill, around Yesler Way and Broadway, the new mixed-use, mid-rise, market-rate buildings suggest what (and who) is to come in this area's future.

This brief tour of Yesler Way reveals what spaces have been preserved and for whom they have been named, and in turn, which histories are no longer apparent in the built environment. The street increasingly reflects the white spatial imaginary with which it has continuously been remade. The area has been deforested and regraded, revealing how settlers extracted value from the space and constructed themselves into the landscape. The Smith Tower and Prefontaine Building, commercial spaces from the early 1900s, have been preserved, as has the Yesler Building, a “public safety building” with a police station and jail for much of the first half of the 20th century (DeCoster 2010). Other buildings, particularly those of Profanity Hill and Yesler Terrace, have been replaced with new buildings through which more value can be extracted from the land. The very name of the street recalls the settler Henry Yesler, while the neighborhood and square at its base is named for the “pioneers”.

This chapter examines the pasts, presents, and futures of *Little Crossing-Over Place*, Profanity Hill, and Yesler Terrace. As will be explained in Chapter 3, writing history is problematic. It is an authoritative practice, usually completed from a privileged position and used to reproduce the writer’s power. Moreover, the practice typically does not allow for a multiplicity of perspectives or sources, especially when they conflict with one another. This is a primary critique of the documents produced by built environment practitioners; they selectively present history in a way that limits both past and future imaginings of a place, and as their spatial policy, design, or development is realized, it can give further credibility to certain historical narratives over others. Scholarship is similarly discursive, and as such, this very document should be questioned. Having said that, this chapter attempts to destabilize dominant historical narratives or a so-called “comprehensive” history with a series of historical vignettes connecting social changes since the mid-19th century with the development of Seattle’s built environment. The chapter provides historical context for Yesler Terrace’s contemporary redevelopment, as well as reveals some of the many histories from which built environment practitioners could draw.

## 2.1 *Little Crossing-Over Place*

Indigenous people ... moved through landscapes that were dense with meaning. The proof is in the names. *Prairie Point*, which would become Alki Point in 1851, was but one named place on a peninsula bordered on the west and north by deep salt water and on the east by a meandering river and its estuary. The headland that brooded to the east of *Prairie Point* was *Low Point*, while to the south along the outer shore, a creek called *Capsized* came pouring out of the forest near a place called *Rids the Cold*; south of there were headlands called *Tight Bluff* and *Place of Scorched Bluff*. Together, these place-names map the indigenous landscape: open places among the forest, cliffs tightly crowded with brush or blackened by mineral deposits [my emphases].

- Coll Thrush, *Native Seattle* (2017: 21)

Sd<sup>z</sup>sdíd<sup>z</sup>əl<sup>?</sup>alič, or *Little Crossing-Over Place*, consisted of a village of “up to eight longhouses” on a small wooded peninsula between the sea, tideflats, and a lagoon filled with flounder; a nearby trail, for which the place was named, leads over the hill toward x<sup>w</sup>q<sup>w</sup>íyaq<sup>w</sup>ayaqs, or *Saw-Grass Point*, where people gathered tule along the lake to make household items (Thrush 2017: 229, 248). These two sites mark the general route of Yesler Way, but more significantly, they start to reveal a network of places inhabited, used, and named by the Dx<sup>w</sup>dəw<sup>?</sup>abš, or Duwamish people, as of the mid-19th century. With other Coast Salish peoples, particularly the local Lakes and Shilshole communities, the Duwamish have occupied this region for about 10,000 years. Those places that remain well-documented today represent only a handful of the sites that would have been used and named by these Indigenous peoples, and the names reflect their particular uses when white settlers first arrived in the region, such as fishing, portage, or games (Thrush 2017: 210, 213-214). The names are important for they provide one way to imagine the region before colonization transformed the landscape, as well as help maintain Indigenous claims to the land. They also connect this land to bodies and other objects through Whulshootseed’s lexical suffixes: “the suffix -us could refer both to a face or a bluff; -aqs could refer to a

nose, a point, or a pointed object; and the -ootseed of Whulshootseed refers to the human or animal mouth, the mouths of waterways, and the language itself (Thrush 2017: 215)."

With its longhouses, places like *Little Crossing-Over Place* were winter settlements, as well as spatial centers for "nearby seasonal camps, resource sites, and sacred places (Thrush 2017: 23)." Coll Thrush (2017) explains, "These local geographies were themselves connected through trade and kinship to communities as far away as the arid interior plateau of the Columbia River and the coast of Vancouver Island, knitting the entire region together in a complicated indigenous weave of towns and territories (23-24)." As of 1852, however, only one ruined longhouse remained at *Little Crossing-Over Place* likely due to smallpox and other epidemics, which accompanied expeditions to the region by Britain and the United States throughout the late 18th and early 19th centuries (Thrush 2017: 24-25, 229). Like the relationship between landscape and body, the home and body are also linked in Whulshootseed, such that "related words spoke of illness and the falling down of a home, and so the ruins were testaments to loss (Thrush 2017: 38)." In addition to fatally infecting Indigenous peoples through their encounters, the expeditions reimagined and renamed the landscape and encouraged further colonization. By the mid-19th century, newcomers were guided down the Duwamish River, "[w]here indigenous people saw spirits and nets and carving wood—the wealth of the land as it was and had been," but settlers "saw the wealth of the land as it could and would be, expressed in words like "arable," "improvement," and "export" (Thrush 2017: 28-29)." Despite the significant presence of the Duwamish and other peoples, as well as the life-sustaining work they provided, Native imaginings, names, and constructions of the landscape were quickly changed with the arrival of settlers.

Following a temporary settlement at sbaq<sup>w</sup>ábaqs, or *Prairie Point*, but renamed New York-Alki, the settlers established a more permanent settlement at *Little Crossing-Over Place* in May 1853, attempting to plat the area and name it after Indigenous leader, Seeathl (Thrush 2017: 38). A plan of Seattle from 1855 (Figure 4) reveals the difficulty of organizing the landscape as a Cartesian grid. The sea, tideflats, and lagoon, as well as the nearby wooded hills limited the grid to a few streets on the peninsula. Similarly, as opposed to a definitive

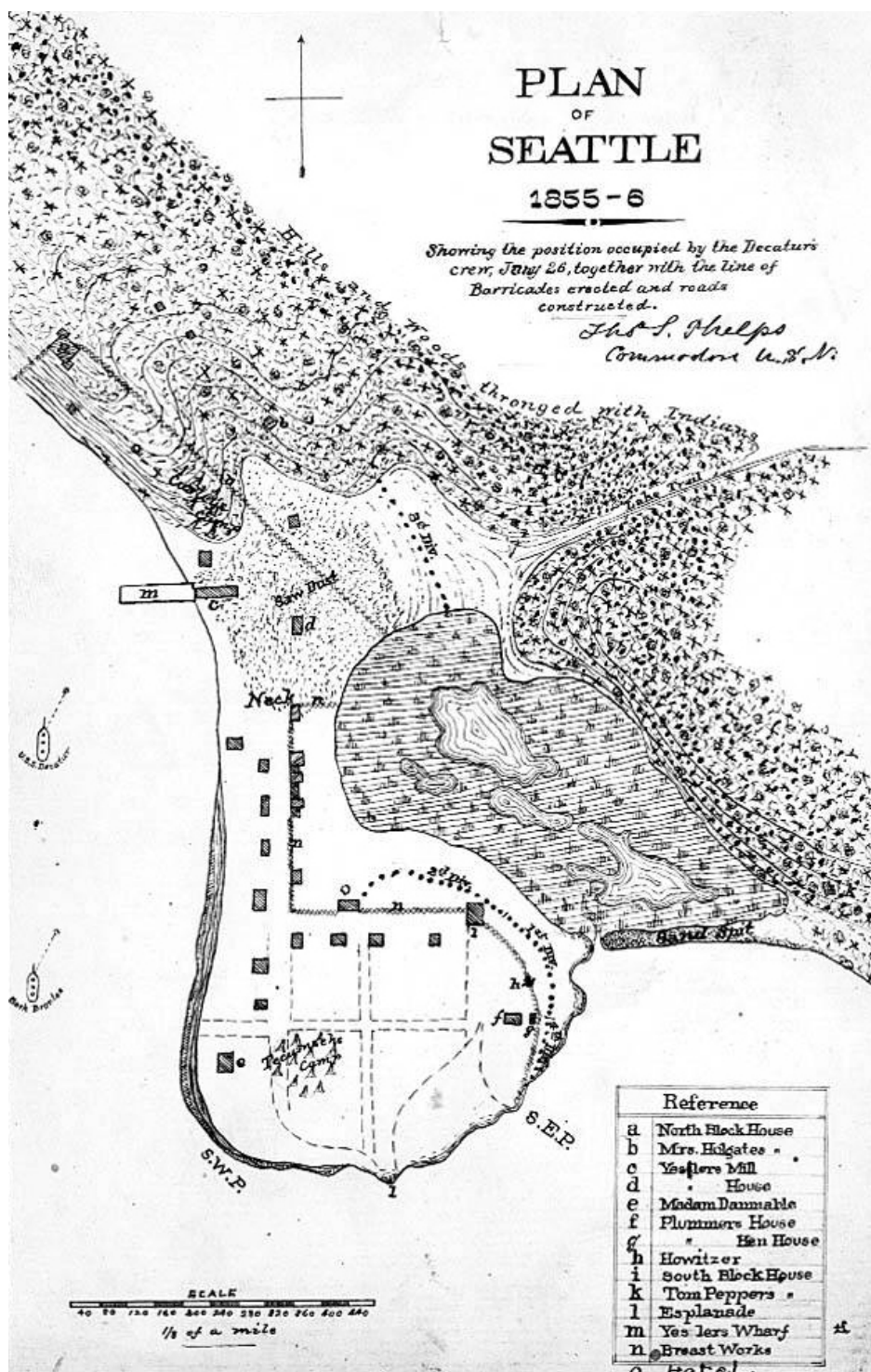


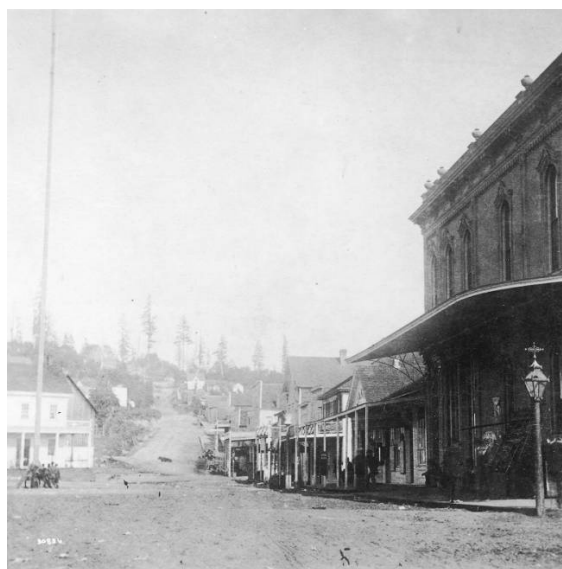
Figure 4: Plan of Seattle, 1855-1856 (UW Libraries, Special Collections, SEA1382)

naming, many places were called different names by different populations. Nevertheless, when Yesler opened a sawmill between the peninsula and trail, both physical and social space were more significantly transformed. As the plan from 1855 reveals, “saw dust” from the mill expanded the amount of developable land for settlers by filling in a small tidal stream at the neck of the peninsula and part of the lagoon. The “Lake Trail”—that is, the crossing-over place to *Saw-Grass Point* on the lake—provided an entry into the wooded hills for trees. As trees were cut down, laborers skidded them down this trail toward the sawmill; the trail thus gained its new, informal name, Skid Road. The beginnings of this deforestation are visible just beyond the “saw dust” on the plan. Finally, the lumber from the sawmill provided materials for a more permanent built environment for settlers, including housing and boarding.

As the physical landscape was transformed, social structures and economic activities also changed. While Indigenous peoples continued to inhabit the area and practice their cultures, some began working for settlers, like Yesler. “Native men cleared land and helped build homes on the slopes above Elliott Bay, and Native women did the washing within those homes,” Thrush states (2017: 49). Others, like Leschay, fought settlers as they territorialized the landscape. Indeed, the plan from 1855 also shows the location of the USS Decatur, positioned to stop a raid from the hills above the town. While the early settlement was marked by various relations in this way, a growing population of laborers and federal policies on Native communities continued to change the social environment throughout the next decade. By the time Seattle was incorporated in 1865, the town quickly adopted ordinances “decreeing that “no Indian or Indians shall be permitted to reside or locate their residences on any street, highway, lane, or alley or any vacant lot in the town of Seattle”,” tying its new urban infrastructure to a policy of segregation (Thrush 2017: 54). Native individuals who were employed were allowed to remain in Seattle and provided housing by their employers, but the ordinance severely restricted who was allowed to be a resident, as well as how and when. Thrush (2017) argues, such policies enabled “the removal of certain kinds of Indians and the retention of others (54).”



(a) Looking West, 1873



(b) Looking East, 1875-1885

Figure 5: Mill Street, 1870s-1880s (MOHAI, Seattle Historical Society Collection, SHS1108; UW Libraries, Special Collections, SEA1675)

## 2.2 Profanity Hill

Around the time of its incorporation, “Seattle was a small, struggling community economically dominated by Yesler’s sawmill and a few hardware and mercantile stores, boarding houses, barbershops, saloons, and brothels—all catering to the loggers, miners, and sailors who regularly passed in and out of town,” Quintard Taylor states (1994: 16). This description is reflected in a photograph of Skid Road (Figure 5), formally Mill Street, in which a variety of small structures line the street between the logged hill in the east and the large sawmill in the west. Mill Street effectively illustrates social distinctions between “pioneers,” older settlers who established Seattle decades earlier and grew somewhat wealthier with the region’s growth, and “transients,” an increasing population of new settlers who primarily worked as laborers throughout the region (Taylor 1994: 17). In the 1870s and 1880s, this social divide was reflected in an uphill-downhill physical divide of



Figure 6: Mill Street, 1898 (UW Libraries, Special Collections, SEA1552)

Mill Street. Living uphill provided “prominent Seattle residents beautiful views of the Puget Sound at a safe distance from the laborers, immigrants, and seamen who lived and worked along the waterfront (Asaka 2018: 239).” By the 1890s, after a decade of substantial population growth, this social divide shifted to a north-south physical divide (Figure 6), as “pioneers” constructed new homes on the hillside well north of Mill Street and “transients” found affordable accommodations both along and south of Mill Street. As the built environment catered to these laborers, the area between Mill Street and Jackson Street acquired a seedy and unhealthy reputation by the turn of the century, especially after vice in the city was largely confined to the neighborhood.

In addition to reflecting the spatialization of class, the area also reveals how space was gendered and racialized in the early city. Most of the laborers living in the neighborhood were single men, and as such, its built environment was marked by single-room occupancy hotels and lodging houses, in addition to spaces for prostitution and gambling. While the area to the immediate north of Mill Street was largely made up of white and Jewish laborers, the area to its immediate south was home to a growing population of Asian and Black laborers, due to their limited employment and housing opportunities resulting from the racist policies and practices of white settlers. Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, and Black workers supplied regional labor on the railroads, lumber mills, canneries, farms, and mines, in addition to local labor as janitors, waiters, servants, porters, and maids (Chin 2001; Taylor 1994). The housing typologies and affordability of the area provided spaces in which these workers could live, and various policies and practices soon reproduced this pattern. As Doug Chin (2001) explains, these included state policies:

The 1921 Anti-Alien Land Law was designated to prevent aliens “ineligible to citizenship by naturalization” from owning land. Within the context of those times, only whites and blacks could be naturalized. All others (Japanese, Filipinos, Chinese) were specifically excluded. This law underscored a dominant American theme: Asians were tolerated only insofar as they constituted a transient, cheap labor force. In Seattle, the single room hotels of Chinatown visibly embodied that attitude (47).

Local practices also contributed to this racialization of space. Taylor (1994) notes, “White apartment owners refused to rent to African Americans outside the area, and restrictive covenants prevented blacks (as well as Asians and Jews) from becoming homeowners beyond this section (84).” Such racialization would only be further entrenched after the Great Depression, when redlining distinguished the “best” neighborhoods from “hazardous” neighborhoods for mortgage lending based in part on race. White settlers assumed and assured that the presence of non-white inhabitants adversely affected their property values to the point that “the city’s business district grew in an unnatural direction” up First Avenue, away from early Chinese businesses at Mill Street (Chin 2001: 17).

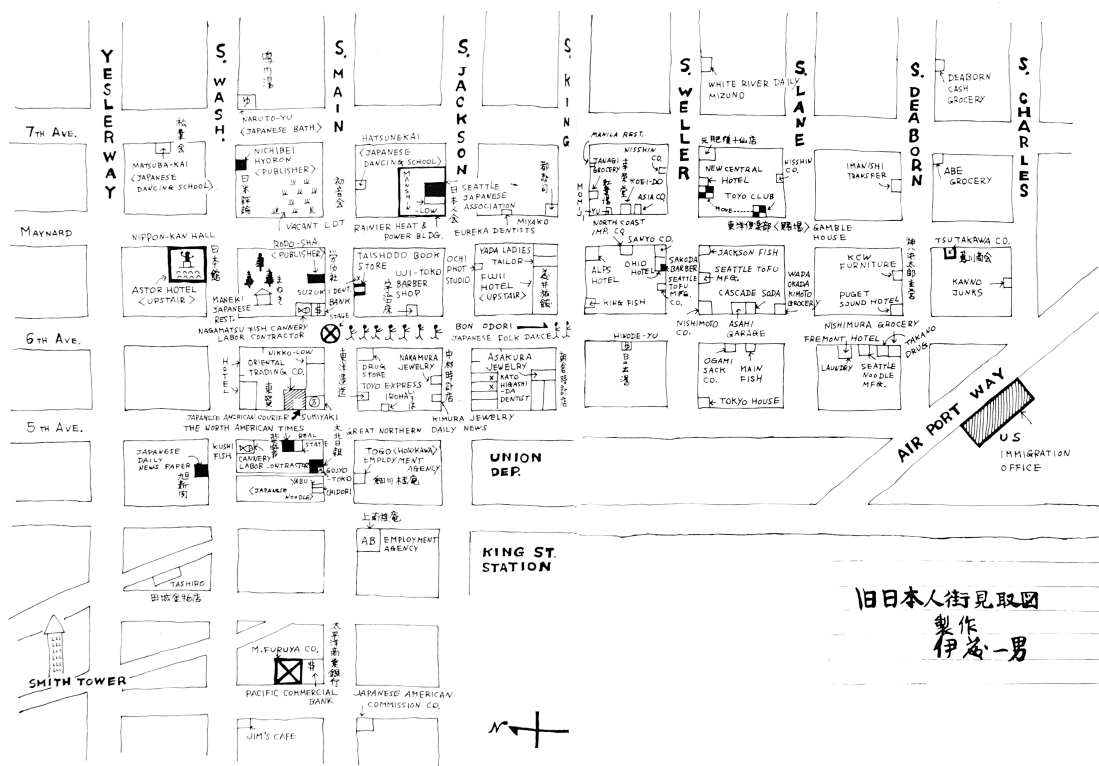


Figure 7: Seattle’s Japanese District, 1930s (Itō 1973)

With such restrictions in place throughout the rest of the city, the built environment around Mill Street, renamed Yesler Way in 1903, as well as Washington, Main, Jackson, and King Streets grew to reflect its multiethnic and multiracial population. This neighborhood was “a rare Asian American and African American integration of racial and cultural space where Chinese restaurants occupied commercial blocks with Japanese tailoring shops, Filipino dance halls, and black barbershops (Taylor 1994: 116).” Nihonmachi (Figure 7) was located around Main Street and was made up of Japanese businesses, churches, a Buddhist Temple, and language school, while both Chinatown and “New Manila” were situated around King Street and included notable structures like the Hip Sing Tong and Kong Yick buildings, as well as Riyal Hall, “a Filipino community center where lively music played constantly (2001: 49).” Between Main and King Streets,

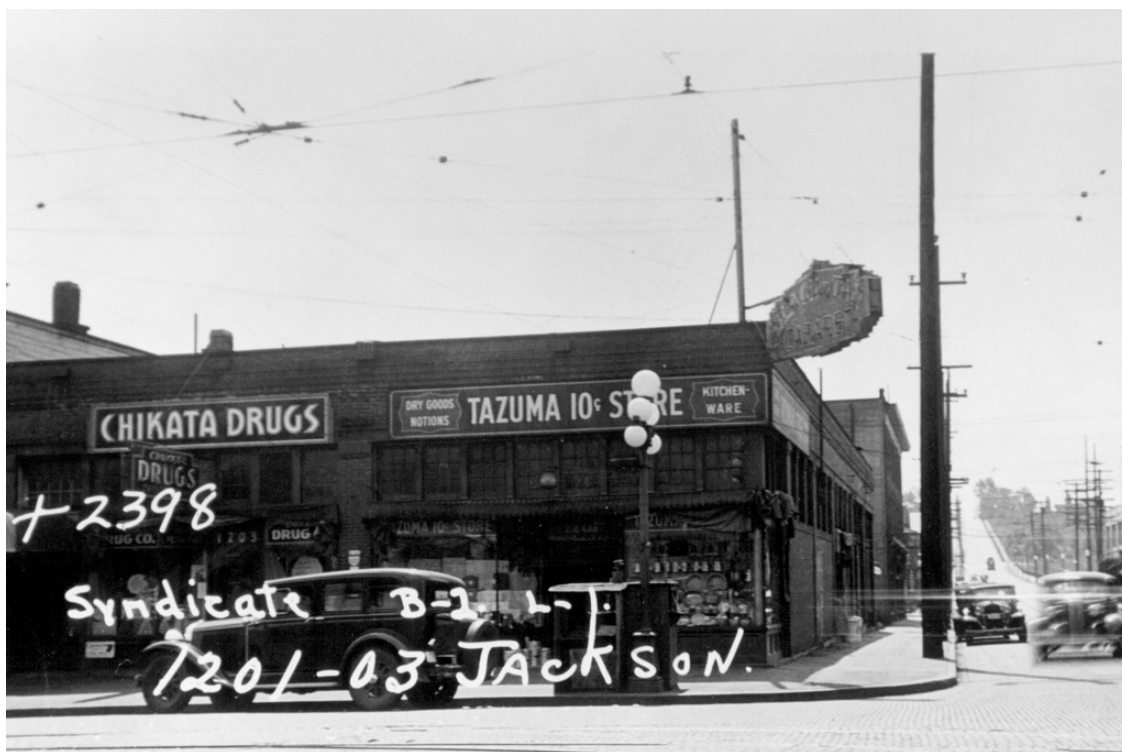


Figure 8: Tazuma Ten Cent Store and the Black and Tan, 1920s  
(Densho Digital Repository, Y. Tazuma Collection, 24-1)

Jackson Street was particularly notable for its jazz scene after the openings of the Dumas Club, Entertainers Club, Alhambra (later, the Black and Tan), and Black Elks Club from 1917 to 1938 (Chin 2001; De Barros 1993). The novelist Carlos Bulosan illustrates the neighborhood's diverse inhabitants, affordable hotels, and loud jazz clubs in *America is in the Heart* (1946). "Bulosan's memory is testament to the presence of a Filipino community just a block away from Jackson Street, illustrating the multiracial—as well as musical—character of the Yesler-Jackson community," Kaegan Faltys-Burr explains (2010). This character is further evidenced in a 1920s photograph (Figure 8) of the Tazuma Ten Cent Store at South Jackson Street and 12th Avenue South, which also housed the Black and Tan. Social alliances were not as clear as they appear in this built environment, and there were still racist and xenophobic exclusions between these populations and

disagreements over the struggles for greater rights. However, groups like the Jackson Street Community Council celebrated the neighborhood's "cultural pluralism" and worked to improve deteriorating housing and infrastructure from 1946 to 1967 (Taylor 1994: 174).

Part of this larger area included a neighborhood called Profanity Hill, located along Yesler Way just uphill from the old Skid Road and following the trail from *Little Crossing-Over Place*. Like much of the Yesler-Jackson area, its aging built environment was deteriorating as of the 1930s and 1940s. The city as a whole also lacked affordable housing options, particularly after the Great Depression. With the passing of the federal Wagner-Steagall Act in 1937, issues of slum clearance and public housing were linked, and cities requesting funding under the act were likely to be more successful if their applications included the demolition of "blighted" areas. In this way, "an argument for public housing also became an argument for slum clearance (Asaka 2018: 237)." What goes unsaid with the term "blighted," however, are its racialized undertones. In a recent article in *CityLab*, Brentin Mock (2017) quotes Wendell E. Pritchett (2003): "Blight was a facially neutral term infused with racial and ethnic prejudice. While it purportedly assessed the state of urban infrastructure, blight was often used to describe the negative impact of certain residents on city neighborhoods. This "scientific" method of understanding urban decline was used to justify the removal of blacks and other minorities from certain parts of the city (6)." In this way, labeling an area as "blighted" was as much a statement about its built environment as it was about its social environment. Slum clearance and public housing, along with other urban renewal projects, helped remake urban space according to the white spatial imaginary and again marked people of color as *other*.

Such was the case in Seattle, which established the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) in 1939, and under the direction of Jesse Epstein, applied for federal funds to construct a new neighborhood of public housing called Yesler Terrace by demolishing Profanity Hill. This neighborhood was occupied by "[s]ome one thousand residents—42% white, 33% Japanese, and the rest Filipinos, Chinese, Hawaiians, and Blacks ... [s]ome 18 prostitution houses, a grocery store, a Chinese laundry, and two Japanese-operated hotels ... [and] three



(a) Child in a Chicken Coop



(b) Family in their Backyard

Figure 9: Kunitsugu Family of 515 Yesler Way, 1920s (Densho Digital Repository, Kunitsugu Collection, 12-12, 12-14)

Japanese churches, including the Shinto Temple and Buddhist Church (Chin 2001: 66).” Like the larger area, single male laborers of different races, ethnicities, and statuses made up a sizeable part of these residents. However, Profanity Hill was also home to quite a few families, including middle-class Japanese families “occupying homes with more space for small farms and gardens,” as well as both Black and interracial families (Asaka 2018: 241, 244). Two photographs from the Kunitsugu family (Figure 9) of 515 Yesler Way evidence such outdoor spaces. In her memoir *Profanity Hill*, Irene Burns Miller (1979) also provides vignettes of its social and built environments based on her interactions in and observations of the neighborhood in 1940. Miller presents a fairly tight-knit community of sex workers, laborers, young children, families, single parents, and older individuals and couples, all of whom made Profanity Hill home and seemed largely resistant to its destruction and their displacement. For many, it was a “refuge” from the racist and xenophobic policies and practices affecting housing in other parts of the city or one of the few affordable options following the Great Depression (21). Further, Profanity Hill was well-located between Downtown and the Japanese, Black, Chinese and Filipino businesses along Yesler, Main, Jackson, and King Streets. The newly opened Harborview Hospital was also nearby. According to Miller, the housing on Profanity Hill (Figure 10) had deteriorated



Figure 10: Housing on Profanity Hill, 1940 (UW Libraries, Special Collections, SEA1552)

significantly since it was constructed for wealthy settlers in the late 19th century—one building’s “cracked red and purple stained glass windows and broken cornices testified to its former beauty (79).” Nearby, there were “crumbling rooming houses, dilapidated hotels, crackerbox shacks (14),” in addition to a “discolored house lean[ing] precariously over the hill (13)” and an “old frame building with broken cornices which had been converted into ten apartments (49-50).” Indeed, Taylor (1994) argues, the proposed public housing was “a vast improvement over the deteriorating Victorian homes and craftsman cottages that houses much of Seattle’s Southside poor (169).”

However, it is also critical to note that Miller observed the neighborhood and interacted with its inhabitants as Relocation Supervisor for the SHA. In her position, Miller was

responsible for helping inhabitants of Profanity Hill find housing in other neighborhoods so that Yesler Terrace could be constructed. Miller shows some empathy for those being displaced and recognizes the challenges of finding housing in a segregated city, but also repeatedly argues she is “helping” the immediate and larger communities. The knowledges and imaginings of Profanity Hill’s inhabitants are not documented—despite an aim to “involve the community in planning for the successful operation of Yesler Terrace (18)”—and, while helpful in illustrating the social and built environments of the neighborhood, Miller’s descriptions are biased by her role in the project. For example, she writes, “Although one thousand residents would have to move from Profanity Hill, three times that many of Seattle’s poor would be housed in new garden apartments (1979: 7).” As Miller admits, and Megan Asaka (2018) emphasizes in her article “40-Acre Smudge,” though, only certain poor people were qualified to live in Yesler Terrace. In order to be eligible, applicants had to be “two or more blood relatives or married couples (they were required to produce the marriage license); incomes not to exceed \$100 a year ... slightly more for large families; the head of household must be a US citizen; they must be living in substandard housing at the time of application; home visits were required to evaluate housekeeping standards (Miller 1979: 113).” Such requirements disqualified most inhabitants of Profanity Hill, including many of the Japanese families and all of the single laborers. Moreover, unlike the existing racial, ethnic, and income diversity in the neighborhood, Epstein treated Yesler Terrace as a “social experiment” with the occupancy of Black people limited to 20% and the occupancy of welfare recipients limited to 25% (Asaka 2018: 255; Taylor 1994: 169-170). These limits were “enforced by the SHA “to avoid creating a ghetto,”” further revealing the project’s underlying racism (Asaka 2018: 256). In order to secure federal funding and local support, Asaka explains, the SHA also used cartography and photography to exclude some and norm others. A map of the proposed demolition area categorizes the Japanese Buddhist Church and nearby businesses as “slums,” thus producing “a visual narrative of abandonment and absence” in “a homogeneous Japanese district (Asaka 2018: 234, 247-248).” Similarly, the SHA and local

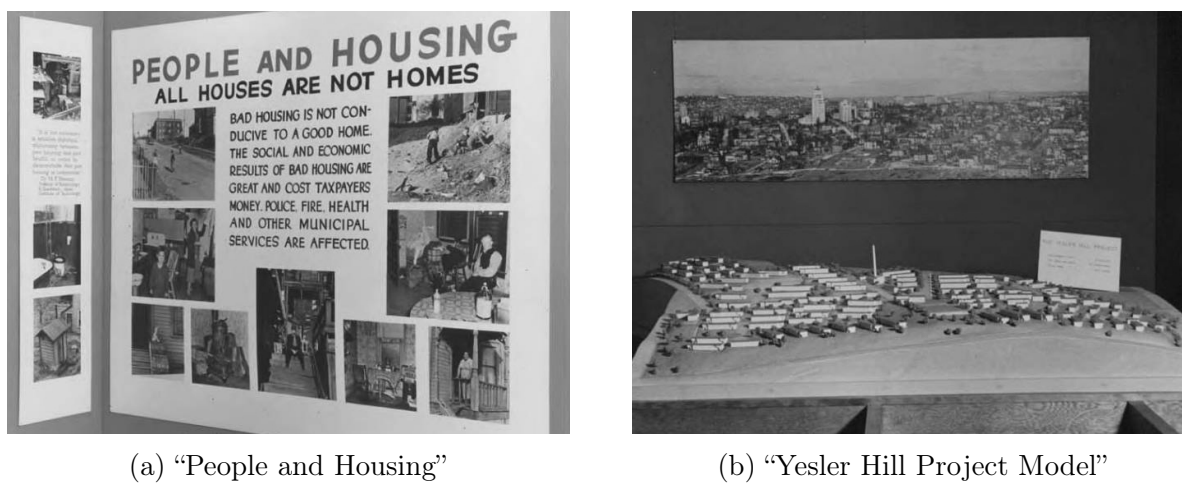


Figure 11: Housing Exhibition, 1940 (UW Libraries, Special Collections, SEA3445, SEA3459)

press used photographs to juxtapose Profanity Hill with its “[p]eeling paint, broken windows, overgrown brush, decaying fences, and haphazard construction” with Yesler Terrace’s “modern and spacious community center surrounded by grass, trees, and well-manicured shrubs (Asaka 2018: 250),” as a 1940 housing exhibition (Figure 11) also reveals. Between its policies, representations, and aesthetics, Yesler Terrace provided a way of “shoring up the white nuclear family,” Asaka argues (2018: 257). This is further evidenced in *Profanity Hill*, in which Miller (1979) suggests a “correct” way of living there, be it through surveilling “good housekeeping standards (19),” demonstrating an “attractive home” based on the University Home Economics Department (67), and even assigning domestic spaces—“[an applicant’s] two little girls must have a bedroom by themselves, the boys would have one of their own, and a separate room for the mother (118).”

By 1941, the SHA had demolished Profanity Hill and displaced most of its inhabitants, and new residents were moving into Yesler Terrace’s new rowhouses. Three aerial photographs reveal the scale of this transformation (Figure 12). Beyond the eligibility requirements and limits, the SHA wanted residents who considered the low-rent housing as a step toward private home ownership. Tenant selection was thus critical to a successful



(a) Profanity Hill before Demolition, 1940



(b) Profanity Hill after Demolition, 1941



(c) Yesler Terrace after Construction, 1941

Figure 12: Construction of Yesler Terrace, 1940-1941 (UW Libraries, Special Collections, SEA0127, SEA0128, SEA0125)

project, Miller (1979) reveals, and the SHA specifically sought “families with upward mobility who will consider Yesler Terrace a temporary place and take pride in their homes (65).” The built environment was completely transformed into “modern two-story apartments, each with its separate outside entrance, each door a contrasting color (Miller 1979: 118).” Interiors consisted of “a kitchen with an oven and stove, living room, bathroom, and separate bedrooms (Asaka 2018: 258).” Miller (1979) provides a particularly noteworthy description of Yesler Terrace in *Profanity Hill*: “The exteriors of natural cedar would blend into the sloping hill and apartments built on different levels would command a view of the majestic mountains and the bay. There would be space for individual gardens; landscaping would include shade trees, flowering shrubs and perennials (64).” This description of the environment captures the previous displacements in and orderings of the space. The regional landscape is simply a view, without its Coast Salish peoples or their place names, while the local landscaping is now planned, unlike the intense gardening practiced by inhabitants of Profanity Hill. Such spatial understandings were neither valuable, nor legible to settlers in the 1860s or developers in the 1940s. Their conceptions and constructions of the built environment were a means to reinforce whiteness.

### **2.3 Yesler Terrace**

While the respective projects of Thrush (2017), Chin (2001), Taylor (1994), and Asaka (2018) correct the typical stories told of Seattle’s Pioneer Square, Chinatown-International District, Central District, and Profanity Hill, the archive of Yesler Terrace from 1941 to 2004 is rather limited. As Asaka argues, and the redevelopment documentation will further reveal, the SHA, media outlets, and scholars usually present Yesler Terrace as the city’s first public housing community and the country’s first racially integrated public housing community. In addition to obscuring the destruction of Profanity Hill and settler colonialism in the city, this narrative also limits the agency of Yesler Terrace’s inhabitants since 1941, as if it were a static neighborhood. In actuality, these inhabitants significantly transformed the composition and politics of Yesler Terrace throughout the next eight decades, such that

despite the SHA's continued representations of "a white nuclear family as the universal ideal (Asaka 2018: 261)," the practices and identities of residents imagined and worked toward something different. This is evidenced in two significant texts: *It Happened on Yesler's Hill*, a short film by the SHA (1949), and *Yesler Terrace Happening*, a community newspaper produced with the support of Neighborhood House and the SHA (1979-1981). Since talk of redevelopment began in 2004, there have also been many articles and projects which document stories from Yesler Terrace; while these texts are also helpful in remembering and centering the neighborhood, they are usually framed by its destruction.

Produced nearly a decade after Yesler Terrace opened, the short film *It Happened on Yesler's Hill* (1949) follows the SHA's earlier strategy of juxtaposing images of Yesler Terrace with Profanity Hill in what appears to be an argument for slum clearance and public housing in other parts of Seattle. The film includes clips from Profanity Hill and its demolition, as well as the groundbreaking and construction of Yesler Terrace. With this transformation, children's play moves from the street to the playground, cramped and dangerous kitchens become bright and organized, and there is now "neighborliness" and "community activities". The clips are accompanied by several slides of text:

The people who lived in this slum didn't have a chance for a clean dignified way of life. Dilapidated buildings and unsanitary conditions endangered the health, safety and morals of the people who lived in this slum area. BAD HOUSING WASTES OUR HUMAN RESOURCES. So the city of Seattle created the Seattle Housing Authority . . . Yesler Terrace stands today because government and private enterprise spent months planning and working together. This cooperative effort brought clean, healthful surroundings to over 3,000 persons.

Such images and text further evidence Asaka's critique of the SHA. Like the cartography and photography at the project's start, the film "meant that [residents of Profanity Hill] had little control over how their neighborhood was presented to the public (Asaka 2018: 253)." The film also suggests a correct way in which to live and organization of spaces which are most legible to those developing the project and other members of the public. The SHA (1949) concludes, "On Yesler's Hill a new pattern for living has arisen out of a slum. A pattern made

up of sun and space, safety and convenience, privacy and community pride.” However, these patterns are not universal, nor do they account for the exclusions they frequently entail.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, Yesler Terrace had a significantly different social and built environment than that projected by the SHA three decades earlier, as evidenced in 24 archived issues of *Yesler Terrace Happening* (1979-1981). Although this newspaper was supported by the SHA and the organization Neighborhood House, its content largely came from the inhabitants of Yesler Terrace. As such, *Yesler Terrace Happening* is a mix of political news and opinions, announcements from the SHA, opportunities for food, jobs, and healthcare, and profiles of residents. There are two narratives that emerge in the archived issues from 1979 to 1981, namely the modernization of Yesler Terrace and funding cuts to social programs there. Throughout this time, “the units are getting new wiring and plumbing, new kitchens and bathrooms, insulation, smoke detectors, new windows and floors . . . a “new life” of at least another 30 to 40 years.” The management office complex was also renovated, and a hillside park between Yesler Terrace and South Jackson Street was proposed. Within these issues, and similar to its earlier documents, the SHA continuously reminds residents to care for their yards—those who do not can be evicted and those who do can win the “Best Yards at Yesler Terrace” contest. If an elderly or disabled resident was not able to care for their yard, management encouraged them to “transfer to a high-rise building.” The SHA justified such measures, for “the way that the wider community feels about public housing depends a great deal on how communities such as Yesler Terrace look when others drive by them.” Nevertheless, for many inhabitants, these yards were significant spaces. In its various profiles of older residents, *Yesler Terrace Happening* frequently describes their gardens in detail, such as Jessie O’Kelley’s “tulips, tomatoes, pansies, mustard, dahlias, spinach, roses, beans, gladiolas, corn, phlox, zucchini, begonias, onions, hyacinths, collards, beets,” or “Pete” Lovenia Jones’s “greens, beans, peppers, onions, garlic, tomatoes, and strawberries . . . [and] a flower for every year she has lived in Yesler Terrace.” Yards appear to have provided inhabitants with an opportunity to imagine and create a space of their own. The social environment presented in *Yesler*

*Terrace Happening*, particularly in response to funding cuts, is even more significant. As part of a more recent exhibition at the Frye Art Museum, C. Davida Ingram (2012) writes, “Yesler Terrace residents have made their lives possible in places where others see the impossible—a different native tongue, households headed by women, poverty. Nonetheless, the Global South is alive and well and gardening in America.” These politics are evidenced in the newspaper with its discussions about food insecurity and alternatives, healthcare opportunities, and overcrowding in jails. There are also announcements about festivals and rallies, as well as information specific to Asian, Native, and Chicax residents, women, youth, and seniors. Many articles address state and federal cuts to funding, which reduced the staff providing transportation, youth activities, daycare, and health services. As such, *Yesler Terrace Happening* documents inhabitants’ demands for legislative action in Olympia and more immediate ways to survive (e.g. food assistance, inexpensive recipes, and gardening tips). Considering all of these changes of the late 1970s and early 1980s, resident and poet Eve Triem writes in the newspaper, “At this moment, Yesler Terrace is like a village, small, tree-guarded, we know each other with friendliness.”

Recent projects have also attempted to capture the neighborhood’s histories and presents before it is fully demolished and redeveloped. Many residents describe the close relationships between neighbors in the documentary *Even the Walls* by Saman Maydani and Sarah Kuck (2015). Zia Mohajerjasbi (2015) captures similar ties among neighbors in the short drama *Hagereseb*, which follows a young resident around Yesler Terrace as he tries to find batteries for his keyboard. Other participatory projects, such as Yesler Terrace Youth Media, *Intangible Effects (No. 1)*, and *Community Portrait / Yesler Terrace*, emphasize the subjectivity of existing residents. Since 2012, Yesler Terrace Youth Media (2017) has been taking photographs, filming videos, and conducting interviews throughout the neighborhood during its destruction/construction, all of which are now archived online. Some of these personal recordings were included in the *Intangible Effects (No. 1)* installation as part of the Mw [Moment Magnitude] exhibition at the Frye Art Museum in 2012 and 2013. As opposed to the “static vernacular of architectural form,” organizers

explain, “We orient attention instead towards the neighborhood as a lived experience, approaching urban space as literally and figuratively vibrating with human activity. In so doing, we conceptualize the neighborhood’s character not as a collection of buildings, but as arising through the activities of its inhabitants (Hirsch & O’Quin 2012).” Most recently, D.K. Pan (2018a) collected and presented individual portraits of residents as part of *Community Portrait / Yesler Terrace*. Such representations preserve some of the experiences and perspectives of Yesler Terrace inhabitants.

\*

This brings us up to the present, amid the ongoing redevelopment of Yesler Terrace. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the SHA expected the remaining rowhouses to be demolished in the spring of 2020. With the last family of Yesler Terrace offered a new place to live, David Kroman (2020) writes, “the final destruction will begin. The northern row nearest Harborview will be the next to go, sometime in late March or early April. The structures to the west will follow. If all goes as planned, the last of the iconic rowhouses—symbols of racial and cultural integration perched at the summit of Seattle’s old Skid Road—will be rubble by May.” New buildings continue to be proposed, constructed, and rented throughout the area, resulting in a “checkerboard pattern” of old structures, empty lots, and new construction. When it is complete, Yesler will be “a campus of mid-rise buildings that will house more than five times as many people as Yesler did before and in a range of income brackets – rich and poor,” a completely reimagined neighborhood (Turnbull 2017). Not even the name is fully spared—“Yesler Terrace, so named for the old neighborhood’s individual yards for every home, is now being rebranded as just “Yesler” (J. Graves 2016).” Like its historical transformations, Yesler Terrace is again being remade according to the white spatial imaginary. In the next three chapters, I critically read documents from the redevelopment in order to reveal the white spatial imaginary in the ways built environment practitioners selectively write history, produce multiculturalism and environmentalism, and form normative identities.

## Chapter 3

### WRITING HISTORY

The site of Yesler Terrace was prominent from Seattle's beginnings as a city. At its western shoreline, Yesler Way was first the site of Yesler's mill—the first mill in Seattle—and the city's first center of development. The original King County Courthouse was located on this part of First Hill, situated between 7th and 8th Avenues and Terrace and Alder Streets. The Yesler Terrace property extended to 12th Avenue, to an area of Jewish settlement in the late 19th century. Its southernmost edge was part of what was known then as "Japantown," later the International District. Also known as "Profanity Hill," because of the steepness of street grades, the surrounding area was developed up through the first decade of the 20th century with dense, wood-frame multi-family townhouses, apartment hotels, and boarding houses.

By the 1930s much of the area was considered blighted. There were many benefits to the site selected for Yesler Terrace: the original development would replace deteriorated housing stock. Furthermore, it offered residents close proximity to the nearby County Hospital and several public schools, and to downtown, which was easily accessible by foot or streetcar.

The original site also offered an enviable view, which included Mt. Rainier to the south and Elliot Bay and the Olympic Mountains to the west. This view, among other things, was an important factor in offering the eventual residents of Yesler Terrace pride of place.

- Seattle Housing Authority, "History of Yesler" (2019a)

The ongoing redevelopment of Yesler Terrace marks the third time the area has been reconstructed by and for a white spatial imaginary. Eighty years ago, the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) demolished Profanity Hill to develop Yesler Terrace. Profanity Hill was home to many Japanese, Black, and mixed-race families, as well as single men of different races and ethnicities. Its built environment reflected these inhabitants, with "three

Japanese businesses (a laundry, a grocery store, and a fish market), one Chinese restaurant, and the Black Elks Club, an African American nightclub and jazz venue” on a single block of Yesler Way (Asaka 2018: 245). When the SHA razed these buildings to make way for Yesler Terrace, however, its design and policies limited who could live there. “The new community center and structures that surround it present a sleek and uniform façade,” and citizenship and marriage requirements prevented Asian American families and single men from returning (Asaka 2018: 250, 257-258). About eighty years earlier, ordinances accompanying Seattle’s incorporation in 1865 limited Native peoples in the area. These ordinances outlined “the removal of certain kinds of Indians and the retention of others,” based on their relation to whiteness—they were not permitted to reside in Seattle unless they were employed by a settler, writing into law the colonization of Duwamish lands (Thrush 2017: 54). It followed more than a decade of disregard for and violence toward Native understandings and relationships to this place, be it through constructing mills, deforesting hills, and widening trails or renaming and reconfiguring Native geographies. As *Little Crossing-Over Place*-Profanity Hill-Yesler Terrace again undergoes a wholesale reimagining, the relationships between constructions in the built environment and constructions of whiteness remain evident through a critical reading of various documents from the project.

For example, consider the above historical narrative, provided by the SHA (2019a) on a webpage titled “History of Yesler”. Within this narrative, the area is historically significant due to its proximity to colonial architecture, namely Yesler’s Mill and the King County Courthouse. Yet there are no references to *Little Crossing-Over Place*, the area’s past or present Native peoples, or settler colonialism. While Profanity Hill is mentioned, it “extends” into the city’s Jewish neighborhood and is the “edge” of the city’s Japanese neighborhood—it is not presented as a neighborhood of diverse inhabitants in and of itself, but simply described as “blighted”. Further, the narrative emphasizes the area’s nearby amenities and “enviable view,” but says nothing of the inhabitants of Yesler Terrace over the past eight decades. Within this document and others, the history of Seattle starts with settler colonialism and

ends with the redevelopment of Profanity Hill into Yesler Terrace; perhaps, its ongoing redevelopment is the next historical moment on that timeline. In this way, certain actors and their spatial conceptions are reproduced as an official narrative, while spatial understandings of inhabitants and other histories of colonialism, xenophobia, and racism are silenced.

Built environment practitioners are involved in writing history. Historical analyses at different scales inform spatial policies and designs for planners and architects, while space is often branded and marketed by developers using some historical fragment. Consequently, the histories that practitioners choose to tell can be reified in the landscape, and new buildings can become a discourse of a particular history, while literally destroying and replacing evidence of other historical narratives. That choice among practitioners is therefore significant, determining what the historical research will include, which histories are considered relevant, and ultimately who will be represented. If approached in an uncritical way, it is not difficult to reproduce the narratives of a white spatial imaginary, as the SHA does in its “History of Yesler”. In this chapter, I problematize the writing of history through considering Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) and Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999). I then use this framework to critically read historical narratives within the documents from the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace.

In *Orientalism*, Said (1978) follows Michel Foucault’s notion of discourse to define the practice and discipline of Orientalism, “a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient (3).” Through academic studies and cultural presentations produced from a position of superiority, the West can control and create the East, “politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively (3).” These are productions of both knowledge and imagination, as the Orient is “approached systematically, as a topic of learning, discovery, and practice,” as well as represented through a “collection of dreams, images, and vocabularies (73).” The production of knowledge is generated with Western perspectives of the Orient from travelers’ accounts and colonial technologies, which provide the evidence for “unshakable maxims about the

“civilization,” while the imaginative representations further reinforce these so-called “truths” (52). For example, Said describes the “imaginative geography” produced through Orientalism, where “Europe is powerful and articulate; Asia is defeated and distant . . . [i]t is Europe that articulates the Orient (57).” The Orient is a stage on which the East is made to perform in a narrative written, directed, and produced by and for Europeans (63). In some ways, these narratives distinguish “the familiar (Europe, the West, “us”) and the strange (the Orient, the East, “them”),” reflexively defining who Europeans are and are not (43). In other ways, they justify imperialism, for the Orient’s “great moments are in the past; they are useful in the modern world only because the powerful and up-to-date empires have effectively brought them out of the wretchedness of decline and turned them into rehabilitated residents of productive colonies (35).” In still other ways, these texts can create reality, as evidenced by the Suez Canal, through which diplomat and developer Ferdinand de Lesseps “melted away the Orient’s geographical identity (by almost literally) dragging the Orient into the West (92).” Orientalism is thus a discourse producing both East and West through the latter’s limited studies and imaginings of the former’s geographies and histories.

In *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People*, Smith (1999) follows Said’s critique and further problematizes the relationship between imperialism, history, writing, and theory—that is, how writing history supports imperialism. Like Said’s imaginative geography, writing history is also an imaginative process, created from selections of the past and organized from a particular perspective. Smith argues, “The people and groups who ‘made’ history were the people who developed the underpinnings of the state—the economists, scientists, bureaucrats and philosophers (32).” They represent both the writers and subjects of the history of the state, while *other* histories—more generally, *other* orientations toward or views of space and time, like those of Indigenous peoples—were rejected and labeled “prehistoric”. Smith continues, “Our orientation to the world was already being redefined as we were being excluded systematically from the writing of the history of our own lands (33).” As settler states “defined and measured,”

surveyed and mapped space, as well as reified their orientation through representations of and constructions in the landscape, “not only has the indigenous world been represented in particular ways back to the West, but the indigenous world view, the land and the people, have been radically transformed in the spatial image of the West (51).” In other words, Smith explains, “the West came to ‘see,’ to ‘name’ and to ‘know’ indigenous communities” through the perspectives of imperialism and colonialism (60). Settlers both encountered Indigenous peoples and imagined histories (or prehistories) from these perspectives.

I cite these works by Said and Smith because Seattle was created through colonizing Coast Salish lands, a project that involved and is maintained by urban planning, architectural design, and real estate development to reify the settler state into the landscape. As Eyal Weizman (2007) and Libby Porter (2010) make clear, the production of the built environment is crucial to colonization, and its contemporary practice is certainly not free from these legacies of imperialism. In this way, I also reference Said and Smith to consider the colonial logic with which built environment practitioners approach Yesler Terrace, or more broadly any urban space slated for “renewal” or “redevelopment.” I use their writings to frame my readings of redevelopment documents from Yesler Terrace, noting who is made absent and who is made present within historical narratives, as well as how these narratives are placed into the landscape through maps, views, historic preservation, and design guidelines.

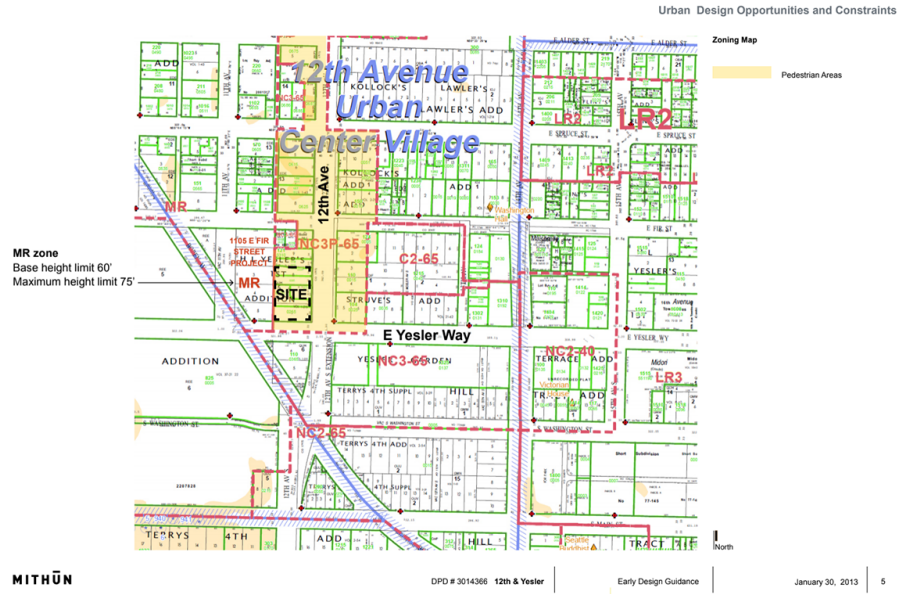
### **3.1 “No response was received from the Duwamish Tribe.”**

Within much of the redevelopment documentation, there is an absence of references to the Duwamish and other Coast Salish peoples whose traditional lands are now called Seattle and occupied by settlers. This absence is significant in and of itself, for it renders the landscape as a tabula rasa and presents settler histories and geographies as the history and geography of a place. Notable exceptions are found in the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) and their appendixes, in which the SHA and City of Seattle demonstrate their legal obligation to analyze cultural resources within the project’s “area of potential effects,” an extended development site. As part of any EIS, federal law requires

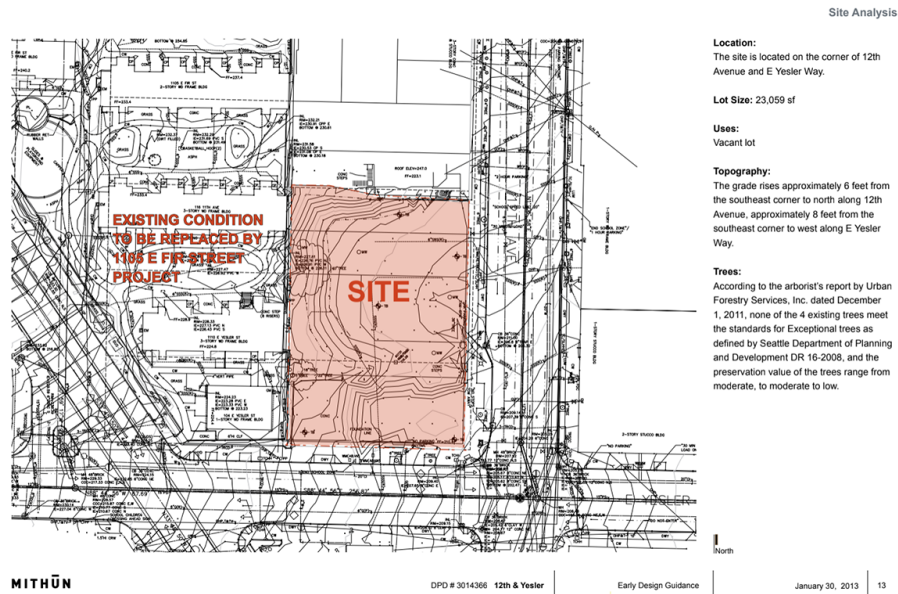
submitting agencies to identify historic properties and consult with Indigenous peoples, while Washington state law prohibits the destruction of “pre-contact (prior to contact with Euroamerican settlers) and historical archaeological sites,” as well as Indigenous burial grounds (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2010: 3.12-1). While this distinction between “pre-contact” and “historical” is established and defined within the regulations, the Yesler Terrace Redevelopment EIS maintains these categories through distinguishing the “archaeological,” “ethnohistoric,” and “historic” contexts of the site (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2011: appx. J, 11-15). This is further evidenced by references to Indigenous peoples in the “cultural resources” section of the document, but not the “historic resources” section. Such categorizations fix Indigenous peoples to a time and space before history and represent them through the orientation of settler states. From this perspective, Indigenous peoples are unmodern, and as such their understandings are devalued and the violences of settler colonialism are minimized. Perhaps most significantly, organizing history in this way removes Indigenous peoples from the contemporary world, even as they continue to inhabit and claim their lands today. As Indigenous peoples are presented as outside of the “historic” context of the site, it is not surprising they are missing from the historical analyses and narratives in so much of the redevelopment materials. Within the EIS, the “archeological” and “ethnohistoric” contexts effectively describe permanent villages and seasonal campsites and even include some Indigenous place names. It also acknowledges that unlike other Coast Salish peoples, “[t]he Duwamish were not assigned their own reservation,” despite the promise of a reservation in the Treaty of Point Elliott (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2010: appx. M, 19). Nevertheless, this information lacks the detail of the site’s “historic” context, which includes descriptions of colonial expeditions, as well as the settlement and development of Seattle in the late 19th century. Within these three sections of the EIS, 10,000 years are described in five paragraphs, but 1792 to 1941 require fifteen. The descriptions of the Indigenous landscape, while not necessarily incorrect, are framed by 20th century anthropology, which Smith reveals, largely served imperialism. These violent, interrelated histories of colonialism and

the state, research and “history,” may explain the lack of response from the Duwamish when they were “contacted during EIS Scoping to receive their input on the scope of the cultural resource analysis (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2010: 3.12-3).”

In this analysis of cultural resources, historical cartography is another source of information: “Primary sources included plat maps and cadastral surveys of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2010: 3.12-3).” Although such maps and surveys may be helpful for narrating the development of the city at that time, they are the very weapons of imperialism that enable the state and settlers to claim territories. These maps do not consider Indigenous orientations to or namings of the landscape; rather, they present tracts of the new city, cut up by and named for settlers (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2011: appx. J, 31-33). Mapping the presence of settlers without Indigenous peoples is an act that erases and imagines at the same time. In this way, cartography reflects the biases and intentions of its authors, but its neutral appearance makes it effective evidence in claiming private property or large swaths of territory, as well as representing the landscape over time as part of a historical narrative. As the series of maps in the EIS begins in 1863, it reinforces the site’s “historic” context, as opposed to its “archeological” or “ethnohistorical” contexts for which there are no maps present. Other redevelopment documents also make use of this historical cartography, while almost all use contemporary maps, surveys, or site plans of some kind. For example, consider the spatial representations (Figure 13) used in the Early Design Guidance packet for 103 12th Avenue, a proposal for a mixed-use, market-rate building (Gracorp Capital, Spectrum, & Mithun 2013). Such representations maintain settler colonialism through the names printed on tracts (Terry, Struve) and streets (Yesler, Boren), positivistic measurings and categorizations of space (zoning, topography, shade), and an all-knowing perspective. These maps, surveys, and site plans may only be representations of space, but they conceive and organize space for viewers from a particular orientation, and in some cases, construct in the actual built environment that which is being imagined on paper. In this way, the mapping practices of built environment



(a) Zoning Map



(b) Topographic Survey

Figure 13: Map and Survey from 103 12th Avenue (Gracorp Capital, Spectrum, & Mithun 2013: 5, 13)

practitioners are rooted in and reproduce colonial relationships to the landscape. While these cartographies may not specifically reference a historical narrative, they write history and geography such that Indigenous orientations to time and space are further excluded.

Just as cartography privileges the perspective of the settler state, the repeated emphasis on views from Yesler Terrace reproduces a landscape of monumental, “natural” formations, like Mount Rainier, the Cascades, the Olympics, and Elliott Bay, which can be easily consumed by residents without regard for the Indigenous peoples of this landscape or the continued development in this landscape. In the Yesler Terrace Development Plan, the SHA (2011) envisions a new neighborhood that “[c]apitalize[s] on Yesler Terrace’s unique location and features. Design the community to take advantage of excellent views, both from the community and of the community (4).” These views are listed and diagrammed in the neighborhood Design Guidelines: “the Marine Hospital and Mt. Rainier are visible to the south; the Smith Tower, downtown skyline and Olympic Mountains to the west, ship yards and stadiums to the southwest; Harborview Hospital to the northwest; and, at higher elevations, the Cascade Mountains to the east (GGLO Design, City of Seattle, & Seattle Housing Authority 2012: vii).” Views are identified as a “context and priority issue” in the Design Guidelines, and architectural designers and real estate developers are encouraged to “protect and enhance views” when conceiving new buildings. Indeed, they do just that in their design packets and marketing websites. As part of the site or context analyses of architectural designers, views are carefully documented and considered, and they usually inform proposed massing, fenestration, and outdoor spaces of the building. For example, in the design review packets for Modera First Hill (Mill Creek Residential & Weber Thompson 2016: 5) and 1000 East Yesler Way (Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects 2018: 84), aerial perspectives and panoramic photographs present the potential views in different directions (Figure 14). Further, every completed market-rate building includes rooftop lounge space for its residents, and each marketing website details the view through photographs and descriptions. Anthem on 12th “offer[s] a rooftop lounge with glorious views of Mount Rainier (CWS Property Management 2020),” Metroline Flats has

VIEW POTENTIAL AND NEIGHBORHOOD PROXIMITIES



(a) Modera First Hill

CONTEXT ANALYSIS | VIEWS FROM SITE



(b) 1000 East Yesler Way

Figure 14: Potential Views from New Construction (Mill Creek Residential & Weber Thompson 2016: 5; Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects 2018: 84)

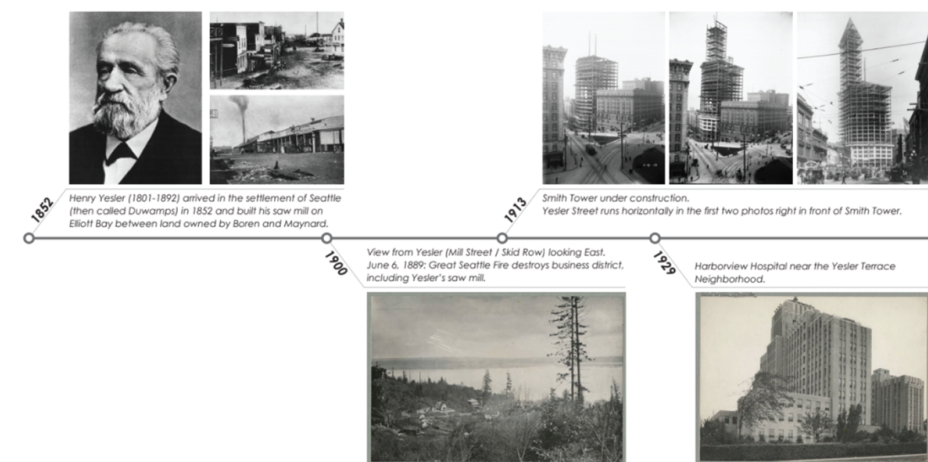
“stunning views of Mt. Rainier, Elliott Bay, and The Cascades (Pinnacle Communities 2020),” and Batik Seattle greets prospective renters with a photograph of their rooftop and view at sunset (Vulcan Real Estate 2020a). Through capitalizing on and consuming these views of “nature” without Indigenous presence, as well as comparing the skyline and mountains, Indigenous orientations to their traditional lands are again excluded. Like cartography, the emphasis on views privileges the settler state’s perspectives of geography, writing its history as the history in the process.

### **3.2 “[T]he steam plant will be the only historic structure on the site.”**

If we consider the prescribed “historical” context of the site, established in the EIS and repeated in documents throughout the redevelopment process, whose histories are represented and what historical narrative is reproduced? This is to ask, in addition to the exclusions of the area’s Indigenous peoples, which settler histories are included and excluded in these documents? The SHA’s webpage on the “History of Yesler,” with which I began the Chapter, is an abbreviated version of one historical narrative found in the EIS (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2010: appx. L, 11-15). This narrative briefly mentions the impacts of inhabitants, namely the Japanese community, on the area, but emphasizes the achievements of Jesse Epstein, the SHA, and architects and landscape architects, as well as the federal government for creating the Federal Housing Administration and passing the United States Housing Act. These actors transformed a “blighted” area into “new dwellings with individual outdoor spaces, views, and community amenities resulting from a careful arrangement of the buildings on the sloping site (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2010: appx. L, 13).” According to this narrative, “Epstein was adamant that Yesler Terrace be racially integrated” and “the original low-income tenants of the site were given preference in application for new housing,” but in actuality, there were limits on Black families and exclusions of single men and Japanese families. The narrative notes that “foreign-born nationals” were ineligible, but does not specify beyond that. In the next appendix of the EIS, the Cultural Resources Report is

more direct: “SHA required Yesler Terrace applicants to be families of U.S. citizens even though the majority of neighborhood residents were single,” and it details Japanese and Chinese institutions and businesses that were relocated as part of the project (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2010: appx. M, 22). However, this historical narrative also focuses on the transformation of the area’s landscape, through logging, platting, regrading, and land filling, at the hands of several actors, including Henry Yesler and Reginald H. Thomson. Absent from both reports informing the EIS are similarly detailed descriptions of or from Profanity Hill’s inhabitants prior to its destruction or Yesler Terrace’s inhabitants after its construction. Their historical narratives are deemed irrelevant, despite the use of historical and contemporary photographs of inhabitants in many of the subsequent redevelopment documents, which I will analyze in Chapter 5. Their perspectives of and constructions in the neighborhood are further obscured by the state’s representations of the area as “blighted,” “substandard,” or in “disrepair” and its reimaginings of the space as more organized, more dense, and more lucrative. The context analyses of some design packets write history in similar ways. For example, the 1000 East Yesler Way Early Design Guidance packet includes a timeline (Figure 15) of relevant events from 1852 to 1951—it mentions the inhabitants of Profanity Hill and the exclusion of Japanese residents, but emphasizes Yesler and Epstein, as well as the Smith Tower and Harborview Hospital (Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects 2018: 8-9). A timeline in the 725 Yesler Way Early Design Guidance packet neglects the destruction of Profanity Hill entirely, but, notably, references Yesler Terrace residents who worked to prevent crime in the neighborhood in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Su Development, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, & Studio SKH 2019: 14). Other redevelopment documents only further abbreviate the historical narrative to the oft-repeated sentence “Yesler Terrace was the state’s first public housing development and the first racially integrated public housing development in the United States,” including the Design Guidelines (GGLO Design, City of Seattle, & Seattle Housing Authority 2012: 8), Early Design Guidance packets for 123/120 Broadway (Vulcan Real Estate & Runberg Architecture Group 2015a: 8) and 110 10th Avenue South

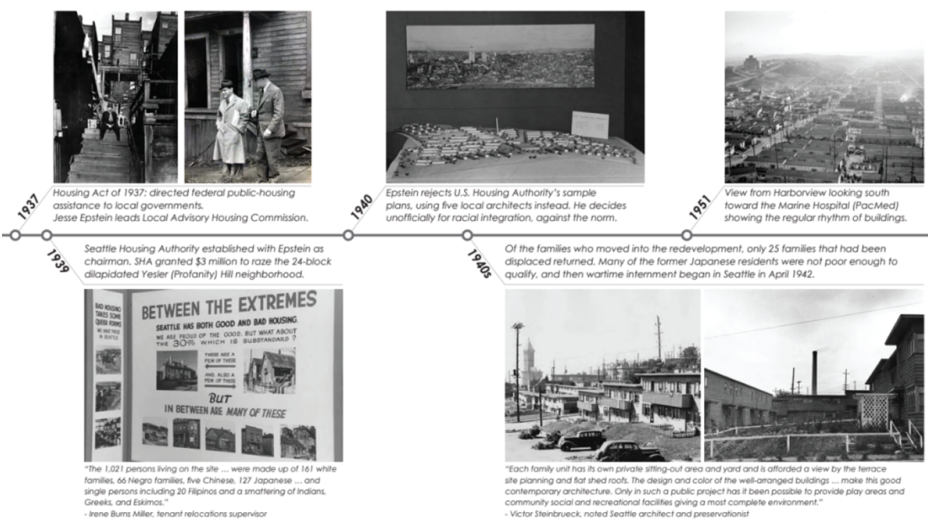
## 2 - CONTEXT ANALYSIS



Images courtesy of UW Special Collections, Seattle Housing Authority, Seattle Municipal Archives, and the Seattle Public Library Historical Photograph Collection

8 | YESLER INVESTORS & LLC | ENCORE architects | 1000 E YESLER WAY | #3032434 | EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE | 10/24/2018

### CONTEXT ANALYSIS | HISTORY OF YESLER TERRACE



9 | YESLER INVESTORS & LLC | ENCORE architects | 1000 E YESLER WAY | #3032434 | EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE | 10/24/2018

Figure 15: Timeline from 1000 East Yesler Way (Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects 2018: 8-9)

(Seattle Housing Authority, Pyatok, & Hewitt 2019: 11), and Batik Seattle marketing website (Vulcan Real Estate 2020a). Missing from so many of these documents are the narratives of diverse inhabitants in the neighborhoods both before and after construction, as well as the ways said inhabitants produced spaces for themselves in a city where much of the built environment reflected and reproduced whiteness.

These selective writings of history are constructed into the landscape through the historic preservation process and the recommendations and implementations of the Design Guidelines. In Seattle, historic preservation can be designated at three scales, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the Washington Heritage Register (WHR), and Seattle Landmarks (SL), all of which make their determinations based on a place's historical, cultural, or architectural significance for the nation, state, or city. While Indigenous places are certainly not excluded from preservation designations, this framing around nation, state, and city already reveals the history in which the programs are most interested. Further, the NRHP "lags in equitable coverage of places associated with women, communities of color, LGBTQ people and other populations (D. Graves & Dubrow 2019: 293)," who are likely also underrepresented in the WHR and SL. Such biases in determining which places are preserved and which places are demolished write a particular history into the landscape. As already evidenced in the redevelopment documents, this history is marked by meaningful presences and absences which typically reproduce the power of white, settler states. In the Historic Resources Report of the EIS, both the development site and the surrounding area of potential effects were surveyed for designated places and buildings constructed fifty or more years ago in order to assess the impacts of the proposed design and suggest mitigation strategies. Most notable among these places are Fire Station No. 3, which is designated by all three programs, the entirety of Yesler Terrace, as part of the WHR, and the Yesler Terrace Steam Plant and Harborview Hospital Central Wing, as part of SL (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2010: appx. L, 4-6). Despite the housing complex's designation by the WHR, only the Steam Plant was designated as a local landmark after the SHA nominated Yesler

Terrace in 2010. The nomination, application, and decision evidence which histories are preserved and told. Speaking with the *Stranger's* Cienna Madrid (2010), SHA spokesperson Virginia Felton says the developer nominated Yesler Terrace because “[w]e wanted to resolve the issue ... We didn’t want to get further down in the process and have someone else nominate us.” Based on this statement, the SHA was more interested in controlling Yesler Terrace’s historical narrative (and its redevelopment plans) than preserving the neighborhood’s significance for inhabitants who have called it home. The application prepared by BOLA Architecture + Planning (2010), the same consultant which prepared the appendix on historic resources in the EIS, emphasizes a familiar narrative of federal housing initiatives, Epstein, the SHA, the architects, and the design and construction of Yesler Terrace. As usual, the narratives of inhabitants are missing from this application, despite criteria in the selection process about historic events or people and cultural, political, and economic heritage. Rather, the application makes specific note of “a standard of integrity ... a term used to indicate that sufficient original building fabric is present to convey the historical and architectural significance of the property (BOLA Architecture + Planning 2010: 4),” which would seem to disqualify the altered and deteriorating rowhouses from the outset. Such statements demonstrate how the built environment can be abstracted from its social environment in the historic preservation process. The SL Preservation Board designated the Yesler Terrace Steam Plant for its distinctive architectural characteristics and because “it is an easily identifiable visual feature ... and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity” of the neighborhood or city (Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board 2010: 1), largely detached from the more ephemeral criteria. It would appear to be the most appropriate choice for a historical narrative emphasizing the physical project, but not necessarily those who lived there.

Within the Design Guidelines, Yesler Terrace’s historic narrative is further summarized as “the first public housing development in Seattle, and the first racially integrated public housing development in the United States,” and it is noted for its “cultural diversity” and the “diversity” of surrounding neighborhoods (GGLO Design, City of Seattle, & Seattle

Housing Authority 2012: 8). There are also specific recommendations for the Steam Plan as “the only historic structure on the site”: “[p]rovide a distinguishing landscape design” and “reference the history and unique cultural mix of Yesler Terrace through art and architectural features.” The brevity of this historic and cultural context varies significantly from the Central Area Neighborhood Design Guidelines (Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development 2018: iv-vi) and the International Special Review District (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods 2020), which describe the respective neighborhoods’ Black and Asian American histories and cultures and suggest strategies for preserving and drawing inspiration from said context. Notably, the Design Guidelines for the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace are largely without history, presenting a tabula rasa of space to be remade in the image of other parts of the city, or another city altogether. The guidelines reimagine a built environment of interactive streets, architectural character and variety, and public and private outdoor spaces, illustrated by photographs of various spatial details that come from everywhere except Yesler Terrace. Similarly, an uncredited and undated presentation from the redevelopment, titled “Urban Design Case Studies,” surveys four neighborhoods in London, Sheffield, and Stockholm for design inspiration. As such, many architectural designers and real estate developers have proposed buildings that do not recall the historical or cultural character of Yesler Terrace. Their perspectives of the existing built environment are perhaps best exemplified in the 1105 East Fir Street Early Design Guidance, which states: “Architecturally the area does not offer much guidance, as much of the existing building stock is unremarkable and made up of wood-frame single-family homes, and low-rise warehouse and commercial buildings (Seattle Housing Authority & GGLO Design 2012: 5).” The buildings proposed for most sites are boxy forms with limited outdoor spaces, hardly different from the three-dimensional boxes used in massing diagrams, which will provide the necessary density to accommodate almost 4,500 more housing units. Some of these designs are said to be historically informed, such as 1000 East Yesler Way, for which the spatial pattern (Figure 16) was generated by stacking and arranging the rowhouses like blocks (Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects 2018: 10-11),

CONTEXT ANALYSIS | HISTORIC PATTERN

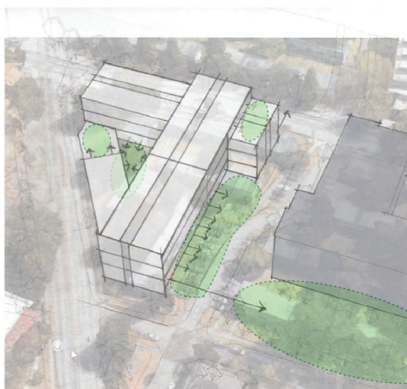


Yesler Terrace was conceived as a series of simple bars that either terrace down the hillside, or cross it. Individual connections to outdoor spaces was the most successful design element of the Master Plan.

19 | YESLER INVESTORS 4 LLC | ENCORE architects | 1000 E. YESLER WAY | #3022434 | EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE | 10/24/2018

(a) Historic Pattern of Yesler Terrace

CONTEXT ANALYSIS | NEW PATTERN



The new Master Plan draws on this past by envisioning a series of interconnected green spaces. These space are planned to create a dynamic and livable neighborhood. New development should enhance this series of green spaces and encourage social interaction and outdoor activity.



→ Pedestrian access (fixed location)     → Pedestrian access (flexible location)  
→ Green street corridor        Pocket park  
   15th Ave 15K Class        Neighborhood park  
● Likely community garden locations

19 | YESLER INVESTORS 4 LLC | ENCORE architects | 1000 E. YESLER WAY | #3022434 | EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE | 10/24/2018 | 11

(b) New Pattern of Yesler

Figure 16: Spatial Patterns from 1000 East Yesler Way (Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects 2018: 10-11)

and 123/120 Broadway, for which the architectural concept considers the history of the lumber industry in Seattle and the rectangular bar forms of Yesler Terrace (Vulcan Real Estate & Runberg Architecture Group 2015a: 46-49). However, the final designs of these buildings are not particularly distinguishable from projects that do not recall the built environment of Yesler Terrace. Another building, 104 12th Avenue, incorporates the historical built environment through “weav[ing] all the materials, scales, and textures found in the surrounding neighborhood (Centric Partners & Clark Barnes 2019a: 24),” producing a varied façade that does not even appear to reference these nearby areas, nor Yesler Terrace. Some of the new buildings developed by the SHA more effectively reveal Yesler Terrace as a design precedent, such as the rowhouses of Kebero Court or porches of Hinoki. However, few units in these buildings incorporate such designs, and noticeably absent are the yards used and appreciated in so many ways by the inhabitants of Yesler Terrace. Without a survey of multiple histories in the Design Guidelines, new construction in the area hardly recalls its historical built environments.

\*

The ways in which built environment practitioners write history at Yesler Terrace are problematic because they make absent Coast Salish peoples and the inhabitants of Profanity Hill and Yesler Terrace in order to make present Yesler, Epstein and the SHA, and the state. Within the historical narratives of the redevelopment documentation, the former are characters used to revalue the stories of the latter. Their orientations to time and space are neglected for an “official” history. The use of maps and emphasis of views further exclude Indigenous relationships to their traditional lands, while historic preservation and design guidelines build a selective history into these lands. The history of the landscape presented and constructed by built environment practitioners is the narrative of those who now own it, as opposed to those who have inhabited it. Their practices are not unlike the those of Orientalists or Western researchers who start with assumptions of foreign histories and geographies and attempt to make them real through visual images and built spaces.

## Chapter 4

### PRODUCING CULTURE

We love our neighborhood for its rich history of diversity. Nearly 80 years ago, Yesler Terrace was developed with the nation's first racially integrated, publicly subsidized housing. Now, the area is being reimagined with more mixed-income communities, parks, public art and recreation, while still retaining a vibrant cultural uniqueness.

Yesler is one of the few neighborhoods in Seattle where you can walk down a street and hear a dozen different languages, or stumble a few blocks away to ethnic eateries in Little Saigon and the International District that have been around for years. We want to keep it that way. From our very name to our design approach to our support of local artists and community, Batik embraces Yesler's multicultural identity while looking forward to the future. A home in harmony that's welcoming to all.

- Vulcan Real Estate, Batik Seattle (2020a)

On the “Neighborhood + Community” page of its marketing website, Batik Seattle, a mixed-use building at 123 Broadway with 156 market-rate and 39 “affordable” units (for those earning up to 65-85% of area median income), begins with the most selective history of Yesler Terrace—“the nation's first racially integrated, publicly subsidized housing”—to extensively advertise the neighborhood's “vibrant cultural uniqueness.” As a resident, you will hear “different languages” and eat at “ethnic” restaurants, all while your building maintains the neighborhood's “multicultural identity” through its name and design. After leasing began, a post on Vulcan Real Estate's (2018) website further celebrated the diversity of its new residents, who “speak more than 15 languages” and include “students, healthcare and tech employees, and 13 children ranging from infant to pre-teen.” They are imagined using the building's community kitchen to make “pot-luck meals and pop-up dinners” together or to

“learn how to partake in a traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony.” Indeed, Batik Seattle is “a home in harmony that’s welcoming to all.”

Recalling bell hooks’s statement with which I introduced this thesis, the use of “multiculturalism” and “harmony” in this way can flatten out actual differences among inhabitants and their cultures. These terms also mask the actual displacements of existing residents and their cultural productions both at Yesler Terrace and in nearby neighborhoods. Whereas all units of Yesler Terrace were reserved for “extremely low-income” people (earning up to 30% of area median income), such housing will only make up 661, or about 13%, of 5000 planned units when Yesler is complete (Seattle Housing Authority 2011: 5). Although the data on race, ethnicity, gender, and age for the area does not yet include its redevelopment, the large supply of market-rate housing will likely homogenize the area with an influx of white young adults. This is in complete contrast to the inhabitants of Yesler Terrace in 2009, as categorized in the Draft Environment Impact Statement (EIS): 52.4% and 33.3% of residents respectively identified as Black or African American and Asian, there were almost three women for every two men (without any mention of non-binary, genderqueer, or intersex people), and 39.5% and 11.9% of residents were respectively under 18 or over 65 years old (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2010: 3.16-6). As per the redevelopment project’s Guiding Principles, all inhabitants of Yesler Terrace will receive replacement housing at Yesler (Yesler Terrace Citizen Review Committee 2007a: 12-13). However, their temporary displacement has already affected the total number of inhabitants who have returned (Beekman 2016), and they are increasingly outnumbered by new, wealthier residents. This follows similar displacements in the Central District, where the Black population fell from a high of 73% in the 1970s to 18% in the 2010s (Beason 2016), Chinatown-International District, where “low-income seniors are being priced out of a neighborhood (Wu 2018),” and South Seattle, where white people are now the largest racial group (Balk 2019). And yet, Batik Seattle will retain the cultural productions of diverse inhabitants, what it calls “multiculturalism,” with units renting for \$2000 to \$4000 per month.

Built environment practitioners are involved in producing culture. This is clearly evident in the high culture of both historical and modern architecture, but it remains so in the contemporary built environment's appeals to popular culture. More specifically, "multiculturalism" and "environmentalism" are increasingly prioritized in planning policies, architectural designs, and marketing materials. The resulting policies and buildings, in addition to other mass media, can reify multiculturalism and environmentalism into the landscape. As they are increasingly commercialized, however, these two trends conceal displacements and degradations; despite their claims, they can be non-performative. This is evident in Batik Seattle's celebration of multiculturalism amid displacements of diverse inhabitants, as well as in the way environmentalism can function as a form of "greenwashing," or marketing through environmentalist concerns. In this chapter, I consider the production of culture, and especially the use of multiculturalism and diversity to manage difference, through several works by Stuart Hall (1991, 1992, 2000) and Sara Ahmed (2000, 2012). I then use this framework to critically read both multiculturalism and environmentalism within the documents from the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace.

In *Essential Essays, Volume 2: Identity and Diaspora*, David Morley (2018) organizes three of Hall's essays on difference under the heading "the politics of anti-essentialism." The first essay, "Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities," (1991) describes the formation of a Black identity as significant for those in Britain of Caribbean, East African, and Asian ethnicities and otherwise blocked from identifying as British (74-75). The formation enabled a unified identity for anti-racist struggles in the 1970s, despite attempts to divide by difference. Hall argues, "In that moment, the enemy was ethnicity. The enemy had to be what we called "multiculturalism." Because multiculturalism was precisely what I called previously "the exotic." The exotica of difference. Nobody would talk about racism, but they were perfectly prepared to have "International Evenings" (77)." Following Antonio Gramsci, hegemony requires such difference to construct a "collective will," for hegemony is not the "destruction of difference," but the "articulation of differences which do not disappear (79)." Nevertheless, there are limits to a unified Black identity, particularly for

those of Asian ethnicities or “outside the normative category of heterosexual masculinity (Morley 2018: 56),” and as such, Hall calls for speaking from multiple social identities, as already evidenced in various cultural creations (80). The second essay, “What is This “Black” in Black Popular Culture?,” (1992) continues to critique the ways difference is used to construct hegemony in popular culture. “[T]here is nothing that global postmodernism loves better than a certain kind of difference: a touch of ethnicity, a taste of the exotic, and, as we say in England “a bit of the other;” Halls explains (85). This is “a kind of difference that doesn’t make a difference of any kind.” Difference can also be essentialized through popular culture, made to look “natural, biological, and genetic (91),” through which categories of difference, like race, gender, and sexuality, are represented in isolation and with “mutually exclusive binaries,” like Black and British (Morley 2018: 57). According to Hall, however, “these antagonisms refuse to be neatly aligned; they are simply not reducible to one another; they refuse to coalesce around a single axis of differentiation (92).” The third essay, “The Multicultural Question,” (2000) defines multiculturalism as a system that “reinforces the strategies and policies adopted to govern or manage the problems of diversity and multiplicity (96)” and lists how these strategies and policies vary widely, including “commercialized, consumerist, or “boutique” multiculturalism (97).” Hall reiterates how racial and ethnic differences are managed, as race is framed as natural, a “fixed, scientific “fact,” unresponsive to change or reformist social engineering (109),” and ethnicity “is grounded in *cultural* and *religious* features (110)” and indirectly tied to biology. “Biological racism and cultural differentialism therefore constitute, not two different systems, but racism’s two registers,” Hall argues (110-111). Through the three essays, this hegemonic management of difference—be it through splitting by difference, essentializing difference, or flattening difference—is made clear, and cultural productions are revealed for the ways they can manage and contest such representations.

Like the “kind of difference that doesn’t make a difference of any kind,” Ahmed (2012) questions diversity in *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, “asking how diversity can participate in the creation of an idea of the institution that

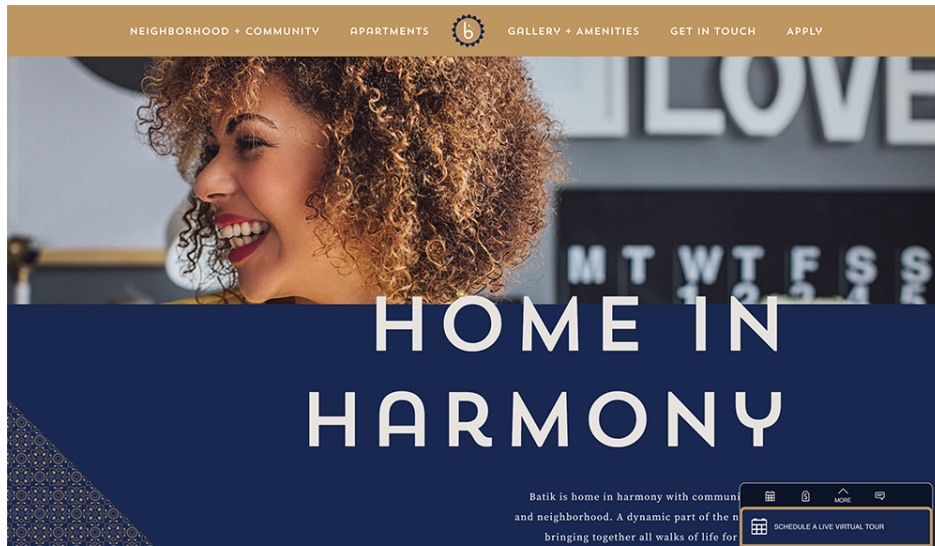
allows racism and inequalities to be overlooked (14).” As it is practiced by nations, institutions, and other organizations, diversity’s emphasis on “those who “look different” (33)” can reproduce whiteness “as the absent center against which others appear as points of deviations (35)” or “that which is already in place or at home (43).” This follows a similar critique by Ahmed (2000) of multiculturalism, which “can function to assimilate ‘the stranger’ as a figure of the unassimilable” and form identity through this difference (4). As whiteness is not decentered, diversity and multiculturalism can reproduce it in a more concealed way through evidencing an imagined heterogeneity, revealed in how difference is claimed as “our” possession (96, 112). In this way, “[d]iversity becomes about *changing perceptions of whiteness rather than changing the whiteness of organizations* (2012: 34).” This is perhaps most clear in its non-performative language and images, including “collages of smiling faces of different colors (52),” as well as “a “feel good” politics” through which “[d]iversity can be celebrated, consumed, and eaten (69).” The differences highlighted in such diversity are respectable, or “those forms of difference than can be incorporated into the national body,” and “only those who have the right kind of body can participate (151).” Based on Ahmed’s interrogations, diversity and multiculturalism are shown to actually reproduce and strengthen whiteness through some of the ways difference is conceptualized and applied.

I cite these works by Hall and Ahmed because built environment practitioners use the language and images of multiculturalism and diversity to imagine both Yesler Terrace and Yesler. These terms flatten actual differences into something that is more easily understood, managed, and consumed by white people in particular. Moreover, the terms hide the actual displacements of people of color from Yesler Terrace and nearby neighborhoods, as well as the homogenization of the population across South Seattle. The discourse surrounding multiculturalism and diversity can also be helpful for thinking about how terms like “environmentalism” and “sustainability” can mask the impacts of construction (to both inhabitants and environment). These terms help justify new “green” buildings, all while built environment professionals ignore those green practices of existing

residents. I use their writings to frame my readings of various redevelopment documents, in which the language and images of multiculturalism, diversity, environmentalism, and sustainability are used and consequently reproduced in the built environment through practices like public art and landscape design.

#### 4.1 “Home in Harmony”

As evidenced by the description with which I began the Chapter, Batik Seattle is the starkest example of commercialized multiculturalism among the redevelopment documents. In addition to the narrative of “Our Neighborhood History,” the marketing website is filled with language and illustrations that emphasize a “home in harmony” (Vulcan Real Estate 2020a). According to Jen Graves (2016) and captured in a project by D.K. Pan (2018b), such marketing was initially used during the construction of the building: “a billboard on the construction fencing ... featured a slender sophisticated woman of light brown skin, laughing, her multiracial identity deployed as a marketing tool. The apartments are called Batik, a word referring to the colorful dyed fabrics from Indonesia.” Batik Seattle has expanded on this multicultural branding, as both building an website (Figure 17) are “patterned with soul,” the former through an eclectic mix of World Market-like furnishings and the latter through an actual batik pattern. Images of colorful apartment units and shared spaces are collaged with images of people of color, including the laughing, multiracial woman and a smiling, Black man. While multiculturalism is clearest at Batik Seattle, similar language and images are found on other marketing websites. Anthem on 12th at 103 12th Avenue describes the area as a “melting pot of vibrant people, culturally rich and diverse (CWS Property Management 2020),” Cypress Seattle at 120 Broadway says it “has retained the character and diversity that makes this one of Seattle’s most vibrant and unique places to live (Vulcan Real Estate 2020b),” and Metroline Flats at 915 East Spruce Street calls it “[r]ich in history and cultural diversity (Pinnacle Communities 2020).” The marketing website for Anthem on 12th also collages images of its spaces with images of various people, namely a white woman with a cat, a



(a) "Home in Harmony"



(b) "Our Neighborhood History"

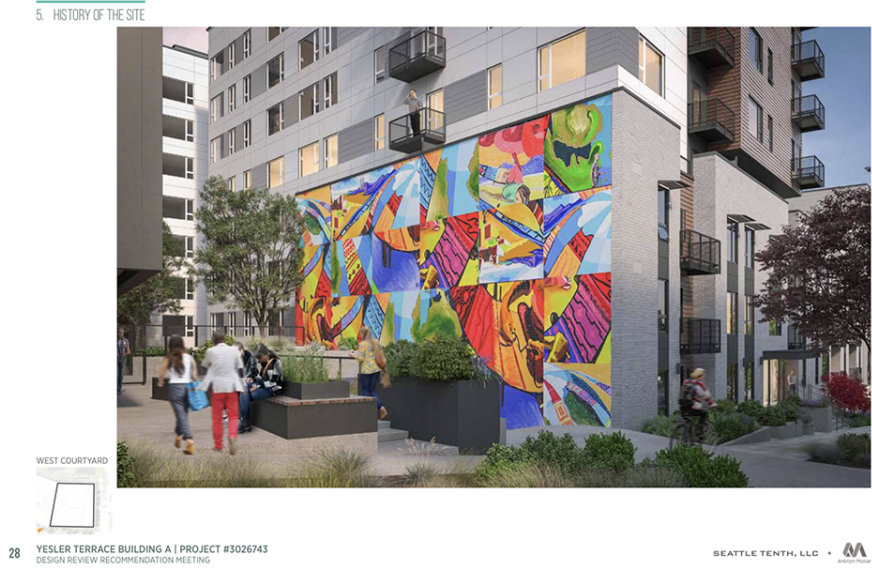
Figure 17: Batik Seattle Marketing Website (Vulcan Real Estate 2020a)

Black man in a blazer, and a multiracial woman blowing pollen. In all of these examples, the different cultures of inhabitants have been flattened into a singular multiculturalism or diversity, ready for consumption. Such language and images are not found on the website where one applies to live in an SHA property, save for brief explanations of each of their names: Red Cedar for a tree used by Native peoples in the region, Raven Terrace for “a bird symbolic in many cultures and the symbol of “storyteller” in the Duwamish Tribe,” Kebero Court for an East African hand drum, and Hoa Mai Gardens “for a flower symbolic in many Southeast Asian cultures (Seattle Housing Authority 2019b).” While this specificity challenges the generalized multiculturalism of the market-rate buildings, it does not actually inform the built environment, which is “designed with ALL cultures in mind so that all members of the community feel welcome (Seattle Housing Authority, Pyatok, & Hewitt 2018: 37).”

Within architectural design packets, multiculturalism and diversity specifically inform the concepts of two projects. In order to “honor the diversity at the site,” the proposal for 209 12th Avenue South is described a collage, “an art work of assembled and layered materials, images or found objects. The elements retain their unique, diverse identity while enhancing the composition as a whole (Seattle Tenth, LLC & Ankrom Moisan 2018a: 29).” At 110 10th Avenue South, Hinoki “reflect[s] the idea that something can simultaneously be different, but at the same time a key part of the whole. Unity and uniqueness (Seattle Housing Authority, Pyatok, & Hewitt 2018: 15).” In these projects, multiculturalism and diversity are supposedly reflected through the use of various forms and materials to construct the building as a whole. While these design concepts have been translated into architecture in a fairly subtle way, public art created to celebrate the area’s diversity is more apparent in the built environment. As noted in Chapter 3, the Design Guidelines for the redevelopment recommend incorporating art as a way to “reference the history and unique cultural mix of Yesler Terrace (GGLO Design, City of Seattle, & Seattle Housing Authority 2012: 8).” Following this guideline, projects sometimes propose to include public art on their building, usually working in conjunction with local artists or residents. For example, Hoa Mai Gardens

at 921 South Washington Street “incorporate[s] fused glass mosaic medallions in the ... themes of history and culture (Seattle Housing Authority & SMR Architects 2015: 15),” and 209 12th Avenue South includes a mural (Figure 18a) referencing Yesler Terrace’s history and culture by the design team and three local artists (Seattle Tenth, LLC & Ankrom Moisan 2018a: 27). Similarly, the project proposed for 104 12th Avenue (inside the redevelopment area, but following the Central Area Neighborhood Design Guidelines) will involve the works of many artists to “celebrate and illuminate the Central Area’s multi-cultural story (Centric Partners & Clark Barnes 2019b: 27).” At a larger scale, the SHA also developed an Art Master Plan with Carolyn Law (2015), suggesting a number of public, creative projects throughout the redevelopment area and proposing a residency for “creative thinkers”. Law states, “The art activity outlined in the plan can clearly add to the potential for Yesler Terrace’s public realm to act as this kind of “mixing bowl”—where creative activity will join hands with an evolving community of diverse people to fill this “bowl” with a changing set of community ingredients, constantly creating new recipes to offer their community (13).” All of these creative projects will likely be more particular than such language makes them seem, and they provide actual support to local artists. Moreover, their particularities challenge the imagined lack of history discussed in the previous chapter and the flattened cultural identity described above. As a whole, however, the incorporation of art in this way can also reify the very multiculturalism and diversity that developers wish to present and sell. The pieces risk becoming colorful, cultural accents, as is the case at 209 12th Avenue South, which incorporates a red color (Figure 18b) from Little Saigon and the International District (Seattle Tenth, LLC & Ankrom Moisan 2018b: 13).

All of this is to ask, who gets to identify, claim, capitalize on, and consume multiculturalism and diversity in this redevelopment project, and as such, how is it spatialized through the construction of the new buildings? The EIS clearly admits that the demographic makeup of Yesler Terrace will change with its redevelopment, as the proportions of youth, women, “minorities,” and immigrants in the neighborhood decrease. “[T]he age, gender, ethnicity and income levels which currently exist onsite would be



(a) Mural



(b) Accent Color

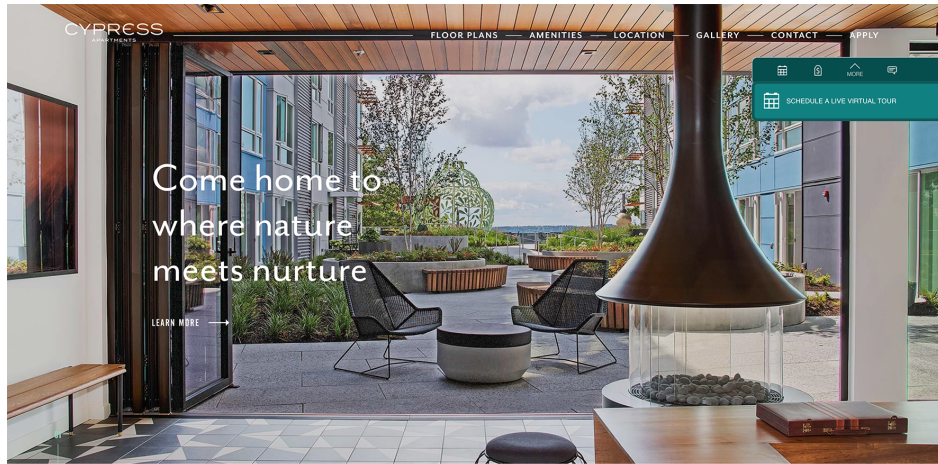
Figure 18: Mural and Accent Color at 209 12th Avenue South (Seattle Tenth, LLC & Ankrom Moisan 2018a: 28; 2018b: 13)

anticipated to shift towards the ratios more consistent with the site vicinity and the City of Seattle (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2010: 3.16-17).” Although such changes are not consistent with a diverse neighborhood, the EIS and Yesler Terrace Development Plan use the increasing economic diversity to frame it as such—the new neighborhood “will be a diverse and exciting community where people across the income spectrum come to live, learn, work and play (Seattle Housing Authority 2011: 2).” Consequently, when it comes to wealthier residents, diversity is framed in terms of an actual addition of people. This is certainly not the case for diversities of race and ethnicity, which are reproduced through the motifs of multiculturalism. These diversities are generalized and represented in the neighborhood’s various languages and eateries, “feel good” descriptions of the past and images of people of color, and even architectural design and public art. In this way, despite ongoing displacements of heterogeneous inhabitants from Yesler Terrace, the Central District, Chinatown-International District, and South Seattle, new residents can still imagine the area as multicultural or diverse. As multiculturalism and diversity become objects detached from actual people, they can be more easily managed and used by others. Ahmed’s work is helpful here for critically reading language like “*our* neighborhood history [my emphasis]” on Batik Seattle’s marketing website or visuals like the red accents on 209 12th Avenue South. Such choices enable market-rate properties in particular to possess and present themselves as multicultural or diverse, all while typically making the area’s demographics more homogeneous. Working from multiculturalism and diversity, built environment practitioners not only flatten different cultures into a singular *Other*, but also construct it into the landscape in ways that allow those in hegemonic positions to claim and consume it, such as public art.

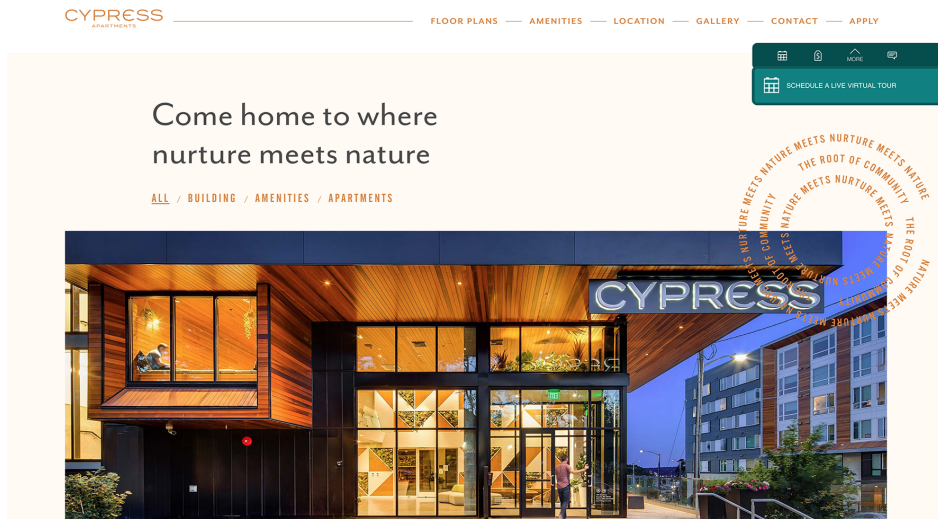
## 4.2 “Nurture Meets Nature”

Across the street from Batik Seattle at 120 Broadway is Seattle Cypress, another mixed-use building with 189 market-rate and 48 “affordable” units (again, for those earning up to 65-85% of area median income). Whereas Batik Seattle is branded around multiculturalism,

Seattle Cypress is branded around nature. Its marketing website presents both residents and building: “A pet-happy, walk-friendly, view-loving community, Cypress was designed to nurture the natural. Think expansive sunny roof decks, lush courtyards with pretty park views (Vulcan Real Estate 2020b).” As with other examples, such branding is maintained across the website (Figure 19) through both language and visuals. The neighborhood is described in terms of its “new” outdoor amenities—a park, green loop, dog park, soccer field, and public art—and apartments “[make] room for your snowboard, your bike gear, your bulky outdoor stuff.” Images from the building show one lounge opening onto a landscaped courtyard, another lounge opening onto a green roof, and a lobby decorated with various plants. Such spaces reflect the building’s design concept “Outside-In,” or “bringing the outdoors into the building and bringing the indoors outside (Vulcan Real Estate & Runberg Architecture Group 2016: 20-21).” Throughout the redevelopment project, urban planners, architectural designers, and real estate developers have committed to environmentalism and sustainability in their new construction. Indeed, “environmental stewardship and sustainability” are part of the four priorities defined by the Citizen Review Committee (2007a: 10-11). However, the guiding principles for this priority, as well as the ways in which it is presented in both the Yesler Terrace Development Plan and Design Guidelines, are mostly general, and as such, environmentalism and sustainability are being actualized in varying ways across the built environment. The Development Plan aims to make the area “a model sustainable, green and healthy community” through the addition of parks, gardens, and green infrastructure that further encourage outdoor activity and green urbanism (2011: 4, 9). In the Design Guidelines, the “Context & Priority Issues” add “cutting-edge green building practice” and “a high level of tree preservation” to this list, and there are more specific guidelines on using topography, protecting trees, and managing stormwater, in addition to developing parks, courtyards, gardens, and rooftops (GGLO Design, City of Seattle, & Seattle Housing Authority 2012: iv, 1-3, 11-12, 37-39). At the scale of the neighborhood (Figure 20), these aims and guidelines have been reified into the landscape through creating the Green Street Loop, a half-mile circuit with greenery, art, exercise stations, and seating, Yesler Terrace Park, with a plaza,



(a) Landscaped Courtyard



(b) Lobby Plantings

Figure 19: Seattle Cypress Marketing Website (Vulcan Real Estate 2020b)



Figure 20: Green Amenities at Yesler (Seattle Design Commission 2017)

playground, basketball court, and soccer field, the Yesler Terrace Hill Climb, stairs and ramps connecting South Jackson Street to South Main Street along 10th Avenue South, and several pocket parks between buildings. At the scale of the building, these efforts have been constructed through green building certifications, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and Evergreen Sustainable Development Standard (ESDS), landscaping decisions, including tree preservation and new plantings, and as is the case with Seattle Cypress, even branding.

Like the addition of historically and culturally informed public art, such efforts toward environmentalism and sustainability are certainly better than nothing. However, I am again interested in the ways language like environmental, sustainable, and natural or the green visuals on maps, renderings, and photographs legitimize certain ways of doing “green urbanism” that require significant destruction/construction and displacement, all while ignoring the existing “green” practices and spaces of inhabitants. Consider, for example, the

individual yards at Yesler Terrace. As described in Chapter 2, these yards were continuously significant for inhabitants. Bob Young (2015) writes in the *Seattle Times* of Marty Reyes's "small backyard where he has loved to sit, watching squirrels and sparrows, listening to ballgames on the radio. Those fenced yards around Yesler sprouted vegetables that neighbors shared. They gave kids a place to play." Their significance is similarly captured in the projects of Yesler Terrace Youth Media (2017). The yards enabled gardening and play, and their trees grew to provide a particularly dense canopy in a part of Seattle that is otherwise dense with buildings. The Design Guidelines admit as much, but then continue: "While the redeveloped Yesler Terrace devotes less space to private yards, it will offer substantially more open public space and shared residential amenity space (GGLO Design, City of Seattle, & Seattle Housing Authority 2012: 2)." Only by framing the yards as "private," despite the ways inhabitants used them together or shared produce, will there be more open "public" spaces after redevelopment. Gardening will be moved to designated P-Patch community gardens throughout the area, while play and exercise take place in the new parks and along the Green Street Loop. The programming, hardscaping, and softscaping of these spaces, as well as the outdoor spaces around each building, invoke a highly ordered, somewhat defensive landscape, further secured through "incorporating natural surveillance and other Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles (Seattle Housing Authority 2011: 9)." While yards were designed away, trees in the area were determined to be exceptional, valuable, or non-exceptional, as defined by the Yesler Terrace Tree Protection Plan (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2012). In determining whether these trees should be preserved, though, the plan takes into account the "street vacation/rededication and redevelopment plan (1)," so trees are only preserved if they can accommodate the neighborhood's new design. None of this is to argue that Yesler Terrace was not in need of significant upgrades for both inhabitants and environment, but rather that effective, sustainable housing for low-income people does not need to be contingent on selling land to private developers, an influx of wealthier residents, and an entirely new way of living. The environmentalism and sustainability used in the

redevelopment follow practices and precedents from other parts of the city and other cities—they are not locally rooted in Yesler Terrace. C. Davida Ingram (2012) is particularly critical of this inconsistency: “In this era of sustainability we still have not found out how the families at Yesler Terrace have sustained themselves, surviving beautifully despite food injustice, invisibility, and sitting on the deadline of displacement.” Thus, environmentalism and sustainability are not unlike multiculturalism and diversity, for they are all defined and produced from a hegemonic position, managing or masking the perceptions and practices of inhabitants.

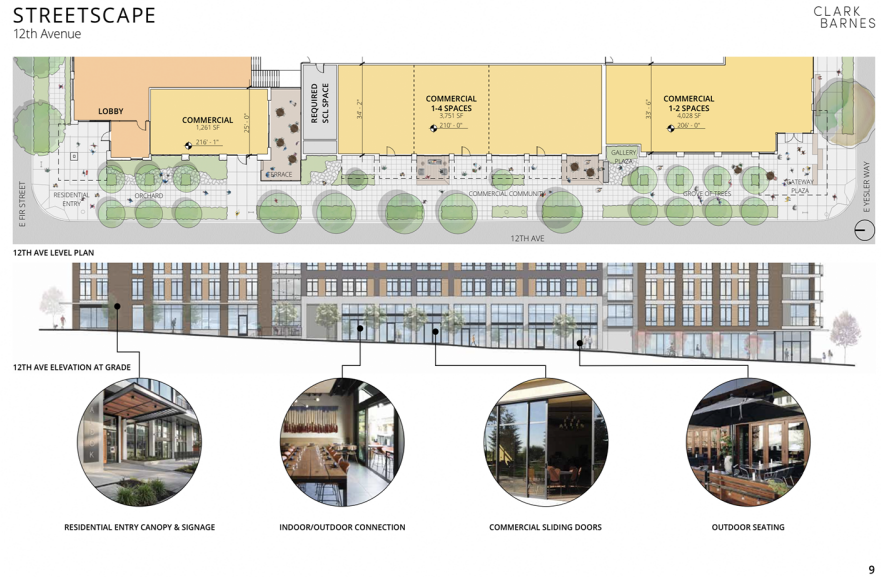
\*

The ways in which built environment practitioners produce culture at Yesler Terrace are problematic because they flatten different cultures and ignore practices of existing residents. Their productions enable the management and consumption of these differences, as well as justify completely new ways of sustainable living. The non-performative use of terms like multiculturalism and diversity hides the displacement of a heterogeneous population, while terms like environmentalism and sustainability obscure the personal and environmental costs of new construction. In addition to language and images found in marketing materials and throughout other documents, these cultural trends are particularly evident in public art and landscape design proposals. With their construction, multiculturalism and sustainability can be made physical and apparent in the built environment, despite the ways they otherwise affect its social environment. Following Hall, these are the “kind[s] of difference that doesn’t make a difference of any kind.”

## Chapter 5

### FORMING IDENTITY

Within the Design Recommendation Packet for 104 12th Avenue, Centric Partners and Clark Barnes (2019b) envision a new streetscape for the northeast corner of 12th Avenue and East Yesler Way (Figure 21). An architectural plan shows three to seven commercial spaces along 12th Avenue, which spill out onto a carefully landscaped (“orchard,” “grove of trees”) and programmed (“gallery plaza,” “gateway plaza”) sidewalk (9). Beneath the plan, the building’s west elevation is annotated with four precedents, suggesting possibilities for canopies and signage, interior and exterior connections, large sliding doors, and outdoor seating. On the next page, a rendering enables viewers to get a feel for the space, as if they were driving or walking down 12th Avenue, or even better, shopping or eating at one of the new businesses (10). The proposed streetscape could be from any one of Seattle’s gentrifying neighborhoods, and some of its precedent images even come from these neighborhoods. It resembles recent development in Cascade and South Lake Union, Capitol Hill, the Central District, Chinatown-International District, and across South Seattle, through which poorer residents, usually Black people and other people of color, are displaced and replaced by wealthier residents, typically white people. “Black and brown people are not necessarily being displaced and replaced by fancy, rich people; instead, the gentrification of today feels accessible as it revamps and reinvents common, traditional, and popular items ... This is gentrification in the age of neoliberalism: visual consumption enacted by the aestheticization of culture and public space,” Brandi Thompson Summers explains (2019: 16). The proposed building, a mixed-use structure with several floors of dense housing above commercial spaces, as well as its design, amenities, and landscaping, are all part of these aesthetics.



(a) Streetscape Plan, Elevation, and Precedents



(b) Streetscape Feedback and Rendering

Figure 21: Streetscape at 104 12th Avenue (Centric Partners & Clark Barnes 2019b: 9-10)

Once constructed, this new building will replace three structures housing the Seattle Curtain Manufacturing Company (and currently, the roaming arts venue Love City Love), Saba Ethiopian Cuisine, Thanh Son Tofu, and Hoàn Cầu Universal Auto Body & Services. Seattle Curtain, founded over 85 years ago by Ralph Capeluto, is a significant business for both the city and its Jewish inhabitants. Its building at 104 12th Avenue, and earlier showroom in the Prefontaine Building at 4th Avenue South and Yesler Way, again evidence the plurality of peoples producing spaces along Yesler Way in the early 20th century. Next door, Saba Ethiopian Cuisine, Thanh Son Tofu, and Hoàn Cầu Universal Auto Body & Services, more recent additions to this multiethnic built environment, are also family businesses that have become neighborhood fixtures. Saba Ethiopian Cuisine, which has occupied its space for almost 20 years, is currently appealing its eviction and explicitly ties its displacement to ongoing gentrification in the area (Tekle 2018). Love City Love, the temporary occupant of Seattle Curtain, is similarly critical: “In a neighborhood where upscale housing development and bars have claimed the landscape, Love City Love emerged as a blank canvas for the creative community to convene (Piette 2019).” Likely in response to such claims, the Design Recommendation Packet begins with a section on “Community Outreach, Research & Engagement,” demonstrating its consultations with “the Community” (2019b: 4). Their statements about the history of Seattle Curtain and broader “multi-cultural” history of the Central District are noted, along with the ways such narratives could inform the building’s design—“retail spaces with stronger neighborhood identity,” “salvaging of materials from the existing buildings,” and art “as a story ... that is usable”. Missing from these notes, and most design review packets, are the critiques of gentrification by existing residents and businesses. Instead, the feedback simply informs art installations across the site, following the aesthetics of other constructions of gentrification.

Built environment practitioners are involved in forming identity. This is made clear in the 104 12th Avenue Design Recommendation Packet’s sections on streetscape and community outreach, in which desired residents and existing residents are respectively represented. There is a very particular inhabitant for whom such buildings are designed, as

revealed in the organizations, sizes, and prices of their housing units or the aesthetics and programmings of their amenities, retail and public spaces, and landscaping. At the same time, existing residents are presented as “participants” in outreach efforts. Their pictures, but often not their words, are included to function as a stamp of approval from “the Community”. Their feedback may inform art along the outside of the building, but typically it does not affect much else. Both who is seen and how they are seen inform the design decisions made by built environment practitioners. In this chapter, I consider identity formation through Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967) and Simone Browne’s *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness* (2015). I then use this framework to read the imaginings of existing and desired residents within the documents from the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace.

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon (1967) describes the racial schema through which the white, colonial gaze, gestures, and attitude can identify a Black man as “an object among other objects (89)” or “a toy in the hands of the white man (119).” Fanon distinguishes this racial schema from the body schema, or the “construction of my self as a body in a spatial and temporal world ... a definitive structuring of my self and the world (91).” The racial schema, on the other hand, is not constructed by the self, but by “the Other, the white man, who had woven me out of a thousand details, anecdotes, and stories (91).” In this way, “the Blacks have had to deal with two systems of reference (90),” both their own customs and those of imposed civilizations. Fanon continues, “I was responsible not only for my body but also for my race and my ancestors. I cast an objective gaze over myself, discovered my blackness, my ethnic features; deafened by cannibalism, backwardness, fetishism, racial stigmas, slave traders, and above all, yes, above all, the grinning *Y a bon Banania* (92).” In his writing, Fanon repeatedly attempts to break this racial schema, only to have the white gaze continuously fix him to this position as an object, which is justified through scientific racism. As such, “[m]y body was returned to me spread-eagled, disjointed, draped in mourning on this white winter’s day,” Fanon writes (93).

Following Fanon's writings on the white gaze and its racial schema, Browne (2015) describes the ways historical and contemporary surveillance technologies are built on racism and can reify race in *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness*. Historically, the white gaze informed technologies used in surveillance, including architecture, representation, and data collection. The use of light, shadows, and mirrors in Jeremy Bentham's panopticon produced a "play of gazes," through which "surveillance "functioned like a microscope of conduct" and sought to objectify, transform, and improve individuals (41)." In addition to this built space, the graphic *Description of a Slave Ship* privileges "white gazes and vantage points to the trauma of slavery, where the tiny black figures are made to seem androgynous, interchangeable, and replaceable (49)." Census enumeration similarly objectifies people, as a state uses categories to "fix individuals within a certain time and particular space" and "renders population legible in racializing as well as gendering ways (56)." Browne also considers Fanon's racial schema in terms of contemporary surveillance technologies, like biometrics. She writes, "Digital epidermalization is the exercise of power cast by the disembodied gaze of certain surveillance technologies ... that can be employed to do the work of alienating the subjects by producing a truth about the racial body and one's identity (or identities) despite the subjects claim (110)." Digital epidermalization is programmed with prototypical whiteness, maleness, youth, and able-bodiedness, limiting who is legible in an "algorithm that is set to fix race and gender (111, 114)." Browne continues, "Prototypical whiteness cannot be understood without the dark matter that gets clustered at one end of the spectrum, without those bodies and body parts that fail to enroll." In these examples, Browne reveals how Fanon's racial schema, or the white gaze on a racial *Other*, "makes for the ontological insecurity of a body made out of place, and "overdetermined from the outside" (98)."

I cite these works by Fanon and Browne because the white gaze informs the planning, design, and development of Yesler's built environment. Within the documentation leading to its production, there is a clear distinction between those who are represented as subjects and those who are represented as objects, those who are made to feel in place and those

who are made to feel out of place. Just as prototypical whiteness informs the surveillance technologies examined by Browne, it continues to inform the production of the built environment, a technology in and of itself and using some of these exact digital tools. Their writings help reveal in the redevelopment documentation how existing residents are represented as “participating” and through the use of their photographs and how desired residents are represented through marketing images and maps, precedents and renderings, and spatial programming.

### **5.1 “Fit naturally into the community.”**

From the start of the redevelopment project, the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) has emphasized community participation. The Yesler Terrace Development Plan describes the formation of the Citizen Review Committee (CRC) as “the first stage of community participation,” as well as outlines the many ways the community will remain involved, such as workshops, surveys, presentations, employment, and community associations (Seattle Housing Authority 2011: 15). As outlined in Chapter 1, CollinsWoerman organized “community workshops” on priorities, housing, job opportunities, urban living, and community health in the summer and fall of 2008, and then presented several design concepts for the area based in part on these workshops in the winter and spring of 2009. The Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), Development Plan, and Design Guidelines are consequently informed by participating residents, be it through the CRC’s Guiding Principles and Definitions or the research and feedback gathered from these workshops and presentations. Moreover, architectural design documents reveal further participation with the production of new buildings in the area. As examined above, the 104 12th Avenue Design Recommendation Packet immediately emphasizes and demonstrates its “Community Outreach, Research & Engagement” efforts (Centric Partners & Clark Barnes 2019b: 4). Similar demonstrations of participation are found in the 1000 East Yesler Way Early Design Guidance packet (Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects 2018: 6-7), 209 12th Avenue South Design Recommendation packet (Seattle Tenth, LLC & Ankrom

Moisan 2018a: 30), and 725 Yesler Way Early Design Guidance packet (Su Development, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, & Studio SKH 2019: 6-11). The sections on outreach from 1000 East Yesler Way (Figure 22a) and 209 12th Avenue South are primarily image-based, providing evidence of meetings, site walks, and public notices, as well as some of the feedback provided by participants. The sections on outreach from 104 12th Avenue and 725 Yesler Way (Figure 22b) are more comprehensive, with directly quoted feedback from participants and design responses. Nevertheless, it is worth questioning this how this feedback is translated into the proposed designs. At 104 12th Avenue, much of “what we heard” simply supports the addition of art throughout the new building; in this case, architects and developers “heard” the feedback of the “community” they assembled, made up almost entirely of artists, but not those protesting against gentrification at the very same site. At 725 Yesler Way, designers and developers respond to participants’ desires for public spaces at the base on a proposed high-rise, but they do not respond to feedback on the affordability of housing, retail spaces, or community spaces. Specific requests for a Somali or East African grocer are also translated to “additional retail such as a cafe or grocery store (11).” Such inconsistencies are further evidenced in a Yesler Terrace Community Council meeting filmed by D.K. Pan (2016), where 120 Broadway and Modera First Hill are presented for feedback, and participants question the city’s definition of “affordability” and request retail spaces for small, local businesses. These issues will not be addressed in the two buildings, but the optics of participation will remain. The use of existing residents in “participation” or “outreach” is presented in a way that signals “community” approval, despite the fact that their feedback in most cases is not being actualized in the built environment.

In addition to the use of existing residents to evidence participation, built environment practitioners include photographs of these inhabitants throughout their documents, typically without much context. While such photographs may be appropriate in the CRC’s Definitions & Guiding Principles (2007a), there is a notable difference between the four approved principles, presented with large images of smiling residents of all ages (6-13), and

COMMUNITY OUTREACH | GATHERING PEOPLE



Community Site Walk conducted on July 10th, 2018 with eight participants including three representatives from the project, and five community members after Yester Terrace Community Council meeting where the walk was promoted.



Poster placed in the Yester Terrace Community Center



Poster placed on a street pole nearby

| YESLER INVESTORS 4 LLC | ENCORE architects | 1000 E YESLER WAY | #3032434 | EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE | 10/24/2018 | 7

(a) Community Site Walk and Poster Placement for 1000 East Yesler Way

SECTION 02 / Public Outreach

Outreach Boards

Boards were printed on 30"x40" posters to explain the major concepts and urban understanding of the site.



Community Outreach Open House

Our Community Outreach meeting allowed for residents to ask questions and leave feedback, and created a dialogue between designers and community members.



Bohlin Cywinski Jackson  
Architects Planning Urban Design

SU DEVELOPMENT | Project 3033617-EG | EDG Meeting | 6/26/2019 | 7


(b) Outreach Boards and Photographs of Open House for 725 Yesler Way

Figure 22: Evidence of Community/Public Outreach (Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects 2018: 7; Su Development, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, & Studio SKH 2019: 7)

John V. Fox and Kristin O'Donnell's *Minority Report*, a thorough argument without any images for greater protection of public housing and representation of existing residents (14-18). Similar images appear in the *Yesler Terrace Development Plan and Design Guidelines* next to renderings of and precedents for an entirely transformed built environment. In these photographs, existing residents demonstrate the diversity of peoples and spaces at Yesler Terrace. Almost always appearing without captions, the photographs illustrate these documents in a way that suggests residents' support for the redevelopment or the neighborhood's continued diversity after redevelopment, whereas both the built and social environments will be completely remade. Photographs of existing residents are not as common in architectural design documents, but when they do appear, they include even less context. For example, the *725 Yesler Way Early Design Guidance* packet illustrates its "Design Vision" with ten uncaptioned photographs from around Yesler Terrace and Yesler (Figure 23a). The proposed design is a mixed-use, high-rise building, most of which will not be available to existing residents, despite the presence of their photographs and statements like "openness and diversity," "social responsibility," and "sharing" (Su Development, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, & Studio SKH 2019: 3). The *1000 East Yesler Way Early Design Guidance* packet similarly begins with an uncaptioned collage, mixing photographs of children and the built environment (Figure 23b) after the construction of Yesler Terrace in the 1940s and before the construction of Yesler in the 2010s (Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects 2018: 3). Like 725 Yesler Way, 1000 East Yesler Way is a private development of market-rate housing units, which are unlikely to benefit these children or their families. In all of these photographs, existing residents are disconnected from that which they are actually saying. The photographs enable built environment practitioners to use existing residents for their ends: their smiles imply approval of the redevelopment project, and their presence (without any photographs of the developers' desired residents) suggests that the neighborhood will continue to be multicultural and diverse.

While the summaries of participation and use of photographs limit what existing residents can say within these documents, built environment practitioners indirectly reveal

SECTION 01 / Design Vision



**Design Vision**

**CITY**

**Gateway** for the city and into Yesler community  
 Visual expression of the city's values of **openness and diversity**  
 Community **front porch** onto the city

**COMMUNITY**

**Social Responsibility**  
 Expression of the civic-oriented, environmentally responsible and **socially equitable** neighborhood  
 A place that represents and **accommodates diversity** - cultural, economic, age, family size  
 Project targeting LEED Gold

**Sharing**  
 Strengthens Yesler Park by extending and **sharing** the view

**Amenities redefined**  
 Open and accessible to neighborhood  
 A destination within the neighborhood and within the city  
 Everyone should feel the ability to use and enjoy the space

**Facilitating Connections**  
 Physically (ground plane) and visually (into the towers)

**PLACE**

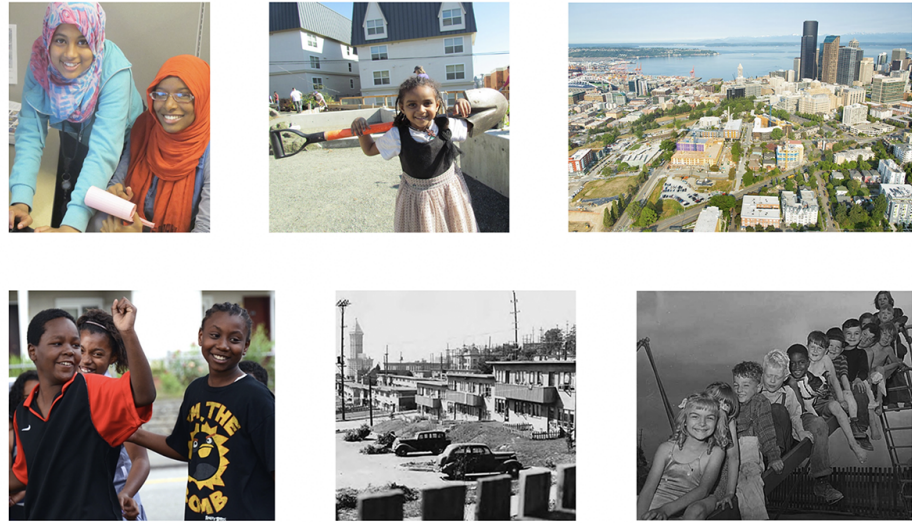
A community within itself  
 Social spaces, corridor "places", lobbies for gathering  
 Safe within and around the building  
 Incorporating **phenomena of nature**: sunsets, reflected light, rain  
**Community room** as a focal point  
 Flexibility and **dual use** of spaces  
**Meandering** is promoted  
 Provide places to **sit and touch**  
 Accommodate both **Active** users and **Passive** users

Bohlin Cywinski Jackson  
 Architecture Planning Interior Design

SU DEVELOPMENT | Project 3033617-EG | EDG Meeting | 6/26/2019 3

(a) 725 Yesler Way Early Design Guidance

YESLER TERRACE | PHOTOS



| YESLER INVESTORS 4 LLC | ENCORE architects | 1000 E YESLER WAY | #3032434 | EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE | 10/24/2018 3

(b) 1000 East Yesler Way Early Design Guidance

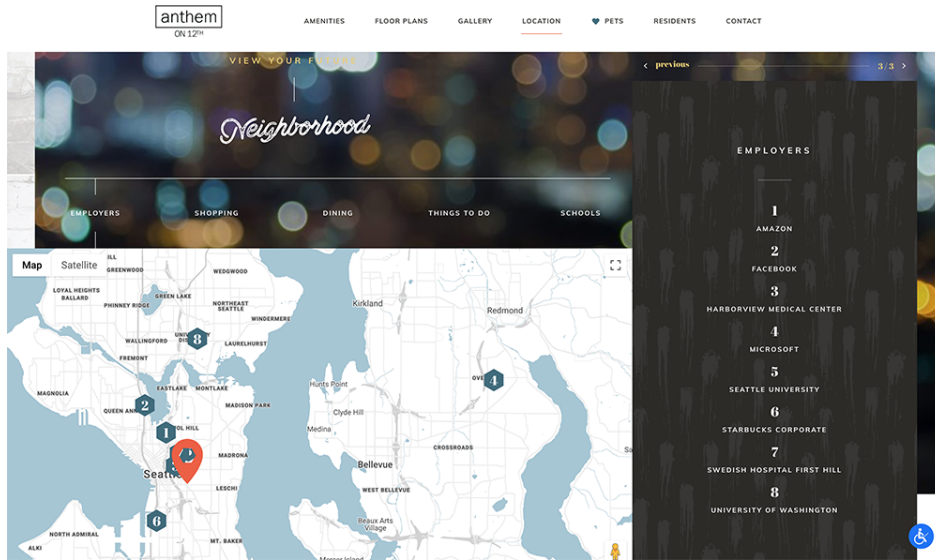
Figure 23: Photographs of Existing Residents (Su Development, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, & Studio SKH 2019: 3, Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects 2018: 3)

their perceptions of Yesler Terrace and its inhabitants as they imagine what Yesler will be like. This is particularly apparent in the Yesler Terrace Development Plan—the document’s subtitle, “Bringing Home a *Better* Future [my emphasis]” implies worse present that can be fixed with the addition of wealthier residents, while goals like “[f]it *naturally* into the community. *Reintegrate* Yesler Terrace with surrounding communities and downtown [my emphases]” suggest there is something off about the neighborhood and its inhabitants and spaces should reflect the rest of the city (Seattle Housing Authority 2011: 4). In the architectural design documents, the revaluing (of the city) and devaluing (of the neighborhood) are apparent in context analyses. According to the 1105 East Fir Street Early Design Guidance packet, the existing area is architecturally “unremarkable” and “[n]ew development that is architecturally vibrant and interesting could add more character to the neighborhood and contribute to the neighborhood’s goal of creating a sense of identity and “pride of place” (Seattle Housing Authority & GGLO Design 2012: 5).” Next door at 103 12th Avenue, “a pioneer project as the first private development of Yesler Terrace,” the objective of the proposed building is to “activate” and “enhance” the corner, while “[t]he transitional aspect of the neighborhood provides opportunity for creating an unique and vibrant mixed-use building to add more character to this evolving neighborhood (Gracorp Capital, Spectrum, Mithun, & Hewitt 2013: 3, 8).” The marketing website for Metroline Flats similarly considers the neighborhood as “emerging” and “poised for a comeback with its central location (Pinnacle Communities 2020).” In an interview with the *Puget Sound Business Journal*, Ada M. Healey, the Chief Real Estate Officer of Vulcan Real Estate, most clearly reveals what these descriptions are getting at; Yesler Terrace reminds Healey of South Lake Union in 2000: “You drove through it, not to it (Stiles 2015).” In describing the existing or desired neighborhood in these ways, built environment practitioners present Yesler Terrace as unnaturally placed in and segregated from the city, in need of the vibrancy and activity of other neighborhoods, and in some ways, not even a home to more than 1,000 people. Yesler Terrace and its inhabitants are devalued, or even made to disappear, in these descriptions in order to justify the area’s

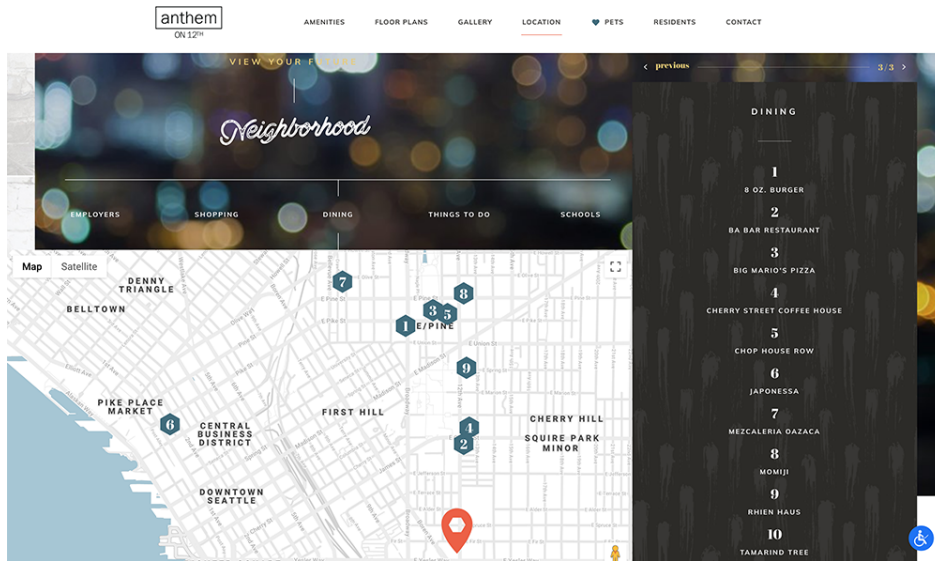
redevelopment. Existing residents are used to evidence participation or illustrate documents, while their particular spatial understandings, practices, imaginings are ignored.

## 5.2 “[K]ind of like South Lake Union.”

If existing residents are imagined in this way, how are desired residents imagined within these documents? I return to the interview with Healey, who imagines Yesler “is going to be kind of like South Lake Union” by 2025 (Stiles 2015). Detour: Since the 1980s, the social and built fabrics of Seattle’s Cascade and South Lake Union have been completely transformed. What were formerly light industrial and working class neighborhoods are now medical research institutions, life sciences facilities, and technology companies, thanks in no small part to Paul G. Allen’s Vulcan Inc., which purchased and developed large tracts of the area. This transformation, as well as the growth of these industries in other parts of the city and region, have raised Seattle’s cost of living substantially and enabled the development of increasingly expensive housing. Indeed, the development of market-rate housing at Yesler Terrace, in which Vulcan Real Estate also plays a large role, is connected to these broader changes. By stating that Yesler Terrace will “be kind of like South Lake Union,” Healey is imagining entirely transformed spaces (mixed-use buildings with commercial space at the street level and several to many stories of small housing units or office space above) and residents (well-paid, young professionals, working and consuming in specific ways). This is made most clear on the marketing websites for Yesler’s new buildings. For example, the websites for Batik Seattle and Seattle Cypress imagine their prospective residents drinking wine at a restaurant, going to a café for juice, or riding bicycles to a food truck (Vulcan Real Estate 2020a, 2020b). A series of interactive maps (Figure 24) on the website for Anthem on 12th, with which prospective residents are asked to “view your future,” is even more revealing in its suggested employment (Amazon, Facebook, Harborview Medical Center), shopping (Costco, Macy’s, Nordstrom), dining (8 Oz Burger, Ba Bar, Big Mario’s Pizza), and things to do (Cal Anderson Park, Century Link Field, Flat Stick Pub) (CWS Property Management 2020). Aside from a fifth map



(a) Map of Nearby Employers



(b) Map of Nearby Dining

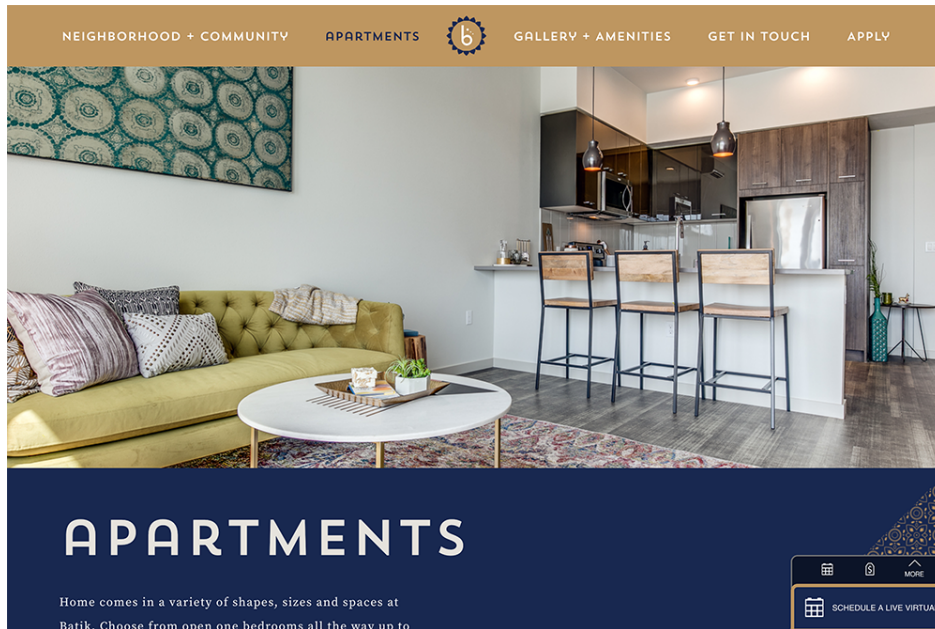
Figure 24: Interactive Maps for Anthem on 12th (CWS Property Management 2020)

which shows nearby schools and institutions, many of these suggestions appeal to a demographic that is much wealthier and less diverse, ethnically, racially, and in terms of age, than that of Yesler Terrace. The geographies of these maps are also notable, for many suggestions are located in the Capitol Hill, Downtown, and Pioneer Square neighborhoods, rather than the Central District or Chinatown-International District. Such images and maps reorient Yesler away from its connections to nearby Black and Pan-Asian neighborhoods in the east and south and toward wealthier, whiter neighborhoods in the west and north.

In addition to these representations of the area online, the designs that are being physically constructed into the landscape further render certain residents in place and other residents out of place. As examined in Chapter 3, the Design Guidelines emphasize precedents from other neighborhoods and cities that in no way reflect the existing social or built environments of Yesler Terrace (GGLO Design, City of Seattle, & Seattle Housing Authority 2012). Rather, specific guidelines related to the context and site, public life, and design concept suggest an organization, scale, aesthetic, and programming of spaces that remake the neighborhood in the image of the city. Proposed buildings are reviewed and approved as part of the East Design Review Board District, which includes Capitol Hill and Pike/Pine, as opposed to a review board particular to the neighborhood, like the Central Area Design Review Board District or the International Special Review District. Further, public spaces, represented in architectural renderings, and housing units, represented in photographs of furnished units, suggest certain ways of using both public and private spaces. Renderings, like that of 123 Broadway (Figure 25a), imagine public spaces ordered by generic landscaping, in which consumption in the commercial spaces or of art displays is the primary activity (Vulcan Real Estate & Runberg Architecture Group 2015b: 56). Indeed, the entourage with which architectural designers decorate their renderings imply who should occupy these spaces, as well as how they should act. Unlike the outdoor spaces produced in different ways by the residents of Profanity Hill or Yesler Terrace, these spaces do not leave much room for similar imaginings. Based on the size of the housing units,



(a) Exterior Rendering of 123 Broadway



(b) Staged Apartment at Batik Seattle

Figure 25: Spatial Prescriptions at 123 Broadway/Batik Seattle (Vulcan Real Estate & Runberg Architecture Group 2015b: 56; Vulcan Real Estate 2020a)

which range from studio to two-bedroom in most market-rate buildings, single individuals or couples would seem to be the preferred tenants. Smaller units make up the majority of units in the market-rate buildings, as well as the “affordable” units within these buildings. Even the majority of the units in the SHA’s replacement housing, ranging from one to four bedrooms, are on the smaller side of that range. Photographs of staged units on marketing websites, like those of 123 Broadway or Batik Seattle (Figure 25b), similarly suggest specific ways to decorate and use private spaces (Vulcan Real Estate 2020a).

The ways in which spaces are programmed in market-rate buildings further evidence desired residents. Beyond the housing units and retail spaces of these mixed-use buildings are a number of private amenities for residents, namely rooftop decks, lounges, and fitness rooms. For instance, Anthem on 12th offers a shared kitchen, rooftop deck, fitness center, lounge space, and dog patch (CWS Property Management 2020). Similarly, Batik Seattle includes a rooftop deck, community room, game room, and fitness center, while the Seattle Cypress features a rooftop deck, courtyards, lounge spaces, and a reading nook (Vulcan Real Estate 2020a, 2020b). In these examples, what were previously shared spaces across Yesler Terrace have been made into the amenities of specific market-rate buildings, open only to its residents. Interestingly, the buildings maintain the language of “neighbors” when describing these spaces. As part of its “Community Philosophy,” Batik Seattle “enjoy[s] bringing neighbors and residents together, shaping a new Yesler where everyone’s invited. That’s why we designed shared amenities like a community kitchen, where residents and neighbors can gather for potluck meals and pop-up dinners (Vulcan Real Estate 2020a).” As revealed in notes from a 2019 Yesler Terrace Community Council meeting, however, “Batik promised a community kitchen, but it’s not accessible to the community (Su Development, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, & Studio SKH 2019: 8).” In other words, terms like “neighbors” and “community,” as well as the spaces they describe, are being increasingly privatized, accessible only to those who can afford them. This shift from public to private amenities closely follows George Lipsitz’s description of the contemporary white

spatial imaginary, essentially bringing the private homeowner association of the suburbs into the city.

\*

The ways in which built environment practitioners form identity at Yesler Terrace are problematic because they limit representations of existing residents to tokenistic roles, while designing for and marketing to a much wealthier and whiter desired resident. Existing residents are primarily represented to evidence “participation” or in uncaptioned photographs. These static representations of people are used to give approval to the changes in the built environment, while their vocal objections, like that of Saba Ethiopian Cuisine or at the Yesler Terrace Community Council meeting, are not present in the documents. Instead, it is primarily the built environment practitioners themselves who speak about how the neighborhood could be made “better”. These practitioners also imagine a desired resident, including where they work, how they dress, and what they eat, as well as how they use public spaces, building amenities, and private units. Their design and marketing choices are infected by the prototypical whiteness, maleness, youth, and able-bodiedness described by Browne.

## Chapter 6

### AN OTHER ARCHITECTURE

We *know* that access to space everywhere on earth is societally unequal. We *know* that through all kinds of policies, practices and discourses, a global minority is stripping a global majority of land, home, shelter, privacy, public space, education, opportunity, capital, nutrients, air, water, bodily autonomy, freedom of movement, security, infrastructure, health, comfort, kin, speech, resources, territory, national belonging, time, possibility, dignity, life. And we *know* that race, ethnicity, class, ability, citizenship status, sexuality, gender identity and species clearly influence all experiences and that those who are produced and read as ‘normal’ take up a disproportionate amount of everything. These are the realities of our social, political, economic and environmental conjuncture. They always have been, and the situation in the world worsens every day. So why, when we so desperately need to think and act against-the-grain, is our discipline generally content to maintain its status quo?

- Natalie Oswin (2020: 10)

In a recent article in *Dialogues in Human Geography*, Natalie Oswin (2020) argues Anglo-American geographical thought cannot be separated from its foundations in empire, military, and capital. Even the discipline’s cultural turn was limited in impact, as scholarship reproduced the institution—part of the system, “rigged, and the property of the few”—and continued to “set [‘Others’] artificially apart, rendered isolated objects of study rather than knowledge co-producers, at best case material rather than scholarly interlocutors (13).” Nevertheless, Oswin recognizes “an other geography” in the new work of Black, Latinx, Indigenous, global south, feminist, queer and trans geographies, which “fights forcefully against the guiding logics of the status quo (14).” Following their lead, the work of scholars must be about “those on the margins not waiting for ‘permission to

narrate' but speaking their/our own truths in their/our own voices and for allies to help create opportunities in which such speech is possible.”

The situation in the disciplines and professions built environments, namely urban planning, architecture and landscape architecture, and real estate, is perhaps even worse than that of geography. Many scholars and practitioners of built environments have not reckoned with, or for that matter, even seem interested in acknowledging its ties to violence, from colonialism and the dispossession of lands to urban renewal and gentrification, nor how this violence continues to inform their theories and practices. While some historians and theorists have started considering these spatial violences, particularly in historical settings, the production of the contemporary built environment has gone largely unexamined. Despite criticisms of and lessons from the past, contemporary practitioners appear to be maintaining the violences of the built environment in their work.

This thesis has attempted to reveal some of these violences through a case study of the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace. I have argued the urban planning, architectural design, and real estate development within this ongoing project are both informed by and reproduce the white spatial imaginary, following George Lipsitz (2007, 2011) and Anna Livia Brand (2018b). This comes after previous productions of whiteness in the built environment, when Yesler Terrace was constructed 80 years ago and when Seattle was constructed 80 years before that. More significantly, the thesis has also sought to expand the ways in which the white spatial imaginary is researched and considered. To these ends, I applied a critical discourse analysis to an overlooked archive of redevelopment documentation and examined these documents through the lenses of writing history, producing culture, and forming identity. Such additions follow critical readings of whiteness in creative texts by Toni Morrison (1992), Martin A. Berger (2005), and Dianne Harris (2013), as well as works by Edward Said (1978) and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) on history, Stuart Hall (1991, 1992, 2000) and Sara Ahmed (2012) on culture, and Frantz Fanon (1967) and Simone Browne (2015) on identity. Together, their approaches and perspectives help reveal the production of the white spatial imaginary in the built environment through the ways practitioners use language and images in their

documents. In this way, interdisciplinary methods and postcolonial, decolonial, and critical race scholarship very much shaped this thesis and its findings, and they will only continue to open up possibilities for critical built environment research and practice.

Where this thesis lacks, however, and toward which I will turn in future work, are the practices taking place and knowledges being produced on the ground. If built environment practitioners and scholars are “tell[ing] it like it is,” organizers are “imagin[ing] what is *possible* (hooks 1994: 281).” The activist work of community organizations is revealing and disrupting the reproduction of white spatial imaginary in the built environment, and more significantly, it is imagining space in *other* ways, evocative of the “Black spatial imaginary” (Lipsitz 2011) and “otherwise planning” (Bates et al. 2018). In and around Yesler Terrace, these imaginings are apparent in the work of the Yesler Terrace Community Council (YTCC), the Chinatown-International District (CID) Coalition, and the No New Youth Jail (NNYJ) Coalition.

Within various redevelopment documents, the YTCC maintains their pressure on the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA), as well as architects and developers, to start from the understandings and interests of existing residents. For example, in the Minority Report of the Citizen Review Committee’s Definitions and Guiding Principles (2007a: 14-18), John V. Fox of the Seattle Displacement Coalition and Kristin O’Donnell of the YTCC argue that these definitions and principles should make stronger demands for and better represent the inhabitants of Yesler Terrace. Anticipating the SHA’s preferred redevelopment alternative, they write, “No plan should be pursued which privatizes vast chunks of the site either through sale or long-term lease arrangements,” and they express their preference for a modernization and renovation option (15). Moreover, density should only be added to expand public housing, “not for “sustainability,” “smart growth,” “vanity,” or planning awards and not to satisfy contractors and developers who would profit,” Fox and O’Donnell argue (17). The YTCC and other existing residents have kept up their criticism over the past decade, with comments in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle 2011: 6-129-6-136), at their meetings (Pan 2016), and in response to proposed designs (Su Development, Bohlin Cywinski

Jackson, & Studio SKH 2019: 8-9). In addition to their continued critiques of the redevelopment, the council and residents demonstrate lessons for the city. These arguments are reminiscent of C. Davida Ingram's (2012) description of the neighborhood and its inhabitants: "The mothers at Yesler Terrace have created barter economies for food and childcare in elegant ways that would be the rage in *Daily Candy*, if only they were moms from Fremont. But they come from Somalia, Ethiopia, Europe, and the Northern Migration." As opposed to remaking Yesler Terrace in the image of the city, perhaps the city should be remade in the image of Yesler Terrace.

Just down the hillclimb from Yesler Terrace, the CID Coalition (2020), online at #HumbowsNotHotels, is organizing against "speculative, corporate development" and resulting displacement in the Chinatown-International District. The Coalition continues to pressure the International Special Review District (ISRD) board for more "democracy, transparency, and engagement," especially as it reviews the proposed hotel at 8th Avenue South and South Lane Street and high-rise at the site of the Bush Garden restaurant on Maynard Avenue South. In part through the CID Coalition's efforts, the Seattle Artist Coalition for Equitable Development (ACED) recently presented Da-Li Development's KODA Condominium Flats at 450 South Main Street with the city's "first artwashing achievement award" for their use of "facade decor and superficial gestures—such as participating in the Pioneer Square Art Walk and sponsoring the CID Block Party—to garner public support (Chinatown-International District Coalition 2019)." Rather than development and displacement, the CID Coalition works to "build inter-generational, inter-cultural, community-based organizing for neighborhood resilience and collective power." Just up 12th Avenue from Yesler Terrace, the NNYJ Coalition (2020), online at #NoNewYouthJail, has worked since 2012 to stop construction of a new youth detention center at 1211 East Alder Street. Following the prison abolition movement and emphasizing the violence of prisons on both prisoners and communities, the Coalition presents the new jail as an "architecture of misery and racism." It has continuously worked to stand up for incarcerated youth, delay construction through a lawsuit and direct action,

and imagine other uses for the space. The NNYJ Coalition suggests “the County negotiate with communities impacted by criminalization to repurpose the building and the hundreds of millions of dollars that would be invested in running the jail into the future. If social services, housing, income support, and youth arts and services programs were funded instead, our County would benefit.”

These are not the typical sources for built environment scholars or precedents for built environment practitioners. Indeed, when the youth jail appears on maps in the redevelopment documents, it is often incorrectly coded as a “community” or “education/institution” space, along with the Yesler Terrace Community Center, Bailey Gatzert Elementary School, and several churches. In one particularly ignorant proposal, the 104 12th Avenue Early Design Guidance packet imagines a woonerf, or living street, connecting the elementary school and the youth jail (NK Architects 2018: 9). Built environment scholars and practitioners should no longer enter neighborhoods for research or design as if they know best, nor should they continue to work for developers on housing projects that will displace inhabitants or the state on prison projects that will conceal their violence. If built environment scholars and practitioners truly want to work for spatial justice, they must align themselves with such community organizations; they must start from the practices and knowledges of these organizations and other inhabitants. These are the sources and precedents from which we must work, as well as the readers and reviewers to whom our work must be accountable.

A year after the publication of *Outlaw Culture*, bell hooks (1995) wrote a short essay on architecture in *Art on My Mind: Visual Politics*. She describes designing the house of her dreams in a high school art class, “a dwelling place of dreams” with “many places designed to enhance the pleasure of reading, places for sitting and lying down, places for reading and reverie (145).” Although students were not told to consider the politics of their own spaces, hooks’s dream house “was not solely the outcome of abstract musings about dwellings; it was equally rooted in a concrete acknowledgement of my reality (146).” Despite these realities, the project revealed how “we were all capable of inventing, transforming, making

space (146)” which hooks links to freedom and further evidences in the spaces of her grandparents. Her father’s father spoke of his home through “a poetics of space, the joy of thinking imaginatively about one’s dwelling,” while her mother’s parents built a home “where rooms were continuously added in off places, tacked on, usually to accommodate the desires of the individual who was destined to inhabit that space (148).” As such, “lack of material privilege need not be synonymous with poverty of spirit of imagination (150).” The white spatial imaginary continuously works to hide this truth, suggesting that the aesthetics and organization of spaces should be left to the imaginings of built environment practitioners, a very privileged and homogeneous group of people usually working in the interests of the state or capital. As examined in this case study, the result has been the destruction of *Little Crossing-Over Place* and surrounding Native geographies in order to construct Seattle, the destruction of Profanity Hill and its spaces of refuge in order to construct Yesler Terrace, and now, the destruction of Yesler Terrace and the creations of its inhabitants in order to construct Yesler. Whenever *other* imaginaries have taken hold at this site, built environment practitioners have returned and worked from a hegemonic position to reinscribe the white spatial imaginary and its categorizations, relations, and hierarchies. It is time scholars and practitioners of the built environment admit and reject this imaginary, and instead, become helpers to those imagining an *other* architecture.

## REDEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS

- BOLA Architecture + Planning. (2010). *Yesler Terrace Landmark Nomination*. Retrieved from [https://web.archive.org/web/20120727162856/http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/preservation/documents/LPBCurrentNom\\_Yesler\\_Terrace\\_Text.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20120727162856/http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/preservation/documents/LPBCurrentNom_Yesler_Terrace_Text.pdf)
- Centric Partners & Clark Barnes. (2019a). *104 12th Avenue Recommendation Package 1*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3028662>
- Centric Partners & Clark Barnes. (2019b). *104 12th Avenue Recommendation Package 2*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3028662>
- CollinsWoerman. (2009). *CRC Evaluations Summary*. Retrieved from [https://www.seattlehousing.org/sites/default/files/YT\\_Evaluation\\_Summary.pdf](https://www.seattlehousing.org/sites/default/files/YT_Evaluation_Summary.pdf)
- CWS Property Management. (2020). *Anthem on 12th*. Retrieved from <https://www.cwsapartments.com/anthem-on-12th-seattle-wa>
- GGLO Design, City of Seattle, & Seattle Housing Authority. (2012). *Yesler Terrace Master Planned Community Design Guidelines*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/SDCI/About/YeslerTerraceDesignGuidelines.pdf>
- Gracorp Capital, Spectrum, & Mithun. (2013). *103 12th Avenue Early Design Guidance*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3014366>
- Gracorp Capital, Spectrum, Mithun, & Hewitt. (2013). *103 12th Avenue Design Review Recommendation*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3014366>
- Law, C. (2015). *Yesler Terrace Art Master Plan*. Retrieved from [https://www.seattlehousing.org/sites/default/files/optimized-YT\\_Art-Master-Plan\\_3-20-15.pdf](https://www.seattlehousing.org/sites/default/files/optimized-YT_Art-Master-Plan_3-20-15.pdf)
- Mill Creek Residential & Weber Thompson. (2016). *Modera First Hill Administrative Design Review*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3023987>
- NK Architects. (2018). *104 12th Avenue Early Design Guidance*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3028662>
- Pinnacle Communities. (2020). *Metroline Flats*. Retrieved from <https://www.metrolineflats.com/>

- Seattle Design Commission. (2017, Sep). *Yesler Terrace Pocket Park II*. Retrieved from <https://seattledesigncommission2017.wordpress.com/yesler-terrace-pocket-park-ii/>
- Seattle Housing Authority. (2011). *Yesler Terrace Development Plan: Bringing Home a Better Future*. Retrieved from [https://www.seattlehousing.org/sites/default/files/Yesler\\_Terrace\\_Development\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.seattlehousing.org/sites/default/files/Yesler_Terrace_Development_Plan.pdf)
- Seattle Housing Authority. (2019a). *History of Yesler*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattlehousing.org/about-us/redevelopment/yesler-redevelopment/history-of-yesler>
- Seattle Housing Authority. (2019b). *Yesler Properties*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattlehousing.org/properties/yesler>
- Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle. (2010). *Draft Environmental Impact Statement*. Retrieved from [https://www.thestranger.com/images/blogimages/2010/12/03/1291414994-yesler\\_terrace\\_deis\\_vol\\_i.pdf](https://www.thestranger.com/images/blogimages/2010/12/03/1291414994-yesler_terrace_deis_vol_i.pdf)
- Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle. (2011). *Final Environmental Impact Statement*. Retrieved from [https://www.seattlehousing.org/sites/default/files/Yesler\\_Terrace\\_Final\\_Environmental\\_Impact\\_Statement.pdf](https://www.seattlehousing.org/sites/default/files/Yesler_Terrace_Final_Environmental_Impact_Statement.pdf)
- Seattle Housing Authority & City of Seattle. (2012). *Yesler Terrace Tree Protection Plan*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/UrbanForestryCommission/FinalIssuedDocuments/Recommendations/YeslerTerracePA0ExhibitCtreeprotection13012.pdf>
- Seattle Housing Authority & GGLO Design. (2012). *1105 East Fir Street Early Design Guidance*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3012897>
- Seattle Housing Authority & SMR Architects. (2015). *921 South Washington Street Design Review*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3017950>
- Seattle Housing Authority, Pyatok, & Hewitt. (2018). *110 10th Avenue South Design Review Meeting*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3032257>
- Seattle Housing Authority, Pyatok, & Hewitt. (2019). *110 10th Avenue South Early Design Guidance*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3032257>

- Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board. (2010). *Yesler Terrace Steam Plant Report on Designation*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/HistoricPreservation/Landmarks/RelatedDocuments/yesler-terrace-steam-plant-designation.pdf>
- Seattle Tenth, LLC & Ankrom Moisan. (2018a). *209 12th Avenue South Design Recommendation 1*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3026743>
- Seattle Tenth, LLC & Ankrom Moisan. (2018b). *209 12th Avenue South Design Recommendation 2*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3026743>
- Stiles, M. (2015, Feb). Vulcan Exec: Yesler Terrace Will Be 'Kind of Like South Lake Union'. *Puget Sound Business Journal*. Retrieved from [https://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/morning\\_call/2015/02/vulcan-exec-yesler-terrace-will-be-kind-of-like.html](https://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/morning_call/2015/02/vulcan-exec-yesler-terrace-will-be-kind-of-like.html)
- Su Development, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, & Studio SKH. (2019). *725 Yesler Way Early Design Guidance*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3033617>
- Vulcan Real Estate. (2018, Sep). *Creating Opportunity for All in Yesler Developments*. Retrieved from <https://vulcanrealestate.com/Stories/Creating-Opportunity-for-All-in-Yesler-Development.aspx>
- Vulcan Real Estate. (2020a). *Batik Seattle*. Retrieved from <https://www.batikseattle.com/>
- Vulcan Real Estate. (2020b). *Seattle Cypress*. Retrieved from <https://seattlecypress.com/>
- Vulcan Real Estate & Encore Architects. (2018). *1000 East Yesler Way Early Design Guidance*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3028954>
- Vulcan Real Estate & Runberg Architecture Group. (2015a). *120/123 Broadway Early Design Guidance*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3020158>
- Vulcan Real Estate & Runberg Architecture Group. (2015b). *123 Broadway Design Recommendation*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3020158>
- Vulcan Real Estate & Runberg Architecture Group. (2016). *120 Broadway Design Recommendation*. Retrieved from <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/default.aspx?ref=3020159>

Yesler Terrace Citizen Review Committee. (2007a). *Definitions & Guiding Principles: Working Toward a Community Vision*. Retrieved from [https://yescollab.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/lsp\\_img\\_Yesler-Terrace-Guiding-Principals-Seattle-Housing-Authority\\_040315-103356.pdf](https://yescollab.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/lsp_img_Yesler-Terrace-Guiding-Principals-Seattle-Housing-Authority_040315-103356.pdf)

Yesler Terrace Citizen Review Committee. (2007b). *Planning Concepts: Working Toward a Community Vision*. Retrieved from [https://www.seattlehousing.org/sites/default/files/YT\\_Planning\\_Concepts\\_English.pdf](https://www.seattlehousing.org/sites/default/files/YT_Planning_Concepts_English.pdf)

## REFERENCES

- Ahmed, S. (2000). *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*. New York: Routledge.
- Ahmed, S. (2012). *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Asaka, M. (2018). “40-Acre Smudge”: Race and Erasure in Prewar Seattle. *Pacific Historical Review*, 87(2), 231.
- Balk, G. (2019, Sep). As South Seattle Gentrifies, White People Become Largest Racial Group. *The Seattle Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/data/as-south-seattle-gentrifies-white-people-become-largest-racial-group/>
- Barton, C. E. (2001). *Sites of Memory: Perspectives on Architecture and Race*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
- Bates, L. K., Towne, S. A., Jordan, C. P., & Lelliott, K. L. (2018). Introduction: What Shakes Loose When We Imagine Otherwise. *Planning Theory & Practice*, 19(2), 254-256.
- Bauman, J. F. (1987). *Public Housing, Race, and Renewal: Urban Planning in Philadelphia, 1920-1974*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Beason, T. (2016, May). Central District’s Shrinking Black Community Wonders What’s Next. *The Seattle Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/central-districts-shrinking-black-community-wonders-whats-next/>
- Beekman, D. (2016, Jul). Yesler Terrace Transition: Many Families Leave Area. *The Seattle Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/politics/yesler-terrace-transition-many-families-leave-area/>
- Berger, M. A. (2005). *Sight Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2003). *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Brand, A. L. (2018a). The Duality of Space: The Built World of Du Bois’ Double-Consciousness. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 36(1), 3-22.
- Brand, A. L. (2018b). Say Its Name—Planning is the White Spatial Imaginary, or Reading McKittrick and Woods as Planning Text. *Planning Theory & Practice*, 19(2), 269-272.

- Brown, A. R. (2017). *The Black Skyscraper: Architecture and the Perception of Race*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Browne, S. (2015). *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Bulosan, C. (1946). *America is in the Heart: A Personal History*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.
- Bélanger, P. (2020). No Design on Stolen Land: Dismantling Design's Dehumanising White Supremacy. *Architectural Design*, 90(1), 120-127.
- Cheng, I., Davis, C. L., & Wilson, M. O. (2020). *Race and Modern Architecture: A Critical History from the Enlightenment to the Present*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Chin, D. (2001). *Seattle's International District: The Making of a Pan-Asian American Community*. Seattle: International Examiner Press.
- Chinatown-International District Coalition. (2019). *KODA Condominiums/Da-Li Development Receives Seattle's First Artwashing Achievement Award*. Retrieved from <https://humbowsnohotels.wordpress.com/2019/08/05/koda-condominiums-da-li-development-receives-seattles-first-artwashing-achievement-award/>
- Chinatown-International District Coalition. (2020). *Our Story So Far*. Retrieved from <https://humbowsnohotels.wordpress.com/about/our-story-so-far/>
- Coulthard, G. S. (2014). *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Davis, C. L. (2019). *Building Character: The Racial Politics of Modern Architectural Style*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- De Barros, P. (1993). *Jackson Street after Hours: The Roots of Jazz in Seattle*. Seattle: Sasquatch Books.
- DeCoster, D. (2010, May). 400 Yesler Way: Seattle Municipal Building 1909-1916, Seattle Public Safety Building 1917-1951. *HistoryLink.org*. Retrieved from <https://www.historylink.org/File/9336>
- De Lara, J. D. (2018). *Inland Shift: Race, Rspace, and Capital in Southern California*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1920). *Darkwater: Voices from within the Veil*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

- Eskenazi, S. (2004, Jun). Housing Project's Fate Tests Community Values. *The Seattle Times*. Retrieved from <https://archive.seattletimes.com/archive/?date=20040609&slug=yesler09m>
- Faltys-Burr, K. (2010). Jazz on Jackson Street: The Birth of a Multiracial Musical Community in Seattle. *The Great Depression in Washington State Project, University of Washington*. Retrieved from [https://depts.washington.edu/depress/jazz\\_jackson\\_street\\_seattle.shtml](https://depts.washington.edu/depress/jazz_jackson_street_seattle.shtml)
- Fanon, F. (1967). *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press.
- Fields, D. W. (2000). *Architecture in Black: Theory, Space and Appearance*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Frankenberg, R. (1993). *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Gilmore, R. W. (2002). Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography. *The Professional Geographer*, 54(1), 15-24.
- Gooden, M. (2016). *Dark Space: Architecture, Representation, Black Identity*. New York: Columbia Books on Architecture and the City.
- Graves, D., & Dubrow, G. (2019). Taking Intersectionality Seriously: Learning from LGBTQ Heritage Initiatives for Historic Preservation. *The Public Historian*, 41(2), 290.
- Graves, J. (2016, Nov). Seattle Artists Race to Document Cultures Gentrification is Erasing. *The Stranger*. Retrieved from <https://www.thestranger.com/visual-art/2016/11/30/24715918/seattle-artists-race-to-document-cultures-gentrification-is-erasing>
- Hall, S. (1991). Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities. In D. Morley (Ed.), *Essential Essays, Volume 2: Identity and Diaspora* (p. 63-82). Durham: Duke University Press.
- Hall, S. (1992). What is This "Black" in Black Popular Culture? In D. Morley (Ed.), *Essential Essays, Volume 2: Identity and Diaspora* (p. 83-94). Durham: Duke University Press.
- Hall, S. (2000). The Multicultural Question. In D. Morley (Ed.), *Essential Essays, Volume 2: Identity and Diaspora* (p. 95-133). Durham: Duke University Press.
- Harris, C. I. (1993). Whiteness as Property. *Harvard Law Review*, 106(8), 1791.
- Harris, D. (2013). *Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Constructed Race in America*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Hirsch, T., & O'Quin, L. (2012, Dec). Intangible Effects. *ARCADE*. Retrieved from <https://arcadenw.org/article/intangible-effects>

- hooks, b. (1994). *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations*. New York: Routledge.
- hooks, b. (1995). *Art on My Mind: Visual Politics*. New York: New Press.
- Hughes, L. (1934). *The Ways of White Folks*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Ingram, C. D. (2012). What Goes Unnoticed. *Mw [Moment Magnitude] Blog, Frye Museum*. Retrieved from <https://web.archive.org/web/20160517234005/http://fryemuseum.org/blog/?p=651>
- Itō, K. (1973). *Issei: A History of Japanese Immigrants in North America*. Seattle: Japanese Community Service.
- Kroman, D. (2020, Mar). The Last of Yesler Terrace's Iconic Rowhouses Will be Rubble by May. *Crosscut*. Retrieved from <https://crosscut.com/2020/03/last-yesler-terraces-iconic-rowhouses-will-be-rubble-may>
- Lazar, M. M. (2007). Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Articulating a Feminist Discourse Praxis. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 4(2), 141-164.
- Lipsitz, G. (2007). The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape. *Landscape Journal*, 26(1), 10-23.
- Lipsitz, G. (2011). *How Racism Takes Place*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Lokko, L. N. N. (2000). *White Papers, Black Marks: Architecture, Race, Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Madrid, C. (2010, Sep). A Dishonor to Be Nominated. *The Stranger*. Retrieved from <https://www.thestranger.com/seattle/a-dishonor-to-be-nominated/Content?oid=4786982>
- Maydani, S., & Kuck, S. (2015). *Even the Walls*. Retrieved from <https://www.globalonenessproject.org/library/films/even-walls>
- McKittrick, K. (2006). *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Miller, I. B. (1979). *Profanity Hill*. Everett: Working Press.
- Mock, B. (2017, Feb). The Meaning of Blight. *CityLab*. Retrieved from <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2017/02/the-meaning-of-blight/516801/>
- Mohajerjasbi, Z. (2015). *Hagereseb*. Retrieved from <http://www.yeslerfilm.com/>
- Moreton-Robinson, A. (2015). *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Morley, D. (2018). *Essential Essays, Volume 2: Identity and Diaspora*. Durham: Duke University Press.

- Morrison, T. (1992). *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Neighborhood House & Seattle Housing Authority. (1979-1981). *Yesler Terrace Happening*. Seattle: Neighborhood House.
- No New Youth Jail Coalition. (2020). *About #NoNewYouthJail*. Retrieved from <https://nonewyouthjail.com/about/>
- Oswin, N. (2020). An Other Geography. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 10(1), 9-18.
- Pan, D. K. (2016). *Yesler Terrace Community Council 10.11.2016*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsxB1n0oJBw&feature=youtu.be>
- Pan, D. K. (2018a). *Community Portraits / Yesler Terrace*. Retrieved from <https://vimeo.com/300863881>
- Pan, D. K. (2018b). *Yesler Terrace 2016-2018*. Retrieved from <http://www.dkpan.com/video-1>
- Piette, E. (2019, Jun). Seattle Arts Venue Nomad Love City Love Making New Home below 12th Ave. *Capitol Hill Seattle Blog*. Retrieved from <https://www.capitolhillseattle.com/2019/06/seattle-arts-venue-nomad-love-city-love-making-new-home-below-12th-ave/>
- Porter, L. (2010). *Unlearning the Colonial Cultures of Planning*. Burlington: Ashgate.
- Porter, L., & Yiftachel, O. (2019). Urbanizing Settler-Colonial Studies: Introduction to the Special Issue. *Settler Colonial Studies: Settler Colonialism, Indigeneity and the City*, 9(2), 177-186.
- Pritchett, W. E. (2003). The "Public Menace" of Blight: Urban Renewal and Private Uses of Eminent Domain. *Yale Law & Policy Review*, 21(1), 1-52.
- Pulido, L. (2000). Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 90(1), 12-40.
- Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Seattle Department of Neighborhoods. (2020). *International Special Review District*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/programs-and-services/historic-preservation/historic-districts/international-special-review-district>
- Seattle Housing Authority. (1949). *It Happened on Yesler's Hill*. Seattle: Seattle Housing Authority.

- Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development. (2018). *Central Area Neighborhood Design Guidelines*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/SDCI/About/CentralAreaDesignGuidelines.pdf>
- Simone, A. (2016). Urbanity and Generic Blackness. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 33(7-8), 183-203.
- Simpson, A. (2014). *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books.
- Summers, B. T. (2019). *Black in Place: The Spatial Aesthetics of Race in a Post-Chocolate City*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Taylor, Q. (1994). *The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District, from 1870 through the Civil Rights Era*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Tayob, H., & Hall, S. (2019). *Race, Space and Architecture: Towards an Open-Access Curriculum*. London: London School of Economics and Political Science.
- Tekle, S. (2018). *Justice for Saba-Alchemy Real Estate Abused Privilege to Gentrify Our Community*. Retrieved from <https://www.change.org/p/save-saba-stop-gentrification-in-our-community>
- Thomas, J. M. (1997). *Redevelopment and Race: Planning a Finer City in Postwar Detroit*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Thrush, C. (2017). *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Turnbull, L. (2017, May). *The Cost of a Public Housing Experiment: Community?* Retrieved from <https://crosscut.com/2017/05/yesler-terrace-public-housing-experiment-community>
- van Dijk, T. A. (1993). Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 4(2), 249-283.
- van Dijk, T. A. (1994). Critical Discourse Analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 5(4), 435-436.
- Vlach, J. M. (1993). *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Weizman, E. (2007). *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*. New York: Verso.
- Wilson, M. O. (2012). *Negro Building: Black Americans in the World of Fairs and Museums*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (Eds.). (2001). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: SAGE.
- Woods, C. A. (1998). *Development Arrested: The Blues and Plantation Power in the Mississippi Delta*. New York: Verso.
- Wu, S. (2018, Aug). Chinatown's Elders are Being Priced out of Their Traditional Neighborhood. *The Seattle Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/chinatown-displacement/>
- Yesler Terrace Youth Media. (2017). *Documenting the Yesler Terrace Redevelopment in Seattle, WA*. Retrieved from <http://ytyouthmedia.com/>
- Young, B. (2015, Oct). Some Question if Yesler Spirit Will Live on after Redevelopment. *The Seattle Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattletimes.com/business/real-estate/some-question-if-yesler-spirit-will-live-on-after-redevelopment/>