Open to whom?

COVID-19 and the Fragility of “Place”
FRAMING
Here's where NYC will be opening up streets to pedestrians starting on Monday: 4.5 miles are inside parks; 2.7 miles are adjacent to parks.

Cycling is fun, freeing, socially distant and healthy. Our city leaders should make it safer through protected bike lanes and open streets.

(2) Open streets everywhere. Opening streets everywhere will ensure equitable access to these spaces and also ensure these open streets don't turn into novelty destinations that draw people to them.

Don’t make “equity” the enemy of improving cities ...

Open streets = happy kids
My Safety is important because...

I feel safe when I'm inside.

Kusha
ANOTHER REALITY

Watch: Police violently arrest man for not wearing **mask**. Disturbing video has emerged of violent clashes between apparent social distancing violators and police officers in Brooklyn, **New York**.

I wrote about an activist/mutual aid group [@TheUfad](#) stepping up and providing drinking water and hand washing stations to the large community of unhoused people that live on and near Wood Street. The city of **Oakland** is not providing these services. Link:

Oakland Polic Department says the arrest of an East Oakland Collective homeless outreach volunteer yesterday started with stop of a person who “matched the description of a person wanted in connection with a prior shooting,” but OPD was mistaken.

Just saw some ☹️ on Twitter that made me close this tab and take a few deep breaths to calm down. Some 🚫 are trying to say Ahmaud would be alive if he didn't run in the **middle of the street** and I am just tired now.
In 1965, John McKnight, Midwest Director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights gave us the term "redlining" to describe the discriminatory practice of fencing off areas where banks would avoid investments based on community demographics (read: anti-Blackness).

This was a process by which certain neighborhoods were deemed unworthy of economic investments due to racial composition. People were “redlined” as a result of a structural and collective effort to control the means to homeownership; which, at the time was a quintessential component of dignity, social cohesion, and wellness.

**But first: A Redlining Refresher**
If our systems, processes, and policies fail to uphold basic principles of dignity, critical analysis, accessibility, and atonement—especially during a pandemic—then the gatekeepers of our systems, processes, and policies are complicit in and contributing to the death, apathy, polarization, and freedom of movement we are all working toward.
The fluidity and multiplicity of “place” is even more complex during this crisis. Those who were “unseen” and “unheard” in the built-environment prior to COVID-19, are most likely to succumb to illness, the economic downturn, and the erosion of social cohesion.

For practitioners of “place”, our site of intervention must begin where “place” has historically been linked with disparity in social determinants of health.

**The Construct of “Place”**

- Underground and Exploited Economies
- Activists, Mutual Aid Groups, and Community Assets
- Curbside Neighbors, Youth, Elders, People w/Disabilities
- Air/Water Quality, Heat Index, Toxic Industry, Blight

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**WALKABILITY DURING COVID-19**

**Dr. Destiny Thomas**

**thrivance**
In what ways do our responses and actions during this pandemic:

1. Reify erasure, tokenism, mistrust, and structural racism?
2. Silence and harm people who’ve been struggling for space within this field for decades?
3. Set a precedent for post-COVID19 planning processes?
4. Re-traumatize people who’ve experienced structural violence?
5. Undermine arguments for the intrinsic value of the life-saving interventions we seek to install?
6. Contribute to a broader narrative/culture of supremacy, model-minority constructs, and climate instability?
CONSIDER THIS: “PURPLE-LINING”

A planning process by which certain neighborhoods (and certain people) are deemed expendable due to their racial, cultural, or economic location on the spectrum of socio-economic privilege. People are “purple-lined” as a result of a structural and collective effort to control the means to mobility and movement; which, at this time are quintessential components of dignity, social cohesion, and wellness.
Strategies that heal walkability during COVID-19

Dr. Destiny Thomas
The solutions and responses to interlocking systems of oppression must be interlocking systems which lead to holistic thriving.
KEY PILLARS OF ADAPTIVE PLANNING

**DISCOURSE** - A common narrative and process for collaborative engagement and analysis of work done to date, work being planned, and strategies for sustainable and equitable future planning;

**PARTICIPATORY DECISION MAKING** - Participatory process design (incl. affinity format options);

**CAPACITY BUILDING** - Multilateral efforts toward strategy-building, and shared social capital in the planning, outcomes, and intentions of the work;

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES** - Comprehensive concepts, policy recommendations, plans, and evaluation materials to support long-term reflexivity, adaptability, and equity

**POLICIES** - Decriminalize, decarcerate, and shift to public health interventions. Remove barriers to mobility options (example: make it all free). Reduce anxiety regarding first-time use across modes (example: free bikes).

**WALKABILITY DURING COVID-19**

DR. DESTINY THOMAS