



American Planning Association

Michigan Chapter

Creating Great Communities For All

MAP Reads Book Group

September 22, 2022

Neighborhood Defenders by Katherine Levine Einstein is September's pick. Good Reads says: "Since the collapse of the housing market in 2008, demand for housing has consistently outpaced supply in many US communities. The failure to construct sufficient housing - especially affordable housing - in desirable communities and neighborhoods comes with significant social, economic, and environmental costs. This book examines how local participatory land use institutions amplify the power of entrenched interests and privileged homeowners. The book draws on sweeping data to examine the dominance of land use politics by 'neighborhood defenders' - individuals who oppose new housing projects far more strongly than their broader communities and who are likely to be privileged on a variety of dimensions. Neighborhood defenders participate disproportionately and take advantage of land use regulations to restrict the construction of multifamily housing. The result is diminished housing stock and higher housing costs, with participatory institutions perversely reproducing inequality."

April 27, 2022

Fixer Upper: How to Repair America's Broken Housing Systems by Jenny Schuetz. Ms. Schuetz was MAP's Spring Institute | Housing Summit Opening Speaker on May 18, 2022. The Brookings Institution Press says, "*Fixer-Upper* is the first book assessing how the broad set of local, state, and national housing policies affect people and communities. It does more than describe how yesterday's policies led to today's problems. It proposes practical policy changes than can make stable, decent-quality housing more available and affordable for all Americans in all communities."

March 23, 2022

MAP's March 2022 pick is *Street Fight, A Handbook for Urban Revolution* by Janette Sadik-Khan. Michael Bloomberg, Michael Bloomberg, former New York City Mayor, said, "Janette Sadik-Khan is like the child that Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs never had: an urban visionary determined to reshape the streets of New York, but with an abiding concern for the health of neighborhoods and the safety of their residents. If you care about the future of cities, read *Streetfight*."

January 19, 2022

Our first title of 2022 is *Black Bottom Saints* by Alice Randall. Maureen Corrigan of NPR says, "*Black Bottom Saints* is a gorgeous swirl of fiction, history and motor oil; there are also plenty of cocktail recipes here to make the rougher stories go down a little smoother." Listen (or read) the entire [NPR Book Review here](#).

November 17, 2021

Dwight Garner of the *NY Times* said, "[*Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent*] is about how brutal misperceptions about race have disfigured the American experiment. This is a topic that major historians and novelists have examined from many angles, with care, anger, deep feeling and sometimes simmering wit. [Isabel] Wilkerson's book is a work of synthesis. She borrows from all that has come before, and her book stands on many shoulders. "*Caste*" lands so firmly because the historian, the sociologist and the reporter are not at war with the essayist and the critic inside her. This book has the reverberating and patriotic slap of the best American prose writing."

July 21, 2021

MAP Reads' July pick is *Citizen Brown*. *Citizen Brown* uncovers half a century of private practices and public policies that resulted in bitter inequality and sustained segregation in Ferguson and beyond. Gordon shows how municipal and school district boundaries were pointedly drawn to contain or exclude African Americans and how local policies and services—especially policing, education, and urban renewal—were weaponized to maintain civic separation.

May 19, 2021

Our May title is *How to Kill a City* by Peter Moskowitz. Gillian White of *The Atlantic* writes that *How to Kill a City* "brings some much-needed clarity to thinking about a slippery concept. 'While urban renewal, the suburbanization of cities, and other forms of capital creation are relatively easy to spot (a highway built through a neighborhood is a relatively obvious event), gentrification is more discreet, dispersed, and hands-off,' he writes. Moskowitz adds to the growing canon aimed at understanding and explaining the process of gentrification, and he not so subtly suggests that while gentrification naturally brings some improvements to a city, including more people and money, it also frequently kills some cultural traditions and diversity, the precise characteristics that make cities so dynamic and desirable in the first place."

March 17, 2021

MAP's pick for March is *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard to Talk with White People About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo. The New York Times best-selling book explores the counterproductive reactions white people have when their assumptions about race are challenged, and how these reactions maintain racial inequality.

January 27, 2021

January's book title is James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*, a plaintive description of the consequences of racial injustice. "A national bestseller when it first appeared in 1963, *The Fire Next Time* galvanized the nation and gave passionate voice to the emerging civil rights movement. At once a powerful evocation of James Baldwin's early life in Harlem and a disturbing examination of the consequences of racial injustice, the book is an intensely personal and provocative document. It consists of two "letters," written on the occasion of the centennial of the Emancipation Proclamation, that exhort Americans, both black and white, to attack the terrible legacy of racism. Described by *The New York Times Book Review* as "sermon, ultimatum, confession, deposition, testament, and chronicle...all presented in searing, brilliant prose," *The Fire Next Time*"

December 2, 2020

Our December title is *The Turner House* by Angela Flournoy. *The Turner House* is the debut novel of African-American author Angela Flournoy, first published in 2015. Focusing on a Detroit family with thirteen children as it struggles to cope with the economic troubles, the narrative spans from the 1920s to the 1980s. The house they live in becomes a character in the story and serves as an anchor for this large African-American family. Although Flournoy has family from Detroit, she did not live in the city personally and so conducted extensive research. Both critics and Flournoy herself have compared this book the work of Zora Neale Hurston, as it explores themes of family ties, race, poverty, addiction, and hauntings both real and imagined. It was highly acclaimed financial success and was a finalist for the 2015 National Book Award for Fiction. Flournoy also won the 2016 VCU Cabell First Novelist Award.

October 28, 2020

MAP's October selection consists of two articles:

"The Case for Reparations" by Ta-Nehsi Coates published in *The Atlantic Monthly* June 2014.
"It is Time for Reparations" by Nikole Hannah-Jones published in the *New York Times* June 26, 2020

August 26 and September 23, 2020

MAP's pick for both August and September is *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* by Richard Rothstein. In *The Color of Law* (published by Liveright in May 2017), Richard Rothstein argues with exacting precision and fascinating insight how segregation in America—the incessant kind that continues to dog our major cities and has contributed to so much recent social strife—is the byproduct of explicit government policies at the local, state, and federal levels. *The Color of Law* was designated one of ten finalists on the National Book Awards' long list for the best nonfiction book of 2017.

July 29, 2020

Our July title is *How to Be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X Kendi. Ibram X. Kendi's concept of antiracism reenergizes and reshapes the conversation about racial justice in America--but even more fundamentally, points us toward liberating new ways of thinking about ourselves and each other. Instead of working with the policies and system we have in place, Kendi asks us to think about what an antiracist society might look like, and how we can play an active role in building it. You can order a copy [here](#).

April 22, 2020

This month's pick is *The Ghost Map* by Steven Johnson. A national bestseller, a *New York Times* Notable Book, and an *Entertainment Weekly* Best Book of the Year. It's the summer of 1854, and London is just emerging as one of the first modern cities in the world. But lacking the infrastructure-garbage removal, clean water, sewers-necessary to support its rapidly expanding population, the city has become the perfect breeding ground for a terrifying disease no one knows the cause of or how to cure. As the cholera outbreak takes hold, a physician and a local curate are spurred to action-and ultimately solve the most pressing medical riddle of their time.

March 25, 2020

Our March title is *Broke* by Jodie Adams Kirshner. Bankruptcy and the austerity it represents have become a common "solution" for struggling American cities. What do the spending cuts and limited resources do to the lives of city residents? *Broke* follows seven Detroiters as they navigate life during and after their city's bankruptcy. Reggie loses his savings trying to make a habitable home for his family. Cindy fights drug use, prostitution, and dumping on her block. Lola commutes two hours a day to her suburban job. For them, financial issues are mired within the larger ramifications of poor urban policies, restorative negligence on the state and federal level and—even before the decision to declare Detroit bankrupt in 2013—the root causes of a city's fiscal demise.

January 22, 2020

This month's title, *Urban Forests* by Jill Jonnes's tells "the captivating stories of the founding mothers and fathers of urban forestry, in addition to those arboreal advocates presently using the latest technologies to illuminate the value of trees to public health and to our urban infrastructure. The book examines such questions as the character of American urban forests and the effect that tree-rich landscaping might have on commerce, crime, and human well-being. For amateur botanists, urbanists, environmentalists, and policymakers, *Urban Forests* will be a revelation of one of the greatest, most productive, and most beautiful of our natural resources."

November 20, 2019

November's title, *The Color of Money*, pursues the persistence of this racial wealth gap by focusing on the generators of wealth in the black community: black banks. Studying these institutions over time, Mehrsa Baradaran challenges the myth that black communities could ever accumulate wealth in a segregated economy. Instead, housing segregation, racism, and Jim Crow credit policies created an inescapable, but hard to detect, economic trap for black communities and their banks.

September 10, 2019

Our September title is *What the Eyes Don't See: A Story of Crisis, Resistance, and Hope in an American City* by Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha. This month the MAP Reads Book Group will participate in the WDET Book Club at the Detroit Public Library. The WDET Book Club travels to libraries around the region and brings in guests who played a role in the book. Join us for a different take on our standard book group format for a conversation at the [Detroit Public Library](#), featuring Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha.

July 24, 2019

The MAP Reads July selection is *Locking Up Our Own*, by James Forman. *Locking Up Our Own* won the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for Nonfiction. Jennifer Senior of the *New York Times* writes, "The stories he shares are not just carefully curated to make us think differently about criminal justice (though they will, particularly about that hallowed distinction between nonviolent drug offenders and everyone else); they are stories that made Forman himself think differently, and it's in telling them that he sheds his cautious, measured self and becomes a brokenhearted, frustrated civil servant."

May 22, 2019

May's MAP Reads selection is Iain Sinclair's *Living with Buildings: And Walking with Ghosts – On Health and Architecture*. In 'Living with Buildings', Iain Sinclair embarks on a series of expeditions through London, Marseille, Mexico and the Outer Hebrides. He explores the relationships between sickness and structure, between art, architecture, social planning and health.

March 27, 2019

Our March title is *Reclaiming Gotham: Bill de Blasio and the Movement to End America's Tale of Two Cities* by Juan Gonzalez. John Nichols of *The Nation* writes: "The future is never charted in Washington. The future always begins at the grassroots, in our great cities. Our ablest chronicler of urban affairs, Juan González, has with *Reclaiming Gotham* produced the essential book on today's American politics—and, more importantly, on the next American politics. . ."

January 23, 2019

The MAP Reads January selection is *The Divided City: Poverty and Prosperity in America's Older Cities* by Alan Mallach. Jason Segedy in *Notes from the Underground* said, "it is the best and most relevant book written on urban planning and policy in post-industrial cities in the 21st century. This book is not only packed with information and ideas, but is well-written, enjoyable, and engaging."

November 28, 2018

Our November title is *Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic Madness at the Fair that Changed America* by Erik Larson. This *New York Times* bestseller intertwines the true tale of the 1893 World's Fair and the cunning serial killer who used the fair to lure his victims to their death. Combining meticulous research with nail-biting storytelling, Erik Larson has crafted a narrative with all the wonder of newly discovered history and the thrills of the best fiction.

The Kerner Report: 50 Years Later and What has Changed?

In the wake of the 50-year anniversary of the release of the 1968 Kerner Report, MAP Reads participants and guest panelists will discuss the state of racial equity in the decades following the 1967 Detroit Rebellion.

The report, officially titled Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, but commonly known as the Kerner Report after the chair of the committee Otto Kerner, details the findings of a President Lyndon B Johnson appointed committee appointed to study the 1967 unrest and rebellion. Detroit, along with cities like Cleveland, Nashville, Boston, and Newark, still experience impacts and consequences from those dark days. And what cures were advanced after scathing indictments on urban education systems, inadequate housing, police

brutality? The report laid out policy solutions for jobs and housing, eliminating segregation and police training, recommendations that were never heeded.

Read the full report, or find a summary [HERE](#).

Suggested Supplemental Readings:

[The Kerner Report](#)

[NPR Report from February 27, 2018](#)

[CityLab: Lessons from the Kerner Report](#)

April 5, 2018

Our April title is *Fordlandia: The Rise and Fall of Henry Ford's Forgotten Jungle City* by Greg Grandin. In 1927, Henry Ford, the richest man in the world, bought a tract of land twice the size of Delaware in the Brazilian Amazon. His intention was to grow rubber, but the project rapidly evolved into a more ambitious bid to export America itself, along with its golf courses, ice-cream shops, bandstands, indoor plumbing, and Model T's rolling down broad streets. This book details the saga.

February 28, 2018

Our February title is *Dawn of Detroit* by Tiya Miles. Most Americans believe that slavery was a creature of the South, and that Northern states and territories provided stops on the Underground Railroad for fugitive slaves on their way to Canada. In this paradigm-shifting book, celebrated historian Tiya Miles reveals that slavery was at the heart of the Midwest's iconic city: Detroit.

January 24, 2018

Our January title is *The Death and Life of the Great Lakes* by Dan Egan. "The Great Lakes hold 20 percent of the world's freshwater, and they provide food, work, and weekend fun for tens of millions of Americans. Yet they are under threat as never before. In a work of narrative reporting in the vein of Rachel Carson and Elizabeth Kolbert, prize-winning reporter Dan Egan delivers an eye-opening portrait of our nation's greatest natural resource as it faces ecological calamity."

October 25, 2017

Our October title is *The New Minority* by Justin Gest, Assistant Professor of Public Policy at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government. "*The New Minority*

speaks to people living in once thriving working class cities--Youngstown, Ohio and Dagenham, England--to arrive at a nuanced understanding of their political attitudes and behaviors. In this daring and compelling book, he makes the case that tension between the vestiges of white working class power and its perceived loss have produced the unique phenomenon of white working class radicalization."

August 24, 2017

Our August title is ***Evicted*** by Matthew Desmond. This Pulitzer Prize winning book is a deeply humanizing and empathetic book about poverty which has had an enormous impact on housing experts and planners. Detroit based housing leaders will join us for a robust conversation.

June 28, 2017

Our June title is ***Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age***, a 2004 book by historian [Kevin Boyle](#). The book chronicles racism in Detroit during the 1920s Jazz Age through the lens of Ossian Sweet, a grandson of a slave who becomes a doctor and eventually moves from the ghetto to an all-white middle-class neighborhood. When racist whites attack and invade Sweet's home, a white man is killed. Sweet and his family are persecuted by the legal system, leading to the deaths of members of Sweet's family and the destruction of Sweet's career as a physician.