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While I found the book to be excellent in its coverage of many fields, I was surprised that the work of one of my favourite scholars, Jean Baudrillard, could not find a worthy place in the otherwise excellent volume. Many of the contributions were well outside my normal practice but a few such as "Mapping Cultural Landscapes, Vertically," were especially pertinent and will be referenced in my future work. In other reviews of Gary Bratchford and Dennis Zuev's *Vision & Verticality: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, I have seen the use of words that are unusual for social such as "dizzying", "brilliant", "eclectic", "enthraling", "soaring", and "groundbreaking". To these I would add my more pragmatic praise as "useful" and enlightening.

References

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Caldararo, N. 2019. *An Ethnography of the Goodman Building: The Longest Rent Strike*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Best read with the aroma of petunia competing for the senses with the riffs of Jefferson Airplane, this paean to San Francisco (SF) and the 1970s counter-culture

is a lovingly told Proustian bailing out all things remembered. Essentially a story of an idealistic world of, in the author's words, "an organic self-determination in co-living", the book is a biography of the Goodman Building of Downtown SF, alongside the created community within and its ever-evolving environment. Described by his university (San Francisco State) as a "veteran anthropologist", Caldararo entered the building in the early 1970s, invited by the tenants to be their *de facto* anthropologist-in-residence to assist in and record their rent strike. He stayed for a decade wherein he lived, laughed, learned and loved with the plethora of co-residents who passed through this fascinating structure. The book reflects an extended anthropological field study produced through participant observation, the copious field notes of which were given to some research respondents for verification. Some co-habitants also provide accounts of their time and place in the building.

The Goodman Building was constructed in 1869 to accommodate the swell of people attracted to San Francisco by the California Gold Rush. The voyages of the European powers brought waves of migrants who, combined with waves of internal migrants similarly seeking the good life, trampled on the rights of the pre-existing Native Americans. Sailors, migrants from South and East Asia, and working-class immigrants chasing the Gold Rush lived alongside one another in the city's South of Market neighbourhood, and the Goodman Building provided for the various newly arrived. Purchased by the Goodman family at the turn of the 20th century, the building continued to be a place for newcomers to San

Francisco, offering single room occupancy for workers attracted to the ever-growing city. Post-World War 2, it housed former GIs and was favoured by artists attempting to celebrate the “live-work movement”. By the time of Caldararo’s research, the building consisted of four storeys and 30 rooms hosting an uneasy combination of artists, Buddhist practitioners and Neo-Dadaists, and non-artists. One resident cracked safes, some were crackpots. Monies were embezzled. Childcare was an issue for some. The “check to check urban singles” and various waifs attracted to the perceived nirvana of SF were not as idealistic as some of the hippies wanted them to be.

Beyond the Goodman Building’s eclectic inhabitants, the specific focus of much of the text is on the decade-long rent strike. The 70 or so tenants in what one resident described as an “urban space probe” evidenced no end of tensions which the rent strike brought to the fore. One significant point of tension was about residential status; there were members and residents. In what was a community of activists celebrating a form of cooperative living and voluntary association, the idealism (and the strike action) revealed acts of collusion, treachery and inappropriateness. The Hippie movement was integral to the thinking and, with it, a gender imbalance and ethnic absences. The contradictory and the ideal are presented, as are the ideal and the real. It is a sketch of the flavour of the time. The text is a time-piece wherein thick description presents other attempted ways of being, notably the in-house “university” classes the residents provided in anthropology, drama and political science.

The place also attracted curious locals and visitors from across the USA.

The Goodman Group emerged in an attempt to make sense of the place and implemented the Monday Night Meeting (MNM). Here, tenants tried to agree how to live and how to resist the Municipal government’s plans to evict them and turn the building into something corporate (so as to fit in with the wider neighbourhood). Communal living cannot be conducted on a do-as-you-please ethos. Such living needed structures, and these were implemented by the positions of President, Vice-president and a Board. Not all had the revolutionary consciousness sought by the hippie counter-culture movement; some were considered counter-revolutionary and some men exploited women. The intellectuals vied for co-existence with those who did not pay rent on time. The MNM chapter explains how a weekly congress acted as both a legislature for shared living and a theatre of personalities wherein resolutions were attempted and emotions managed - not always successfully. The MNM attempted to provide some order to the experimental chaos. The intractable and timeless issues of communal living — dirty dishes in the sink, neglected communal areas, garbage being someone else’s problem, fraught regulation of those who enter, and those who sign up to the project but do not pull their weight in delivering it — are all presented to remind us that Sartre had a point when explaining that Hell is other people.

The book is also implicitly about city (San Francisco) governance. It reflects on variously: ways of being, migratory flows, living with scarcity, understanding affordability, accepting transformation, how

temporary living arrangements can be and how homelessness and the un-housed live. Essentially it is a study of economic survival tactics, transitory platforms and the negotiated identities that built environments can offer. It is also about how people organise their living space. The book informs the curious as to the tension between old and new tenants, the foundations and fissures of a created community and the production of the Other.

The way of being pursued perhaps best described as “direct democracy” required in some the fetishization of consensus. Did this pursuit permit too much voice to personal concerns over efficient building management? The strike ended in 1982 and eviction the following year without violence. For a while, the strike led by the Goodman Project personnel attracted celebrities and activists of various causes; notably, those interested in art, architecture and people. Others were no doubt fascinated by the experiment in ways of sharing and acting. Who visited? In the words of one former resident, “lawyers and community organisers, real and faux-celebrities, shipping tycoons and citizens” (p. 202). Privacy was not guaranteed. Arguments were audible as was sexual congress. The author, however, could find beauty in all of this, lauding: “...the wisps of movement and scents of past experiences created dimension of dreams within a sleepy reality...” (p. 190). This reality was sold to a property developer in 1982, and so the “slum clearance” pursued by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency was accomplished by pricing out those described as “working people” whose presence held back the corporate image of the district. Some 30 % of

the Goodman tenants bought into the renovated block. Disputes ensued amongst various housing groups as to who should be prioritised in allocation.

Who would purchase and read this vast tome? Chapter 1 is a brilliant literature review for anyone interested in urban anthropology. But for this reader the text is far too long. The 345 pages could be reduced by a third. The 30-page appendices are not needed. A glossary is, however, and chapter sub-headings would help enormously. Some chapters consist of just 2 and 3 pages, while others number over 50. A reader is left pondering a few issues. Is atomisation of the people a conscious political project? At the more anthropological level, a reader would have liked to know not only who *was* in the building at the time but who the main protagonist and actors *were*; i.e. where did they arrive to the Goodman from, and was theirs a youthful idealism safe in the knowledge that elsewhere in the US their inheritance was guaranteed and the family home big enough to take them in if all else failed? We are left to consider whether the pursuit of community living relies on a charismatic leader or rule-oriented entities for its success. What had the experiment in living that the Goodman Building hosted produced? Towards the end of the book, the author provides an answer: “We had engaged the world and brought a measure of holistic ordering into a corner of mechanised waste and chaos. And along the way, reintroduced a dialectical tension between the poles of vision and matter; takes a step toward deconstructing the divide put up by Descartes and company and done it on the home planet, not outer space” (p. 284). Right. Or maybe

Mary Douglas (1991) put it simpler when stating that a home is not just a house or a shelter but people and experiences. The author ends the book stating a “community was lost”. It no doubt was, but that asks us to consider whether all constructs of community have a lifespan and why that is so.

Reference

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Karner, T. X. 2023. *Making a Scene! How Visionary Individuals Created an International Photography Scene in Houston, Texas*. Amsterdam: Schilt Publishing.

Making a Scene! is a well written and carefully researched multimodal ethnography of how a collection of dedicated, talented, and art savvy individuals were able to create an internationally recognized art world centred around photography in what some might think was an unlikely place. In her selectively illustrated book, Tracy Xavia Karner weaves together the many varied efforts from more and less well-known local artists through philanthropists to describe how, they individually and collectively, managed to create a Southern USA Mecca of international photography.

During the course of her almost a decade long study, Karner conducted 46 in-depth interviews which provided most of the rich core of materials for the book. The main characters in the detailed story begin with Houston’s Museum of Fine Arts Director

Bill Agee’s early dream of a photography department, and from which a vibrant and engaged photography scene emerged and developed. Anne Tucker, also at the *Museum of Fine Arts* in Houston, and local photographers who created *Houston Center for Photography* were also central to the effort. Wendy Watriss, Fred Baldwin, and Petra Benteler, who inaugurated the first international photography festival in the United States — *FotoFest* — were key players in the successful effort.

The narrative form of Karner’s writing style also was a pleasant surprise as the inviting text was very easy and enjoyable to read. The following is example:

“The Gus and Lyndall Wortham Curator of Photography, Anne Wilkes Tucker, sat alone in her office surrounded by boxes waiting to be filled. How to sort a life into boxes? Could cardboard hold years of ideas, friendships, and memories? Somehow, she had to fit 39 years of her life into these containers. Some things would go to the museum archives, but much more would be leaving with her. Anne had spent more than half her life leading the Photography Department at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and though somewhat wistful, she decided now was the time to close that chapter in her life. [...] The clear June evening sky bestowed a golden hue to the trees outside Anne’s office window, and most everyone else had already gone home for the day. Anne loved being in the museum at night and taking advantage of her access, after all the visitors had gone, to go up to the third floor. To be alone in the John A. and Audrey Jones Beck Collection, Anne says,