



1st Edition

# Contesting Public Spaces

## Social Lives of Urban Redevelopment in London

By  
[Ed Wall](#)

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- Available for purchase on June 1, 2022

ISBN 9781032163567

June 1, 2022 Forthcoming by Routledge

174 Pages 20 B/W Illustrations

## Book Description

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This book explores concerns for spatial justice as streets, squares, and neighbourhoods are continuously made and remade through planning processes, political ambitions and everyday activities. By investigating three sites in London that have been the focus of masterplanning, Ed Wall exposes conflicts between planning offices and private developers who direct large urban change and community groups, market traders and residents whose public lives are inseparable from their neighbourhoods being reconfigured.

The book uniquely brings sociological approaches to what are often considered architectural concerns, revealing challenges as London's public spaces are designed, regulated and lived. Through in-depth research, Ed Wall identifies how uncertainty caused by large-scale urban strategies, the realisation of visual priorities, and uneven relations between private interests, public organisations and daily lives determine the public realm of global cities.

This work is intended for readers interested in how the urban spaces of their cities are continually produced in competing ways—from architecture and urban studies scholars to planners and politicians.

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## Author(s)

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### Biography

**Ed Wall** is Academic Lead of Landscape Architecture and Urbanism and co-director of the Advanced Urban (AU) research group at the University of Greenwich, London. He is a visiting professor at Politecnico di Milano, and in 2017, was City of Vienna Visiting Professor: Urban culture, public space and the future—urban equity and the global agenda (SKuOR/TU Wien). His research and design work explores practices of public space and processes of landscapes through concerns for spatial justice.

## Reviews

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"Ed Wall takes us on an illuminating journey into the planning offices, pavements and image platforms that shape the redevelopment of central London at the turn of the millennium.

*Contesting Public Spaces* is a rich compilation of the speculations, strategies and struggles that produce public life. Its vital details reveal the emergence of exclusive, ornamental and securitised forms that bypass the interpretive possibilities of the commons, asking us to reconsider the very role of planning itself."

**Suzanne Hall**, *Associate Professor in Sociology at the London School of Economics, Cities Programme*

"At a time when designers of the built environment are searching for new approaches aimed at producing more just and equitable places in the city, Wall's exploration of the politics of public space, outlining the global to hyperlocal tensions of public space acquisition, making, and ornament, force us to lean into architecture and its allied design disciplines as a political practice. This is crucial, and now timely, if designers are truly concerned and wish to do something about the erosion of society's rights to the city and for who, including who decides and designs, whose behavior and activity is accepted, and who is allowed to express their publicness fully."

**Toni L. Griffin**, *Professor in Practice of Urban Planning at Harvard University Graduate School of Design and Founder of Urban American City*