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Article

Radical Solidarities in Punk and Queer Refusals of Safety and Inclusion Narratives in Planning

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Abstract
Recent call-outs against Ottawa punk venues have fueled public debates about safe space and the inclusivity of local music scenes. The Ottawa Music Strategy released in 2018 translated these debates into cultural development policy that links creative placemaking and safe space discourse. This article examines the civic response to activist call-outs by analyzing how the Ottawa Music Strategy integrates diversity and inclusion strategies into cultural policy, and how cultural policy and safe space policies intersect with cultural revitalization and economic development priorities in the Ottawa Official Plan. Punk counter-narratives developed through grounded ethnographic research in the Ottawa punk scene unsettle normative public safety narratives that frame punk spaces as unsafe. Place-based histories of anti-oppression tactics, logics, and traditions of punk space and activism contextualize alternative responses by local punk venues and promoters. Drawing upon literature in queer planning and queer geography and literature on intersections between radical queer and punk politics, spatialities, and identities, this article discusses punking planning in solidarity with queering planning through alternative community-based responses to issues of safety, inclusion, and participation.

Keywords
creative placemaking; cultural planning; punk; queer planning; spatial justice

Issue
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1. Introduction

A public petition to keep the Queers out of Ottawa was not a news story anyone expected in 2016. The twist in this story, however, is that the Queers were a touring punk band. A local collective of gender-diverse artist activists of colour called Babely Shades started the petition to call-out racist and homophobic comments by the lead singer. Following the cancelation of the show, members of Babely Shades and allies turned their activism towards implementing safe space policies, bystander training, and improving diversity of representation in music spaces and festivals.

The incident also fueled public efforts to reform and stabilize public narratives around cultural diversity, inclusion, and safety. During the JUNO Music Awards hosted by the City of Ottawa in 2017, the mayor announced the creation of an Ottawa Music Strategy (OMS). Developed in partnership with key stakeholders in the local music industry, the strategy set a vision to make "Ottawa respected as the most inclusive music city in the world" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 9). The strategy mobilizes the concept of Music Cities and cultural policy to create a sense of identity that can contribute to economic development through tourism, branding, and industry growth. Investment in and promotion of a diverse, inclusive, and safe music industry was framed as a critical catalyst for social, economic, and cultural development.

Those in the punk scene, myself included, felt the OMS and public response to safe space mobilized mischaracterizations of punk as unsafe, non-inclusive, and deviant. Without any consideration or engagement with existing politics or histories of local punk spaces, punk venues were being framed as an irredeemable liability to the promotion of an inclusive music city brand.

At the same time, the initial call-out by Babely Shades renewed internal debates about how punk spaces reproduce but also challenge systems of oppression through an anarcho-punk and do-it-yourself (DIY) ethos rooted in politics of anti-oppression, solidarity, difference, and care. With support from queer and racially diverse members of the local punk scene, the Queers show was rebooked as a fundraiser for a local LGBTQ youth group.

In this article, I draw meaningful parallels between punk space and queering planning through non-normative identity formation, community building, and subversive politics of deviance in the production of space. I propose investigating intersections with queer literature without aiming to either erase or reconcile the conflict, differences, and sometimes difficult histories that exist between punk and queer.

Following the literature review, this article examines the translation of activism into progressive cultural policy by considering how the OMS promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in its vision for becoming a music city. A deep reading and policy analysis of the vision, guiding principles, and recommendations of cultural planning and creative placemaking documents outlines municipal priorities and normative planning narratives of creative revitalization and economic development.

Original research and grounded participatory ethnographies of the Ottawa punk scene shift the analysis to counter-narratives that highlight experiences of commodification, displacement, and depoliticization of subcultural spaces. Examples of community-based practices of co-constructing less oppressive spaces offer alternative responses to the regulation, standardization, and enforcement of safe space policies. Intersections between radical queer and punk politics, practices, and theory are explored to argue for radical solidarities in refusing normative planning narratives and pursuing alternative, anti-oppressive approaches to queering and punking planning.

2. Cultural Planning and Creative Revitalization

Over the past 20 years, cultural planning and creative placemaking have had a significant impact on both formal and informal productions of space. These participatory practices are popularly framed as promoting sense of ownership, civic duty, community-building, better representation of diversity, and more democratic spaces. Ideally, cultural planning and creative placemaking contribute to the production of more livable and more inclusive cities.

In their whitepaper, Markusen and Gadwa (2010, p. 6) write that the successes of creative placemaking they observed "suggest that a collaborative policy platform can be developed across agencies, levels of government and public/non-profit/private sector organizations." They also point to growing interest by media and public officials in Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class* as further entrenching the economic opportunity of engaging creative skills of the cultural sector to partner with both public and private stakeholders as a strategy for urban revitalization.

Almost a decade after the publication of their whitepaper, Markusen and Gadwa (2019) re-evaluate the optimistic arguments of their initial study and review the debates about placemaking that have emerged since. They note the embrace of placemaking practices and public appreciation for the capacity of the arts to contribute to community stabilization and cultural engagement. However, they also found that the integrity of existing local culture and community bonds have in many examples been negatively affected. Increasingly, creative placemaking projects have prompted intense debate about diversity and displacement, systemic inequities, and the need for more anti-oppressive and intersectional evaluations of outcomes (Burns & Berbary, 2021; Pritchard, 2018; Sarmiento, 2021; Summers, 2019).

Despite invocations of diversity and community, Summers (2019, p. 15) argues that the displacement experienced by Black communities as a result of placemaking, for example, is just as "racially inflected as the racialized geographies of segregated communities, and divested urban cores of the Jim Crow through post-Civil Rights eras." In their study of diversity, equity, and inclusion in municipal and cultural plans Loh et al. (2022, p. 154) found that "often the people who make up those 'diverse' cities are erased from the narrative or are minor players at best." Sarmiento (2021, pp. 1–2) argues that diversity discourse in placemaking facilitates a "liberal and inclusive form of gentrification" as a "spatial strategy meant to manage diversity." Mainstream placemaking and cultural policies promote particular spatial identities and desires that these authors, and others, position within long histories of the racialization of space, systemic oppression, and production of urban inequities.

3. Queering Planning

Queer planning and queer geography literature have significantly contributed to making visible the planning systems and values that have excluded, controlled, and discriminated against non-normative users and uses of public and private space (Bell & Binnie, 2004). Despite decades of LGBT rights activism, improved visibility of queer experiences, and improved support for progressive planning reforms, including those explicitly intended to address safety, diversity, and participation of queer and other marginalized identities, "unjust geographies of queer marginalization" (Goh, 2018, p. 464) persist.

Recurring tensions exist in the literature between celebrating the importance of LGBT spaces in the city, the governance of LGBT residents under neoliberal municipal regimes and politics of respectability, reinforced societal bias of urban queer imaginaries, and the sanitization and commodification of queer spaces (Bell & Binnie, 2004; Lewis, 2013; Podmore & Bain, 2020). Bell and

Binnie (2004), for instance, discuss how global cities and cosmopolitanism participate in reshaping and defining residents and potential residents through consumer citizenship. They note that "matching gay pride to civic pride means that cities have to respond positively to gay culture in order to maintain their competitive edge" (Bell & Binnie, 2004, p. 151). They observe that the commodification of subculture collapses alternative experiences of the city into a desirable and marketable urban lifestyle.

There is increased interest in recognizing gay villages and other queer spaces as playing an important role both in "developing a unique culture by socializing individuals" and in "shaping queer urban social movements and political activism" (Misgav & Hartal, 2019, p. 3). Hartal (2018, p. 3) argues that liberal logics of personal identity and representational politics of inclusion have "established queer subjectivities as fragile, weak subjects, in constant need of protection from unsafe spaces," and calls for further scrutiny of how "queer subjectivities produce/are produced through safe space and its discourse" (p. 6). Hartal (2018) analyzes how diverse understandings of queer spaces inform sometimes contradicting approaches to creating safe(r) spaces by and for LGBT subjects and how internal and systemic power structures inform their different approaches.

In her study of a new generation of LGBT activists and the production of queer spaces, Goh (2018, p. 474) reveals ongoing unjust systemic conditions encountered when opposing normative structures and institutional frameworks, concluding that "making queer safe spaces through spatial-political organizing is not simply about an appeal to queer identity" but also depends upon offering "alternative social-spatial relations and the possibility of continued difference in the city." Broto (2021) similarly argues that despite a "vibrant queer critique of development" and its potential to "shift heteronormative assumptions in development studies" (p. 2), meaningful participation depends on moving beyond inclusion based on representation of diverse identities "to focus instead on broad interest issues that reflect queer problems" (p. 14).

Queer subjectivities, counter-histories, and community-based spatial practices inform queer critiques and alternatives to the normative planning project and the reproduction of oppressive systems. Queer planning literature works to address the heteronormativity of planning by recognizing intersecting identities of gender, sexuality, class, and race, within broader geopolitical systems including settler colonialism, capitalism, and globalization (Oswin, 2008). As such, queering planning can be framed in solidarity with broader spatial justice and anti-oppression movements. This broadened scope actively extends the subject and impact of the literature beyond the study of queer space towards calls for engagement in actively queering and unsettling the practices, systems, and logics of planning (Doan, 2011; Forsyth, 2011).

4. Punk Space and Intersections With Queer Theory

Punk notoriously resists definition. The sparse but intriguing scholarship on punk space, from restaurants (Clark, 2004) to squats (Lohman, 2017), to zines (Pine, 2006), to music venues (Green, 2018), to everyday spaces and the urban underground (Sonnichsen, 2019) often draw on experiences of punk as political resistance, and as practices of mutual aid and community care. In his reflections on subcultural scenes, Straw (2015, p. 477) proposed to think of subcultural scenes as "ethical worlds shaped by the working out and maintenance of behavioural protocols," and as "spaces of mediation which regulate the visibility and invisibility of cultural life."

The grassroots, anarcho-punk, and DIY ethos in punk spaces are frequently presented in punk research as "not just creative practice but a sociopolitical lifeline for women, queers, people of color, and all those that dominant forces attempt to keep disenfranchised, unproductive and off-scene" (Nault, 2018, p. 15). Meanwhile, popular representations of punk white male youth subculture persist in coding punk as non-inclusive and hostile towards women, queer, and BIPOC folk while simultaneously erasing feminist, queer, and anti-racist legacies and struggles within punk (Duncombe & Tremblay, 2011; Gonzales, 2016; Reddington, 2016; Way, 2021).

Speaking from their own experiences at the intersections of punk and queer, a few scholars point to punk as queer space, as queer performance, as queer theory, as queer temporality (Cohen, 1997; Halberstam, 2003; Muñoz, 2006; Nyong'o, 2008). Nyong'o (2008, p. 108) writes that "the affinities between lesbian, feminist, trans, and gay people and the punk subculture was immediate, definitive, and far more enduring." By challenging the mainstream cis hetero male representations of punk from the outside and its presence in punk from the inside, these counter-narratives celebrate ways that women, queer folk, and people of colour have shaped and been shaped by punk.

In her work on youth subculture, McRobbie (1991) challenges the presumed non-participation of girls, for example, by distinguishing between presence and visibility. She argues that visibility, especially the visibility of popular representations, may "reflect the more general social subordination of women in mainstream culture" (McRobbie, 1991, p. 14) rather than the actual experience of their participation and contributions. McRobbie's challenge about presence and visibility leads to key considerations when investigating punk subculture, punk space, and experiences of non-inclusion within those spaces. While acknowledging that conflict, hostility, and discrimination are present in some queer-punk encounters, and that social hierarchies are reproduced in both queer and punk spaces, punk also offers important spaces of mediation, difference, and activism.

As counter-cultural spaces of community building and political resistance, punk can contribute to queering

planning. Punk experiences add to the non-normative voices who make visible the systems of social, spatial, and economic marginalization and who practice alternative community-based response to safety, diversity, and participation. Evaluating the impact on and response by punk music venues and scenes to cultural planning policies and creative revitalization strategies that target cultural spaces as catalysts for social and economic development can offer key critical insights on the sanitization, commodification, and displacement of countercultural spaces.

5. Diversity and Inclusion in the Ottawa Music Strategy

The OMS (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018) is an interesting example of contemporary cultural policy development and creative revitalization planning that directly references participation, safety, and diversity. The role of the OMS is "to develop a roadmap for how Ottawa can build on strengths and address challenges in a way that unleashes the potential of music to bring out the best in our community" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 3). Developed through community partnership and stakeholder consultation with the City, the OMS also serves as an example of the City's approach to strategic partnerships and public engagement.

The OMS sets a vision for Ottawa to become a "music city" by the year 2030. The strategy defines "music city" as having a vibrant music economy that is actively promoted by the city, noting that "music is a formidable social, economic and cultural catalyst" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 3). The first of eleven goals of the vision is that "music is an undeniable part of the Ottawa brand" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 9). The strategy concludes with recommendations and implementation plans for both the City and for the music industry. The following close reading will consider how the OMS addresses diversity and inclusion, how it translates them into strategies for cultural development, and how it aligns community-led initiatives with the role of the municipal government and planning tools.

The strategic goal that "Ottawa is respected as the most inclusive music city in the world" anchors the OMS framing of and commitment to diversity and inclusion (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 9). The elaborated definition of the goal states that by 2030 "barriers [will] have been removed to ensure equal opportunities for women, Indigenous peoples, new Canadians, people with disabilities, Francophones as well as racialized, queer, trans, and other previously marginalized communities" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 9).

Celebrating uniqueness and diversity, encouraging participation by breaking down barriers, and fostering collaborations are presented as key mechanisms for the production of a unique music identity for the city that "stands out on the global stage" and capitalizes on "music's value as an economic engine and catalyst for growth" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 10). Together, these guiding principles of the OMS all link the city's multicultural identity with inclusive participation and economic growth.

Whereas diversity and inclusion are promoted as desirable strengths, safety and underrepresentation are presented as the two weaknesses that need to be addressed. The OMS recommends promoting music spaces "that are safe and welcoming for all performers and audiences" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 15). The OMS recommends that the music industry "continue to coordinate initiatives to increase participation among youth and women" and "develop a long-term strategy break down barriers for underrepresented communities" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 21). The implementation plan, however, is limited to addressing these issues through sexual assault training and safe space standards and certification.

The final goal of the OMS vision for 2030 is that "the City helps lead the way," acknowledging the existing role the municipal government plays in the music scene and identifying new ways for the City to be "a global leader in fostering music city growth" and work with the sector to "fully achieve its music resources, fill key gaps, and remove obstacles" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 10). Opportunities for city leadership are included in several recommendations. The OMS recommends promoting a "music-friendly regulatory environment" including improved consultation and collaborations between the City and music industry stakeholders, and "exploring opportunities to support music venues in a planning policy context" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 13).

As a City initiative for strategic partnerships with the creative industries, the OMS connects the development of the music industry "with business, entrepreneurship and the larger creative economy," and as an "important element of the City's economic development agenda" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 6). City supports of the local music scene are framed in terms of strategic investment with their expected returns for the broader economy.

The timing of the OMS in relation to Ottawa city plans mean that it first responded to and was influenced by the Ottawa 20/20 Official Plan (2003), the Renewed Action Plan for Arts, Heritage and Culture (RAPAHC) in Ottawa (2013), and updates to the economic development strategy in 2017. When the City began consultations on a new official plan in 2018, the OMS and related music industry partners were well positioned to influence the development of new cultural planning policies. The new Ottawa Official Plan was adopted by City Council in Fall 2021. The following section will examine how these key governing documents also address diversity and inclusion, and cultural development of creative spaces.

6. Creative Revitalization and Economic Development in Municipal Plans and Policies

In 2003, the City of Ottawa introduced the Ottawa 20/20 Growth Management Plans to "provide long-term strategic direction and form a comprehensive blueprint for the future of Ottawa and its communities" (City of Ottawa, 2003, p. 2). The Ottawa 20/20 Plans included the Official Plan, Arts and Heritage Plan, Human Services Plan, Economic Strategy, and Environmental Strategy. Growth management, economic clusters, and creative cities are all prominent concept throughout the plans, likely a reflection of Richard Florida acting as a key consultant in the development of the plans and the influence of the high-tech industry that thrived through the 1990s.

The first two guiding principles of Ottawa 20/20 point to these influences and how they would shape both planning and cultural policy in the city. The first principle is for "a caring and inclusive city" including that "all people feel safe," that "everyone has the opportunity to fully participate," and "the people of Ottawa respect and celebrate cultural and social diversity" (City of Ottawa, 2003, section 1.3). The second principle is to foster "a creative city rich in heritage, unique in identity" where local arts and heritage provide "a path to creativity and innovation, and a sense of who we are" (City of Ottawa, 2003, section 1.3). These two guiding principles offer critical insight for interpreting how diversity and inclusion values intersect with creative revitalization and economic development priorities across an array of planning and cultural policies.

The majority of cultural policies in the Ottawa 20/20 Growth Management Strategy are found in the Human Services Plan and the Arts and Heritage Plan. However, the Official Plan frequently refers to culture, creativity, inclusion, and diversity as contributing to liveability and as key growth strategies (sections 2.5 and 3.6). In particular, the Ottawa 20/20 Official Plan focuses on substantial growth and enhancement of the Central Area as a strategic directions for overall growth management over its 20-year mandate. The Official Plan introduces policies to support the Central Area's role as "the economic and cultural heart of the city and symbolic heart of the nation," to "enhance the diversity and attractiveness," and to "promote a common vision, vitality and development in the downtown" (City of Ottawa, 2003, section 3.6.6).

The RAPAHC that replaced the Ottawa 20/20 Arts and Heritage Plan makes even more explicit reference to creative cities, creative placemaking, and culture as the strategic link between economic growth and improved liveability. In the introduction, the RAPAHC (City of Ottawa, 2013, p. 6) states: "The role and place of culture within the creative economy and the liveable city have been well researched and described by leading thinkers, economists and historians. Ottawa is ripe with enormous cultural potential and opportunities."

The RAPAHC recommended strategies and actions direct the City to "celebrate," "develop," "promote," and "invest in" the "unique cultural identity" and "creative places and spaces" (City of Ottawa, 2013, pp. 15–24). The plan offers the rationale that these cultural strategies not only "build access to culture for all," they will generate the economic and social returns that are "key to Ottawa's prosperity" (City of Ottawa, 2013, pp. 15, 23). Placemaking enters the City's cultural policy as a specific approach for linking cultural economic opportunity with place-based development:

> Place-making makes good economic sense, and smart cities develop communities in which people want to live, work and play. Creative talent chooses to live in places that are authentic and creative; businesses locate to places in which their employees have access to a rich menu of cultural opportunity; and tourists seek out unique cultural experiences. (City of Ottawa, 2013, p. 17)

Also noting the unique diverse multicultural identity of Ottawa, the RAPAHC highlights the opportunity of recognizing and celebrating Ottawa's cultural assets: "Access to cultural opportunities and cultural participation for the full diversity of Ottawa residents will encourage social cohesion, civic engagement and safer, healthier neighbourhoods" (City of Ottawa, 2013, p. 15). In this description, cultural assets include not only diverse cultural spaces but also a diverse creative class: "Young, new, distinct, emerging and re-emerging cultural voices are vital. They balance, challenge and complement established expression, often ushering in rebirth and revival" (City of Ottawa, 2013, p. 15). City policies frequently present diversity and inclusion as both cultural asset and strategic opportunity.

With the introduction of a New Official Plan, the City highlights culture as one of five cross cutting issues essential to achieving the overall goal of "becoming the most liveable mid-sized city in North America" (City of Ottawa, 2021, section 2.1). The New Official Plan makes the case for integrating cultural policy into the land-use and growth management plan by recognizing how "cultural planning and the identification and development of cultural assets offers a way to improve quality of life, liveability and grow and diversify the economy" (City of Ottawa, 2021, section 2.2.6) The plan continues that "cultural related policies in the Plan address the need for new development to consider the role of culture in creating a sense of identity and pursuing equity and inclusion" (City of Ottawa, 2021, section 2.2.6).

With direct reference to the OMS, the New Official Plan sets an explicit cultural policy intent to "promote the arts as an important element of placemaking" and "strengthen the economic impact of the creative and cultural industries" (City of Ottawa, 2021, section 2.2.6). As planning policy, these cultural planning intents will be applied to the development and evaluation of future development proposals, zoning regulations, and city projects for the next 25 years.

The next section introduces the creative revitalization and planned redevelopment at City Centre from a punk perspective of commodification and displacement. A brief personal story prompts alternative readings of who is included in and who is excluded from the inclusive music city vision set by the OMS and reaffirmed in the New OP. Select examples of how punk spaces have responded to the call for safer and more inclusive spaces are presented in contrast to the planning and policy strategies presented above.

7. Counter-Narratives of Difference and Subculture in Punk

> "Jam's over. We're going to the Monkey for a drink. You should come," my friend texts me.

It's late and rainy and cold. Just a little too far to walk, a little too cold to bike.

> "Take a taxi, I'll cover your drinks."

I never take taxis but maybe just this once. I get dressed, walk to the corner, and hail a cab.

> "Hi, I'm going to the Orange Monkey at City Centre," I tell the driver.
>
> "Where's that? What's the street?''
>
> "Well, City Centre is on City Centre Drive."

The Orange Monkey is a dive bar and pool hall at City Centre, a 1960s warehouse building and complex off an old rail line on the edge of the downtown core. It was once voted Ottawa's greatest eyesore. The studio where my band and many of my friends' bands have jam space had recently moved in upstairs and a new underground venue was starting to host shows.

> I give directions to the taxi driver. We pull up outside the Monkey.
>
> "Is this the place?" he says with concern. "I can't let you out here, miss. I don't think it's safe."

I saw what he saw. The expansive poorly lit parking lot with more potholes than cars. The sad crumbling concrete garage bays that look even sketchier in the rain. I know to him this unfamiliar decrepit environment codes this space as "not safe." But I know this space. I've been here many times. I know this bar. I have friends inside. It's ugly but that is part of what codes this space as punk.

Now, about eight years later, the garage bays are inhabited by a popular bakery, microbrewery, food truck turned bricks and mortar, bike shop, crossfit gym, axe throwing space, art gallery, fine dining pop-ups, and other trendy businesses. The new light rail transit station at the end of the street and planned transit-oriented-development that will include two of the tallest towers in Ottawa is, according to the development signage, set to become a "community hub." Many still get lost as they try to find this mystery space just outside common knowledge of the city, but the visibility, accessibility, and attractiveness of a rehabilitated City Centre are rapidly changing in ways that we know won't leave much space for punk.

Punk and punk spaces have long histories of being targeted and used as examples of the kind of unsafe and non-inclusive spaces Babely Shades, Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, and the City are working to change. Through mischaracterization and misunderstanding, punk spaces have become a stand-in for unsafe space and a launching pad for strategic rebranding and targeted for revitalization. My participation in the Ottawa punk scene and experiences in punk spaces in many other cities have challenged and changed my perception of what looks safe, where I am welcomed, and how I am invited to participate.

Despite a vocal few, many in the punk community have been sensitive to the message of the safe space movement, though not necessarily with its approach or its increasingly normative policies and regulatory environments. For many punks, punk venues are important if imperfect "safe spaces," spaces that embody punk anti-normative ethos, with long histories of at least working through present inequities, harm, and trauma towards anti-oppressive futures.

Both excluded from, and not entirely convinced of the increasingly popularized form of the safe space movement, many punk venues and promoters are engaging in alternative responses to the call for safer, more inclusive spaces. These focus on opening dialogue, beginning processes of reparations, and co-constructing ways forward while also recognizing and rooting the foundations of anti-oppressive values in punk history and ethos.

Sitting on the Outside (SOTO) is a local promoter self-described on Facebook as "underground punk, hardcore, rock in Ottawa by punks and weirdo's, for punks and weirdo's [sic]" (SOTO, 2021). SOTO also includes the following statement in the event description of all their event postings on Facebook (SOTO, 2020): "Sitting On The Outside is fundamentally opposed to sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia and any forms of oppression. Disrespectful or oppressive behaviour towards the people attending the fest, or towards the venues won't be tolerated."

During its 2019 festival, SOTO organized a community discussion entitled *How to Build a Safer & More Inclusive Punk Community* (SOTO, 2019). Unfortunately, due to travel conflicts for the hosts from Montreal's Not Your Babe Fest, the event was cancelled. The discussion of safe space was organized around three key issues: sexual violence, diversity, and intoxication culture. Based on the event description, SOTO presents an introspective and co-constructed approach to safe space and inclusion:

> This workshop has been built to open a dialogue and question ourselves on the inclusivity of the punk community and toxic behaviours that can directly affect the security of the people in it. Can we really say that we are a safer space? (SOTO, 2019)

While acknowledging the scene is not free of toxic behaviours and social hierarchies, the punk scene remains sceptical of and resistant to externally imposed and enforced safe space strategies based in standardized policies, training, or certifications such as those recommended in the OMS. The event description continues: "This is not a meeting organized by one profiteering individual selling a magic formula for transformative justice, but rather an occasion to talk communally about our experiences, criticisms and how to improve our community together" (SOTO, 2019).

Similarly, local punk venue House of TARG offered a statement on social responsibility, poking fun at mainstream philanthropy, and emphasizing the tradition of mutual aid and benefit shows in the punk scene:

> The heartbeat of TARG is to serve our community and we will always be committed to that. We aren't exactly Bill Gates when it comes to philanthropy, but we strive to do what we can to make our limited resources available to friends, organizations & initiatives we believe in. (House of TARG, 2020)

Within the punk scene, similar community care and anti-oppression statements have adorned venue doorways and posters, zines, and repeated in songs and conversations as quintessential punk utterances since the 1970s.

8. Discussion

Both the OMS and New OP recognize the opportunity of music cities and set out strategic priorities and policies to mobilize culture as part of the social and economic development plans for becoming a more liveable and prosperous city for everyone. The predominant strategy follows the creative class narrative of promoting cultural assets and creative opportunities to attract the creative class and tourists who will in turn contribute to the economic development and revitalization that will attract more growth.

For the creative sector to realize its stated goals and full potential as an economic catalyst, the OMS identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the local music scene. The cultural diversity of local music is highlighted as one of the core assets that needs to be strengthened through cultural policy to address two key weaknesses: the lack of a recognizable brand and barriers to participation for underrepresented communities. The representation of diversity in these municipal policies recognizes the value of cultural branding for translating diversity into a unified city identity.

The curious phrasing of the goal that Ottawa will be "respected as the most inclusive"—rather than the goal to be inclusive—highlights the tension Music Cities place on creating both a sense of belonging and clear branding. City branding emerges around a progressive narrative where everyone feels welcome and safe, and where we celebrate our diversity as part of our identity. The OMS (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 2) asserts that "if Ottawa is to achieve its full creative potential, there must be a thriving music scene, where artists and entrepreneurs flourish, and that's instantly recognizable to people outside Ottawa." The importance placed on the visibility of diversity becomes apparent in strategy and policy statements where local music and the city are not just "recognized," but "respected," "celebrated,'' and "applauded" for their diverse representation and inclusive participation.

As policy directions, these creative placemaking and cultural planning reorient official plans and planning departments beyond strict land-use regulation towards seemingly progressive principles of safety, inclusion, and diversity. Yet, the very nature of diversity presents a challenge to producing a coherent brand identity and vision where "the local music industry is organized and visible" (City of Ottawa & Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, 2018, p. 10). Many of the recommendations of the OMS translate these principles into recognizable representations of diversity in a shared space. This policy translation fails to reflect or protect the diversity and long histories of practices embedded in the space by existing and often marginalized groups.

As Summers (2019), Sarmiento (2021), Loh et al. (2022), and others argue, the explicit aspirations of placemaking policies towards economic development and the embedded logic of urban growth lead many equity-seeking groups to link cultural planning strategies such as the OMS to their ongoing erasures and displacement. Meanwhile, narratives of diversity and inclusion help to frame placemaking initiatives as progressive while reproducing social hierarchies and catering to privileged interests through the regulation, policing, and commodification of community spaces and practices.

At the same time, it needs to be acknowledged that many equity-seeking groups have mobilized the strategic opportunities of cultural policies and mainstream interest in placemaking to gain greater representation and voice in shaping cultural policies and community development projects. Project SoundCheck and the DIY Audio Workshop for Women+, for example, are community-led initiatives directly named in the OMS that open opportunities to improve the participation and representation of some previously marginalized groups. In Ottawa, new music festivals, existing festivals, and music venues have incorporated safe space training, safe space statements, and promote more diverse representation in booking performers.

Opportunities for broadening participation through procedural, participatory, regulatory, and spatial design

all seek to address inequitable exclusions within the limits of existing social structure and frameworks. Strategies to overcome barriers to achieve better representation and participation for underserved communities and underrepresented groups do not, however, address historic or ongoing systemic exclusions of those communities and groups. Inclusion strategies may improve the representation of diverse groups, but without an evaluation of the power structures and institutional frameworks, as called for by Hartal (2018) and Goh (2018), these strategies risk reproducing social and spatial inequities.

The shift in public perception and use of the City Centre complex and surrounding area over the past decade help to illustrate alternative readings of space and different relationship to its grit and revitalization. The repetition of common gentrification narratives sees the transformation from abandoned industrial space to a first wave of trendy businesses catering to a creative class, followed by municipal reinvestment in surrounding infrastructure and private redevelopment. The short lived use of the warehouse space as an underground music venue, the still grungy rehearsal studios, and the divey pool hall still on site continue to remain outside common public mental geographies of the site.

Punk presence on site in relation to its urban grit could be framed within the gentrification narrative (Woods, 2022). However, renewed public characterisations of punk as deviant, unsafe, and out of step with the desired municipal branding and economic development interests frame punk presence not as part of the revitalization but as part of why revitalization is needed. As a cultural form that does not contribute to a clear cultural identity brand of the city, punk presence in, and use of, the city become represented as unwelcomed and unwelcoming, unsafe, and anti-social. Cultural policy targeted at music industries is not likely to recognize punk as a legitimate cultural expression or as desirable diversity for the music city brand. Punk and punk spaces are coded as non-participant, non-productive, and non-reformable.

From a punk perspective, the narratives of diversity and inclusion promoted in public cultural policy are not about social transformation but are "where all difference is subsumed…and ends up looking a lot like the interests of those who are most powerful" (Duncombe & Tremblay, 2011, p. 7). Progressive framing of diverse representation and inclusive participation in public policy are understood instead as oppressive political projects for maintaining control. Understood in this light, they work to move deviance towards greater social coherence and social order, and to move the city towards a respectable identity and recognizable brand.

The homogenized, marketable, monoculture promoted through creative revitalization and cultural policy as an opportunity for economic growth acts as what Clark (2004, p. 25) critiques for being "a synthetic destroyer of locality and diversity." Clark argues that punk takes an ethical stance against capitalist pursuit of perpetual growth and economic development, observing how culture reduced to profitability undermines group structures of care and security. Growth, from a punk perspective, moves more people and places towards precarity than prosperity, perpetuating urban inequities and issues such as gentrification, displacement, policing, and poverty.

Unlike strategies to reform public policy to make diversity visible and valuable for the public as catalysts for growth, punk refusals of social inclusion challenge the narrative of "some fantasized moment of union and unity," and recognize instead "the conservative stakes in community for all kinds of political projects" (Halberstam, 2003, pp. 315, 318). The punk scene can be a radical space of anti-social belonging that is welcoming to those who remain unwelcomed by the dominant society. These anti-social scenes are exclusive spaces for the excluded, safe(r) from the control of social norms that code non-normative behaviour and being as deviant, undesirable, and undeserving. Punk spaces are important but imperfect spaces of difference and spaces for difference.

The statements by SOTO and the House of TARG both point to ongoing and evolving community care-based practices of navigating and challenging the reproduction of social inequities and hierarchies in community spaces. The antiracist punk ethos recognizes that oppressive social orders cannot be dismantled through universal unity and consensus that centre and concede to power structures and institutional frameworks. By participating in shaping and reshaping "ethical worlds shaped by the working out and maintenance of behavioural protocols" (Straw, 2015, p. 477), in response to callouts against unsafe, racist and misogynist behaviours, the scene first recognizes that these are symptoms of and inseparable from oppressive systems of social, spatial, and economic marginalization of broader society in which they operate.

9. Conclusions

Cultural policy and creative placemaking strategies for reimagining Ottawa as a music city do make space for diversity and inclusion insofar as they contribute to the normative city-building project. Whereas cultural policy frames inclusion, diversity, and safety within the vision to be recognized as the most diverse music city in the world as a catalyst for economic development, queer and punk critiques of cultural planning policies and strategies raise concerns over the sanitization, commodification, and further marginalization of diverse cultural practices, spaces, and communities. The progressive planning goal of becoming recognized as "the most inclusive music city in the world" risks translating diversity into a brand, inclusion into productive participation, and safety into personal feelings.

Queering planning helps to complicate motivations and systems that structure inclusion and participation, to make visible the limitations of formal planning mechanisms, and to centre marginalized and/or alternative voices and practices. In thinking about queering planning

as a call for more than creating or preserving queer spaces, as more than the inclusion and representation of queer folk, this article considers countercultural punk practices and punk spaces as participating in intersecting ethics of anti-oppression and spatial justice.

By holding space for conflicting and imperfect spaces of activism, resistance, and alternative practices, I argue it is possible to build solidarity between punk, queer, queer punk, and other marginalized and/or alternative groups. By turning critical attention to the planning policies and political processes that they are all operating within and against, we leave space for the radical possibilities of diverse social-spatial relations, and to support the continued struggle from multiple and intersecting margins to claim their right to the city.

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Conflict of Interests

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