Consensus is Overrated:  
How Agonistic Pluralism and Radical Planning Challenges the Post-Political City

Zheng Chin  
Monash University, Department of Architecture  
zheng.chin@monash.edu
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Monash University, Department of Architecture

Abstract:
In light of the perceived failures of communicative planning within Australian cities, many urban scholars have argued that the theory of agonistic pluralism presents a viable alternative to our current planning paradigm. However, planners have thus far struggled to implement these conflictual principles into planning practice. I argue that these failed attempts are due to the ontological contradictions between the dominant communicative planning system of rational consensus and the conflictual practices of agonistic pluralism. Therefore, given these differences, it remains difficult if not nearly impossible for planners to integrate agonistic pluralism into the existing planning system in hopes of making planning processes more accepting of adversarial relations. To address this problem, I develop a Mouffe-ian approach to planning practice, which draws from the conflictual principles and practices of agonistic pluralism to understand, legitimise, and explore the use of activism as a radical planning practice. I argue that it is necessary for planners to embrace the affective, emotional, and often irrational aspects of planning and accept that planning is inherently political, that planning will always involve some form of conflict, and that planning itself requires the exercise of power. Ultimately, this radical conceptualisation of planning aims to use activism to re-politicise planners, something which the post-political neoliberal regime has sought to deny. By establishing this theoretical framework, I seek to address my core research question, which asks: How can planning processes be transformed to better accommodate agonistic conflict in the form of activism as a legitimate practice in the pursuit of a more democratic city?

Key words: Agonistic Pluralism; Radical Planning; Activism; Post-Political; Conflict

Introduction
In this paper, I outline a Mouffe-ian approach to radical planning that draws from the conflictual processes of agonistic pluralism to understand, legitimise, and explore the use of activism as a planning practice. I unpack the critiques of communicative planning and argue that its reliance on communicative rationality means that consensual planning practices are unable to adequately address the problem of power. Moving beyond these limitations, I then explore alternatives that are inspired by Mouffe’s work. In particular, I examine agonistic planning, which attempts to operationalize Mouffe’s conflictual principles of agonistic pluralism within planning practice.

However, I argue that the current approach to agonistic planning is narrow, as it limits the role of the planner to that of a mediator, where conflict - an expression of disagreement between opposing groups - is only applicable within the context of existing planning decision-making processes. Instead, I suggest that agonistic planning is better situated within the practices of radical planning (Bond 2011). Here, in drawing parallels between the conflictual processes of agonistic planning and the mobilising practices of radical planning, conflict is understood within a broader socio-political context, where the planner - in using disruptive practices to transform normative visions of the city - is an activist who engages in and encourages emancipatory conflicts which seek to destabilize and challenge the existing hegemonic order.

However, the suggestion that planners should support and actively participate in activism raises many questions. How should the planner, who traditionally acts as a neutral mediator, take on the role of an activist? What room is there within existing planning practices that allows for planners to support activism, let alone be activists themselves? How does activism currently manifest within planning? In what way does the current planning system thwart any possibility for activism?

The Failures of Communicative Planning

A brief overview of communicative planning
Communicative planning, as the name suggests, is inspired by Jürgen Habermas and his theory of communicative rationality. Habermas (1989) contends that under specific conditions, individuals can engage in democratic decision-making processes, where they set aside their differences to reach a consensus. Furthermore, to prevent individuals from using their power to influence decisions, Habermas argues that deliberation should follow the principles of discourse ethics, where rational, fair, and undistorted communication results in the ideal speech situation. Here, participants engage in a power-free discourse
which is “clear and comprehensible”, “sincere and trustworthy”, “appropriate and legitimate” and “accurate and true” (Forester, 1982, p. 71).

Planning theorists such as Judith Innes, Patsy Healey and John Forester were largely responsible for applying communicative rationality to planning practice. Their aim was to transform the normative visions of the city within critical urban theory and use communicative rationality as a way to ground these democratic imaginaries in practical planning processes. According to them, planners should act as neutral facilitators who mediate conflicting interests, and provide an opportunity for participants to determine the best course of action (Forester, 1999). Now considered best practice, planners rely on communicative techniques such as community consultation, public forums, citizens juries, and co-design, to encourage democratic participation throughout the decision-making process. Whilst there are many successful examples of communicative planning, especially when compared to the un-democratic practices of technocratic planning, communicative planning has not been without its faults.

**Why has communicative planning failed?**

In practice, communicative planners struggle to balance what is ideal and what is realistically possible. To achieve true consensus, everyone must be given a fair opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, however, this is not always possible. In reality, given the schedule of most planning projects, there is rarely enough time, or resources to ensure that participants reach a consensus. Furthermore, participants may be apathetic, believing that their decisions will have little to no impact, while some may seek to avoid participation altogether, instead finding alternative ways of subverting the decision-making process (Kothari, 2001). Moreover, privileged members of the public have greater financial and social capital, allowing them to advocate strongly for their own interests.

Moreover, Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger (1998) suggest that, “an actor… could intentionally employ strategies and tactics within the discourse arena to bring about his or her desired ends” (p. 1988). Planners also face the issue where “members of a group who participate within the collaborative planning exercise are likely to possess shared agendas and common values in an attempt to ensure that their viewpoints succeed in the discourse arena, even if they agree to be open and honest in the debate” (p. 1988). And finally, “individual stakeholders within the discourse arena might attempt to constitute a particular image of the self in presenting viewpoints, either to evoke an acceptable image to the audience, or to present a completely false position to minimise argumentation and debate” (p. 1988). Therefore, consensus is rarely in the best interest of all participants, rather, some find it beneficial to manipulate the situation so that it better serves their own agenda (Huxley, 2000).

To understand these challenges facing planners, I unpack the theoretical basis upon which communicative rationality is constructed. Fundamentally, the core concern is that consensus is an ideal that is rarely achieved and - in some contexts - unachievable. Mouffe (1999) establishes this argument by challenging the very possibility of undistorted communication. Drawing from the linguistic arguments of Wittgenstein, Mouffe “challeng[e]s the very idea of a neutral and or rational dialogue”, stating that “to have agreement in opinions there must first be agreement on the language used and this, as he (Wittgenstein) points out, implies agreement in forms of life” (p. 749). Furthermore, Huxley (2000) citing Fay (1987) states that “the situatedness and embeddedness of human life in history, custom, and tradition create conditions that are beyond complete comprehension, that are contingent and beyond individual or collective will, and that do not allow for the attainment of individual or collective self-transparency” (p. 372). Therefore, it is not enough that we “agree on the definition of a term” rather “we [also] need agreement in the way we use it (Mouffe, 2000, p. 97).

Furthermore, Purcell (2009, p. 150) states that distortion in language, contrary to Habermas’s notion of undistorted communication, is necessary for language to be intelligible. Purcell states that “language can at best represent the actual thing it aims to signify”, therefore, to bridge the “gap between signifier and signified requires the use of a master signifier, which allows the creation of a “consistent field of meaning”. Žižek (1992) (as cited in Purcell, 2009) states that the master signifier “distort[s] the symbolic field by arbitrarily elevating one particular representation over others” (p. 150). Although the master signifier distorts the field of meaning, by doing so it also allows such a field of meaning to exist, therefore, removing “all distortion would cause the field to disintegrate, and communication would cease” (Purcell, 2009, p. 150). Therefore, the “impediments to the free and unconstrained public deliberation of all on matters of common concern is a conceptual impossibility because, without those so-called impediments, no communication, no deliberation could ever take place” (Mouffe, 1999, p. 751).

What this linguistic critique reveals is that “language and communication, the centrepiece of the communicative project, cannot be neutral, fully shared, and [an] undistorted medium. Rather language is
always political; it is distorted by power, and those distortions establish hegemonic relations among participants” (Purcell, 2009, p. 150). Whilst Habermas acknowledges the power embedded within language, he maintains that the use of rational and undistorted communication allows power to be divorced from language. Here, Habermas “assumes an idea of power that imagines it to be discrete and alienable. That is, it conceives of an agent’s power as a discrete resource that s/he possesses. In that conception power can be neutralised, set aside, contained and the agent can go on operating without it” (Purcell, 2009, p. 151). However, critics disagree with Habermas’s understanding of concrete power, instead they argue that power is in fact relational.

A prominent critic of Habermas’s conceptualisation of power was Foucault. Foucault sought to expose the realities of power embedded within society, and by drawing from a wide range of case studies, he explains how rationality and knowledge were used by the powerful to serve as a means for control (Flyvbjerg & Richardson, 2002; Drolet, 2015; Miller, 1993). In Foucault’s (1980, p.98) analysis of power he contends:

Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody’s hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation.

Thus, power is everywhere, it exists between people and is enacted through social relations. By accepting these relations of power, it becomes necessary to shift our focus away from the impossible task of eradicating power, and seek instead to understand the realities of power and the ways in which power manifests. Therefore, in response to these critiques, I use Mouffe’s suggestion for agonistic pluralism rather than communicative rationality as the basis for an alternative planning practice, one which addresses these fundamental questions of power.

**Agonistic pluralism as an alternative to communicative rationality**

Agonistic pluralism, as advocated for by Chantal Mouffe (1993, 2000, 2005, 2013) is a political theory which argues that conflict, rather than consensus, is an inescapable social condition within any society. Mouffe (1999) contends that the claim that consensus can be achieved through rational deliberation are false, as “[b]y postulating the availability of a public sphere where power and antagonism would have been eliminated and where rational consensus would have been realized, this model of democratic politics denies the central role in politics of the conflictual dimension” (p. 752). Instead, Mouffe (1999) argues that consensus is an expression of hegemony, as every form of “consensus exists as a temporary result of provisional hegemony, as a stabilization of power and that always entails some form of exclusion” (p. 756). By asserting the constant struggle for hegemonic dominance, there can be no such thing as ‘neutral’ deliberation where power has no influence, as power is the very thing which is being deliberated. Therefore, we must understand “how to constitute forms of power that are compatible with democratic values”, allowing us to “acknowledge the existence of relations of power and the need to transform them, while renouncing the illusion that we could free ourselves completely from power” (p. 753).

For Mouffe, the basis for agonistic pluralism, requires a distinction between the political and politics. Drawing from post-foundational political theory, Mouffe (1999, p. 101) describes the political as the “dimension of antagonism that is inherent in all human society, antagonism that can take many different forms and can emerge in diverse social relations”, whereas politics “refers to the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions that seek to establish a certain order and to organize human coexistence in conditions that are always potentially conflictual because they are affected by the dimension of ‘the political’”. Here, Mouffe argues that politics serves as a way of domesticating and organizing antagonism within the political, which is necessary for establishing any socio-political order. However, due to the impossibility of consensus, these political institutions will always exclude those whose values and beliefs do not align with these instituted political bodies. Therefore, the formation of the collective ‘us’ becomes expressed through the use of power, hegemony and control, which results in a ‘them’ which signifies those who are excluded.

This process of inclusion and exclusion always results in conflict. However, Mouffe contends that not all conflict is alike, rather, conflict has two modalities, antagonism and agonism. Antagonism is conflict between enemies, where this distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ often results in violent confrontation and the desire to eliminate ‘the other’. Whereas agonism is conflict between adversaries, where opponents respect the others rights for equality, freedom, and political participation, even though they may disagree on certain principles. For Mouffe, the role of democratic politics is not the subjugation of conflict into consensus, instead, it is the transformation of antagonism into agonistic conflicts. Ultimately, Mouffe (1999)
insists that any society which has realised the dream of true democracy is not a society in which power has been eliminated, but rather one where “no limited social actor can attribute to herself the representation of the totality and claim in that way to have the “mastery” of the foundation” (p. 752). Here, Mouffe envisions a “well-functioning democracy” as one that “calls for a confrontation between democratic political positions, and this requires a real debate about possible alternatives. Consensus is indeed necessary but it must be accompanied by dissent” (2000, p. 113).

**The post-political threat as the dominant planning regime**

Although Mouffe’s theory of agonistic pluralism provides a way to re-imagine our current planning practices, it begs the question, why haven’t these conflictual principles established themselves as a legitimate approach to democratic participation? Here, we must recognise the structural context in which we currently find ourselves, this being an economy which is largely neoliberalised and a political system which is becoming increasingly de-politicised. Otherwise known as the post-political paradigm, many urban scholars argue that this particular urban condition seeks to foreclose direct political action and replace conflictual politics with more acceptable forms of consensual participation (Beveridge & Koch 2016; Legacy, Cook, Rogers & Ruming 2018; Ruming 2018; Swyngedouw 2018; Legacy, Metzger, Steele & Gualini 2019).

The post-political, according to Wilson and Swyngedouw (2014) is a de-politicising process where “political contradictions are reduced to policy problems to be managed by experts and legitimate through participatory processes in which the scope of possible outcomes is narrowly defined in advance” (p. 6). This process of depoliticisation occurs when “the political - understood as a space of contestation and agonistic engagement - is increasingly colonised by politics - understood as technocratic mechanisms and consensual procedures that operate within an unquestioned framework of representative democracy, free market economics, and cosmopolitan liberalism” (p. 6). However, in practice, the post-political becomes an attempt to ensure that any conflictual political participation within civil society - such as protesting, activism or civil disobedience - is intentionally de-legitimised as a mode of political participation (Ruming 2018). Instead, proponents of the post-political ideology encourage the use of consensual, rather than conflictual, governmental techniques by elites and experts - such as community consultation, public forums, and co-design - where individuals and groups who represent the ‘have nots’ are invited to participate in democratic decision-making processes, so long as the outcomes do not challenge or question the status quo (Ruming 2018).

The rise of the post-political city has generally occurred within western liberal democracies where the economy is largely neoliberalised. Wilson and Swyngedouw (2014) argue that the use of depoliticising tactics are a deliberate way to “ensure that the framework of debate and decision-making does not question or disrupt the existing state of the neoliberal political-economic configuration” (p. 5). Here then, establishing hegemony is a necessity as “neoliberalism has increasingly shaped state policy to benefit capital rather than citizens. As a result, it has produced an acute political problem: how to legitimate itself as it dismantles welfare systems, increases inequality, and unleashes into urban political life the harsh relations of market competition” (Purcell, 2009, p. 143). By signalling the end of politics and narrowly defining democratic participation within the existing functions of state-led processes, proponents of neoliberalism are able to establish hegemonic dominance by suppressing confrontational and challenging problems through the use of depoliticising tactics employed by the post-political city.

These practical, theoretical, and historically contingent critiques of communicative planning reveal the embedded power structures that communicative rationality has failed to adequately address. Therefore, in the face of these overwhelming critiques, planners must respond by developing a radically democratic approach to planning which at its core, “challenge[s] the status quo and transform[s] the power relations that produce inequality” (Bond 2011, p. 163). In the following section, I begin to investigate how Mouffe's suggestion for agonistic pluralism can form the basis for a planning practice that is a radical alternative to the current planning regime.

**Agonistic Pluralism as a Radical Planning Practice**

**Planner as mediator: agonistic pluralism as an existing planning practice**

What then are the implications of agonistic pluralism and its approach to power, conflict, and hegemony for planning practice? In an attempt to integrate Mouffe’s conflictual principles of agonistic pluralism into planning practice, a small number of planning practitioners and academics have begun to use the analytical tools provided by Mouffe to better understand how conflict manifests within existing planning practices.

One example is the research conducted by McAuliffe and Rogers (2017) where they operationalize Mouffe’s concepts of antagonism and agonism. They examine the specific conditions that might facilitate a
transition from antagonistic conflict into more amicable agonistic relations. Focusing on Sydney's urban development politics, they identified the “presence of community politics beyond formal planning systems by investigating the different strategies and tactics used by resident action groups in their attempt to influence urban development processes” (p. 233). Here, they studied the conflictual interactions between various “local resident groups and metropolitan alliances... with government and private sector actors” (p. 219). Through a series of interviews and focus groups, they discovered that Mouffe’s distinction between antagonism and agonism was too narrow, and instead argued for three modalities of antagonism: rigid antagonism, soft antagonism, and strategic antagonism (agonism). They observed that when rigid opposition against urban development was met with success, it often led to participants taking on a softer approach to their campaigning, as participants realised the benefits of being strategic and building alliances with other players. This ability to ‘slide’ between rigid and strategic antagonism came with experience and usually resulted in more successful outcomes. Furthermore, they discovered that as groups transitioned to strategic antagonism, they recognised their ability to influence decisions outside formal planning processes, as formal participation “was widely seen as tokenistic and instrumental, particularly in local government planning were community engagement mechanisms were routinely seen as tick-a-box processes” (p. 227).

Another attempt to understand conflict is the work of Pløger (2004), where he studies ‘strife’ within an urban regeneration project in Denmark. For Copenhagen municipality council, the goal was “to establish a holistic and coordinated achievement, with new forms of citizens’ involvement and public-private or public-public partnerships” (p. 76), where the empowerment of citizens was employed as a strategic tool for planning practitioners. Whilst the project sought to encourage democratic planning practices, Pløger argues that planners inability to distinguish between agonistic and antagonistic conflict resulted in a tendency to see all forms of disagreement as inherently antagonistic. Therefore, rather than consider the possibility that agonistic strife could be productive, planners instead focused on transforming conflicts and disagreements that would otherwise be productive into consensus. This process of consensus-steering was useful, as it served as a way to side-step the difficulties of informal politics within planning decisions. Ultimately, Pløger states that the “real problem is that agonism cannot be dealt with in a productive way, because political systems, institutional designs and forms of governance and institutional ways of thinking cannot work with agonism and strife” (p. 86). Therefore, Pløger stresses the need to institutionalise agonistic strife, and allow for more fluid “public participation processes and political fields of action that stress openness, temporality… respect for difference… and the need to live with inconsistencies and contingency” (p. 87).

Widening the analytical lens of agonistic pluralism, Inch (2015) grounds agonistic theory within existing planning disputes. By unpacking the stories of citizens ‘ignited’ by “unwanted development” (p. 411), Inch examines what it means to be a ‘good’ citizen by comparing agonistic and deliberative approaches to citizenship. He argues that an agonistic citizen - in contrast to a deliberative citizen - is a “counter-hegemonic activist” who upholds the right to equality and freedom by articulating “demands to unsettle an existing hegemonic settlement that is the sedimentation of an historical set of power relations”, whilst working collectively with others in “chains of equivalence”. Inch sees the agonistic citizen as a radical, as someone who is not limited to rational argumentation and “allows a wider range of political expression to be considered legitimate, including recourse to strategic and direct action, and rhetorical and symbolic forms of politics that are often potent symbols of conflict, bringing power out into the open so that it can be contested” (p. 408). Inch contends that the problem lies within the planning system itself, stating a need for “further democratisation of planning democracy [which seeks to challenge] the limited ways in which citizens are currently invited to participate” (p. 419). Furthermore, due to plannings pro-growth agenda, Inch argues for the need to “work through the limitations of current approaches to participation to highlight the failure of existing democratic channels, using this as a basis from which to argue for change” (p. 419).

Whilst these hegemonic planning structures present significant barriers to citizens wishing to participate in planning decisions, it did not prevent them from doing so. Inch (2015) observed that citizens, after experiencing the limitations of formal planning processes, decided to “register their opposition in other ways, [by] organising community meetings and protests outside council meetings or on election days, seeking to gain local press coverage through direct action” (p. 415). Engaging with these agonistic practices, “citizens often felt that such forms of activism were more successful in generating popular pressure, politicising issues and challenging elected representatives” (p. 415).

What these examples demonstrate, is that current consensual planning processes - used by planners and legitimised by planning institutions - struggle to recognise, integrate, and operationalize the modalities of conflict which agonistic pluralism proposes. Although planners themselves might accept agonistic conflict as a legitimate approach to democratic participation, there are still widespread structural and systemic barriers within planning institutions that prevent, and in some instances suppresses the acceptance of conflict as an alternative to consensual decision-making processes. Therefore, I argue that it is necessary
to challenge the way we currently frame agonistic pluralism within planning practice. Although Inch (2015), McAuliffe and Rogers (2017), and Pløger (2004) are beginning to conceptualise an agonistic planning practice, they examine conflict from the perspective of the planner as a mediator, where citizens participate in agonistic conflict. Yet, I argue that when planning practice is framed in this way, conflict can only be understood as a form of disagreement in planning outcomes. Therefore it is necessary to re-frame the role of the planner, and begin to understand how planners themselves might engage in some form of agonistic conflict.

Planner as activist: agonistic pluralism as a radical planning practice

Whilst advocacy as a form of activism was first established by Paul Davidoff in 1965, the call for planners to participate as activists is inherently problematic, as planners still see themselves as public servants who align with the objective and neutral aims of the state as a bi-partisan institution (Purcell, 2016). Here, planners do not consider themselves decision makers, rather, their expert understanding of urban processes allows planners to inform and advise policy makers, politicians, and other decision makers. Here then, as planning practice finds itself increasingly de-politicised, the role of the planner is reduced to that of a technical expert rather than a political activist. However, these hegemonic post-political attitudes to planning practice have only come about recently, as it was not that long ago that Friedmann (1987) argued for radical planning as a legitimate practice. According to Friedmann, planners should seek to facilitate the “emancipation of humanity from social oppression” (p. 301), and pursue structural change and social transformation through bottom-up forms of social mobilisation. Therefore, radical planning provides both a process and a normative positioning, where planners are guided by emancipatory practices that seek out and oppose oppression and domination (Young, 1990).

Therefore, the second way that agonistic pluralism challenges how we currently think about contemporary planning is through the articulation of a counter-hegemonic meta-narrative. In other words, the call for planners to address the issues of power and conflict within planning practice is inherently a conflict about the right to conflict. This meta-narrative moves beyond the legitimisation of conflictual processes within planning practice, to establish a broader vision for a post-foundational democratic practice, one which acknowledges that agonistic conflict results from the continuous struggle to establish hegemonic dominance. Here then, planners must not only consider how conflict manifests within specific instances of planning decision-making processes, but at the same time, seek to support a broader counter-hegemonic struggle that challenges the post-political hegemony in hopes of recognising continuous conflict as a legitimate and necessary function for any healthy democracy.

This struggle for the right to conflict is fundamental to post-foundational political theory. Here, post-foundational scholars deny the possibility that society could ever reach a finished state, and any claim by an authority to have done so is inherently false (Mouffe, 2000; Marchart, 2007; Swyngedouw, 2018). Understanding the impossibility of the ‘final ground’ - as no such thing exists - reveals the precarious, contingent, and always unstable foundation of any social order. Therefore, whatever authority is currently in power, however sensible or appropriate they may seem, has achieved this status by legitimising its own existence through the use of power to establish itself as the dominant hegemonic social order. By understanding agonistic pluralism through the lens of post-foundational political theory, planners are empowered by the understanding that there exists a constant shift in power. This knowledge provides planners with the theoretical grounding necessary for understanding how mobilizing those who are excluded, can serve as a way to engage in agonistic conflict which disrupts and destabilizes these established yet always contingent hegemonic power structures.

Future research

Through the ongoing research within my PhD, I hope to better understand how planners can apply this counter hegemonic theoretical framework to their planning practices. My PhD will aim to interrogate the consensual notions of the post-political city, and the extent to which the normalization of these depoliticising ideas influence the decisions, practices and attitudes of planners specifically within metropolitan Melbourne and the Victorian planning system. However, this research not only attempts to understand, but also seeks to identify possible solutions to this problem. Through the use of participatory action research, I aim to better understand how direct political action - through the mobilisation of communities - is able to rupture the consensual mechanisms of post-political planning processes.

Conclusion

Here then, in an attempt to suture agonistic pluralism together with radical planning, this paper seeks to legitimise the use of conflict within planning practice. By challenging the hegemonic practices of communicative planning, and accepting the inevitability of conflict, agonistic pluralism dismisses the
preconceived ideas held by many planning practitioners that reaching consensus among participants within any decision-making process is democratic, as consensus can only be achieved through the use of power to establish hegemony. Therefore, agonistic conflict forces planners to reconsider traditional planning practices that have for the most part sought to achieve mutual agreement as a desired outcome of planning decision-making processes. Here then, rational and participatory communicative processes such as community engagement, deliberative democracy, and public participation must be re-framed through the lens of power, antagonism, hegemony, and conflict. By re-imagining planning in this way, other approaches traditionally ostracised by conventional planning discourses begin to present themselves as viable alternatives, legitimising the use of conflictual strategies and tactics often employed by radical planners such as insurgency, disruption, advocacy, activism, and dissent.

However, while agonistic pluralism brings to light the need to better understand the use of conflictual processes as a radical form of democratic planning practice, so long as the narrative of the post-political city maintains its authority over planning practice, then radical planning will always be limited in its capacity to gain influence and legitimacy. Therefore, radical planners must not only address the issues of power and conflict as part of everyday planning practices, but seek to find ways to challenge the overarching normative belief held among planning practitioners that conflict is unproductive, and that if and when conflict does appear, it should be overcome through logical and rational means. Therefore, I argue that planners must engage in activism - as a counter-hegemonic practice - to legitimise the use of conflictual processes within planning practices.

References