

Editors' Introduction

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

The content of this omnibus edition of *Landscape Journal* reflects the diversity of issues and methods associated with scholarship in the design, planning, and management of land. Articles in the issue examine the design, planning and management of coastal areas, management of agricultural landscapes, transformation of vacant land into habitat, and landscape urbanism. Methods of inquiry include both quantitative and qualitative research strategies as well as logical argumentation. Locations of these investigations include coastal areas in Southwest Australia, Texas, New Orleans, and Minnesota.

In “The Batture Effect,” Carey Clouse, Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts, and Zachary Lamb, PhD student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, examine the willing inhabitation of a squatters’ community located between the Mississippi River and a US Army Corps of Engineers’ flood control levee in New Orleans. The article calls into question conventional assumptions regarding hazard awareness and development security. It also suggests that this “guerilla urbanism” makes hidden environmental threats visible and enables the testing of small-scale architectural, urban, and psychological adaptation measures.

In “Re-Conceptualizing Suburban Terracing: Topographically Responsive Development Scenarios for a Sandy Coastal Site,” Associate Professor Karl Kullmann at the University of California–Berkeley examines the practice of “earthwork benching” (or terracing) to create subdivision developments in sandy coastal areas of Southwest Australia. Using criteria related to urban performance and topographic expression, the analysis examines the implications of five benching strategies, represented through computer-generated three-dimensional models, for conservation of natural topography.

“Repurposing Vacant Land through Landscape Connectivity,” written by Galen Newman, Associate Professor at Texas A&M University, Alison L. Smith, Assistant Professor at the University of Georgia, and Samuel D. Brody, Regents Professor in the Departments of Marine Sciences and Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning at Texas A&M University, creates a regional growth framework that balances the need to repurpose vacant lots with the provision of enhanced landscape connectivity on Galveston Island in Texas. Using ArcGIS and Linkage Mapper software, the analysis seeks to use vacant land as a means of linking existing habitat patches, wildlife conservation areas, wetlands, riparian corridors, and small-scale green spaces.

Using qualitative analysis of the results of 30 in-depth interviews, Bjorn Olson, Senior Environmental Project Associate at the Environmental Initiative in Minneapolis, MN, and Mae Davenport, Associate Professor of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources and the Environment at the University of Minnesota, explore the drivers of and constraints to conservation decision making and practice adoption among agricultural producers in two impaired Minnesota watersheds. The authors identify two factors that influence conservation practice adoption behavior: farming ethic and farmer appraisal of conservations practices.

Continuing on the theme of urbanism, Vera Vicenzotti, Senior Lecturer at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, offers a constructive critique of landscape urbanism. She discusses the problems that arise when landscape urbanists ignore the tensions created by the multiple meanings of landscape and offers two theoretical constructs for addressing the issue.

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