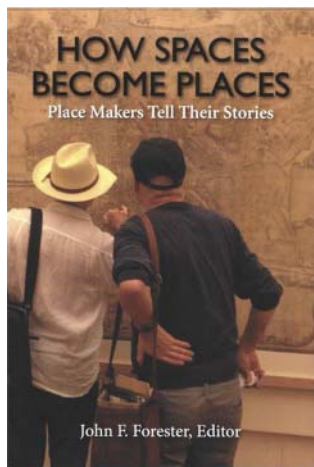


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Richard C. Smardon is a SUNY distinguished service professor emeritus at SUNY-College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

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HOW SPACES BECOME PLACES: PLACE MAKERS TELL THEIR STORIES

John F. Forester (ed.).
New Village Press, 2021.

Richard C. Smardon

John Forester's new book is of interest to this reviewer because of his experience as a facilitator for environmental assessment and water-

way revitalization projects as well as his background in teaching public participation and mediation courses over many years. Forester's book "flies in the face" of traditional community planning and designing professionals by showing how "nonprofessionals" can facilitate and implement community development projects.

Forester is a professor in the City and Regional Planning Department at Cornell University. He has served as department chair and associate dean at Cornell and received his undergraduate and graduate degrees (MS, MCPD, PhD) from the University of California, Berkeley. His research focuses on the micropolitics of the planning process and political deliberations that planners use to shape participatory process and manage disputes. He has written or co-written several books within these content areas

(Forester, 1999, 2009, 2013; Forester & Reach 2015).

This book is unusual in that it is a collection of edited interviews of place-maker/community organizers that utilize various approaches to address specific community issues. There are other books on place-making (Anguelovsky, 2014; Hester, 2010; Markusen & Gadwa, 2010; Schneekloth, 1995) as well as books on community facilitation and problem solving (Anderson & Pyle, 2021; Herd, 2019; Kane, 2014; Sarkission & Hurford, 2010; Wates, 2014), but only Wilson's (2019) book *The Heat of Community Engagement; Stories across the Globe* uses a similar format of a collection of interviews to cover similar content.

Forester's new book is divided into three parts: Design Collaboration and Ownership; Engagement and Differences in Placemaking; and Art Imagination and Value Creation. Each of the interviews comprising the body of the text includes a contextual preface by Forester. The actual interviews were conducted by Forester and some of his graduate students. In Part One, four interviews from community organizers address affordable housing, integrated land use, and environmental planning for Oregon coastal communities, in addition to public space planning in Portland, Oregon, and the bridge design/review process at the St. Croix River connecting Minnesota and Wisconsin. In Part Two, three interviews with organizers address racial violence and safety disputes in Los Angeles; the development of the Red Hook, New York, Community Justice Center; immigration, ethnicity, and religious differences in Oldham, UK; and environmental justice issues in Detroit, Michigan. Part Three features interviews with community organizers that were involved with the Providence, Rhode Island, WaterFire river art festival; community development in Eagleby, Australia; developing a community garden network in Paris, France; Artwalk development in Rochester, New York; and creating an art center in New York Mills, Minnesota.

As Forester states in the introductory chapter, these place-makers "transform ordinary, taken for granted spaces into places that matter" (Forester, 2021, p. 1). Forester has three major objectives in the book: 1) examining strategies used by place-makers with diverse background and training, 2) considering how they complement and extend existing planning

efforts, and 3) using detailed narratives to uncover such strategies.

In the concluding chapter, Forester states that the place-making stories presented in the book are interpretations of what happened in actual time and place; they document context and include examples of possibilities, challenges, obstacles, and creative responses. In the Afterward, Forester places the place-maker stories within the time of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter Movement. The three appendices are an overview of community development and crime prevention at the New York Center for Court Innovation, by Robert Burdock; a piece on optimism by Michael Hugh; and documents on the interview process and the protocols used.

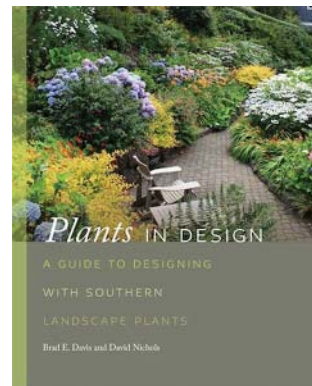
The text is an easy read, and the author uses color highlights in certain sections of the book to emphasize specific points. This reviewer would have liked to have seen a few graphics or photos from some of the case study locations, but I understand the author/editor may not have had equal graphic material for every chapter. The author's introduction and conclusion frame the context and lessons learned, respectively. This book is valuable for professional planners and designers in that it gives insights on working with communities in a coproduction mode. Self-trained community organizers working on similar problems or project situations would also benefit from the collection. The book could also serve as a supplemental textbook for community development or facilitation courses.

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Richard C. Smardon is a SUNY distinguished service professor emeritus at SUNY-College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

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PLANTS IN DESIGN: A GUIDE TO DESIGNING WITH SOUTHERN LANDSCAPE PLANTS

Brad E. Davis and David Nichols. University of Georgia Press, 2021.

Nicholas Serrano

I have taught introductory plants classes to landscape architecture students for ten years and have always struggled to find a good textbook. Many of us in temperate zones probably learned about plants using Michael Dirr's *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants* (2009), the "Horticulture Bible." Originally published in 1975 and now in its sixth edition, it remains an invaluable resource for the ardent plantsperson, but it is perhaps overly exhaustive for most students and