



David Madden and Peter Marcuse, *In Defense of Housing*, London: Verso, 2016. ISBN: 9781784783532 (cloth); ISBN: 9781784783549 (paper); ISBN: 9781784783563 (ebook)

On the morning of 14 June 2017, news images of an inferno in North Kensington, London, rapidly spread across the UK and around the globe; a 24-storey block of flats had caught on fire, engulfing the floors, and with some residents still trapped inside their flats. Aerial news footage juxtaposed the horror of the single burning tower with the surrounding lower-scale residential neighbourhood. Over the course of the next several days the story of Grenfell Tower unfolded. The fire was presumed to have been started by the presence of faulty electrical wiring and was exacerbated by poor quality exterior cladding that had been included in more recent renovations. The building is owned by the borough council of Kensington and Chelsea and was largely occupied by lower income tenants and a small number of leaseholders, many of whom were newcomers to the UK. Situated within one of the wealthiest boroughs of London, the fire at Grenfell Tower and the fatalities and displacement experienced by its residents quickly became a symbol of state disinvestment in public housing amidst the geography of residential hyper-commodification in London.¹ It represents the impact of corner-cutting and technocratic malaise found at various governmental levels, the struggles over affordable housing provision and access, and the everyday presence of social marginalization and racialization in London and other cities. Madden and Marcuse's wonderfully detailed book, *In Defense of Housing*, was published prior to the Grenfell Tower tragedy. Yet, the authors' emphases on issues such as residential alienation, racialization, and class-based oppression in housing provision, and the multiple failures of housing policy, offer a historical and contemporary context for understanding the multi-scalar governance problems and social trauma that collided during and in the time after the fire at Grenfell Tower.

¹ 71 people died as a result of the fire, and as many as 204 households from the tower and surrounding area needed to be re-homed (Rawlinson 2017, 2018).

Madden and Marcuse have deftly coalesced an important array of empirical data on housing into five core chapters to examine the current state of housing provision, largely within the geographical contexts of the UK and US. Centrally, their argument lies in a neo-Marxist critique of the contemporary hyper-commodification of real estate and the residential property market, including the complex arrangements of residential property financialization. In their aptly titled first chapter, “Against the Commodification of Housing”, Madden and Marcuse situate the idea of real estate being an attack on housing. They suggest that this is where “the pursuit of profit in housing is coming into conflict with its use for living” (p.17). By positing this conflictual image, the authors set the tone for a historical contextualization of the shift from an emphasis on housing as dwelling space based upon human need to a now universalized understanding of housing as commodity form. The authors pinpoint the privatization of commons in the process of agricultural enclosures in the UK as the starting place for the movement towards the privatization of land, housing, and changing societal meanings of home through commodification practices. The emergence of housing as a commodity itself—as a source of economic value—is traced through a historical narrative of how housing became a core component of the open market and circuits of investment. Their narrative moves through a history of housing systems in the UK and US in the 20th century, ending Chapter 1 with a description of the current temporal context of hyper-commodified housing. As a strong framework for the later chapters and discussions of contemporary social and community-based housing issues, three mechanisms of a globalized hyper-commodification of housing are set forward: [i] the deregulation and “rewriting” (p.31) of government involvement in housing; [ii] a financialization of housing and real estate, which is defined as the “increasing power and prominence of actors and firms that engage in profit accumulation through the servicing and exchanging of money and financial instruments” (p.31); and [iii] the globalization of housing, which has produced international economic networks of investment and involvement in real estate development in strategic locations across the globe. The authors argue that, “[t]ogether,

these interlocking processes of deregulation, financialization, and globalization have meant that housing functions as commodity to a greater extent than ever before”, and that “[t]his is what lies at the heart of the present crisis” (p.35).

Following their positioning of the structural components of the current crisis of housing provision, Madden and Marcuse integrate compelling historical and contemporary narratives of residential alienation and oppression in housing provision and use. This is complemented by a focus on the everyday lived experiences of low-income and/or racialized persons in accessing and retaining housing in light of processes of gentrification, eviction, and displacement. Of particular interest in Chapter 2, “Residential Alienation”, is the authors’ discussion of the concept of ontological security. The emotional considerations of and attachments to housing are a welcome addition to the more dominant focus on the political economy of housing provision. Residential alienation, as a process and practice of the marginalization of individuals and families from their rights to housing, is underlined as a central outcome of the commodification of housing. The authors identify homelessness as the most acute form of residential alienation. Physical and emotional alienation from residential environments is argued to cause a lack of ontological security in one’s living place, location, and right to housing. The authors define ontological security as a subjective state; as the “emotional foundation that allows us to feel at ease in our environment and at home in our housing” (p.68). The inclusion of emotional sensibilities around notions of home and place raise the issue of emotional precarity in addition to situations of economic precarity based upon vulnerabilities in labour and income. While precarious forms of labour and unstable wages are indelibly connected to issues of housing security, the emotional attachments to and outcomes of these issues in relation to home and housing are less often discussed. By addressing the emotional considerations of housing (in)security, Madden and Marcuse elevate and carefully position the personal narratives of urban residents. These narratives are thoughtfully woven throughout the book and expose the challenges lower-income residents face in accessing rental housing, struggles with debt and fears

of foreclosure experienced by homeowners, incidents of racialization and discrimination in access to housing, and experiences of eviction and displacement.

The authors also identify historical responses to the problematic provision of and access to affordable housing and some hopeful remedies to the current urban housing crisis. Chapter 5 offers a thoughtful historical tracing of housing movements in New York City that puts the role of non-governmental organizations and activists front and centre. Madden and Marcuse provide a detailed description of 19th century tenants' leagues, the creation of a radical tenant movement largely influenced by European newcomers to America who transferred radical ideology and action into their everyday practices in New York, and the production of innovative housing cooperatives over the 20th century. Their section on post-1970s housing activism in response to growing problems of gentrification, eviction, and displacement gives attention to the power of squatting and other anti-gentrification protests. The authors end this chapter, however, on somewhat of a defeated note by lamenting the current neoliberal context where "political possibilities have been constricted" (p.186), and where there is now reduced space for housing alternatives in cities.

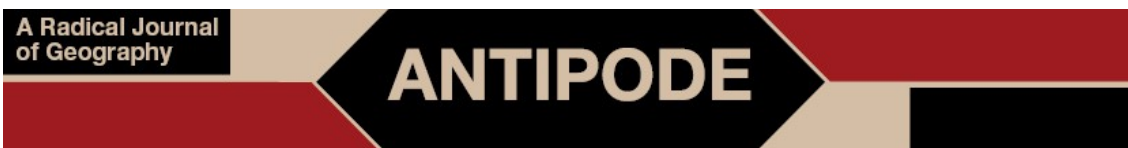
While Chapter 5 concludes with a rather dejected tone, the conclusion of the book focuses on the notion of a "radical right to housing". In this last section, the authors celebrate some of the growing alternatives to the housing crisis that raise hopes for social justice and more equitable and collectivized understandings of housing provision. With a rallying call to de-commodify, de-financialize, and democratize housing, Madden and Marcuse point to the work of organizations such as the Right to the City Alliance, which advocates for tax foreclosure as a local government method for converting empty condominium units into public housing for low-income residents. They also highlight the community land trust model as a growing practice for the de-commodification of urban land and housing, as well as new and emerging co-housing arrangements in North American and European cities. Interestingly, despite the dominant focus on US and UK urban contexts throughout the book, it concludes with a call for a globalized

housing movement and suggests that social movements focusing on housing must “match the [global] scale of the housing problem”. To an extent, this proposal contradicts the very local and community-based practices, such as community land trusts, that the authors previously underline as important urban alternatives. Madden and Marcuse’s sentiment regarding the need for a global housing movement, however, is positioned in a clear and aspirational way. The appeal for a global housing movement provides a strong concluding directive for their work.

While a tragedy such as the Grenfell Tower fire must not occur again, Madden and Marcuse’s book provides strong structural analyses that assist with a comprehension of why localized residential catastrophes such as Grenfell occur as well as the broader reasons for the globalized housing crisis. Their book offers critical observations on the associations between racism and class-based discrimination in the history and current situation of housing provision and adeptly moves between localized narratives of housing discrimination and displacement and the globalized currents of housing commodification and financialization. While the book could have relied less on the use of footnotes—on some pages the footnotes take up half of the page—the overall quality and organization of the book is excellent. It is not only an important and necessary contribution to housing scholarship but also an important resource for the field of urban studies more broadly and will undoubtedly be of central interest to critical urban geographers, planners, and sociologists.

References

- Rawlinson K (2017) The victims of the Grenfell Tower fire. *The Guardian* 23 November
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jul/13/grenfell-tower-fire-victims-dead-missing-identified-named-so-far> (last accessed 16 April 2018)
- Rawlinson K (2018) 100 households around Grenfell still in temporary accommodation. *The Guardian* 29 March <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/mar/29/100->



households-around-grenfell-still-in-temporary-accommodation (last accessed 16 April 2018)

Susannah Bunce
Department of Human Geography
University of Toronto Scarborough
scbunce@utsc.utoronto.ca

April 2018

Paul Peel book. Read reviews from world's largest community for readers. Audible Barnes & Noble Walmart eBooks Apple Books Google Play Abebooks Book Depository Alibris Indigo Better World Books IndieBound. Libraries. More Details Original Title. Paul Peel: A retrospective, 1860-1892 = Paul Peel : retrospective, 1860-1892. ISBN. 0920872743 (ISBN13: 9780920872741). Other Editions. None found. ISBN. This bar-code number lets you verify that you're getting exactly the right version or edition of a book. The 13-digit and 10-digit formats both work. Scan an ISBN with your phone Use the Amazon App to scan ISBNs and compare prices. Share.

.Â * Unique presentation that describes the evolution of paper machine clothing into sophisticated products that are made from synthetic fibers with highly engineered properties for distinct paper machine applications. * Demonstrates the tremendous opportunities for paper machine clothing products to meet the demanding needs of today's paper machines * Describes new technologies that have kept the industry on the leading edge of global competitiveness. - -This text refers to the hardcover edition. About the Author. Find isbn from a vast selection of Other Books. Get great deals on eBay!Â All Categories Antiques Art Automotive Baby Books Business & Industrial Cameras & Photo Cell Phones & Accessories Clothing, Shoes & Accessories Coins & Paper Money Collectibles Computers/Tablets & Networking Consumer Electronics Crafts Dolls & Bears DVDs & Movies Entertainment Memorabilia Everything Else Gift Cards & Coupons Health & Beauty Home & Garden Jewellery & Watches Music Musical Instruments & Gear Pet Supplies Pottery & Glass Real Estate Specialty Services Sporting Goods Sports Mem, Cards & Fan Shop.