

Reading Tips and Study Questions: Judging the New Orleans Plans—September 19th

Required reading

1. Pp. 271-283 only in **Peter Marcuse**, "Rebuilding a Tortured Past or Creating a Model Future: The Limits and Potentials of Planning." In Chester Hartman and Gregory D. Squires eds., *There is No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster: Race, Class and Hurricane Katrina*. Routledge: New York. 2006.

Tips and questions

We will devote much of this session to team-level discussion and planning, but we'll also consider Marcuse's arguments about the limits and potentials of planning, since this is a key issue in the assignment.

Questions for class prep and discussion sections:

1. Why does **Marcuse** so emphasize federal assistance to New Orleans and other parts of the Gulf Coast?
2. Much of the latest generation of planning thought has favored expanded participation by citizens and other "stakeholders." Some also endorse "equitable development" as a strong core value of public planning. But participatory planning is envisioned as grounded in egalitarian intentions and a well-organized, clear, and transparent planning process. And equity raises questions about what's available in the way of resources and who deserves what. In the New Orleans context, multiple planning processes contended for attention and inspired distrust rather than trust, some of the ideas these processes gathered were submitted upward with unknown effects, and effective public decision-making is still constrained by a huge lack of information, sometimes by weak and competing government institutions, and by the problems associated with failing to meet basic needs (water supply, trash removal, public transportation, etc.). What would **Marcuse's** vision of "ambitious planning" look like in this context? Or does planning seem more "ameliorative" or otherwise limited?