



# Library podcast

## People's Geographies

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[00:00:36] How's everybody doing tonight. Outway I'm going to ask again how are we doing tonight. There we go.

[00:00:46] We have a tradition of public engagement events at the Central Library where we take the first minute or moments of a program to do two really important things.

[00:00:58] One is to acknowledge that we are on Duwamish land and that's really important. I'm very excited that we are going to be celebrating native communities and especially coastal Salish communities in 2018 and moving forward. The other thing that we like to do in addition to acknowledging native sovereignty is to encourage everyone in the audience to take a moment and introduce yourself to someone you don't know just a minute.

[00:01:26] So turn around the people next to you just say hi and a greeting.

[00:01:33] All right. Right right. Can I bring us back to center our yaller such an easy crowd.

[00:01:42] I'm like working with you all. This program is made possible by the way by the Seattle Public Library Foundation.

[00:01:48] That's important. I can't miss that.

[00:01:50] And if we have any donors give give yourself some props. I want to move on because we were on time and I don't want us to get behind time. Did I introduce myself. I'm Devita Ingram I'm the public engagement program's manager and I'm so delighted that we've got to do this program tonight. It's the people's geography of Seattle and it was made possible through our collaboration with the University of Washington Bothell and in particular I wanted to think Amrs shape did a tremendous job in curating tonight's program. Can we give them a round of applause.

[00:02:33] Amrs an interdisciplinary researcher using the tools of geography anthropology and environmental science to look at critical questions about our landscape primarily at the intersections of environmental studies and urban planning. He's spent a disproportionate amount of time poring over historical maps which I'm glad he did because his map making a cartography is amazing of this region and thinks a lot about how the past can inform the future likewise. So Amrs going to be one of our moderators for tonight and he will be joined by Christian Andersen Christian is a faculty member in the school of interdisciplinary arts and sciences of Sciences at the University of Washington Bothell. His work focuses on how to comment on how common sense ideas in everyday activities of ordinary people are bound up with broader formations of power and economy and urban space. So I think this is someone who understands politics Space-Time a lot. I'm excited about Ahmer and Christian moderating our conversation. We also AMR and Christian in a moment are going to introduce you to our presenters. But we wanted to start with the video by Aigner we'll Colma. Are you familiar with his work.

[00:03:52] And I know we're in the library but I'm going to invite you to be loud explosive be loud in response when we talk about community.

[00:04:00] Nea is a local media maker and a long term resident of the Central District. And as it turned out there were two conversations about Seattle changing. One is here tonight at the Central Library and the other one is at Langston Hughes and it's focusing on the changing aspects of the Central District which was the historic community of African-Americans. When we had housing covenants that were racist but in any case as an intro for this clip which will watch in a moment and then we'll hand them over to Christian and Ahmer and they wanted to to think about these things as you watch this video.

[00:04:38] Are you ready to get to for the past 20 years. My work as a journalist filmmaker and visual artist focused on highlighting the stories of people in marginalized communities. Recently I've been focusing on stories of mass displacement that defines the change happening in our city. Realizing that I am also at the center of many issues I've begun to tell my personal and family stories as part of this body of work. I want to uncover the depths and complexities of these stories in ways that humanize what people have gone through and continue to go through as our region changes. My hope is to help shape the conversation about change and displacement in ways that centered the needs of the most vulnerable. The clip we're about to watch is of in years brother Uram set who is also a very beloved lyricist.

[00:05:34] And my colleague or Linda will queue up the video video for us so let's watch the video. My name is Uram sec check Sec.

[00:05:45] Son of Afula we'll call him on and Poppy's SEC fool who is the daughter of Frank Green which is my grandfather who was the son of only the newer as Granny. I always tell people I have always lived within a five block radius of one of the original properties that my grandfather purchased 23 14 which was on 2013 Mirian was the earlier song. That was a family piece of property and I was literally there up until I was 22 23 years old when I finally moved out of the house. I moved to the

location with my lady when I first before we had a child which was on 25th in union between Liberty Bank what they're now calling Liberty Bank and the grocery outlet. So I was somewhere in between there. The third place that I lived was back into a family piece of property with 9/11 which is located next to 915 which my brother and I woke home with corn and the owners and purchased from within the family. So that house is right next to his which is a bigger piece of property one of the bigger pieces of property in the family. And then finally I am now currently living off of 2090 and shared on that block heading up into the Madrone in the area. So I've literally lived Lissy from Cherri to union is what four blocks on them from 20 30 to 29 six blocks literally that's my whole life has been spent has been lived in that area.

[00:07:45] It was always with the family home.

[00:07:48] It was what I often say is it was an escape.

[00:07:53] We have more than one place we can go to 23 14 being the house that I was raised in 9/11 in the back nine fifteen of which were occupied by cousins uncles aunts at one time or another. So there was always children around. It was kind of like a safe place. We were always surrounded by family always. There was always kids around. So entertainment was never a problem we were just allowed to kind of just run the neighborhood as we kind of wanted to in the case of our. We always loved going over there. It was always warm and inviting. She cooked a lot spent most of her time in the kitchen so we mainly went there for pastries she baked alive.

[00:08:36] So she had this big bay window in the back with this big table in and like it was always filled with just pastries and baked goods. And you didn't have to knock you could walk in and go and help yourself.

[00:08:52] My what I remember is that we always had a safe space we always had a place to go. It was always warm and inviting you know if we got tired of our current dwelling we could go somewhere else.

[00:09:07] We don't have that anymore. The community is not there like that.

[00:09:13] That's what I know. That's what I remember.

[00:09:16] What I always tell people them the importance of all of these properties is that they all served as like bigger piece of a larger puzzle like each. You

[00:09:28] Know they were counted compartmentalize where you had like everybody was a part of the same family which had the Wilsons here you had the Commons there you had the Greens here you had the whole Calmas you had the sex. Though we were all one big family names change due to marriage or whatever it was it was a collective like we each one of these each one of these houses we hosted events. We had community events where people would come out and just mingle eat enjoy music. We had family events that we do there.

[00:10:03] But most importantly and every one of these houses people who died in the like literally every we have we do not think 20 dude 45 in an awful would have died in a row.

[00:10:27] But yeah every last one of the properties that we have had been occupied by family from generation to generation and we've there's very few people who have been put in nursing homes and senior centers and stuff like that. So we've always took care of my grandfather died in this house.

[00:10:45] His bed was literally right here where you see this. It was right here.

[00:10:50] And I remember walking in the day he died thinking that he just passed out and I started slapping him again we want to open up our conversation with a meditation on the central district will also close it with Joel Freedberg work in the Central District with Shell flight but in between we have a lot of different amazing conversations that we'll be having and I want to invite Aamer and Christian to come on and introduce our speakers and we'll get going.

[00:11:27] Thanks to Orlando and SPL staff I'm AMR.

[00:11:33] I'm Christian we're part of a loose group of people who have been working to organize a collaborative project that we are calling a people's geography of Seattle. We're excited to have everyone here.

[00:11:45] Thanks for coming out tonight's event is part of a broader effort to connect some conversations that are already well underway to grapple with transformations currently unfolding in Seattle and the region. And to think about potential ways of responding to some of the pressing tensions that seem to be bound up with those transformations among these are the rapid reconfiguration of built social and ecological environments through ongoing processes of urban development and uneven and unjust disruptions and displacements especially among low income communities and communities of color.

[00:12:21] These situations demand critical public in these broader context.

[00:12:26] The aim of the People's geography as a broader project is to strengthen relationships across different communities engaging with these issues. It's an attempt to build on already existing efforts toward an emancipatory rethinking and indeed reshaping of the geography of the city and region. The idea is to start with a series of conversations which identify emerging questions resources and interests.

[00:12:51] And from there to facilitate structures of connection and cooperatives support across these ongoing on that point it is worth reiterating that the dynamics of displacement and injustice are hardly new to this city this region or this land divide us started us off by Ignát underscoring that we sit on Occupy Duwamish land and is useful to think about that statement as much more than just a gesture to the concluded past. Instead that statement points us toward longstanding aspects of the

relationship and legacies between history power and place. Here in Seattle still being actively shaped experienced contested and reshaped in the present and it is precisely in the interest of this reshaping that we might better centered narratives of communities that long persist in effectively organizing the peace struggles and his recasting of local history through an indigenous lens titled native Seattle. The scholars call thrush calls our attention to power of power of what he calls place stories a way of making salient profound ways that are conceptualizations as well as our experiences of place are connected to and shaped by the stories we tell each other and to each other. To paraphrase and quote thrush these place stories could be dialogues about the transformations of landscape and power in the city and about strategies of living together humanely in this place bringing new stories to light and considering how those stories can inform new kinds of actions should be our agenda for the future and is crafted in the moments we simply ask each other what happened here. And to that I would also add what is happening here.

[00:14:30] In order to help conceptualize paths towards a just and equitable city for our shared future so tonight we'll hear from four panelists all engaged in important work around themes just identified. The conversation will begin with each panelist introducing us to some of the work they're currently doing and the context in which their work is situated. Following that there'll be a segment where the panelists will respond to a series of prompts extending aspects that come up in their individual presentations.

[00:14:58] Finally will conclude with questions and call and response from the audience.

[00:15:06] Badenhausen is a community organizer writer and actor living in Seattle. She has a political science degree from University of Washington is now working with the people of color led climate justice organization got green in her lifetime she hopes to have an impact on the fight for black and collective liberation when she's not working especially during the fall. She's watching a ton of TV shows. Me too. Chuck Li is one of a half Jen Hong Kong immigrant to Renton 2016 seating change fellow with the Chinese Progressive Association in San Francisco's Chinatown. She currently organizes here in Seattle with the Chinatown International District coalition and Pacific Rim solidarity. She also entrance for the Asian Pacific American labor alliance's Membership engagement coordinator program and will be completing her B.A. in comparative history of ideas at U dub this winter.

[00:15:59] Cynthia brothers started vanishing Seattle in 2016 to document the displaced and disappearing local institutions cultures and communities of Seattle. She's a member of the Chinatown International District coalition has written for the Seattle Globalist and worked in areas of immigrant rights online organizing in arts and culture raising the 2 0 6 she admits to local clichés like playing in bands and once making espresso for a living.

[00:16:24] She's also a proud alumni of the high school where Bruce Lee first is famous one inch punch Jill Freedberg is a documentary filmmaker oral historian radio producer and youth media educator. Her current projects include the shelf life community Story Project and sharing our voices a citywide oral history project for city Seattle Public Library Jill also teaches in the media

communications degree program at Batho. Her work reflects her belief that responsible powerful storytelling builds understanding and solidarity across borders and across this.

[00:17:03] Yes.

[00:17:04] Yeah I figured out the mike. Hi everyone thank you so much for coming. Being part of this program. I'm actually like struck by the picture that was up earlier of the geography's because the two streets that I lived most of my life on are like right there began in Cloverdale so when I saw that I was like I was almost like is my geography too. And I was struck by and I wanted to share that with you. So my name is jodan. I am a client the climate justice organizer. I got green. I've been at this position doing this work for close to three years now. Actually today's my third year anniversary of being with Guy Green I'm spending it here talking about Geiger. So I got involved three years ago. A friend of mine I called her and I was like Hey I'm unemployed I'm trying this temping thing is not as much fun as I thought it would be. Can we just try and talk about work and when we talked about all the things that I was interested in she asked me what I was doing now and I was like oh I'm really doing anything just watching a ton of TV shows a mom brand and she was like well let me just tell you a little bit about Cargreen and Puget Sound Stage and we're getting together to create a committee of young young people of color older people of color to talk about what climate change means to them. And I just kind of stopped her there and I was like well I'm a person of color.

[00:18:36] I think that people of color are going to die from poverty racism police brutality and it will just be way people and the planet left to deal with whatever climate change results into. And I think I'm all right with that. And after a second I feel like hey that's that's interesting that you like think about it that way but it's going to be all of us are going to be people of color. We're going to be talking about how climate change connects to all of the issues that you care about and you should just come and if you hate it eat the food take the food to go and like you can leave and it will be no problem. And I was like oh yea so I came I saw some people that I organized with was people I went to college with. And we just kind of sat there we talked about how climate change impacts people of color and not just the polar bears and sea level rise and the things that I've been told most of my life but that when this when the sea level rises. Islands go underwater when sea level rises. I always go underwater. Different countries go underwater when when he when when the world gets hotter. There are places that can't farm and the places are going underwater and not farming or are majority countries or people of color.

[00:19:51] And that that information just kind of like struck me and I just sat there and I took it all in and we talked about how capitalism and white supremacy created climate change and our incessant need to always dig into the ground and burn things to make our cars move our planes work. And it was all the thing. It was just like the connection that I needed for someone to make for me so that I could. I can almost feel invited into the work. So I didn't leave. I've been here since. And we created this survey which I'm really proud of.

[00:20:23] Two years ago close to two years ago now and we were asking people of color neighborhoods like South Seattle. The International District and then white center and all the

communities what they thought about climate change and what if anything wouldn't make their communities healthier better. And we wanted to make sure we weren't just mining people's information and then disappearing.

[00:20:49] So when people talk to us you would give them some like a gift card to Safeway to like thank you for sharing this amazing information with us. And we collected over 175 surveys and all of the people we were concerned because this survey was a little bit longer than we had planned it was maybe 20 minutes instead of 15 where people just talk with us. They were so interested in what angle we were coming from to share this information with us. So they would talk to us for 20 for 30 minutes and they would be like okay that's a great question. But what if you asked it this way. What I'm concerned most about is the the trucks driving to my neighborhood and the kids having asthma and living on the Superfund's day. And the thing that came out of those that rose to the top is everybody talking about the affordability of the neighborhood that they lived in and how they've been displaced from how the countless different neighborhoods. And because the rent the rent increases and because they're spending so much time on so much money on their rent there's not enough money for for like healthy food and all of these things are making them sick and they were concerned about health care. And people just shared their struggles their lives their information with us. And we were so honored to receive that. We created a report called our people our planet our power. It's all mine. It's amazing. It's brilliant. And it's super accessible and easier to understand and have. And if a politician just picked it up lawmaker picked it up and just implemented everything that we recommended we think that there will be in a better place.

[00:22:26] And so through that process we came to to do displacement and displacement work to understand gentrification and the impacts of climate change. When we displace communities and people from the place where they've built a home a community a place where they know their neighbors like them said in his video. He like however many block radius he had everything he needed from his family and the people to grow up with all of that creates resilience. When a economic disaster physical climate disaster or any of those things Lake District strike people they should be able to have that community to bounce back. But when that is no longer there and everyone's been displaced to can't or to Komara different places. It leaves people vulnerable and unable to come back from that. But it also puts them in a place to be actively contributing to climate change right. So like driving from here to there not having public transit because most of the places that communities of color are displaced who don't actually have like transit system that's really connected. I mean Seattle is probably like the best example of like sort of well connected. As long as we know as soon as we get to the west east to west. But the places don't have that. So it creates people having to drive more stay in their cars more are not really getting that contact from their communities. So we're fighting for a world that is just in the most. I don't want the basic sense I don't want people to just survive. I want people to thrive. We want people to have healthy and affordable homes and have access to good transit and healthy jobs and good paying jobs and good food.

[00:24:17] And that's kind of like what we're working towards in my work. I want I'm going to have I'm ready to close because I feel like I've been talking a lot and it's weird to hear yourself talk anyway. You don't need to hear all these things going on in my brain.

[00:24:33] Right now we're working on a campaign called Don't display stuff around a community elder who's done so much work an unbelievable amount of work in Seattle and in the United States. Her apartment is being torn down and being built a 44 an affordable small Efficiency Unit. And we're trying to find a place for her to land and try to talk about larger issues of displacement and how the city is changing and becoming more transitional housing versus community based and welcoming to elders and people of color and all of that. So yeah that's all for me.

[00:25:12] Thank you for listening Hi I'm chuckling with the CD coalition the Chinatown International District coalition.

[00:25:28] Humboldt's not hotels is actually a phrase from maybe Uncle Bob Santos has anyone heard of him. Yeah

[00:25:37] Yeah great right.

[00:25:39] He was an activist who passed away recently within the last few years actually and during the stadium construction. I think in the 1970s ish there was the building of the kingdom which is now replaced by the individual Safeco and CenturyLink stadiums right. But they had the slogan hummed Hombach was not hot dogs and so we have our own twist on it now. I had this fellowship two summers ago where I spent a lot of time in San Francisco's Chinatown and I was struck by when I was walking to work every morning. They have this park called Port Portsmouth's square and it's always like populated with a bunch of elders doing exercises and dancing and congregating right. But we don't really have the sort of public space here and all talk about this a little bit. So our coalition came together last year actually in a coalition. Now for just over a year Cynthia brother is actually right over here wrote an article in the Seattle Globalist called well grandma have a place in the New Chinatown International District. So she found out that there was a hotel being built on lane and Eighth Street in the Chinatown International District. And the problem with this hotel there are many problems with this hotel. But it's supposed to be 14 stories tall. Nothing else in the city is that tall like even close to being that tall. And that property was actually a property that local nonprofit wanted to buy to expand their elder services. It was legacy house I believe that wanted to create more housing and services for the elders that live there.

[00:27:38] But they were outbid by this hotel developer called Hotel concepts. So now they're planning for this hotel a picture on the left is a picture of the CD from Smith Tower in 1996. So this is a kind of anatomy of what the hotel looks like. It's supposed to be condos and market rate apartments. There will also be like hotel spaces of course and then a retail space at the bottom. The buildings surrounding this hotel include can on a Elder Services Center. Denise Louie Education Center. I see us international community health services which is like a clinic with a lot of like culturally appropriate and language appropriate services. I grew up going to I actually grew up in Renton and then came to Seattle to go to the Yuda yeah the traffic that would be introduced to this hotel area would definitely disrupt the services that these nonprofits can provide to their residents of course and their visitors rate. It's it's a lot and we found that by the further we go into this work the

more we developments that we're finding out about well I'll talk about this a little later to some history of the city. So the city as a community actually started out in Pioneer Square and has moved to its current location because of gentrification. So when Smyth's tower which is pictured on the left was built that was the highest building west of the Mississippi or something at the time of its building. And that raised the property values in that area which had to which meant that the folks that were living there at the area had to move elsewhere.

[00:29:52] They couldn't afford to live there anymore. And then now we find the CIA in its current location a lot of the labor site came to live in the city came to work in the logging industry. Canneries in Alaska and building the railroads. A lot of the hotels that we see in the city are named after railroads like the N.P. hotel Northern Pacific Railroad for instance. And then there was the construction of the Interstate 5 which tore down a whole bunch of Chinatown businesses and Japanese owned businesses. It just cut straight through. In the 1960s 1950s as a result of white flight to the suburbs ways to get back into the city and out of the city and it seemed like it was irrelevant to the government at the time. That and now really that people had livelihoods and lives built in these communities and had everything they needed. It was just tore down. We have a couple of parks and the I.D. but what you will notice about the ID is there is a lack of green space and we have one of the lowest tree canopy areas in the neighborhoods in Seattle which is not like a coincidence right. If you look at Hay Park for instance the new renovations there it's like all concrete new gateway that has anyone seen the new gateway into. Yeah it's a spectacle. It reminds me of like the if you've seen like the Suza Low Library and Taine Hall at Yuda how they're supposed to be really reflections of each other.

[00:31:44] I'm not sure what the gateway is doing but anyway. So this is a displacement risk index of basically like you are more likely to get evicted if you are a renter. If English as a second language you don't have a college degree. If you have a working class income. So Seattle's income average right now is seventy thousand dollars. Most people in the id make around 20000. If you are close to buses light rail or street car if you have parks community centers libraries in the vicinity you are more likely to be evicted from where you live. And this is all true of the city. We have all of these things right. The majority of city residents are renters. They've been there for generations and generations. We have an elder in the Coalition's Sue who grew up in the ID and she talks about like how there were children playing in Canton alley which is where the wing Luke Museum is right. What was traditionally the set up of like your average business in the ID was storefronts at the bottom and then families would live up top rate. But we don't really see that anymore. Families business owners and their families have to live out in like Ken Renton. They've been displaced. So what do we want to see in the I.D. now. We had our first community meeting on March 11th last year. And time and time again we've heard from elders that they are concerned about the lack of community that they're seeing.

[00:33:22] People don't speak their language anymore and they don't know how to communicate with these folks. If they don't speak English. Ninety percent of our attendees felt bad were very bad about this hotel on Nathan Lane. Seventy percent of our attendees felt bad or very bad about recent occurrences in our neighborhood. Recent occurrences like developments changes going out in the neighborhood and so on 60 percent of our attendees felt bad were very bad about the city's

community engagement on these issues. Historically and now still we see the government not our city officials not representing our voice. What our people want they just come in and maybe they'll talk to nonprofits who claim to represent the people who live in their neighborhood but really also on their end. They have not been engaging the community enough either. So that's where we wanted to step in as a more progressive voice in the neighborhood as the voice of accountability to say that enough's enough we need more community engagement we need more spaces for community. We want intergenerational spaces. We want folks to be able to talk to each other and build lives that can support their families and their needs. So with like the displaced of campaign for instance we've been calling for a moratorium on affordable housing development in the in Seattle. So what this would mean is if you are trying to build market rate housing in Seattle we want an end to this. For now we are calling for a moratorium because we have not seen enough engagement from the city for instance.

[00:35:07] We don't know what the impacts of all these developments are going to be. So we want more studies being done from the cities part. Right. They have tons of funding for engagement but we don't know where this funding goes. We don't know how they're spending it and that's part of the issue too is a lack of transparency. Also we want more affordable housing in the CBD. They say that in the historic core of the CBD which is not affected by the recent up zoning that's been in Seattle that folks who live in this historic core won't be displaced but we don't know how can we trust them. What have they given us to trust them in the past now. We want to support the international specifiers festival review district board expansion. So what the ISRG does is they are in charge of rejecting or approving the external modifications to buildings in the third purview. And right now they only oversee the Chinatown International District. So we want them to expand into Little Saigon so that they can have a say as to what happens there as well. These are community meetings too so folks are welcome to come and like show up and let them know what your thoughts are to. And we want community based models of land ownership. So this is something we're exploring as well. Developers don't have our interests in mind. Many times the developers don't even come from Washington state which is like what's happening there.

[00:36:48] But yeah if they are coming into our communities and changing the face of our communities that we need to have a say in how these communities are changed. That's it for now. These are ways to stay in touch with us.

[00:37:01] Thank you everyone to see you all tonight.

[00:37:14] Thanks to all public library and pseudo Barthel and soda VITTA and Ahmer Krishan for having me. And it's such an honor to be here for this panel is amazing panelists.

[00:37:28] So O wearing the same shirt.

[00:37:32] Berisik Oh and if anyone got that Bruce Lee reference and noble high school I went to I guess come see me after I think I have a sticker in my purse so I can give to you. But if I happened to go to high school with you you're disqualified. Yeah. So bashing Seattle. It documents the

disappearing local small businesses and gathering spots and communities of Seattle. But it's also a love letter to the people and the places and the histories that have given this city soul. And I also want to acknowledge that we're on stolen Duwamish in Squamish land and what I'm documenting on gashing Seattle is a very limited amount of time. But it's also nothing new. I mean we've been displacing people and burning down longhouses you know ever since the first so-called Pioneers came here in 1851. But I believe that there are some parallels in the process and the narrative that we see around displacement today that's very much a legacy and a product of how the first peoples were displaced from land. So when I started bashing Seattle in 2016 it was mostly out of those personal needs are just like start taking pictures of stuff that I saw disappearing all around me at this really rapid rate. And people asked me a lot. What was it that pushed me to basically start the project. And so I wanted to share with you my very first post and this is from a Filipino restaurant that was on Capitol Hill called entires and there was a drag performer. Her name is Latasha Monella who worked there and every Friday she would do this epic like three hour one woman drag show. It was just incredible. And there is a rent hike on the space so the owner be nice Uncle Ernie had to close. So this is from the very last night and the last performance that Natasha did there. It's a video of her performing the song and I'm telling you I'm not going from Dreamgirls.

[00:39:47] And I really hope this plays because otherwise I'm going to have to sing it nobody nobody wants that.

[00:40:23] So as you can see Tashi was surrounded by friends and fans and Nyes was this very special place that existed at the intersection of the Beacon Hill community and Filipino community and the Asian American and the queer community and it was just a really unique space that I mean it was very uniquely Seattle. So I just wanted to capture that and share that as a way of saying you know look at what we're losing and these are the places that really matter. So I just kept hosting and it kind of grew from there and got its own momentum and I found that Instagram was a good platform to use because the process of change and gentrification is so visual so I'll share a sampling of some of the polls that I tend to do or themes her other I guess pretend that a house hard enough to or organizations could I do because honestly I'm just usually just trying to keep up with all of the things that are disappearing.

[00:41:25] So all the posts that are tributes to iconic Seattle institutions they might not typically be seen as landmarks or iconic in the way that space needle is or something but you know they work to the families and the communities I grew up going to these spots. So for example bowling lanes by Lonnie Lane sunset imperial lanes. Anyone remember going to those.

[00:41:50] Yeah yeah it's all do stuff like that.

[00:41:54] They might be more throwback typos or they might be more recent closures so I've done for example like old spaghetti factory or the hurricane or loosening of China.

[00:42:07] Then another one is use history records that used to be on Queen Anne before that yeah. Before that it was a tower records and then in 2013 they had a huge rent hike and had to close. Now

it's a chase bank so I've wanted to share a couple of comments that folks left on the easy street post at goeey ducks commented. I bought my first LP here and I was there the day they tore the building up. This loss still hurts. I'm a rad dude commented I used to work there and napped under the classical slash soundtrack section.

[00:42:48] So these type of post you know people will leave really personal comments about how they met their spouse their or practically raise their kids there. And that's an aspect of running that she's bashing Saúl that I really enjoy because there's this collective story sharing that happens and then also pulls some places that are deeply tied to local communities and cultures that are being especially affected by gentrification displacement for example. This is a sign posted at Poney which is a gay bar on Capitol Hill that says attention. This is a gay bar a very gay bar.

[00:43:22] If you aren't queer or respect for Ally get lost. P.S. This isn't as you were not your pets. This is obviously reflecting and calling out a lot of the demographic changes and the loss of safe spaces that have come along with the gentrification of EI here's a picture of prominent Red Apple which was recently demolished I'm not going to say too much about that.

[00:43:44] I'm really excited that Joel from shelf life story is his hero. She's going to speak more on that. But I did want to share. So there's a bashing Seattle pop up that's going on right now. Shameless plug done at the generation store in Pike Place Market through the end of this month and there's a big a 15 foot wall display where folks can put up post it's about what they miss about Seattle or respond to a particular picture so the picture of the Red Apple is included there and I just want to share a couple of things that folks left on the post it's best mexican food section. The side of White Center. The clerks knew us and always said hello rapee frowny face the bumping tunes always had me dancing while I shopped and because I don't want to just always post super depressing stuff on the couch. I'll try to have suggestions for proactive things up post and do so for example Small Business Saturdays. I'll try to highlight small businesses or people of color on businesses and I'll also post positive examples and share wins so anyone who's done organizing knows that it's important to share wins and victories along the way so people can see that it's possible. So one example is when the building that housed mama's Mexican kitchen on Second Avenue one historic landmark status after a grassroots fight from the community in Belltown made up of residents and workers and artists down there.

[00:45:10] That's an ongoing fight.

[00:45:14] Yeah. So there's just a few examples of the post that I've done. It's been a couple of years I'm still kind of experimenting with things. But at this point I think I have a few general objectives. The first one is to just cultivate awareness and keep people talking about this issue.

[00:45:32] It is essentially history and appreciation for these places to facilitate community building whether that's online or off line or connecting the two.

[00:45:42] And then for folks who are moved by the stuff to encourage them to get engaged activated and use whatever tools they have to do so whether that's art or organizing getting more involved in the political process what have you. So I mean I do post a lot of pictures of buildings and spaces on vanishing Seattle but what's really important to me is what happens inside of those spaces and communities and the people that are attached to those places and how those spaces can foster community or even help make the survival of those communities possible. So if you're interested in following along and join the conversation front social media vehicles to get a hold of me please feel free to message me and I'll look forward to continue the conversation.

[00:46:42] So I'm Jill Freedberg with the shelf life community Story project and we are recording oral history interviews with current and former residents of the Central Area neighborhood and sharing those stories through various mediums community events and upcoming podcasts. Our Web site and some other mediums that I'll talk about later.

[00:47:07] The reason that we're doing that work is because we want to interrupt some problematic narratives that are accompanying the gentrification and displacement that are taking place in the Central District which are narratives that are fueling behaviors that are making it difficult for established residents of the Central District primarily people of color. African-American families make it difficult for them to stay in their homes and stay safe and thrive.

[00:47:40] The real story of this central area is a story of innovation and community leadership creativity resistance. It's the story of a thriving micro economy of small businesses primarily owned by people of color. A story of solidarity and interdependence and tenacity in response to every obstacle that the city of Seattle could place in the path of central area residents which were not obstacles experienced elsewhere in the city for the better part of the 20th century. So housing discrimination in the form of racist covenants and redlining predatory lending job discrimination inadequate infrastructure racist schools excessive and violent policing. To these obstacles. For decades the residents of the central area responded with innovation and community leadership and resistance.

[00:48:48] So much so that not only did the central area become a thriving community but there are many people who would assert in a coma whose film we started the evening with asserts as well that bad experience of thriving in the face of all those obstacles made Seattle the city that it is today.

[00:49:15] And so when we interview people these are the stories that we hear we hear about the obstacles and the hardships but we're also hearing about this experience of thriving and this experience of interdependence and community leadership. We're also hearing a lot of anger and grief and experiences of isolation as this community that made Seattle the city that it is is physically displaced and torn apart which is where those narratives that I mentioned come in.

[00:49:51] The narrative of the real story of this central area is being replaced with a narrative of race sure that that is a narrative of discovery and in integrity of Riv narrative of revitalization.

[00:50:07] So it's the it's the new resident who says you know when I got here there really wasn't very much here but my presence is making it better. Right. This is complete lack of historic context lack of understanding and knowledge about what it took to build this neighborhood.

[00:50:27] What it took to build this neighborhood where the people came from who did that work and what the impact is on displacing that community. So some of the behaviors that accompany that narrative there at all levels right if you're a city planner and you believe that what's happening in the central area is a revitalization that will influence the decisions you make around growth policy and zoning. If you are a developer and you believe that you are on the vanguard of revitalization that will influence how you treat the neighborhood and how you treat people in their homes and how much you pay them for your homes and if you are a new neighbor and you believe that you are on that vanguard of revitalization. It will affect how you treat your neighbors whether you're calling the police on the family barbecue that has happened every Sunday for 50 years or failing to patronize the established businesses and only patronizing the shiny new ones. So there are a whole host of behaviors that are not abstractions that are very destructive behaviors that are accompanying these narratives of discovery and revitalization. If you discover something it sort of implies that it's all for you and you can do whatever you want with it and that is how people who have three four generations of community building and family in the neighborhood are are experiencing it.

[00:51:51] So what.

[00:51:54] And one more piece of it that I think is also important is that the children of those families in all likelihood will not grow up in the central districts they are being geographically separated from that story. The real story of of who built the Central District and how hard that work was and they need that story more than they need. The story of how Seattle kicked that community out of the city which is essentially what's happening at this time. So we for 18 months we had a space next door to the Red Apple at twenty third and Jackson that we used as a community story booth that people could come into during opening hours and volunteer to share to be interviewed to share stories about the neighborhood. It was a fortnight had been a subway so we did our best to spruce it up a little bit. In addition to interviewing people we think we did about 65 interviews in that 18 months with sort of simultaneously seems like a lot and not very much at all. We also had some for culture funding to hire artists to work on the project in this pictures Henry Luke who's a South an artist who did a series of portable murals depicting elements of stories that people have shared in their interviews.

[00:53:11] And then we did a bunch of free workshops training people in audio recording and interviewing techniques which felt like one of the more effective aspects of that stage of the project is that people who took the workshops then brought people into this space that they wanted to interview from the neighborhood family members neighbors and so that kind of felt like an X expanding circle of sort of story web and capacity. And then we use this space for some community events open houses that sort of thing. But we have we've lost that space the promenades being torn down this week to make room for some Paul Allen's latest round of market rate apartments. But the work as shelves life's work is still very much ongoing. Myself and my wife Anna and Dominique Meeks are frantically editing the shelf life radio series and podcast and the project will return to doing neighborhood interviews this

summer. Different locations around the neighborhood like neighborhood churches and senior centers and that sort of thing.

[00:54:17] One of the biggest things be new residents should value is the fact that people help this space. The central area as we know was redlined. It's the only place that African-Americans could live for a very long time. And the care and love that came with the residency is evident. It's not a wasteland it's a very well cared for community. Geographically aesthetically and that came from African-Americans Asians all of the people who could only live in a certain area. It's like because you just discovered something doesn't mean it's new.

[00:55:05] So visit the website because all of the stories there could say all of that way better than I ever could.

[00:55:11] Thanks.

[00:55:20] Had Don. Cynthia and Jill really appreciate your work. So at this time we're going to do some facilitated discussion questions feel free to answer whoever wants to answer or take these questions. Many of our presenters are organizers and storytellers. How are you thinking through issues of social change related to who gets to speak up when and how.

[00:55:49] And as it concerns gentrification migration displacement and the changing I think this question is very interesting to me because usually when there's the discussion of displacement comes up everybody just jumps in and they're like oh yeah I remember when Seattle was like this and this and there's never like a no room or ever any room for people who have been displaced.

[00:56:17] I think this that shelf life project is really important just like here from people who've lived someplace for so long and they're being displaced or have been displaced. I think the thing that Vivian said is that just because you discovered something doesn't mean it's new and that should be the theme of any discussion as it relates to the gentrification displacement racism all of these things just because it's just now happening to you doesn't mean it's new.

[00:56:46] Since the election I won't say any more about that. But a lot of people have been like coming into organization coming it's different organizing spaces that I'm in been like oh my god this is happening. And I just want to take a moment because we've been living in this for as long as if this was the thing right. So just because it's you're discovering it doesn't mean it's new. I think in conversations when we're talking about issues that impact people the people most impacted have the answers right. Because like for example racism ice I spend it not an ordinary amount of time thinking about how to end racism right. Like how to stop it how to whether my solutions are the solutions that we need is a different question. I would say yes but whatever.

[00:57:38] I think when you have an issue that's on your mind all the time your solutions are probably better than people who don't experience racism on a daily basis or on the other side of the perpetuating racism which is same for gentrification and displacement. People who are gentrifying

don't have any of the answers just because they think it's like new doesn't mean it's like they think it's exciting doesn't mean it's new. So I think the people who have the answers and who we should make the spaces for are the people most impacted by whatever issue we are discussing Yeah.

[00:58:18] Very much agree with what you're saying. I'll also add like the psychological impacts are real. Right. Gentrification is racialized and so is you know the psychological impacts that come from racism.

[00:58:35] Oh yeah. When when you are in your communities and it everything you see about you is changed. You don't know the people who live with you anymore.

[00:58:45] Like what kind of impact is that have. Could you imagine. Like basically like has anyone ever moved to a new place and been like Los Lonely Where am I. I don't know anyone here. Could you imagine that being you're like everyday life as you don't even have to move. Right. The people around you are moving to you. But like yeah I guess as for this question though. Beyond the obvious like language barriers and cultural barriers or whatever you want to call them barriers. I don't know if barriers is the right word. I say that because at least four like Asian American folks we've been socialized or the society we live in has been has seen us in a certain way right. And so when you look at like an elder or an Asian American elder you might see them less oh so cute so friendly or whatever but like Kodama was saying earlier. Once you start talking to these people they have a lot to say. You just have to listen and like don't bring in your own eyes. Yes. Thank you. Byass to that conversation. If you just sit down to listen to these folks you will learn a lot. They have a lot of history and knowledge to share that they bring with them not just having lived in Seattle but also from like being displaced from their homelands originally.

[01:00:15] For instance so this idea of and this practice of interrupting dominant narratives is super compelling to me. I'm also such a fan of shelf life stories. I mean the narratives around change and around notions of progress and who gets to tell his stories. I mean that's very much shaped by those who already have money and power and privilege. And I think that those processes and those narratives need to get more democratized. I think one of the main things that I thought was common thread I think running through when I try to do things in Seattle is try to raise questions and challenge assumptions about what do we mean when we think about and we talk about progress and who gets to set that definition. What does that look like. Who benefits from that and who gets totally screwed over by it. Similarly like us notion of world class city that we always hear ascribed to Seattle and how this is this idea that we're just like barreling blindly towards. Well who defines that and how do we measure what is world class. I mean do we measure that in the number of skyscrapers or now we have the third highest homeless population or do we measure it by how well we take care of our people. So I think the more people that are raising questions around equity and access and accountability and talking about their own reality and using doubt as a foundation to hold people in power accountable.

[01:01:56] I think the more of that the better so since shelf life is working specifically with people's stories this question of voice and representation. There's like there's a lot around that. I mean one of

the motivators for me on this project is that I feel like these narratives and also that the actual processes of gentrification and displacement are expressions of white supremacy and so if it's the work of white people to challenge white people around white supremacy then challenging these expressions of that for me is one of my motivators on this project. Making it an oral history project as opposed to a documentary film or some other sort of form of nonfiction storytelling feels like the sort of least tampered with way of transferring stories and sharing stories. We have a pretty involved process on shelf shelf life where once someone has come in and shared a story and then they're given a word for word transcript of their interview and given as much time as they need which some people you know a year later still have their transcripts but are given as much time as they need to go through and delete and omit anything from it that that they wish they hadn't said and then also to choose the ways in which their story is shared. Like yes to the podcast no to the graphic novel or what have you. So that is definitely not a process that's used in a lot of like in journalism or documentary filmmaking. So that has been another way to sort of experiment with dealing with some of the issues around representation and voice.

[01:03:48] And then another thing that we have experimented with and I mean the entire project is an experiment but another thing we have experimented with shelf life is to the extent that there has been you know ebbs and flows of grant money and donations to the project that has whenever there is money to pay people on the project that the people of color working on a project are the ones getting paid to sort of challenge patterns of white artists and academics building careers and bank accounts off of other people's stories and other people's experiences so that's been somewhat sustainable. But but but I think it's a really important conversation that needs to continue around. You know extraction and and and how do we I guess one more thing I'll say about that is that we have really we give people plenty of time in their interviews to express anger and grief. But we're really trying to center the stories of how people have thrived in the Central District and not make a shelf life like consumption of pain and hardship but really a celebration of the work that people have done to stay put and thrive OK this one's a bit of a brainstorming part of the challenge of the kind of work that you all are doing is that it often depends on groups of people who are already pulled in many directions often small groups of folks with limited resources for connecting and scaling up.

[01:05:24] If you could imagine and have some kind of broader public or collective support structure to bolster your work maybe a specific set of institutional resources structures for a certain kind of cooperative outcome dialogue so forth. What would it be. Why you mixed up the order.

[01:05:41] I'm saying this is kind of oh yeah I think the the thing that pops into my mind as when I read this like many times as you were reading aloud is the work that we do. GREENE is we do kind of work but it's very centered on people of color been impacted by our issue. But the issues that we work on are issues that I get often is just an influx of white people who are like I'm interested in doing this. How can I do this right. Which is great but you still have to I don't want to create a space that replicates systemic oppression. Right. So it's the one thing that I could ask for right now is maybe like a space where white people can go realize how messed up the world is learn and learn the racist tendencies and everything else and then be ready to cooperate with people of color and like learn that where we are all trying to end systemic oppression for ourselves. Right. Like I don't want you to

learn about racism. So you can save me and like all the little poor children in Africa by the way Africa is a continent not a country just putting that out there to do that instead of just thinking about ending racism and white supremacy to save yourself.

[01:07:03] Right. Because it is damaging for everyone including white people even though you get to build lives and have a great time and not get pulled over by the police and not be terrorized by these things. There still legs like psychological damage that happens to just believing that you're better than everybody else. So learn unlearn racists. I don't like the systemic things for yourself learn that you just want to be free yourself so that you can cooperate me cooperate with me and other people of color and not feel like you're coming in like parachuting in to save all of us. I mean obviously money always good to have other resources. I mean like if we can make time like double instead of like you know just 48 hours instead of 24 I mean like that like that's just like a little bit impossible. But that's two things that I would ask for is donate your money and donate your time when you are ready.

[01:08:06] Yeah I guess we'll continue to go down the the money part is very important.

[01:08:12] I think like for instance at this event you know pay your speaker is right. Don't just invite people to come and give you their time and not like help them in a way. Right. It's not enough just to give a platform to someone and feel like that's your work. Your work is done here. I guess so. Also say coalition building is very important. I think a lot of folks who have been like politicized or woken up by Trump want to like jump into the movement and be like how can I help them and sometimes they go to create new groups or like they think that they can just they have the solution. And when I say white folks right we all think we have the solution to something. But we aren't special. Folks have been doing this work for a long time and I would encourage folks who are new to look around you and see what's already happening and support folks effort if you like see maybe you like a problematic group in your neighborhood and you don't like necessarily agree with them. How about instead of making your own group to counteract that. You joined that group and you change it from within and work on your own whatever issues that you're seeing. Within the coalition the CIC coalition we have a lot of folks come from all sorts of backgrounds and all they do all sorts of things so we have folks who are more like on the city and like urban planners for instance we have folks more like me from like community organizing backgrounds more like grass roots sort of work. And we have all found like the benefits of coalition work to be very important.

[01:10:06] Yeah.

[01:10:11] I would like a sea of librarians to help. There's just like a lot of data and ephemera and things that are just really exciting to work with a bunch of librarians on a project like shelf life and you know money for this reason said it was talking about before that. Like at least on this project we're not asking anybody to work for free and which means sometimes no work gets done and have to be okay with the slow motion model and the librarian piece like partner is partnerships with universities are challenging and we've had some conversations about this already partly because of what you were just talking about Chuck which is you know how do you how do institutions partner with communities and not sort of inherently extract their cultural work in a way that just ends up getting somebody's

tenure or fellowship or something so finding ways for established institutions to work with community organizations in ways that are really mutually supportive and beneficial.

[01:11:23] So I've found this question pretty challenging but I also appreciate it because I don't know. I think it forced him to sit down and think about it try to think it through a bit more. I mean I do honestly struggle sometimes with like what is my lane. And some people try to pull me into like these really like this rabbit hole of like housing policy issues and I'm like you know I wanted to work but it was interesting that we all brought up money too. Because one way I try to approach it was like oh what would I do if someone was like here's a million dollar grant. Not that you know. Money is the answer to everything. But I think for me I would like to figure out are there ways that's bashing Seattle could better amplify efforts that are already happening whether that's other folks voices or community led efforts to support different local organizing that's happening. And then if it went the other way like say if there's particular post that folks are moved by that could somehow be a catalyst or I don't know maybe there'd be like this network or like writing team of like rapid response organizers that you know that might want to respond to what resonates with them. But another thing that I'll share that I've gotten I've heard a lot through folks commenting on the platform is just the barriers around. There's a lot of people that feel similarly about issues of gentrification displacement but there's not necessarily a lot of knowledge about what concretely can be done or even worse there's this feeling of hopelessness or powerlessness I think is really awful.

[01:13:14] But I think some of the points of intervention are just really not accessible or super technical it's like you almost have to be a policy wonk to understand this stuff. Just one example in September I partnered with architecture firm for design and Emperor square that asked people about the design review process and those big notice of proposed land use action boards and so people will answer the questions. Have you noticed or read one of these. Yeah that's probably a lot of people have but much less people participated in the public comment process or in that whole process and for those that did they felt like it didn't really matter make a difference. But I mean there is good organizing happening obviously and you know stuff that folks are doing in their neighborhoods. But sometimes it can feel like it can be siloed as I've heard people say that if there were some sort of citywide vehicle where people could connect and do you know peer learning so they're not just feel like they're starting from scratch because folks have you know come up with really good strategies and if there was a way to I don't know have a brain trust or something where folks could share that knowledge. I've heard from from various folks that that would be helpful.

[01:14:34] One last question before we open up a. When we look around for solutions for some of the things that have come up over our discussion what are the primary things that an everyday person can do to make a difference.

[01:14:48] I think talking to your family about issues that you care about I think when we go and try to understand what happened in 2016 and how we've got to be where we are today is a lot of people who did not have conversations that they needed to have right. So don't just move away from small town USA to some big city and forget about your folks who still have other racist sexist homophobic

islamophobic all the other things Worldview's writes uncomfortable to have this conversation with the people you care about who raised you you admire.

[01:15:22] But I think that's like just a conversation for you every day. And when you realize as a white person or as a person from a different community who's gentrifying a certain area and you realize that you're part of the problem. I mean don't turn around and forget about it and pretend it's not you. Or call the police on the people who've been having their barbecue for 50 years or like follow your black neighbors because you think they're somehow going to break into your house or break into your car or creating that atmosphere where people feel unsafe in their communities. They realize that you are a part of the problem and then go from there. Right. If you're ignoring that part of being a part of the problem it's very difficult for you to try to maneuver that in a healthy way for you and for the people who live in your who live in the community that you are now part of. And I think it's really important to just have discussions when you are not a part of a group that's oppressed. With all the other people who are not a part of that group right.

[01:16:20] So when you're sitting in your locker rooms and you're like about to play some violence for think about and that one guy makes that joke about Lokoja only a sexy Tony Danza yes. But like I was there you were just like you know that's that's actually rape that's problematic don't make those jokes and if they don't do that and go make sure check in with that person that person calls the police on you you're totally a rapist and then you become that person because then if a woman is like actually you know I think they might be raped. Now this is just locker room talk like whatever. Right. Just like brushing off that person who is a part of that minority group. Same for racist comments race Illig don't touch people's heads if you see your friend doing that. Tell us tell them that's racist. Don't make some comments about the Muslim person in your group being related to Osama bin Laden. That's just not real unless it is. And that's unfortunate.

[01:17:12] And then like all the other like little comments that just like really just like grate on me and like are difficult to make it difficult for me to maneuver society right. And that might seem like something that's so small but it's like it goes a long way and building your knowledge and trying to and the systems of the is with us. The big thing that I will say is Google things right. So if you find there's something you know you're interested in. You have a friend who might know all those things. Don't try to mind them for their information. Google it. Get some basic understanding and you're like you know what this is all the articles that I read and I still have this one little thing that I just don't understand that person if they feel like it will be like. All right let's come in and buy me a cup of coffee and I'll tell you all about it. Right. So Google it. Because Google isn't really good. Just like put it in somebody have already thought about it and filled in the information. So those are the things that an everyday person can make a difference.

[01:18:20] I think a common vein within all the panelist here and I think ultimately you like community organizing is discussions talking to people. Right. The more we talk to people the more we get to know them and I think especially with like what I always come back to is the model minority myth of Asians always being like middle class hardworking. That's how you get up the hierarchy and it's it's really not true. But we don't know this until we get to learn about the nuances in individual stories. For

instance I did my recent internship with Appollo the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance right. Who would have known that there were Asian American union workers.

[01:19:07] I don't know that's not the kind of story that comes to mind sometimes when you think of Asian American people. And I think the same or similar things can be said about the stories of the people that we work with. You really just need to listen to what's happening and not try to assert our own views or our own conceptions of what's there when it's not really there necessarily. What can we do to make change.

[01:19:43] It really it takes work and I think that work is in the form of discussions. Showing up at your community meetings. Like I said the International Special Review district board a lot of these boards of the city have community meetings and we need to know what's happening. Part of that includes like not letting the city just do business as usual and sweep things under the rug or get away with doing things without engaging in proper community engagement. Yeah that's what they want to do right. With the mandatory housing affordability for instance M.H. which was the zoning of the neighborhoods and in Seattle right when they came to the city what they wanted to do was passed the MHL as fast as possible. And we as part of the coalitions work around it was slowing that process down saying Look you haven't done you haven't engaged our community you haven't asked folks how this would change their livelihoods. So that's what we want you to do. We cohosted like a town hall with some nonprofits in the city including interim interim Community Development Association Bay and we invited our city council members to come into the neighborhood and get yelled at by the community members right. If that's what it takes then yeah but we also have to continue to follow up with these folks cause God knows that they're not going to keep themselves accountable.

[01:21:32] So I think we all have our own power and agency that sometimes we underestimate whether that's on an organized level or a personal level and it can be as simple as the choices we make every day of where we shop or what type of small businesses we support. And I think a lot of it you know like Chuck said about organizing is like talking to people or you know just getting involved in civic life and you know getting outside of your own socioeconomic strata your own network in supporting places without feeling like you have to change it. And you know using the respect of power and privilege that we each have to be mindful of the impact that we have and also to understand that I mean this is light for the white folks like you might not personally go to the bodega or the beauty salon or the Chinese herb shop but you know folks can appreciate the need that they that they serve in their community and how they support the existing ecosystem even if they're not catering to your own personal needs.

[01:22:44] So like speaking up for that even if it's not something that you know you have a personal self-interest or benefit and just I guess I'll highlight just a couple of examples of efforts community based efforts that are going on now that encourage you to check out one is friends of historic Belltown. I mentioned the landmark status that was one for mama's Mexican kitchen. But that whole block on Second Avenue from mamas to Tulis for the crocodiles to Rocco's Lava Lounge Chairs that's anchored by the Wayne apartments and there's an effort now by the developer to basically clear the way to turn that entire block. So friends of historic Belltown has been leading that fight for a

while and they take a holistic approach to preservation where they look at culture preservation and affordable housing for a lot of industry workers down there on the arts community. Another that I'll mention is the artist coalition for equitable development or Seattle AIST. And there they kind of came out of the upstream festival that are our favorite dude Paul Allen put on this past summer and that was really amazing opportunity to leverage that to say hey what about you know all the actual artists and cultural workers that enabled you to even have a festival like this.

[01:24:11] You know you're simultaneously gentrifying us out of our neighborhoods.

[01:24:15] Yes they are terrorists and you know what his development at 20 or Jackson that he wants to make into a big Twelve's you know for the team that he owns. So you know they're talking about ways to do development in an equitable way in a way that is culturally inclusive and not just doing some really awesome creative stuff having a lot of events and you know taking on the both of them or taking on these big developers and trying to get them to the table.

[01:24:43] So community has a say in the development that happens in their neighborhood. Just everything that they said and learn your learn your history and take care of your neighbors and don't be a jerk so let's give another round of applause to our panelists

[01:25:16] So now we have some time for audience questions. And we just ask in the interest of respecting everybody's time that you try to keep questions relatively brief and try to make sure there's a question in the question. We'll have a microphone runners. I'm happy to run to the steps ferocious. So if anybody has a question they can bring a mic up and we'd love to hear from you.

[01:25:44] So like questions like primarily for Cynthia but I'm sure you all have experience with this and I would love to get your input. I have it written down like miss my points. But like what can we do to reconcile the needs to limit displacement preserve culture and the aesthetic value of the city with the needs for like dense affordable housing so that this city can be open to everyone. Sometimes it seems like the preservation perspective can override with the like not in my backyard perspective as well. So you talked about like holistic development and I was wondering if you could expand upon that and talk about like good ways to achieve that in our neighborhoods.

[01:26:21] Yeah that's a lot.

[01:26:23] And I think it's a great question I mean I think sometimes there's false dichotomies that are set up whether it's density versus affordability or NIMBY versus NIMBY or preservation versus livability or whatever. I mean I don't think that these things are mutually exclusive and there are a lot of examples where preservation has happened that it's not just like you're throwing a tarp over an old building and being like nobody touch it ever preserved in amber. I mean those spaces have been utilized like Washington Hall is one example. Yeah were anchors you know had no invoices rising and a lot of great. I mean that took a lot of effort and resources. But it can be done. So we have models to look to where you have a space where this really rich history of our city.

[01:27:22] And it continues to sustain that.

[01:27:29] And I think we also have to go back to our values it's like it's not necessarily at least from me being about anti density or anti development period.

[01:27:38] It's who is it for and whose needs and whose values are prioritizing over others. So I think if we are seeing like a lot more density and what was being built was actually accessible and affordable to the folks that were living around it or used to be maybe living in that exact same spot before it got demolished. I think that would be a different conversation. But again I think a lot of these dichotomies are set up as a way to divide us and make us think that you know what's going to save us is just going to be like supply as a magic bullet and you know neoliberal capitalism and the free market is like the answer to everything and that's a whole nother discussion.

[01:28:23] But you all so much for your work and to all the organizers in the audience and we've got so many local elections that are close by a couple of hundred votes or ten votes or 39 votes. And I just wondered what you what innovative things you're doing with your constituencies to encourage voter registration and voter participation. And and if if you're doing things that have worked if that can help inspire people in the audience think you this is a new button.

[01:29:05] I think I used to work for an organization called the Washington Bus a while ago that focuses on young people voter registration of young people and issues that they care about to make voting accessible to them. And that's where I kind of got politicized to start doing organizing. And I think with our position did really well was highlight the issues that people cared about and gave them a way to plug in. Ray like you care about police brutality. What can we do about that. Who's who's running for office was against us. How can you learn those skills so you can be better prepared for when the ballots come out right. I think what's really important is to community building needs to happen before then. I've been I worked on a lot of candidate campaigns and issue campaigns. And I think the one thing that I would like suggest to anyone who was thinking about running or is planning a campaign is to not do the sticks like the six months between whenever you start until November nothing ever gets done. You won't ever get to the people who have lower voter turnout because you're not really talking to them you're just going around to vote for this person vote for this issue. And that's something that you care about. You don't take the time to make sure that everybody else cares about it too.

[01:30:21] And I really like in the circles of political organizing there is and the campaigns are always like the low propensity voters versus hypersensitive voters and the way that is organized is racist. Like high propensity voters means that you voted in the last four presidential elections. How many of us have been voting like have been voting age in the last four presidential elections. I've only voted in like two. Right. And as I have been like getting into it I I started voting in Obama's second election. So and people you have to make it so that it's accessible to everyone. And I think the way we organize campaigns and run campaigns needs to be different. The people who were running for office need to be different. When Nikita Oliver was running people I never heard talk about voting were voting because she represented them.

[01:31:15] They saw themselves in her race. So I think enough about Legh old white dudes running for office. Enough about people who don't really have connections to community. Running for office for community and more people of color running for office more women of color running for office more intersectionality so that there's skin in the game.

[01:31:35] Like you are running for office and you're gonna make the city better versus I am finished with working and I would like to do something different right. Like that's completely different. That's what I would say.

[01:31:52] So one thing that I think is really interesting and the way we think about narratives in this city is changing is like we have to build all these apartments for people who are moving to the city but we don't really talk about who gets to move to the city. And so I'm really curious if you've heard of projects or specific developments or even just specific kind of storytelling or community based initiatives to build places that people who were displaced get to move to the city or people who are low income get to move to the city because right now we have this concept that all these buildings are going up there just for rich people.

[01:32:28] So like what happens if you're an artist or you're an immigrant or you're a low income and you got displaced and you want to move back or you want to move to the city and do no any projects that are kind of catering to that need this actually you said to the right to move back which is one of our campaign policies that were going to be shameless plug though we're going to be we're still working out and I think that concept like no one was even having that conversation two years ago. Ray my executive director I always talk about it and I'm just like let's just like stop the people who are here from leaving and we can figure the rest of it out. And I think it was the way that right to return came into our campaign is that one dove and her friends were creating the campaign they wanted no displacement from the building. And if the people who lived in the building want to come back to the building in a new form that it is they should be they should have the first right of return. And we're making a policy that says if you're going to displace somebody that person gets to come back at the same rent rate that they were paying a year before you displace them and how we get around the rent control is that the developer pays into a fund and forever until the time they start destroying people's homes for that person.

[01:33:44] So I'm paying a thousand dollars to displace me. Build a fancy new building. I get to move in. You're now charging 2000 you pay the other thousand and I pay that thousand. And that's just kind of how we're going to live here and we're going to work on and we're going to try to introduce it will have a big events invite everybody to hear more about that one project that I know about which is really interesting because I wracked my brain and came up with one is the Mount Baker community building there. I don't really know the exact name. There's a building that is being rent. I don't know if it's a new place it's being renovated and all the folks who live there are like older folks refugees and immigrants. And the place needs to be needs to upkeep. And what they're doing is no one is getting displaced from that building so every single person who lives there now when the new building comes up will have a new place to live. And that's like super innovative and fascinating and I can't wait to see

what that looks like. So then it can be replicated but I don't know of any projects that are being built so that it's affordable for folks to move and Mount Baker Housing Association.

[01:34:54] Thank you so much for that question.

[01:35:00] Hi. I was wondering in what ways you see the legacy of the Duwamish people and their culture and today still in our cultural geography.

[01:35:12] Seattle indigenous culture being reflected in the culture of Seattle's section.

[01:35:16] A really great question of how that I think that may be part of the reason for the hesitancy is that it's not very well or that it's maybe done in ways that are misrepresented. So even like looking at art for example there's a lot of misconceptions around what is called selfish first words like Northwest Coast and conflating all this stuff into this and it of identity. I mean we have a lot of art you know even like Park Square in places that are not from this region. Stolen from Alaska.

[01:36:00] I mean maybe I'll just try to give another plug for a project that I admire which is real Duwamish which is about getting resources and the concept is that we're you know we're on Occupy Duwamish land. So if we wanted to pay rent to the Duwamish that that's some mechanism to do that. And there's of course are also getting real resources and those reasons are going to support the cultural preservation and sovereignty and sustaining the drama. Schreiber's is still fighting for federal recognition. There's just one more thing. Also a plug for a generation and Pike Place Market. One of the only native owned retail stores and the only native owned place in Pike Place where people from around the world come and I think the idea of Seattle is very much associated with indigenous peoples and art. But they're like the only one actually native owned and run and doing so in a way that not about Native folks being in the past or any museum. These are folks who are doing really innovative contemporary art and building the capacity of Native artists who go beyond just like being seen as artisans but to like take their product to market and do stuff on a bigger scale.

[01:37:19] So I don't know if that will answer your question but I would say one thing more more regionally that than Seattle specific which part of the sorry and pardon me I'm getting over this blue thing that everybody got and I'm still a little bit congested. The regional tribes are surging sovereign CIID through. They are coal managers of our resources through to bold decision in the 70s tribes access to certain amount of customary Scooby salmon catches and other types of use resource uses. And the tribes have been using the legal system to exert their sovereignty over at a landscape scale. Everything around Salmon tied to salmon has water water resources and all types of development has impacts on water and water resources and Regulus regular LARRY story features and this has been carried out also through what's most recently through this Colvard case where all these there's all these roads out there and you know there's water streams have have been put into culverts go bypass them and and they won recently in one case to make all these coverts salmon possible. And so it's still bound up in the courts in certain ways but it is one of the examples of how they're using the legal system to third sovereignty on a well on the whole landscape which effect which part that's I'm for one more question before we close out.

[01:39:31] So this has to do with being an empowered empowered citizen. I have friends who work in the city and also like try to stay in touch with development efforts. And they've said to me you know by the time the White Board goes up it's too late to comment. The the decision has been made and so I think that when you talk about you know being empowered begin being connected to the city and asking them you know making comments and so forth if if you already know you're defeated what can you do. What can you do to really make an impact if you already feel defeated.

[01:40:20] I think it depends a lot on who you are. Right. There's always time to comment. Right. So like I don't want to say it's never too late because sometimes it is too late but when the white board comes up and depending on the neighborhood really like if you're in North Seattle and you're a white homeowner I'm sure you can call the mayor and not be like we'll take you right down. But I think there's like there's a process right when if you have if there's 50 more comments on a project that the the the Department of Construction inspection and they get that and they're like OK well maybe you will slow this down instead of just signing this perimeter right off we'll have a community meeting whether or not that community meeting or we call a community meeting but a public hearing whether or not that leg stops the project right then or they find different ways to stop it is like for research depending on who you are. The way we're dealing with it is that we are following along every step said they are. The things are we talking about the environmental impact statement which they didn't do before we had that meeting and there's two different two different review areas right. There's the Administrative Review where they're just like check check check everything is good and then there there's a design review. And the difference is size. The big however the big the project is and the design review phase is longer so potentially gives you more time to stop the project versus the administrative which could go faster. I don't really have like this is how you stop development thing for you because if I did I would have stopped development. But I think it's important to talk about where the development is and the reason why there's not been like crazy amount of zoning in North Seattle communities is because the homeowners want to keep their neighborhood as whatever they think of it. And it's just like it's just like language for we don't want no black and brown people here having bus come to my house.

[01:42:17] Giving people more access to use to use that platform to stop displacement and other places.

[01:42:26] I just add to that I mean I think there's ways to try and work within the system that the city has set up which obviously takes a lot of resources and technical knowledge and time. But I would encourage folks to think about ways to work outside that system and say fuck that system doesn't really work for a lot of people whether that's through direct action or protest or other creative ways that are coming from community. And yeah just approaching it from outside of the system and sort of trying to work inside but inside outside I think together is good because you can throw a lot of you know kind of like wrenches in that process but you don't always follow the rules.

[01:43:09] I also wouldn't I would not undervalue dignity for dignity's sake like being relentless is better than being being defeated. So you know maybe it's too late to comment but if every single

person that walks past that big white board calls in a comment way at least you know that you did. Right. I mean there is there is something to be said for dignity standing up even if you think it won't do anything and I just wanted to say like we don't have to play their game right.

[01:43:46] The game that they've set up is is not meant to benefit our people. And time and time again throughout generations we've seen working class people people of color other marginalized folks have been doing the inside outside thing. But also we have resiliency because of this very system that we've had to. We've been limited in I think a tie back to the previous question about the how have we like incorporated or not incorporated like Duwamish peoples and our work is like the critique of like Marxism from a native standpoint. Right. We are so used to seeing land as property that even communal ownership of land is like if we it's not land is not property.

[01:44:46] I mean this is kind of I don't really have like the knowledge behind this so I'm probably like conflating different native cultures and stuff but to think of land as property as something that we can sit on and gain value and capital from. Is there something to be said about that right. So there's a lot of like if we just look back towards people of color and the ancestral history that we've come from like what did they do differently. What is happening now that we can change. We don't have to continue business as usual. There are ways for us to things for us to create that can better or all of our lives.

[01:45:37] And I also want to thank our presenters Eimer and Christian are gonna close this out but this was an incredible conversation and also if anyone was troubled by the silence that hit the room when we asked about indigenous cultures and how it ties back to conversations about displacement we have a native advisory group that's been working with us and they have encouraged the library to do ongoing programming about native cultures. But for any patrons that are in the audience we have a number of native led community partners. So Chief Seattle Club Daybreak's star red eagle soaring. So I would encourage you to look at the potlatch foundation they fund native groups and that is a victory for myself as someone who does community engagement a really helpful way to helps support and be aligned with native sovereignty. So thank you for that so another round of applause with panelists

[01:46:45] Thank you so much for your time and generosity and insight.

[01:46:50] If people are wondering what the next step is for the broader project that we gesture towards this is the beginning because a lot of potential opportunities have been raised. A lot of potential assets things to organize around issues to keep the conversation going about. So the next step from here is to continue this conversation include additional community stakeholders and other folks who are interested in the spring will be convening a series of workshops some of which will be public. Others will be between different collaborators some of them are already here. And we have a website. People's geography of Seattle dot org. So all one word lowercase no punctuation. What you will see there is simply the logo and a message to watch that space. Because over the coming months the goal is to keep the conversation going and actually start thinking about how we can build capacities and do some of the collective work that you all have already started to point the way to

building on the already existing efforts and resiliency and all the communities that you have spoken about.

[01:48:00] So that's the next step.

[01:48:03] Thank you very much.

[01:48:14] This podcast was presented by The Seattle Public Library and Foundation and made possible by your contributions to The Seattle Public Library Foundation. Thanks for listening.