Place, Emotion, and Environmental Justice in Harlem: June Jordan and Buckminster Fuller's 1965 "Architextual" Collaboration

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. . . you assume the buildings and
the small print roadways and
the cornered accidents
of roof and oozing tar and ordinary
concrete
zigzag. Well.
It is not beautiful.
It never was.
These are the shaven
private parts
the city show
of what somebody means
when he don't even bother
just to say
"I don't give a goddam"
(and)
"I hate you."

—Excerpt from the draft of the poem
"Sweetwater Poem Number One"[1]

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This essay examines the nexus between environmental and social justice as an intervention into the materiality of urban planning in a collaboration between two leading public intellectuals: June Jordan and R. Buckminster Fuller. Both interdisciplinary thinkers and civic environmentalists, they illustrate the concept that "environmental quality and economic and social health are mutually constitutive."[2] I shall situate their project "Skyrise for Harlem," an architectural redesign of Harlem that challenged many of the dominant practices of urban planning in the 1960s, within the paradigm of urban environmental justice, as theorized by Robert Bullard, Dorceta E. Taylor, Lawrence Buell, Joni Adamson, and others. Environment justice activists claim that where we live, work, play, and pray constitutes our environment, and that poor communities and communities of color have been burdened with disproportionate toxic exposures, as well as neglect and discrimination. Environmental justice became "one of the largest and most active social movements in the U.S. . . . addressing the concerns of urbanites and people of color that had been overlooked by mainstream environmental organizations."[3] As Dorceta E. Taylor explains, the movement is made up of thousands of grassroots environmental groups nationwide; prior to the emergence of the environmental justice movement, mainstream environmental organizations were mostly white and middle class.[4] I shall claim "Skyrise for Harlem" as an interrogation of design and affect as a significant intervention into critical environmental justice studies. I've coined the term *architextural* to emphasize architecture as text and text as thickly descriptive, multidimensional (a precomputer version of hypertext), serving as a scaffold on which to build a vision of hope and embodied environments. Jordan originally conceptualized this project as a "threshold" or gateway into new possibilities for Harlem—where she felt there had been "no threshold. In Harlem what does entrance mean? On one side of the door there is the street of no human direction. On the other side is a hallway leading to a life closet of inconsequence . . . the inconsequence of being born only to continue dying."[5]

June Jordan was a poet, essayist, orator, educator, Black English advocate, and social justice activist who died of breast cancer in 2002. She transformed the bounds of self and society with a revolutionary vision and is an unacknowledged poet-philosopher of the urban environmental justice movement. She textually and visually mapped the dimensions of psyche and race, political economy, language and place. Early in her career, Jordan studied architecture and design with Herbert Gans, a leading sociologist of urban planning at the time (at Barnard College in New York City), as a Fellow in Environmental Design at the American Academy in Rome, and as a researcher and writer on housing and economic conditions on the

Lower East Side of Manhattan for Mobilization for Youth.[6] She advocated a transformative urban planning that has never been thoroughly acknowledged or explored as part of her legacy as a poet and thinker; she collaborated in 1964–65 with Fuller, an engineer, architect, mathematician, and poet, best known for his geodesic dome designs and for what he called "Comprehensive Anticipatory Design Science": an attempt to solve humanity's major problems through the use of technology, thus supporting more people with fewer resources.[7] Their redesign of Harlem featured elevated, conical towers supported by central masts with one hundred levels (see figure 1) built over existing housing units containing new dwelling space, parking ramps, and suspension bridges cutting through the towers and creating a connecting road. The plan also included an expansion of green space, more leisure areas, and new thoroughfares. It aimed to keep residents and community intact and to take into account the psychological state of living in an area deemed a ghetto. This architexture challenged typical urban planning schemes of the time and the practice and rhetoric of "slum clearance." In an April 1965 *Esquire* article, Jordan first described Harlem as "life dying inside a closet, an excrescence beginning where a green park ends . . . [I]t is of course a political embarrassment for which no political solution is adequate."[8] She claimed that "Skyrise for Harlem" is the way to "rescue" a quarter of a million lives by completely transforming the environment; she went on to describe the history of Harlem's disenfranchisement, the lack of a master plan for Harlem, and the effects of the recent riots on the psyche of residents. Then, she laid out the full plan of the "radical landscapes" she and Fuller proposed.

What is especially vexing is that Jordan's role in the Harlem-redesign project was minimized or omitted at the time the plan was publicly unveiled in *Esquire* (where Jordan wrote the article under her married name, Meyer, but was not credited in the piece as cocreator). She is also absent from articles that refer to the project, such as one titled "Cone Sweet Home" (18 April 1965) in Fuller's local newspaper, the *Carbondale Illinoisian* (where he was a professor at Southern Illinois University) and even at the Whitney Museum's recent exhibit (New York City, 26 June to 21 September 2008) Buckminster Fuller, Starting with the Universe. The original drawing of the Harlem redesign was featured, but credited to Fuller and his architectural partner Shoji Sadao,[9] and Jordan's name and collaborative role were omitted on the placard that accompanied the illustration.[10] In this essay, I hope to set the record straight by examining the ways in which these two public intellectuals worked together and the result of their synergistic thinking. Jordan and Fuller believed that architectural and spatial

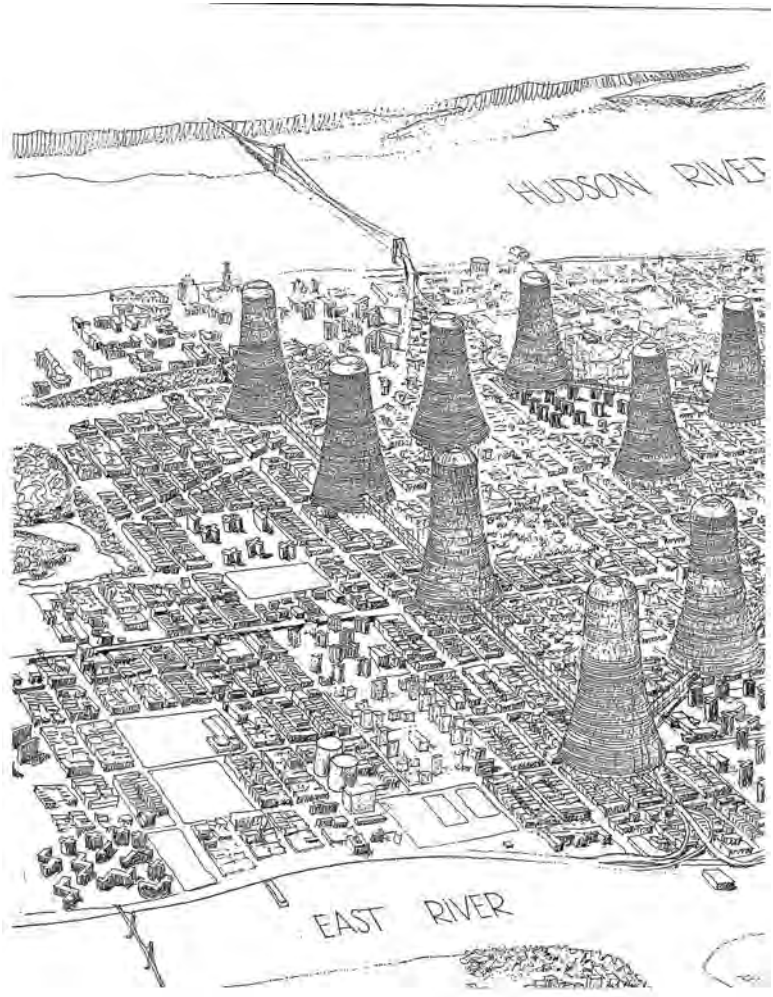

Figure 1. Rendering of "A Skyrise for Harlem," design by Buckminster Fuller and Shoji Sadao, which appeared in the *Esquire* essay written and conceptualized by Jordan.

environments play an essential role in the attitude, self-worth, memory, and life experience within a community, and Jordan knew firsthand that Harlem needed a change, needed hope—her philosophy fits within what Eric Gary Anderson calls the *ecosocial,* which focuses on "local communities that prepare the way for critical discussion of the blighted, traumatized and traumatic social and cultural histories that play out in built as well as natural environments."[11] I am interested in exploring the historically situated ecosocial contexts in which

Fuller and Jordan were working and to examine what individual philosophies and experiences in various media were brought to bear on this project and in public memory. I draw on archival materials that include their correspondence that provide insight into their interdisciplinary, representational anticipatory practices.

Jordan's work is concerned with what we would now call critical race theory. Built from legal studies and other interdisciplinary fields, critical race theory contends that people of color speak from an experience often framed by racism and therefore have perspectives that are different from the dominant culture of hegemonic whiteness. The Harlem project was a way to work with one of her mentors, who happened to be white, to"design a three-dimensional, an enviable, exemplary life situation for Harlem residents who, otherwise, had to outmaneuver New York City's Tactical Police Force, rats, a destructive and compulsory system of education . . . [T]oo often, urban renewal meant Negro removal."[12] Jordan is concerned with unmasking the structures, processes, and settings that undermine Harlem housing as they interpolate race and class realities, and, in doing so, she intervenes in the environmental and social conditions that are reproduced and socialized. Therefore, she should be acknowledged as initiating in the mid-1960s what Cindi Katz calls for in today's neoliberal privatized world: "a collective responsibility for social reproduction."[13]

The "New York Approach" to Urban Renewal

In New York City, this was the era of the influence of master builder and urban planner Robert Moses, on the one hand, and Jane Jacobs, the critic of much traditional urban planning, on the other. While Moses had no "operative role" in the public housing program, his developments displaced vast numbers of people living in the projects and so-called slums.[14] Critics, echoing Jacobs, have been asking whether the areas being cleared were really slums beyond rehabilitation? Was not a distinctive New York City fabric—a mix of housing, stores, churches, small factories, and varied other uses—being swept away for the cold monoliths of modernist architecture and planning? Jacobs was interested in the ways in which human beings live and thrive in layered complexity and seeming chaos. Modernist planners, such as Moses, used deductive reasoning to find principles by which to plan cities. Among these policies, the most violent was urban renewal and the most prevalent was and is the separation of uses (that is, residential, industrial, and commercial).

These policies, Jacobs claimed, destroy communities and innovative economies by creating isolated, unnatural urban spaces. In their place, Jacobs advocated a dense and mixed-use urban aesthetic that would preserve the uniqueness inherent in individual neighborhoods. Joel Schwartz called the tactics used by Moses and others in post–World War II urban planning the "New York Approach," which was part of the move toward what we now refer to as neoliberalism and privatization:

> With the language of modern city planning, sponsors privately arranged the transformation of neighborhoods, calculated what they regarded as limits of black and working-class removals, and pressed their schemes on Moses. They believed they could bulldoze and build on progressive terms, only to discover that Moses took their proposals as points of departure for grandiose programs.[15]

He goes on to argue that this approach depended on collaboration between planners whose personal gains coincided with Moses's agenda.

I would place Jordan and Fuller's collaboration squarely in the corner of Jacobs's approach, as they created a mixed-use aesthetic from the ground up in their Skyrise, but placed additional emphasis on the relationship between race, class, and place. Jordan brought her own experience to her architextural ecosocial advocacy. She had worked on Fred Wiseman's film, *The Cool World* (1964), "a movie about black kids and how they die,"[16] and had written a long essay on her response to this film. She was searching for and finding multiple mentors and thinkers with whom she could exchange ideas, never content to limit herself to only one kind of discourse, medium, or category. But it is significant in critical race theory that experience is embedded within one's projects. "Contextual reasoning" is another way to describe it—and this type of inquiry is often at the center of environmental justice narratives written by women of color—"combining personal stories and empirical data to convince others of the connection between pollution and discrimination."[17] Jordan's prose defies easy categorization. Her essays, notes, or letters may include data, poetry, lists, and allusions to other texts and rhythms. She used her experience of growing up in Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn to challenge the discourse that was being generated at this time about African American experience as a kind of pathology. She objected to

> facile references to Black communities as "breeding grounds of despair" or "culturally deprived." . . . That was not the truth. There are grounds for despair in the suburbs . . . and I more than suspect greater cultural

> deprivation in economically and racially and socially homogeneous Long Island commuter towns than anything I ever had to overcome! In Bedford-Stuyvesant, I learned all about white history and white literature, but I lived and learned about my own, as well. My father marched me to the Museum of Natural History and to the Planetarium . . . while my mother picked up "the slack" by riding me by trolley car, to public libraries.[18]

Whereas Jordan was concerned about the repercussions of economic and environmental factors on the lives of the poor, Buckminster Fuller emphasized scientific and social invention, as well as intervention, in the utopian technological mode, where hybridization of form and function go beyond the temporal. A "philosopher of shelter," Fuller saw housing as a problem "linked to invisible networks of distribution and social organization, as well as selection of the appropriate materials and building methods."[19] He also believed that reforming the environment would cause people to change, not vice versa, and that nature offers the solutions to use in built environments, therefore applying concepts from nature to technology, and culture: "[Y]ou apply the solutions which nature has devised in the synergetic operation of molecules."[20] Today this is called biomimicry, and many environmental activists have taken an interest in it. Jordan and Fuller came at the problems of urban renewal from different backgrounds and with different priorities, but found inspiration and balance in joining forces.

In a letter to Fuller, Jordan wrote that it was important to convey to the public that Harlem needed "radical reconstruction rather than mere improvement into the middle-class physical chaos prized by the rest of the city." To contrast Harlem's despair with the hopefulness that she saw in Fuller, Jordan wrote a poem in two columns:

Harlem	Buckminster Fuller
The most Debased condition	The most visionary hope
of man	for man
Perpetual Impotency	Infinite Potency Because
	Of Indefinite Resources
	Within a Finite Universe
The Ghetto Closet	The World Universe[21]

"Skyrise for Harlem": Not Anywhere But Up

"Skyrise for Harlem" was a spatial and psychological revisioning of traditional urban renewal, which as Jordan wrote was "frequently a pretext for permanent expulsion of the Negro population." Jordan sought to

> rescue a quarter of a million lives, by completely transforming their environment . . . as Harlem will widen from river to river. . . . Partial renovation is not enough. Piecemeal healing provides temporary relief at best and may create as many problems as it cures. A half century of neglect requires exorcism.[22]

Instead of moving residents out of their homes during the construction of the project or of removing them permanently through use of eminent domain, they proposed building structures over the already standing buildings, so "no one will move anywhere but up." Both Jordan and Fuller shared a belief in change through invention rather than reform.

Building "up" on top of a structure made sense for Fuller; as early as 1928, he devised an approach to housing he called "4D" or four dimensions, the fourth one being time, as he saw buildings as temporal and spatial. Fuller's designs from this period are conceptualized as mobile and erectable, and all were to be delivered by air.[23] Jordan and Fuller expected the project could be completed in three years; the first year, Jordan wrote, "will be spent in what R. Buckminster Fuller describes as 'tooling up': organizing the mass production of structural parts and utility units, including all basic furniture."[24]

Jordan explained how schools, traffic, parks, shopping areas, playgrounds, parking, and even a bridge connecting Harlem beyond greater New York City would revitalize the community: "It would demonstrate the rational feasibility of beautiful and low-cost shelter integral to a comprehensively conceived new community for human beings."[25] For Jordan, what is inside and outside of a building can "influence our moods and psychology, our conversations and silences, our sense of place and history."[26] In an unpublished manuscript, she wrote,

> [W]here we are is a matter of architecture . . . there is no evading architecture, no fruitful denial. . . . We speak, then, of tyranny. Control then, of this tyranny as a means to obviate the origins of desperate disquietude repeatedly destructive beyond the boundaries of Harlem, through comprehensive design of the new reality.[27]

Jordan's interest in this project was in part spurred by the Harlem riots of 1964, which she had predicted would happen and that filled her with anger. She also thought back through her family trauma where she was bullied by her father, from whose hands her uncle, a probation officer, had to remove "a chair, or knife, or whatever."[28] She recognized that her father beat her "because he himself felt bullied and despised by strangers more powerful than he would ever be."[29] Thus, this dual awareness of the trauma and indelible memory of violence

that is both personal and collective, cyclical and contextual, also provides the textual bridge that led her to Fuller.

Her uncle taught her how to fight, but she resolved "not to run on hatred, but instead to use what I loved, words. However, beyond my own people, I did not know the content of my love. What was I for? . . . the agony of that moment propelled me . . . to R. Buckminster Fuller," whom she had "met" (through his writing) in the Donnell Library in Manhattan; "[P]hotographs of his inventions led me into a biography and then into his writings . . . even more than Corbusier, Fuller's thinking weighed upon my own as a hunch yet to be gambled on the American landscape where daily, deathly polarization of peoples according to skin gained in horror as white violence escalated against Black life."[30] Jordan, by then a struggling poet and single parent, had no money: "I put my life on the line," she wrote, about taking on the project.[31] Elsewhere, she had written that another factor that drew her to Fuller was that neither she nor he had finished college and that his differences were part of the draw:

> It has to do with searching for the intimately kindred amid so many differences when what you respect, so often, is the difference from yourself embodied in other writers. I could discover my kinship with Tolstoi [*sic*], Whitehead and Fuller . . . their reverence for the living actuality of human chance.[32]

At the time of their collaboration, he was already an acclaimed designer and sought-after planner, whereas she had no consistent income and was going through a divorce from her white husband, Michael Meyer. Fuller was impressed by Jordan's Harlem proposal and by the fact that she approached him. In a letter of recommendation he later wrote in support of a Guggenheim fellowship for Jordan, he stated, "She first inquired of me what could be done for Harlem. After I told her and after I finished the design, she went to *Esquire* with the case and . . . they agreed to publish. Here is a young woman at an extraordinary time in our history, when all of us hope to rectify the long injustice done to the human beings of dark skin, and here is an individual taking the initiative in a great competent way."[33]

Scale, Green Space, and a New Reality

Jordan referred to the spatial aspects of geography and undeveloped green landscapes to make a point about the binary oppositions that are set up between rural and urban life. In this way, she anticipated one of the main threads of environmental justice, which is to deconstruct these spaces and to ask for more accountability from

traditional environmental organizations in considering the urban aspects of nature and their impact on populations. In a letter to Fuller, Jordan described an aerial view she had flying over Laconia, New Hampshire. She compared and contrasted the scale there with that of Harlem, as well as the potential for productive labor, sustenance, and participatory community through which she envisioned a more just life in Harlem:

> As the plane tilted . . . I could see no one, but there was no tangible obstacle to the imagining of how this land, these contours of growth and rise and seasonal definition could nurture and extend human life. There was no obvious site that might be cleared for housing. . . . And yet, I surmised no menace of elements inimical to life in that topography. It seemed that any stretch, that every slope, provided living possibilities . . . [T]his easy confidence . . . implies necessary labor both feasible and quickly rewarding for human beings to accomplish. By contrast, any view of Harlem will likely indicate the presence of human life—people whose surroundings suggest that survival is a mysterious and even pointless phenomenon. On the streets of Harlem, sources of sustenance are difficult to discover, and sources of power for control and change are remote. Nor is labor available—that directly affects, in manifold ways, the manners of existence. . . . This relates to our design for participation by Harlem residents in the birth of their new reality. I would think this new reality should reassure its residents that control of the quality of survival is possible and that every life is valuable.[34]

She had the Harlem riot fresh in her mind; ironically it took place just days after Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. In the July riot, Harlem erupted after what by now sounds all too familiar: the fatal shooting of James Powell, a fifteen-year-old unarmed African American male by a white police officer. One person was killed, more than one hundred were injured, and hundreds more were arrested. Jordan described it in a letter to a friend:

> The cops shot from a kneeling, commandos' comic book posture, in the middle of Seventh Avenue. We only wanted to pay homage to the kid the policeman had murdered. It was a bloody shock. . . . The cops kept shooting and shooting. People lay all over the streets crying in pain. . . . At one point the cops forced some of us up against a store window, and the window collapsed. . . . I was so scared I could hardly breathe.[35]

According to Manuel Castells, between 1964 and 1968 there were at least "329 important riots . . . the wave of riots in the black ghettos started in Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant, New York, in 1964, and represented the most direct challenge ever posed to the American social order, an order historically based upon racial discrimination and ethnic fragmentation among the lower classes,"[36] triggered in part by disruptive efforts of urban renewal and the so-called war on poverty.

Jordan wrote that the Harlem riot generated a "profusion of remedies," but nowhere "was environmental redesign given prime emphasis."[37] Jordan had told Fuller that most Harlem tenements were six stories, and he came up with a plan to build the new dwellings above the old (see figure 2).

The first floor of the new buildings would correspond with the seventh floor of the old—during construction, the residents would continue living in the old housing; then once the new structures stood completed, the old would be razed, and Harlem families would "literally move up into their new homes. The enormous ground area freed would now be converted into communal open space for recreation, parking, and so forth."[38] The design was intended to achieve economies of cost per unit as the result of scale: "[P]roviding for the total redevelopment of a community of 250,000 . . . it would have enormous national, showcase impact . . . demonstrating the rational feasibility of beautiful and low-cost shelter integral to a comprehensively conceived new community for human beings."[39] In the article Jordan wrote for *Esquire* to describe the plan, she detailed how "Fuller's circular decked towers are fireproof and may be delivered in large sections by helicopter." Inside, a system of ramps would offer parking, as well as shops, game rooms, and workshops, with "an average of 1200 square feet per family as against an average of 720 in today's public housing."[40] A similar conical, multileveled parking ramp had been rendered by Fuller as early as 1933, when he proposed it as a garage for the Chicago World's Fair. Fuller, who considered Henry Ford the greatest artist of the twentieth century was inspired by automotive and aerospace technologies, and hence it may seem odd to us that he conceptualized the car and dwelling unit as compatible mates for a radical design, but he did.[41] Fuller also couldn't help but be influenced by the "vertical urbanism" of New York City that had been dominant since the 1930s when skyscrapers were idolized as a form of mass consumption and progress.[42] Fuller was impressed by mass production and the economy of resource consumption that this type of dwelling would provide for Harlem residents. Jordan was excited by this new paradigm and seemed to ignore that the track record for Fuller's designs becoming a reality was actually very poor.

They also envisioned more green space for Harlem and the creation of new interstices that could impact and perhaps lower the crime rate:

> [A]n arterial system of green spaces leading to water: an arterial system psychologically operative from any position in Harlem. For example, a concentric design with the perimeter touching water east and west . . . [T]he

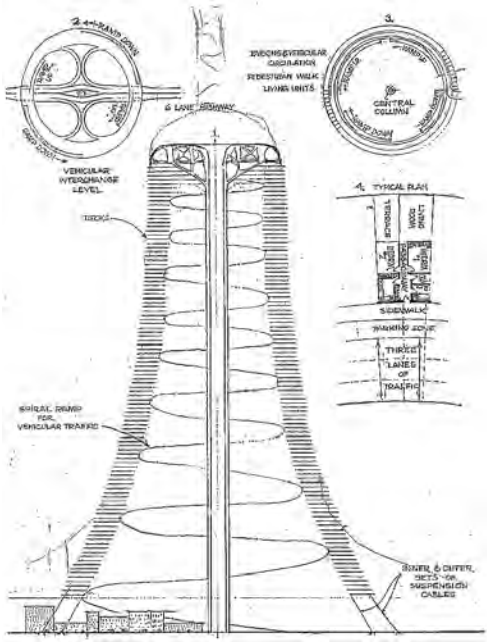

Figure 2. This shows the interior and cross sections of the conical towers that would be built over existing tenements.

> crisscrossing pattern too often becomes a psychological crucifixion; an emergence from an alleyway into a danger zone vulnerable to enemies approaching in at least two directions . . . I am appealing for as many curvilinear features of street patterning as possible . . . all of these undesirable effects now result from the gridiron layout of city blocks.[43]

Hence, Jordan thought that the grid pattern of New York's streets actually was a factor in the high crime rate; she called the pattern as it existed a "psychological crucifixion."[44] Instead she envisioned what today we call *traffic calming* or greening the streets for public access: "[W]alkblocks and roadsides . . . if parking facilities were sufficiently numerous, we could allow space only for the passage of one automobile . . . permit no street parking and reserve the gained area for foot mobility and public seating."[45]

Ironically, when *Esquire* published the article describing the project, they succumbed to the stereotype Jordan had sought to challenge and exhibited racism and sexism. *Esquire* changed her headline from "Skyrise for Harlem" to "Instant Slum Clearance" and attributed the entire project to Fuller, omitting Jordan's prominent role and ultimately dismissing it as a "utopian plan." In 1972 their plan for Harlem remained unrealized, but Fuller and Jordan felt it was having a favorable influence. Jordan told Fuller that the Museum of Modern Art in New York City had an architectural exhibition with four plans to make

Manhattan more livable: "[T]here presented as practicable . . . are many of our ideas for Harlem's transformation . . . [P]erhaps implementation will occur, after all."[46] Both Fuller and Jordan continued to work on urban transformations through architecture and text, engaging in civic environmentalism, and seeing design and place as part of the texture of healing, sustainability, and survival for disempowered people.

Shortly after the Harlem project, Jordan, due to Fuller's connections and recommendation, won the Prix de Rome for Environmental Design at the American Academy in Rome, and from there began fieldwork in Mississippi, where she proposed communal agrarian reform and would eventually write a novel, *Okay Now* (1977), based on her experiences and interviews with Fanny Lou Hamer and others. She made a connection between the lives of African Americans in urban cities of the North and their post-reconstruction migrations from the South: "[S]topping the hunger, ending the systems of spiritual starvation, in Mississippi-America will demonstrate our capacity for radical, right action." She considered cultural memory and the ecosocial effects of migration when black Americans "trekked north to find themselves unwelcomed and unprepared for self-sufficient lives in center cities that yielded so little to their needs."[47] Collaboration with Fuller in Harlem and through their correspondences and meetings proved a significant development for both of them as Fuller maintained a lifelong concern with the unequal distribution of resources and the way these problems were exacerbated by war. Jordan and Fuller viewed "Skyrise for Harlem" as one of those critical plans that interrupted and interrogated "the tacit agreement among all groups—lending institutions, fire insurance companies, and the Federal Housing administration—to redline inner city neighborhoods, denying them credit and insurance."[48] In fact, according to Fuller, he and Jordan hoped to bypass such racist housing policies and achieve "integration in reverse—make living conditions so attractive, as well as reasonable in rent, that white families as well as Negroes will want to move into the buildings."[49] Unfortunately the infrastructure and support for such a project were not there, and Fuller often moved from one project to the other without pushing for its completion.

In today's milieu of globalized neoliberal capitalism, with its megacities and megaslums, we need to insist on studying the effects of social, environmental, and economic deprivation on the daily lives of people and their home places, the ecosocial contexts of communities. We need to preserve and exhort the historical resistances based in race and space and not reinvent the wheel, and continue to interrogate state and city planning, built and natural environments,

and resurrect and bring public awareness to the transformative possibilities that the 1960s generated. The "Skyrise for Harlem" project anticipated many of our goals for built environments and sustainable urban communities of today—to be affordable, accessible, aesthetically pleasing, and include a balance of green space, accessibility to water and parks, and an improved quality of life. Jordan and Fuller believed we needed a theory of place that was scientific, spiritual, and visionary, "of space designed as the volumetric expression of successful existence between earth and sky; of space cherishing as it amplifies the experience of being alive, the capability of endless beginnings, and the entrusted liberty of motion . . . a particular space inexplorably connected to multiple spatialities . . . yet sheltering particular life."[50] We still search for that right balance today and should not forget their philosophies and design as we formulate.

Acknowledgments

The manuscript cited in note 1 and others referred to in subsequent references from the Schlesinger Library and Sophia Smith Collection are quoted by permission of the June M. Jordan Literary Estate Trust, JuneJordan.com. I thank them. I also thank Vanessa Gorsuch for her research assistance with archival materials, and Marilyn Morgan for her assistance with the June Jordan papers. For grants that supported this research, I thank the Research Foundation of CUNY for a PSC/CUNY award; the Office of Academic Affairs, Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY, for a faculty publication grant; and Wellspring House, for a writing residency.

Notes

[1] June Jordan to Frances Fox Piven, 12 August 1971, Frances Fox Piven Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts.

[2] William A. Shutkin, *The Land That Could Be: Environmentalism and Democracy in the Twenty-First Century, Urban and Industrial Environments* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), 14.

[3] Michael Bennett, "Manufacturing the Ghetto: Anti-urbanism and the Spatialization of Race," in *The Nature of Cities: Ecocriticism and Urban Environments,* ed. Michael Bennett and David W. Teague (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999), 169.

[4] Dorceta E. Taylor, "Women of Color, Environmental Justice and Ecofeminism," in *Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature,* ed. Karen Warren and Nisvan Erkal (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 40.

[5] June Jordan to R. Buckminster Fuller, 18 June 1964, personal collection of Shoji Sadao.

[6] "Mobilization for Youth was the first Great Society agency. It opened in 1962 on New York's Lower East Side, the precursor of seventeen such agencies established in sixteen major cities in the early 1960s with federal anti-delinquency money. . . . To most of the adults on the Lower East Side, MFY was symbolized by its store-front service centers, to which residents were encouraged to bring their daily problems of living under the welfare state" (Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare* [London: Tavistock, 1972], 290).

[7] *Who Is Buckminster Fuller?* Buckminster Fuller Institute, 2005–7, www.bfi.org/our_programs/who_is_buckminster_fuller (accessed 4 January 2009).

[8] June (Meyer) Jordan, "Instant Slum Clearance," *Esquire,* April 1965, 109.

[9] Conversation with Shoji Sadao, 7 October 2008. I thank Mr. Sadao for speaking with me and for giving me access to his personal collection from which I quote in this essay.

[10] After I discussed the matter with the curators and provided some textual proof, Jordan's name was added for future viewings of the exhibit.

[11] Eric Gary Anderson, "Black Atlanta: An Ecosocial Approach to Narratives of the Atlanta Child Murders," *PMLA* 122, no. 1 (2007): 195.

[12] June Jordan, *Civil Wars,* 1st Touchstone ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 10, 24.

[13] Cindi Katz, "Power, Space and Terror: Social Reproduction and the Public Environment," in *The Politics of Public Space,* ed. Setha M. Low and Neil Smith (New York: Routledge, 2006), 106.

[14] "Slum clearance affected black New Yorkers more profoundly than others . . . [T]he discrimination in the housing market and the limited options available to blacks landed them in other slums, but Moses did not recognize this problem" (Hilary Ballon, "Robert Moses and Urban Renewal: The Title 1 Programs," in *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York,* ed. Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson [New York: W. W. Norton, 2007], 102).

[15] Joel Schwartz, *The New York Approach: Robert Moses, Urban Liberals, and Redevelopment of the Inner City,* Urban Life and Urban Landscape Series (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1993), xix.

[16] June Jordan, "Letter to Jane Cooper" (19 February 1970), MC 513, box 62, folder 23, the Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

[17] Robert M. Verchick, "Feminist Theory and Environmental Justice," in *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice: Gender, Sexuality and Activism,* ed. Rachel Stein (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 67.

[18] June Jordan, "For My American Family," in *Technical Difficulties: African-American Notes on the State of the Union* (New York: Pantheon, 1992), 7.

[19] Michael John Gorman, *Buckminster Fuller: Designing for Mobility* (Milan: Skira, 2005), 9.

[20] Richard Goldstein, "Gladly the Dymaxion Cross I'd Bear," *Village Voice,* 1 February 1973, 8.

[21] June Jordan to R. Buckminster Fuller, 12 October 1964, personal collection of Shoji Sadao.

[22] Jordan, "Instant Slum Clearance," 109–11.

[23] According to Michael John Gorman, "often overlooked as a mere eccentric-

ity or a historical anomaly of the Zeppelin age, air delivery of housing was a central principle of Fuller's approach to design" (*Buckminster Fuller,* 36).

[24] Jordan, "Instant Slum Clearance," 109.

[25] June Jordan, "Letter to R. Buckminster Fuller," in *Civil Wars* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 24.

[26] David W. Orr, "A Meditation on Building," *Chronicle of Higher Education: The Chronicle Review* 53, no. 9 (2006): B6–7.

[27] June Jordan Papers, MC 513, box 33, folder 11, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

[28] Jordan, *Civil Wars,* xi.

[29] Ibid., 134.

[30] Ibid., xvii.

[31] Ibid., 23.

[32] Jordan, "Letter to Jane Cooper."

[33] Undated letter, M1090, R. Buckminster Fuller Papers, Stanford University Special Collections and University Archives. Copyright 1965, the estate of R. Buckminster Fuller.

[34] Jordan, "Letter to R. Buckminster Fuller," 25–26.

[35] Jordan, "Letter to Jane Cooper."

[36] Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 50.

[37] Jordan, "Instant Slum Clearance," 111.

[38] Jordan, "Letter to R. Buckminster Fuller," 24.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Jordan, "Instant Slum Clearance," 111.

[41] Gorman, *Buckminster Fuller,* 194.

[42] Jeremiah Borenstein Axelrod, *Los Angeles Is Not the City It Could Have Been: Cultural Representation, Traffic, and Urban Modernity in Jazz Age America* (2000), www.nottingham.ac.uk/3cities/axelrod.htm (accessed 3 January 2009).

[43] Jordan, *Civil Wars,* 27.

[44] Ibid.

[45] June Jordan to R. Buckminster Fuller, 20 September 1964, personal collection of Shoji Sadao.

[46] June Jordan to R. Buckminster Fuller, 1 March 1967, June Jordan Papers, MC 513, box 33, folder 11, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

[47] June Jordan Papers, MC 513, box 49, folder 6, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

[48] Peter Medoff and Holly Sklar, *Streets of Hope: The Fall and Rise of an Urban Neighborhood* (Boston: South End, 1994), 15.

[49] "Cone Sweet Home," *Carbondale Illinoisian,* 18 April 1965, 18.

[50] Jordan, *Civil Wars,* 28.