Introduction: Special Section on Detroit

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This special section on Detroit is about the roles large cities play in university service-learning pedagogies and campus-community engagement. The University of Michigan's three campuses sit anywhere from 5 to 75 miles from the City of Detroit today – but the founding location of the University in 1817 was in the City itself. In the intervening two centuries, the ways we think about and engage in projects with the City of Detroit has run the spectrum from intertwined to separate.

Over the past decade, narratives of Detroit in scholarly research and the media have ranged from the fate of the shrinking city through the drama of bankruptcy to the rising crisis of gentrification. This is reminiscent of the cultural climate of the 1970s, particularly in the United States, when academics experienced a series of radical shifts in approaches to research, practice, and relationships that reflected Detroit's evolving presence within the region, the state, and the country. Decades later, in the midst of very different cultural, economic, and technological circumstances, and on the 50th anniversary of the Detroit rebellion, we ask how have approaches to community-engaged practice and research themselves adapted?

Rhetorical shifts away from 'community growth' toward a proliferation of 'creative innovation' are occurring in academia and in urban policy. Creative and experimental modes of development have become absorbed into normative, market-driven systems with an increasing emphasis on the value of the brand of "Detroit." These processes may be instrumental in spurring the growth of the City, but they often occur at the expense of social values, inclusivity, and public engagement.

The development of a wide variety of frameworks for university and community-based educational and research efforts has responded to the increasing neoliberalization of Detroit on the one hand and renewed interest in radical collaborative models on the other. Social and economic developments, driven by market logic and declines in municipal funding for making, thinking, learning, and doing, occur side-by-side with ambitious grassroots proj-

ects emphasizing the social values of co-creation and social justice. What are the critical questions that need to be asked in order to promote authentic and meaningful engagement with the City today, in this rapidly evolving context?

We invited proposals for Detroit-focused articles from academics, artists, educators, and researchers that comment on, propose, and reflect programs and approaches to research and practice and their relation to historical and contemporary models. By offering examples and analysis of what is happening now, we hope that the following provides some critical perspectives on this emerging work with a focus on preparing student, faculty, and community partners for authentic engagement.

By building on the foundations of social justice, creativity, imagination, and experiment, we advocate for the consideration of Detroit as a point of comparison for campus-community engagement practice, education, and research in other cities. In these examples, rooted in experiential modes of thinking, learning, and doing, we see engagements oriented toward current and future cultural and social conditions that can be integrated into developing modes of education and research.

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