

FIGHT THE POWER: REDRESSING DISPLACEMENT AND BUILDING A JUST CITY FOR BLACK LIVES IN VANCOUVER

Allen, S (2019). Fight the power: Redressing displacement and building a just city for Black lives in Vancouver. Master's Thesis, Simon Fraser University. Summit.

BACKGROUND

- Hogan's Alley, the **only Black enclave** in Vancouver's Strathcona neighbourhood, was **displaced by the City of Vancouver**.
- Concentrated communities of Black people in the area was due to **racialized, class-divided** city planning layouts.
- Rooted in **prejudice** and **systemic discrimination**, the **modernization** of Hogan's Alley displaced members of the community.
- Responding to the **national urban renewal program**, the city called the area a "slum" as an excuse to access federal funding and clear the neighbourhood for its own purposes.
- The final displacement of Hogan's Alley happened when the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts (bridges) were built, **forcibly driving out the entire community**.



"The injustice that occurred to the Black communities in Vancouver has remained invisible and unchallenged for decades, until recently" (p.42)

RESEARCH

- Initially, redevelopment plans for the **Northeast False Creek (NEFC)** included plans to **capitalize** on the community's **suffering** and **displacement**.
- In calling for redress for the displacement of Hogan's Alley, a group of black residents called the **Hogan's Alley Working Group (HAWG)** gathered to discuss plans for the former area.
- Seeking to redress past harms while ensuring that the displacement wouldn't happen again to the surrounding neighbourhood, HAWG organized interventions and analyses that held the City of Vancouver **accountable for the displacement**.
- The City of Vancouver **failed to honour** the history of Hogan's Alley by poorly recognizing the **harm against the Black community**.



FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The HAWG pushed the city to **reconsider** the design process and its **legacy of racist policies**.
- There is now a policy, the **HAWG must be included** in decisions about Hogan's Alley.
- Vancouver needs to stop focusing on "smart cities" and working on the problems at hand, such as **poverty, homelessness, and affordable housing**.
- Policies need to be put in place by the City of Vancouver to **create opportunities for marginalized communities**.
- Allen urges fellow Black students **to fight and point out the flaws** attached to city planning in North America while pressuring policymakers to **recognize that Black Lives Matter**.



Summary and infographic by Aden Tan, Aleia Niquidet, Kendyl Stark, Lara Posthumus and Sarina Virani

This undergraduate student work is a product of a collaboration between the Making Research Accessible initiative (MRAi), researchers, Dr. Evan Mauro and the students of ASTU 100 at UBC. This student work has been reviewed by the lead author of the original item. Revisions provided by the lead author have been incorporated into the student work with support from the UBC Learning Exchange and members of the MRAi. The reader should bear in mind that this is a student research project/report and is not an official document of UBC.

