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Landscape Urbanism and its Discontents: Dissimulating the Sustainable City

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In contemporary Western society, urban development is regarded as an unfortunate blight from which nature provides a much-needed respite. This apparent dichotomy ignores the interdependence between human settlement and the natural world. In fact, one of the most pressing problems facing urban theorists today is determining how to resolve the tension between the built and natural environments, in the process creating truly sustainable cities.

Landscape Urbanism and its Discontents is a collection of essays exploring the debate over urban reform, now polarized around the two competing paradigms of Landscape Urbanism and the New Urbanism. Landscape Urbanism is conceived as a more ecologically based approach, while New Urbanism is more concerned with the built form. Well-known and influential urban theorists such as Andrés Duany and James Howard Kunstler delve into the impact of the tension between the two perspectives on:

- Smart growth
- Neighborhood design
- Sustainable development
- Creating cities that are in balance with nature

While there is significant overlap between Landscape Urbanism and the New Urbanism, the former has assumed prominence amongst most critical theorists, whereas the latter's proponents are more practically oriented. Given that these two sets of ideas are at the forefront of sustainable urban design, the analysis– and potential reconciliation—offered by *Landscape Urbanism and its Discontents* is long overdue.

Andrés Duany is a leading proponent of the New Urbanism and is a founding principal at Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company.

Emily Talen is a professor at Arizona State University and the author of four previous books on urban design.

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