



POLICY BRIEF

BOLD Policy Project

Project Lead: Jay Pitter Placemaking

Project Collaborator: Windsor Law Centre for Cities

Authored by Jay Pitter | February 2023

Public spaces are the biggest placemaking paradox; at once sites of immeasurable joy and delight, and unspeakable violation. Unfortunately, the latter is distinctly and disproportionately true for Black people—particularly those directly impacted by the transatlantic slave trade—whose early encounters in public space trace directly back to the auction block. Urban policies such as “slave catching,” police profiling, noise-control bylaws and vendor-permitting have been used to discriminate against these propertized human beings, their descendants and other Black people navigating public spaces. While considerable scholarship pertaining to the surveillance, restriction and violation of Black bodies has been examined across critical race theory, sociology and social justice disciplines, there is a growth opportunity when it comes to grounding Black peoples’ public space experiences in the built environment—parks, public transit, streets, entertainment spaces, libraries, coffee shops and other spaces where human connections, prosperity and freedom are fostered.

This policy brief provides an overview of the BOLD Policy Project, an initiative led by Jay Pitter Placemaking, which is intended to examine and transform the invisible, yet powerful, forces of urban policy using a place-based, racial equity lens focused on Black people. It unpacks 10+ case studies, which integrate Black public space stories and urban policies to create a foundational understanding of the issue across historical time periods, geographies and violations. The conclusion presents high-level themes, illuminates BOLD Policy Project core questions evoked by the case studies and issues a call to action for establishing the conditions for structural change. And so, we begin.



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Acknowledgements

Led by Jay Pitter Placemaking (hereinafter referred to as the practice), in collaboration with the Centre for Cities at the Faculty of Law, University of Windsor (hereinafter referred to as Windsor Law Centre for Cities), the BOLD Policy Project seeks to transform Black public space precarity to equitable public space through policy reform. This academic collaboration, predicated on shared values and an established relationship, is particularly advantageous because of the Windsor Law Centre for Cities' commitment to practice-focused research and equitable municipal governance. Also, the faculty is located in Windsor, Ontario—home to one of Canada's longest-standing Black communities. Equally important, Jay Pitter Placemaking is an evidence-based practice and Ms. Pitter is an award-winning urban planning lecturer and adjunct professor committed to transforming public spaces, urban policy and the urbanism canon. Given the research topic coupled with the bi-national scope of the BOLD Policy Project and Ms. Pitter's practice, the Windsor Law Centre for Cities is geographically and academically well-positioned to contribute to this urgent initiative.

The initial research for this policy brief was conducted by a small group of University of Windsor Law students enrolled in a Practice-Based Experiential Placement (PBEP) in Equitable Placemaking Policy and Anti-Black Racism in Winter 2022. Academic supervision for the PBEP was provided by Dr. Anneke Smit, Founder and Director of the Centre for Cities and Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law. The course content and narrative policy research approach was developed by Jay Pitter, Visiting Fellow in Equitable City-Building. Additionally, Ms. Pitter had the great pleasure of lecturing and guiding critical in-class discourse and supporting student research.

Jay Pitter Placemaking extends sincere gratitude to Dr. Smit for her course supervision and invaluable consultation. Also, the practice would like to acknowledge Windsor Law students Hezekiah Davies, Kevin Limbombe, Simrat Mehra, Lyann Ordenes-Gonzalez, Douglas Pateman and Kira Salena for their research contributions, which supported the development of this brief, along with the research contributions of Dayan De Souza and Christina Hoang.

The BOLD Policy Project is made possible by the generous funding and forward-thinking of United Way Greater Toronto (Project Trustee), United Way Calgary and Area, and Toronto Foundation.

From the auction block to the back of the bus to street pavement executions—Black people have historically experienced, and continue to experience, disproportionate, distinct public space discrimination.

Policy Brief Objective: Interweaving stories and policy, this policy brief is a premise for those working within municipalities, universities, policy think-tanks and other institutions for building a foundational understanding of how long-standing urban policies perpetuate anti-Black public space precarity and discrimination.

Policy Problem

Black skin is distinctly branded; forever seared by policy and place. The transatlantic slave trade is one of history’s most pernicious place- and policy-based attacks on humanity. Cheryl Harris, legal scholar, explains that enslaved individuals of African descent became “propertized human life,” governed under both private property and constitutional laws. Like all forms of property, these commodified human beings “could be transferred, assigned, inherited, or posted as collateral.”¹ This state-sanctioned violation created the foundation for legal and quasi-legal urbanism policies that have perpetuated the continued exploitation of Black labour, restriction of Black bodies and denial of dignified space for Black lives to flourish.²

Urban policies guide the geographic, economic and social growth of cities. They have numerous articulations in municipal codes, official plans, orders, zoning bylaws and ordinances. These policies are an invisible yet powerful force that shapes the lives of all urban dwellers, in both positive and adverse ways. For Black people, urban policies such as anti-vagrancy, noise control, police profiling, public transit fare-checking and permitting have been used to restrict Black mobility, diminish Black prosperity and extinguish Black lives in public spaces.

Geographers Lynn A. Staeheli and Don Mitchell define public space as “property open to public use.” Many of these spaces—streets, parks, community centres, libraries, etc.—are owned and maintained by municipalities. Coffee shops, local bookstores and entertainment venues are often privately owned but also constitute public spaces. All of the above may be owned and operated through public-private partnerships. Ultimately public spaces are sites intended to foster belonging and democracy—they are places where community becomes a verb.³

For instance, Black people are often disproportionately targeted by the police when engaging in public space activities which promote health and community connectivity, such as cycling. The report, *Assessing the Fairness and Effectiveness of Bicycle Stops in Tampa*, found that the city’s police department issued 80% of its cycling citations to Black residents, even though they comprise only 25% of Tampa’s population. Another survey conducted by PEW Research Centre found that adult Black Americans are about five times as likely as white adults to self-report being unfairly

1 Harris, C., (1993) *Whiteness as Property*. Harvard Law Review, Vol. 106, No. 8 (p. 1720). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1341787?origin=JSTOR-pdf>

2 Pitter, J. (2021) *Engaging Black People in Power: A Public Engagement And Urban Policy Primer*. York University. https://euc.yorku.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/EBPP_2021-03-22_FINAL.pdf

3 Mitchell, D., Staeheli, L.A. (2009). *Public Space*. In International Encyclopedia of Human Geography. (pp. 511–516). Elsevier Science. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-008044910-4.00990-1>

stopped by the police because of their race or ethnicity (44% vs. 9%). In Canada, the Ontario Human Rights Commission's 2018 report on racial profiling by the Toronto Police Service found that Black Torontonians were 20 times more likely than their white counterparts to be shot fatally by the police.

Moreover, due to the legacy of redlining and racist residential ordinances, large numbers of Black people live in low-income, racialized communities with fewer public spaces and amenities. A report published by Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America⁴ found that Black people, along with other racialized, low-income groups, often live in formerly segregated neighbourhoods covered with paved surfaces and hardly any green space. The resulting rise in localized heat and poor air quality contribute to health issues such as a higher number of visits to the emergency room to treat asthma.

These are just a few of the many examples demonstrating the breadth, severity and adverse impacts related to structural public space discrimination experienced by Black people.

Policy Intervention

The BOLD Policy Project seeks to go beyond conventional charity and social service interventions to identify and reform urban policies restricting and extinguishing Black lives. Spurred by the public execution of George Floyd—a vicious, viral and sadly common tragedy that sparked a global civil rights uprising—this project is led by award-winning placemaker and urban planning lecturer, Jay Pitter, whose evidence-based practice is located at the nexus of urban design and social justice.

Ms. Pitter's bi-national placemaking practice is informed by the seminal scholarship and ancestral example of renowned African American sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois, and French philosopher and sociologist, Henri Lefebvre, who reminds us that cities are places where differences collide and where systemic power is constantly shaping human relations and the built environment.

Also, the practice is rooted in a diverse range of powerful community insights derived from leading placemaking and urban policy initiatives across numerous North American cities.

As with all of Ms. Pitter's placemaking and research initiatives, the BOLD Policy Project is centred on the inherent place-based wisdom of all individuals and communities. This inquiry is based on the Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach that equitably involves community members, practitioners and academic researchers in all aspects of the process, enabling every participant to contribute their expertise and to share responsibility and ownership. Its purpose is to enhance understanding of a given phenomenon and to integrate the knowledge gained with action. Among the core principles of CBPR are a commitment to build on community strengths and resources, to foster co-learning and capacity-building, and to balance research and action for the mutual benefit of all partners.

The BOLD Policy Project is comprised of bi-national, historical urban policy research; a review of place-based healing and urban recovery practices across Black geographies; a review and codification of anti-Black urbanism policies across 8–12 North American cities with significant Black demographics and/or Black cultural influence; a public survey engaging a diverse range of Black communities; and a toolkit to transform anti-Black public space policies.

⁴ Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, (2020). *Asthma Disparities in America: A Roadmap to Reducing Burden on Racial and Ethnic Minorities*. aafa.org/asthmadisparities

Policy + Storytelling

Storytelling is an effective pedagogical tool for understanding how the invisible yet powerful force of policy impacts the lives of everyday people. In fact, according to Bevir and Rhodes,⁵ “Every new piece of legislation, every piece of policy advice or guidance, is a narrative in its own right, which links together beliefs, actions and institutions in a distinctive manner.” In this way, storytelling creates a virtuous cycle, opening up pathways between policy-makers and communities, contributing to a more just and compassionate society.

Using a narrative framework developed by Jay Pitter Placemaking, the following case studies highlight the stories of Black people who’ve navigated a complex range of anti-Black public space precarity and discrimination. Each story is one of many, and with the exception of the Saartjie Baartman precedent, all occur within the context of North America. They span historical time periods and employ an intersectionality approach that acknowledges Black public space violations often excluded from media headlines, which tend to focus on Black men—a critically important aspect of a broader issue.

The case studies/stories have been written in a narrative style and are informed by numerous references. Key references related to each summarized story, along with additional ones providing context for the broader cultural phenomena and/or policy issue, have been tethered to provide attribution. Resources that provide a more in-depth understanding of the structural, socio-cultural and policy context have also been tethered to each case study/story.

The following is not intended to be comprehensive. However, it does provide a solid preliminary overview of the dimensions and despair related to Black peoples’ public space experiences.

CASE STUDIES

Case Study: Brutal Attacks On Trans Women

City and Date: Memphis, TN (1866) and Minneapolis, MN (2020)

During the Memphis Riot of 1866, Frances Thompson, a formerly enslaved, Black trans woman was sexually assaulted by a group of white men, including police officers. She boldly presented her case before the U.S. Congress—an act which subjected her to a life of further harassment and harm due to her gender identity. Despite her courageous advocacy for trans rights, trans women, particularly Black and other racialized trans women, continue to face transphobic violence and alienation across public spaces more than a century later. For example, Iyanna Dior, a Black trans woman, was violently attacked by up to 30 individuals (primarily cisgender men) in the aftermath of a minor car accident during the George Floyd civil rights uprising in Minneapolis in 2020. This specific type of public space violence, located at the intersection of race and gender-based discrimination, is so insidious and prevalent that it has been declared a crisis by a growing number of institutions.

⁵ Bevir, M., Rhodes., R. A. W., (2006). *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*. p. 4. <https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Handbook-of-Interpretive-Political-Science/Bevir-Rhodes/p/book/9781138498884#>

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Case Study: Unearthing Cemetery Segregation

City and Date: Halifax, NS and wider Canada (1907-1968)

The Camp Hill Cemetery in Halifax, Nova Scotia, long had policies which mandated segregated areas for burials of Black people, including Black First World War veterans who had to be buried apart from their white comrades-in-arms. St. Croix, Nova Scotia, passed a bylaw in 1907 (which remained in effect until 1968) that completely barred Black Canadians from being buried in local cemeteries. These two examples are not unique to Nova Scotia. Similar policies were instituted across Canada, resulting in a legacy of Black cemeteries in provinces such as Ontario, Quebec, P.E.I., New Brunswick and Newfoundland. Many of these cemeteries have been disrespectfully built over and are not recognized as sites of significant cultural heritage. The ones that remain are often neglected. Even in death, and in return to the earth, Black bodies are restricted in public spaces.

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Case Study: Attempt To Desegregate Swimming Pool Belly Flops

City and Date: Edmonton, AB (1923)

In 1923, a young Black boy attempted to go swimming at Borden Park Pool in Edmonton with his white friends but was refused admission due to a little-known order issued by City Commissioners that restricted Black people from swimming in City-run pools. The boy’s mother, Mrs. P.S. Poston, and a committee of Black residents wrote a letter to the City Council expressing their outrage. They also appealed to the City Commissioner, who only insulted them in return. This prompted Mrs. Poston to gather other Black citizens to argue their case at a City Council meeting, where they asserted that they had the same right to public amenities as other taxpayers. This time, they were met with a mixed response, although it ultimately resulted in the order being rescinded. Despite that, tensions continued with Black residents because the Edmonton Exhibition Association, which managed the facility, continued to refuse Black people access to the pool. Some Council members suggested the problem would work itself out when pool season ended. The following year, two new swimming pools opened and with these additional options, “mixed-bathing” debates subsided.

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Case Study: Justice for a Lunch-Hour Jaywalker

City and Date: Halifax, NS (2017)

In January 2017, Gyasi Symonds walked across the street to the local Nook Espresso Bar near his office in Halifax. Before entering the coffee shop, Symonds was stopped by two police officers who warned him about jaywalking because he hadn't used the crosswalk. Mr. Symonds was careful to heed the warning of the police officers and used the crosswalk on his way back to his office. However, the same two police officers followed him inside his office building and issued him a \$410 ticket, claiming they had observed him jaywalking a second time. Mr. Symonds filed a complaint with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, which later determined that he was the victim of racial discrimination. The Halifax Police Department was ordered to pay Mr. Symonds \$15,232 in compensation.

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Case Study: Spotlight on a Theatre Enthusiast Denied Admission

City and Date: Edmonton, AB (1922), New Glasgow, NS (1946), Montreal, PQ, and Victoria, BC

In 1922, Lulu Anderson attempted to enter the Metropolitan Theatre in Edmonton to watch the then-popular stage play, *The Lion and the Mouse*. Theatre management refused to admit her. According to the *Edmonton Journal*, she was thrown onto the street and assaulted. Refusing to accept this indignity, Ms. Anderson retained a local lawyer and sued the theatre. Despite losing her case, her advocacy laid the foundation for a similar, well-known incident which occurred over two decades later. In New Glasgow, N.S., Viola Desmond refused to vacate her seat in the “whites-only section” in the Roseland Theatre. Ms. Desmond was arrested and convicted of an obscure tax offence, without having legal representation. Similarly, Loews Windsor Theatre in Montreal enforced segregated seating for Black patrons, referred to as “the monkey cage,” while British Columbia’s Victoria Colonial Theatre banned Black patrons from premium seats. These and other examples exemplify the bitter irony of Black people historically being sought-after entertainers while concurrently being marginalized and excluded within entertainment spaces.

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Case Study: Militant Mothers Create Bridge For Safe School Travel

City and Date: Vancouver, BC (1971)

In 1971, construction of the Burrard Inlet railway tracks by Canadian National Railways and the Burlington Northern Railway meant that children from the Raymur Housing Project had to cross the busy tracks to get to and from the Admiral Seymour Elementary School. Carolyn Jerome, a single mother, was concerned about their safety, so with a group of other local mothers, she launched a telephone campaign, attended B.C. tenant council meetings and wrote letters to decision-makers. After receiving little to no response, these women, who earned the moniker, the Militant Mothers of Raymur, defiantly created a blockade using their bodies and tents. They raised placards with slogans such as “Petitions Don’t Work” and “Children Before Profits” which grabbed the attention of the media. This prompted the City to listen to their long-time demands for the construction of a safe overpass for the children to travel to and from school.

Citations & Resources:

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Case Study: The Dust-Up Over Negro Creek Road Sign

City and Date: Township of Chatsworth, ON (1990s–2022)

Beginning in the 1990s, Carolynn Wilson dedicated decades to showcasing the contributions of Black people in the Grey County area of Ontario. Her actions included fighting against attempts by township officials to rename Negro Creek Road after a white settler—a move which would have erased the area’s Black history. With 4,000 signatures of support, Ms. Wilson took what was formerly the Township of Holland, now the Township of Chatsworth, to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal and won the case. However, since then, the road sign located on a five-kilometre stretch of Highway 6 has been stolen multiple times every year and continuously vandalized with paint and, some say, bullet holes. In February 2022, Chatsworth officials passed a proclamation declaring Black History Month in the township, hoping that educating residents on the history of Negro Creek would decrease tensions pertaining to the sign.

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Case Study: Patrons Leave Restaurant With a Bad Taste in Their Mouths

City and Date: Toronto, ON (2014)

In May 2014, Emile Wickham went to a Chinese restaurant in Toronto to celebrate his birthday. Once seated, a server informed the group that they needed to prepay for their meals per restaurant policy, to which they agreed. After paying, Mr. Wickham reflected on this odd request and decided to query other patrons to confirm whether they too had to follow this same policy. When they learned that this policy did not apply to everyone—the members of Mr. Wickham’s party were the only Black customers in the restaurant at the time—the group confronted restaurant staff about the inequitable application of this so-called policy. Although they were offered and accepted a refund, the group left the restaurant disheartened. Mr. Wickham pondered the situation and considered many options in redressing the humiliating experience to which he and his group were subjected, including leading a protest. Ultimately, he decided to file a complaint with Ontario’s Human Rights Legal Support Centre. After four years, the adjudicator ruled in Mr. Wickham’s favour and awarded him \$10,000 in compensation. Additionally, the restaurant was ordered to post an Ontario Human Rights Commission Code card in a highly visible area within the establishment. Despite Mr. Wickham’s gracious offer to have a frank, follow-up discussion about the incident, the restaurant owners once again diminished his humanity by declining his request.

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Case Study: Boy Denied Science Books Becomes An Astronaut

City and Date: Lake City, SC (1959)

In 1959, a young boy by the name of Ronald McNair attempted to check out science books in the whites-only section of the Lake City Library in South Carolina. The librarian refused his request and asked him to leave because he was Black. However, this young science enthusiast was undeterred and insisted that he was not leaving the library without the books. The librarian escalated the situation by calling the young boy’s mother and, incredulously, the police. When the police arrived, the librarian was instructed to allow him to check out the books. She then unenthusiastically complied. The boy thanked her and left the library with his mother. His perseverance, integrity and steadfast curiosity were life-long characteristics that later led him to become a gifted athlete, musician and the second African American astronaut. The Lake City Library was recently renamed the Dr. Ronald E. McNair Life History Center to honour his advocacy and achievements.

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Case Study: Student Protest Ends Up In Flames**City and Date:** Montreal, PQ (1969)

In the late 1960s, Rodney John emigrated from the Caribbean Island of St. Vincent to Montreal to pursue his academic aspirations at Sir George Williams University, which later became part of Concordia University. He was a gifted student and aspired to become a physician. However, when his biology professor, Perry Anderson, gave Mr. John and five other Caribbean students poor grades, they accused their professor of discrimination and demanded a formal investigation with the university. After almost a year of inaction, Mr. John and other Black students decided to lead a peaceful occupation of the campus' computer centre, which lasted for 13 days. When negotiations deteriorated, some students barricaded themselves inside and caused the destruction of \$2 million worth of computer equipment. The Black students who participated in the protest were pardoned, deported or arrested. Perry Anderson, the professor in question, was cleared of all charges of racism. Mr. John went on to earn five university degrees, including a PhD, but indicated that he felt “unfulfilled” in reference to his time in university.

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Case Study: Woman Stripped of Dignity On Busy Street**City and Date:** Toronto, ON (1993)

In 1993, Audrey Smith was exploring the Parkdale area of Toronto as a Jamaican tourist while visiting relatives. As she was standing at an intersection, Ms. Smith was approached by two male police officers who accused her of having drugs in her possession. Despite pleading her innocence, she was handcuffed and placed in a cruiser. She believed her only option was to consent to a search, which she assumed would occur at a police station. Instead, a female officer was called to the scene and the three of them strip-searched Ms. Smith in public, in view of passers-by, inflicting unspeakable trauma and public humiliation. The search yielded no drugs and Ms. Smith filed a complaint prior to returning to Jamaica. However, she was unable to travel back to Canada to testify against the three police officers who violated her personal boundaries.

Citations &

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Case Study: Little Girls' Initiative and Curiosity Disrupted By Adult-Sized Bias

City and Date: San Francisco, CA (2018) and Caldwell, NJ (2022)

In 2018, Jordan Rodgers, an eight-year-old girl in San Francisco, set up a table and sold bottles of water to raise money for her family's upcoming trip to Disneyland. A neighbour, dubbed "Permit Patty," confronted young Jordan and called the police, alleging the girl was illegally selling water without a permit. More recently, Bobbi Wilson, a nine-year-old girl from Caldwell, New Jersey,, faced similar public space harassment when her neighbour called the police after witnessing the youngster spraying a liquid on trees. This neighbour referred to Bobbi as a "woman" during the dispatch call and indicated that he was unaware of what she was doing but was afraid. Unbeknownst to this neighbour, the spray consisted of apple cider vinegar, water and dish soap, which is a natural bug repellent to protect trees from spotted lantern flies—a lesson Bobbi learned at school. In both instances, these little girls were criminalized for taking initiative and expressing curiosity in their local public spaces. Jordan Rodgers' family received a complimentary trip to Disneyland from a generous stranger, and Bobbi Wilson was honoured by the Yale School of Public Health for her efforts and thanked for donating 27 spotted lantern flies to its Peabody Museum.

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Case Study: Documenting Trauma to Ignite Change

City and Date: Money, MS (1955) and Multiple (1950s–1960s)

During the summer of 1955, 14-year-old Emmett Till was visiting his relatives in Mississippi. While shopping at the Bryant Grocery Store with his cousins, the youth was accused of whistling at the store's white co-owner, Carolyn Bryant. A couple of days later, when her husband, Roy Bryant, returned from a trip, he heard about the whistling allegations against Emmett. With help from his brother, Mr. Bryant searched for and found young Emmett at his uncle's home. The pair proceeded to kidnap and brutally beat the youth, leaving his unrecognizable, lifeless body in the Tallahatchie River. Amid unspeakable grief, his mother Mamie Till-Mobley made the sacrifice of having an open casket at Emmett's funeral, displaying her beloved son's mutilated body as a way of amplifying the heinous treatment of Black people in public spaces. The gruesome photograph of Emmett's body is

credited with helping to ignite the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. More than a half-century later, the world witnessed the nine-minute 29-second recorded public execution of George Floyd at the hands of a white police officer. The documentation of this grotesque brutality against Floyd also ignited a civil rights uprising, once again demonstrating Black peoples' precarity in public spaces. Equally important, the ongoing burden of providing graphic and grotesque proof of public space discrimination to spur structural change is contributing to a form of collective trauma across Black communities.

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Case Study: Publicly Humiliated To Death

Country and Date: South Africa (1789), England, Ireland and France (Various Dates)

Saartjie Baartman, sometimes derogatorily referred to as the “Hottentot Venus,” was a Khoikhoi woman born in 1789 in what is now South Africa. Her father, a bushman, was killed while driving cattle and she spent her youth living on settler farms. When she was 21, she moved to Cape Town to work as a domestic worker. Soon after she met William Dunlop, a Scottish military surgeon who also showcased animal specimens. He invited Ms. Baartman to travel to England to be exhibited. Accounts suggest that she initially hesitated. Despite not being literate in English and coming from an oral culture, she somehow signed a written contract agreeing to travel to London to be exhibited in public for entertainment for five years. Londoners paid to touch Ms. Baartman’s clitoris and bottom, the object of their contradictory disgust and desire. She also played instruments and smoked a pipe on stage. When both the novelty of the show and Mr. Dunlop died, Ms. Baartman travelled to Paris with a man named Henry Taylor who then sold her to an animal trainer. Soon after, Ms. Baartman died of what was speculated to be “inflammatory and eruptive disease,” but it is plausible that she perished from public exploitation and humiliation so ruinous that it caused her death. Ms. Baartman’s skeleton and her pickled brain and genitals were exhibited in the Paris Museum of Man. In 1994 Nelson Mandela petitioned the French government for the return of her body parts. His request was finally granted in 2002 and Ms. Baartman’s body parts were returned to her homelands for burial. Today, she is a revered, symbolic figure for women facing racial and sexual abuse.⁶

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⁶ Summarized account from Jay Pitter’s forthcoming book *Black Public Joy* with McClelland and Stewart, Penguin Random House Canada

Conclusion

The above case studies evoke a series of questions, which will inform the work of the BOLD Policy Project while supporting institutions—particularly municipalities, and related policy-making and governance bodies. Ultimately, they tell a story of Black public space restriction, racial violence and indignity. However, across these and many other stories, amid the despair and injustice, the spirit of audacity and perseverance of Black people is a vibrantly coloured, woven thread.

Some of the core questions, referenced above, include: How do we begin to define and address the long-term trauma—within a lifetime and intergenerational—resulting from anti-Black public space discrimination? How do early childhood experiences of anti-Black public space discrimination impact Black peoples' sense of spatial entitlement, mobility and sense of belonging? How does anti-Black public space discrimination disrupt Black joy and the quality of life in communities—for Black people who rise to excellence or find themselves wedged between the margins alike? How can Black peoples' public space stories play a role in both humanizing and democratizing policy-making and transformation processes? Finally, how can examining public space policies through a racial equity lens focused on Black people benefit other equity-deserving groups? In addition to eliciting these core questions, the stories of Black peoples' public space discrimination reveal dimensions of the challenges that are rendered invisible within a traditional policy-making and transformation framework.

Overall, storytelling is reflective of Black peoples' oral traditions, so the project is culturally responsive while challenging traditional policy-making and transformation frameworks. Furthermore, creating space for community actors to speak on their own behalf, to bear witness to themselves and to each other, is an act of communal healing—a reclamation of space. In addition to prioritizing Black peoples' collective healing through this process, this is the type of personal agency and coalition-building required for Black communities to engage municipalities and other institutions in bold and generative changemaking conversations. In return, institutions must embrace more equitable and participatory policy-making approaches that consider the long-standing adverse impact of policies that govern public spaces across time, communities and individual identities. These are the fundamental conditions—to create institutional space that embraces community power and lived experiences—for policy to fulfil its highest purpose as a social good.

Note: Subsequent BOLD Policy Project initiatives and deliverables will be available on the BOLD Policy Project webpage: windsorlawcities.ca/bold-policy-project. This webpage will serve as a living, dynamic policy transformation toolkit which will contain additional informative policy briefs, a Being Black in Public survey, a municipal policy review and actionable policy transformation tools.

Based in the **Faculty of Law, University of Windsor, the Centre for Cities (C4C)** supports research, teaching and public engagement on the legal and policy tools related to municipalities and good city-building. Under the leadership of its founding Director Dr. Anneke Smit and with 15 affiliated researchers, C4C situates itself at the nexus of research and practice. C4C's mandate is to facilitate and lead innovative collaboration between academics, municipal governments, community organizations, local institutions and industry to further the goals of sustainable and inclusive local governance.

Jay Pitter Placemaking is an award-winning, bi-national practice mitigating growing divides in cities across North America. The practice leads institutional city-building projects focused on public space design and policy, mobility equity, cultural planning, gender-responsive design, transformative public engagement and healing fraught sites. Additionally, Jay Pitter, Principal Placemaker, shapes urgent urbanism discourse through media platforms such as the Los Angeles Times and Canadian Architect. Ms. Pitter is a sought-after speaker who has delivered keynotes for organizations such as United Nations Women and the Canadian Urban Transit Association, and is also an urban planning lecturer who has engaged students at Cornell University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Princeton University and numerous other post-secondary institutions. Guided by Ms. Pitter's expertise, which is located at the nexus of urban design and social justice, the team translates community insights into the built environment and urban policy.

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