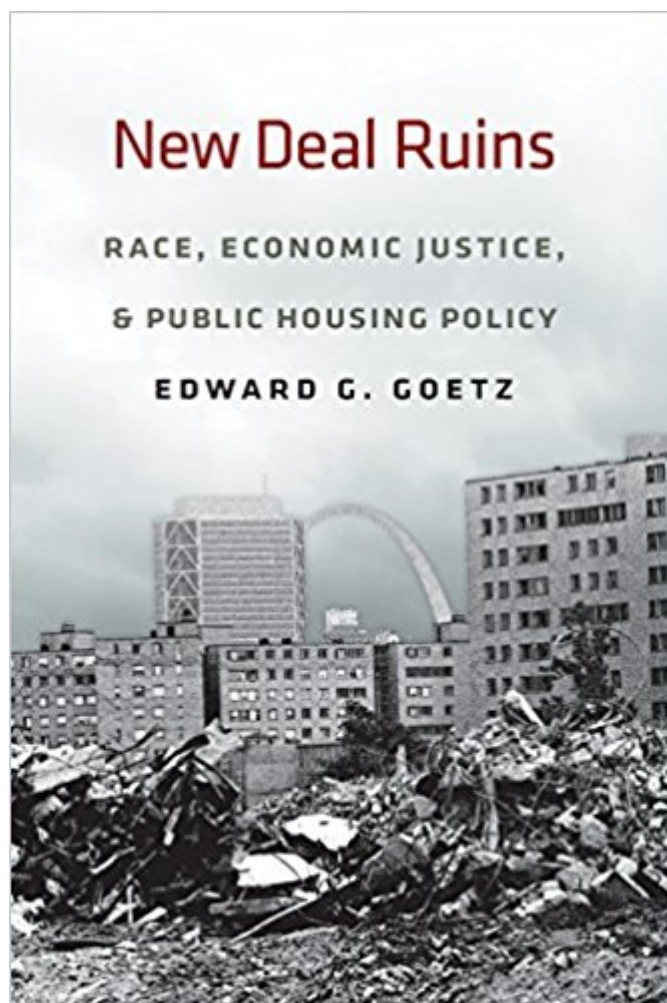


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New Deal Ruins: Race, Economic Justice, And Public Housing Policy



Synopsis

Public housing was an integral part of the New Deal, as the federal government funded public works to generate economic activity and offer material support to families made destitute by the Great Depression, and it remained a major element of urban policy in subsequent decades. As chronicled in *New Deal Ruins*, however, housing policy since the 1990s has turned to the demolition of public housing in favor of subsidized units in mixed-income communities and the use of tenant-based vouchers rather than direct housing subsidies. While these policies, articulated in the HOPE VI program begun in 1992, aimed to improve the social and economic conditions of urban residents, the results have been quite different. As Edward G. Goetz shows, hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced and there has been a loss of more than 250,000 permanently affordable residential units. Goetz offers a critical analysis of the nationwide effort to dismantle public housing by focusing on the impact of policy changes in three cities: Atlanta, Chicago, and New Orleans. Goetz shows how this transformation is related to pressures of gentrification and the enduring influence of race in American cities. African Americans have been disproportionately affected by this policy shift; it is the cities in which public housing is most closely identified with minorities that have been the most aggressive in removing units. Goetz convincingly refutes myths about the supposed failure of public housing. He offers an evidence-based argument for renewed investment in public housing to accompany housing choice initiatives as a model for innovative and equitable housing policy.

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Customer Reviews

"New Deal Ruins provides an extensively researched accounting of how the public housing program has arrived at this point, and a necessary primer for understanding the program's current circumstances and rather dim prospects... And as with his previous books, Goetz's latest work belongs on the bookshelves of any scholar of U.S. low-income housing policy." -- James Hanlon, *J Housing and the Built Environ* (2015)

"Throughout *New Deal Ruins*, Edward G. Goetz makes a compelling case that, for the residents who are displaced by HOPE VI and other public housing demolition, the results are uneven at best and downright horrible at worst. Goetz puts current efforts to reshape public housing into long-term context. The way in which public housing demolition and redevelopment supported local efforts to gentrify neighborhoods is both positive for the success of the projects and negative in terms of social equity." -- Rachel Garshick Kleit, *The Ohio State University*

"Many people have chronicled the decline and fall of American public housing, but Edward G. Goetz's book is at least as much about the demolition of myths as it is about the dismantling of housing projects. In explaining the intricate conflation of race, politics, and economic opportunism that has been transforming many cities since the 1990s, this provocative volume raises trenchant and disturbing questions about the future place of the poor in the American metropolis." -- Lawrence J. Vale, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*, author of *Purging the Poorest: Public Housing and the Design Politics of Twice-Cleared Communities*

"Edward G. Goetz's clear-eyed, data-driven book shows that public housing destruction and redevelopment, despite its excellent press, is failing to help most public housing residents upgrade their lives and communities. *New Deal Ruins* documents the disturbing parallels between contemporary public housing redevelopment and the disgraced urban renewal policies of the 1950s. The benefits of redevelopment, such as gentrification, accrue to elites, while the social costs, including dislocation, are borne by poor minorities. This powerful indictment of prevailing urban social policy is essential reading for activists, academics, and government officials." -- Nicholas Dagen Bloom, *New York Institute of Technology*, author of *Public Housing That Worked: New York in the Twentieth Century*

Edward G. Goetz is Professor of Urban and Regional Planning and Director of the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota. He is the author of *Clearing the Way: Deconcentrating the Poor in Urban America* and *Shelter Burden: Local Politics and Progressive*

Housing Policy, and is the coeditor of *The New Localism: Comparative Urban Politics in a Global Era*.

Excellent supporting data and great use of qualitative and quantitative data. Wish there were more detailed recommendations for improvement of public housing communities.

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