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# Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity

*Setha Low, Dana Taplin, Suzanne Scheld*  
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**Setha Low, Dana Taplin, Suzanne Scheld : Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By AleGreat Article and On Time Service 7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Cultural diversity in urban park planning By D. Donovan, Editor/Sr. Reviewer Urban parks provide important public spaces which invite different groups to meet and relax, strengthening community interactions - but at times parks become inhospitable to different groups. Cultural diversity should be the

key goal in designing urban parks, the authors maintain: **RETHINKING URBAN PARKS: PUBLIC SPACE AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY** uses case studies of selected New York and Philadelphia parks to identify common problems and how parks may be used to manage cultural diversity. Chapters survey limiting factors to park use, ethnic activities, and restoration project goals. College-level students of urban planning and public space access will find this essential to understanding how cultural needs interact with urban park design and use.

Urban parks such as New York City's Central Park provide vital public spaces where city dwellers of all races and classes can mingle safely while enjoying a variety of recreations. By coming together in these relaxed settings, different groups become comfortable with each other, thereby strengthening their communities and the democratic fabric of society. But just the opposite happens when, by design or in ignorance, parks are made inhospitable to certain groups of people. This pathfinding book argues that cultural diversity should be a key goal in designing and maintaining urban parks. Using case studies of New York City's Prospect Park, Orchard Beach in Pelham Bay Park, and Jacob Riis Park in the Gateway National Recreation Area, as well as New York's Ellis Island Bridge Proposal and Philadelphia's Independence National Historical Park, the authors identify specific ways to promote, maintain, and manage cultural diversity in urban parks. They also uncover the factors that can limit park use, including historical interpretive materials that ignore the contributions of different ethnic groups, high entrance or access fees, park usage rules that restrict ethnic activities, and park "restorations" that focus only on historical or aesthetic values. With the wealth of data in this book, urban planners, park professionals, and all concerned citizens will have the tools to create and maintain public parks that serve the needs and interests of all the public.

About the Author **SETHA LOW** is Professor of Environmental Psychology and Anthropology and Director of the Public Space Research Group at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. **DANA TAPLIN** is Codirector of the Public Space Research Group at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, as well as Adjunct Professor of Environmental Studies at Pace University and Visiting Assistant Professor of Interior Design at the Pratt Institute. **SUZANNE SCHELD** is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at California State University, Northridge.