THEME ISSUE:
(RE-)ENCOUNTERING THE NORDIC
IN A WORLD OF TRAVELLING IDEAS

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Photo on the front cover: Scott Maco

CHRISTIANIA'S PLACE IN THE WORLD OF TRAVELLING IDEAS: SHARING INFORMAL LIVEABILITY

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Abstract

The self-proclaimed Freetown of Christiania has occupied prime real estate in the Danish capital of Copenhagen since 1971. Over the same period, Christiania has captured the public imagination as an evolving social experiment that represents intangible attributes of "liveability". This paper employs a conceptual framework of informal urbanism, and a network space of flows, to challenge neoliberal assumptions that circumscribe how, in formal planning, liveability is narrowly determined from measurable indicators (such as economic revenue). In turn, this challenges the way that "influence" is understood to be "relevant" as a function of institutional actors and technologies that deliver "competitive" urban regeneration. Exploratory research is conducted on (and through) the Christiania Researcher in Residence (CRIR) programme, as a catalytic hub of dialogue, drawing on CRIR archives and ethnographic interviews to reveal a "space to think with" that is co-constitutive with diverse connected communities of practice around the world. This discussion yields a nuanced geographic analysis of "travelling ideas" and embedded learning. Focussing on the case of Christiania and CRIR raises a wider set of issues that we need to think about when considering interdependent patterns of formal and informal association in urban planning and social policy.

Introduction

Nordic cities are globally recognised in annual "quality of life" surveys as paradigmatic models of urban liveability. This, combined with the recognised benefits of knowledge exchange, has prompted numerous architectural study tours and municipal planning conventions to visit Copenhagen (and similarly Stockholm, Oslo, and Helsinki) to share and transfer these cities' attributes of urban liveability to other contexts elsewhere. The Nordic liveability paradigm emphasises the way that healthy, ecologically sustainable, and convivial lifestyle behaviour patterns (such as walking, cycling, and civic engagement) can be supported by human-scale landscape planning and good governance. While the precise formula of liveability remains elusive and relatively intangible, as does the overall attractiveness of a place, it is typical for liveability to be narrowly determined by tangible measures (such as economic revenue) of formal planning.

Copenhagen is endowed with numerous public spaces set aside for art and entertainment, and this helps make "liveability" a recognized export of Danish landscape architects. The best-known expert in this field is Jan Gehl, with the Public Spaces Public Life (PSPL) survey technique that he has practiced since the 1970s (Gehl, 2010; Gehl and Svarre, 2013). This is a "planned" approach that examines people's use of urban spaces, notably the "spaces between buildings" in opposition to car-based modernist planning (Matan and Newman, 2012, pp.30). In Copenhagen, there is one public space that appears to disrupt the Nordic paradigm of planned liveability: the "freetown" of Christiania. While this counter-cultural settlement boasts many recognised features of Nordic liveability, including a car-free green landscape, its "unplanned" aesthetic draws on "magical urban encounters...of buzzing intermingling" (Watson, 2006, p.5) that rarely "count" as relevant evidence for expert policy formulation.

This paper challenges the preoccupation with instrumental (neoliberal) measures of competitiveness and expertise in formal planning. It does so by drawing attention to informal landscapes and processes of urban innovation that reveal intangible but vital qualities of liveability. The aim is to shift attention from formal planning to informal place-making, focussing within the municipality of Copenhagen on the shared public space of Christiania as an unruly but intrinsically Nordic export that travels to other contexts elsewhere.

On Christiania

The self-proclaimed Freetown of Christiania occupies 85 acres of prime real estate at the heart of the Danish capital of Copenhagen. As a landscape, it represents a green oasis in which an eclectic jumble of some 320 characterful buildings defies the accepted conventions and regulations of formal urban planning. On one hand, the haphazard arrangement of self-built wooden homes invites comparison with the impoverished "shanty towns" that Mike Davis (2006) predicted as the dystopian future for the majority of the world's urban dwellers. On the other hand, it also evokes the sort of quirky, creative landscape that urban planners increasingly seek to imitate in the design of "liveable" public spaces and "creative cities" (Hellström Reimer, 2012; Vanolo, 2013). These ambivalent, liminal qualities follow the creation, by pioneer squatters, of "a village in the city" with "freedom enough for everybody" in their occupation of public land and buildings vacated by the Danish army in 1971 (quotes from Vest, 1991).

From the outset, it was the unspoken Christiania way to renovate and adapt rather than to tear down existing buildings, and to build with reclaimed materials at minimum cost (Jarvis, 2013). At first glance, Christiania is the quintessential antecedent to current trends of DIY urbanism and ad-hoc, small-scale, spontaneous, temporary "pop-up" citizen-led interventions in mainstream urban arrangements (see for instance Finn, 2014). Certain attributes also resonate with the literature on intentional and autonomous communities in which connections are made between experimental homes, alternative living arrangements, and diverse methods of "changing the world" by creating, resisting, testing and demonstrating new socio-spatial structures (see for instance Schehr, 1997 Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006). Yet, as the following discussion demonstrates, in Christiania we find poorly understood functions of dynamic communications and ambivalent urbanism that merit a fresh analytic approach.

Disrupting the tranquil village analogy, and introducing the first of many layers of contradictory meaning, is the extraordinarily intense and far-reaching influence that Christiania exerts, beyond this physical site, as an idea of "freedom" that captures the imagination. This is witnessed by many hundreds of thousands of visitors who make Christiania the second most popular tourist destination in Copenhagen (Fallesen and Hind, 2008), plus many others who connect through wistful dreaming to a place they may never visit in person. Equally significant as this sheer volume of visitors is the interest in Christiana shown by planners, politicians, writers, artists, academics and activists, each forming their own impression of a vitality they wish to recreate elsewhere.

The story of how Christiania came into being has assumed legendary status in counter-cultural circles. According to the official "Christiania

Guide" (sold for 10 DKK and available to download free in English and Danish from the Christiania website):

> The tale starts in 1969/70, when the fence at the corner of Prinsessegade and Refshalevej in the quarter of Copenhagen called Christianshavn is knocked down several times by a group of local people to gain access to the large former military area within. Initially this infringement provides a playground for the local children but once the people of Christianshavn get their playground, the site attracts homeless squatters. Around this time, the alternative newspaper Hovedbladet (Head magazine) is published with the headline: "emigrate with bus number 8". The article tells about the abandoned military installations at Badmandsstræde Barracks, and includes lots of ideas for the use of the area – not least to house the great number of young people who cannot find anywhere to live. The result is the influx of people who want to create another life based on communal living and freedom, and thus Christiania is born – on the 26th September 1971 (Christiania Guide, 2006, p.3).

Versions of this story have been shared at festivals and at political rallies over the intervening years and the headline trends have been published in national media and tourist magazines. This origin story has thus evolved through numerous interpretations, and the reality is that there are competing "truths" about Christiania. Missing from the official legacy, for instance, is the key role of Jacob Ludvigsen, the young editor of *Hovedbladet* who coined the "emigrate with bus 8" slogan, named the "freetown" Christiania, and co-authored Christiania's original mission statement. Ludvigsen faded from the story after he quit the site in 1972, disillusioned by the absence of order in common meetings. He is widely reported to have declared that "to live outside the law you must be honest", a paraphrased line from a Bob Dylan song that lambasted self-interested criminal groups. As we shall see, this song-line and the "emigrate with bus 8" slogan are bound up with the continual reconstitution of Christiania's reputation.

Christiania operated outside the legal framework for 40 years, until February 2011, when the Danish state proposed a take-it-or-leave-it deal in which residents would buy the land and original buildings that they had illegally occupied. For activists fiercely opposed to the idea of private property and ownership, this was a fraught decision. The deal was finally accepted because collective purchase would safeguard Christiania from any individual or corporate entity being able to control or sell it in the future. In a similar fashion to the legal safeguards provided by a Community Land Trust, Christiania would "buy itself free of speculation" as a common resource for "everybody and nobody" (Manghezi, 2012). At this stage, the newly created Christiania Foundation launched a

"Peoples Christiania Share" (Folkeaktie) as a source of crowd-funding that appealed directly to people all around the world who held cherished memories and dreams of Christiania (the shares are symbolic and have no economic value).[1]

On influence and the travelling idea

There is growing academic interest in the way that novel ideas and visions of urban space and governance "travel" through networks of innovation, representing communities of practice and the pulling-power of prototype "demonstration" projects (Wenger and Snyder, 2000). Prominent in this field are studies that focus on the geographies of policy mobility and the influence of key experts as "idea brokers" or mediators in shaping neoliberalization processes and "competitive" urban regeneration (McCann and Ward, 2011; Peck, Theodore and Brenner, 2013; Coe and Bunnell, 2003). Parallels can be drawn between the autonomous "travelling idea" and the way that policy makers and practitioners in many countries look to one another for solutions, rendering neoliberal policies "mobile" (Ward, 2007, p.660). Indeed, the suggestion that Christiania might inspire imitation is not new. The international literature on urban squatting points to evidence of multiple personal connections with Christiania as an explanation for this social movement's proliferation across Europe in the 1970s (Martinez, 2011, p.3). This raises the uncomfortable spectre that "counter-hegemonic" inspiration may be transmitted through networks and flows of people, places and projects in remarkably similar ways to the instrumental proliferation of hegemonic neoliberal policy formulations. Yet, much as we know that some types of knowledge lend themselves better than others to the "evidence-base" used to determine instrumental "success factors", some patterns of formal association are undoubtedly privileged (and other informal interactions disregarded) by the same heuristic function.

Whether a particular urban regeneration scheme or policy attracts international attention and influence is bound up with neoliberal assumptions. These include the way influence is usually understood to be relevant as a function of institutional actors and technologies that deliver "competitive" urban regeneration using measurable indicators, such as economic revenue, visitor numbers, architectural awards and cultural cachet. We find the authority of a highly selective "evidence-based" knowledge and the language of expert consultation invoked throughout the urban studies literature and with expectations that a vibrant, inclusive street life can be "engineered" in neighbourhood planning through a conscious mix of land uses and activities (Tait and Jensen, 2007). For example, Richard Florida (2002, p.243) claims that college educated creative and knowledge workers are the driving force of this agenda, and if planners and politicians want to attract and retain them they should invest in the 3 T's of technology, talent, and tolerance (see also Landry, 2000; and

1   On 1st July 2012, the Christiania Foundation was created to purchase the land and buildings for 125 million DKK. (16.8 million Euros). Deductions were made to compensate for the renovation and maintenance of the water, sewers, electricity, rights of ways and the rural open spaces that Christianites agreed to undertake. Of the final sum of 52 million DKK, 46 million DKK came from a collective mortgage and 6 million came from the sale of the so-called "Peoples Christiania Share" (Folkeaktie). In the first 30 months, this emotional connection raised 11.2 million DKK representing one seventh of the 76 million DKK sum required.

Brandt, Frandsen and Larsen, 2008 on "vague spaces"). Moreover, these measures and strategies circulate among policy-makers and planners in countries that share similar (neoliberal) political-economic characteristics. This suggests that a restricted information-sharing infrastructure reinforces a restricted definition of influence and impact (Ward, 2007).

Planners and politicians who travel to Denmark to study the Nordic liveability may chance upon Christiania, intrigued by what attracts so many visitors to this unruly place. Danish businesses and organizations often take their foreign guests to Christiania as a showcase of Denmark's progressive and liberal urban way of life. Many of the estimated 500,000 visitors are inspired by the playful "shabby chic" that thrives on a landscape stripped of commercial logos, invited by the resident tour guides (Rundvisning) who have been showing large and small groups around Christiania for more than 30 years to admire such architectural curiosities as the Bananhuset (Banana House). Others will not see past the intimidating reputation of Pusher Street. If limited to these superficial encounters, Christiania's "place in the world" might well be explained through orthodox "creative city" narratives that highlight a profitable paradox in "environments and events that are simultaneously organised and yet felt to be spontaneous" (Ellin, 2006; Pløger, 2010, p.849). Yet, surface impressions fail to engage with alternative urbanisms that flow from dreaming and enchantment rather than physical encounter. To address the lack of attention paid to sensory, embodied experience, a new analytic approach is needed that considers Christiania's influence differently, and by this token, challenges what is deemed "relevant" for planners and policy makers to learn from. We need to recognise informal and intangible processes that formal structures largely take for granted, and may threaten to undermine. This is like the argument Jennifer Robinson (2006) makes when she calls for an urban theory that accounts for a wider variety of "ordinary" cities and, crucially, for analytical approaches that bridge research on "planning" in global or world cities and "informality" in the small cities of "less developed" countries (Bell and Jayne, 2006, p.5).

On informal urbanism

Christiania is a provocative case through which to challenge neoliberal attempts to engineer urban creativity and develop "tools" for the development of eventful "liveability" because in many respects it suggests an informal urbanism more usually associated with the so-called developing world (AlSayyad and Roy, 2003). Connecting to this literature allows for a more radical appreciation of diverse patterns of association in urban daily life, beyond the binary power relations used to generate a league table of "world" cities. Rather than regarding informal urbanism as the absence of professional "expertise", or as somehow less-than or awaiting "development" or "normalization", we arguably need to recognise that "no political system functions on the basis of formal structures and processes alone" (Daniels, 2004, p.503).

To better capture diverse patterns of association, liveability and influence, it is useful to build upon the seminal work of German sociologist Georg Simmel and that of Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells. The contributions of both, in relation to the travelling idea as a network of flows, have undoubtedly assumed significance in the field of critical urban geography (Beaverstock, Smith and Taylor, 2000). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Georg Simmel published several studies highlighting the significance of co-present social interaction. He drew attention to a convivial scale of belonging that drew on the concept of *Gemeinschaft* (close-knit community) previously introduced by his contemporary Ferdinand Tönnies. Simmel recognised an affective "living togetherness" in this concept, pointing to the universal occurrence in human development of a sociable pleasure in the physical company of others. He referred to this as "Geselligkeit" or the "play-form" of association. This play-form introduced novelty and disruption to otherwise routine exchanges. He observed that associations assumed greater depth when they increased social awareness and meaning through dialogues that challenged taken for granted norms and values. For Simmel (1903), the virtue of Geselligkeit is that engagement runs deep, beyond fleeting impressions.

In the 1980s, Simmel's work on complex patterns of association influenced Manuel Castells, among others, to articulate the concept of a "network society" (Castells, 1996). Originally this term was used to evoke the increasingly rapid spread of information, including cultural and political ideas, brought about by the spread of networked digital information and communications technologies. These information networks were understood to constitute a new social landscape. For example, Barry Wellman, a contemporary of Manuel Castells, worked with the idea of a "global village" of networked individuals (Wellman, 1999). Castells extended the logic of networking to recognize multiple influences (such as religion, spirituality, political solidarity, economic status and cultural upbringing) as co-constitutive of both real and virtual networks of communication, interaction and encounter. Castells conceptualized this multi-dimensional network as a space of flows; a network of relations, defined at key intersections by "hubs" of practice and connection. The ensuing years have seen only a limited development of these concepts and a tendency to assume a metageographical perspective that neglects messy, fleshy lived realities and imaginations. By contrast, the analysis pursued here seeks to recover Simmel's humanistic scale of association, to account for sensory and embodied as well as dialogical network relations (see also Sennett, 2012).

It is unusual to apply the concept of informal urbanism to urban development in Nordic cities, despite suggested similarities between informal social and economic networks that serve to sustain everyday life and alternative lifestyles that challenge hyper-privatisation and commercial

logos (Jarvis, 2015). Even before the recent legalisation process, Christiania displayed a rather different impression of urban informality to the images of squatter settlements observed in Pakistan and India, for example. Despite being informally squatted and largely self-built, Christiania is not densely developed. The resident population reached 900 in 1989 when it stopped growing, capped at this low density of dwelling by a state-imposed moratorium on new building that was part of the protracted legal struggle to evict or "normalise" occupation (Amouroux, 2011), as well as strong internal negotiation to preclude further encroachment. This has been the cause of negative external perceptions whereby: "people in Copenhagen talk about Christiania as all these ageing people who don't want to welcome new people or build new homes. But they have not been allowed to build anything new and in recent years when young people started squatting (the squat), Christiania had to be seen to throw their own young people out and make them homeless" (Lise Autogena, interviewed by Chapman and Wooster, 2007).

While the informal settlement label carries illegal and inferior connotations around the world, the international literature and ethnographic evidence suggests that residents regard informal self-built housing as a legitimate expression of belonging (Feireiss, Brillembourg and Klumpner, 2005). In Christiania, this is evident in a sense of entitlement that comes from conscientious home-making, whereby "do-it-yourself" renovation coincides with strategies for managing on a low-income. Informal urbanism in Christiania arguably reflects the historically ambivalent and contradictory attitude of the Danish state, whereby the state grudgingly accepted the housing that existed in 2001, then decided that the buildings on the waterfront must be torn down. While the state regarded the legitimacy of housing on the sensitive sites as an interim agreement, Christianites interpreted this as sufficient certainty to invest in home-making and collective social organising. Fundamental to understanding how this collective sense of legitimacy was created and maintained, against the legal and normative definitions of insecure squatter status, is the convivial scale of belonging and dialogue conceived by Simmel (1903). It demonstrates the play-form of association, extended with reference to the sensory and embodied impulse and learning of "living togetherness".

On a network space of flows for the CRIR programme: Data collection and analysis

The remaining discussion draws on triangulated data and methods of analysis representing a variety of media from research conducted on (and through) the Christiania Researcher in Residence (CRIR) programme. Belief that Christiania is relevant and important as a field of interest beyond the site it occupies galvanized a group of Christianites, ex-Christianites and associated scholars to launch the Christiania Researcher in Residence (CRIR) programme in 2004. Further motivations derive from

an understanding that "Christiania's future depends on many things, including support from outside of Christiania, and outside of Denmark" (Rømer, 2008, p.1). The programme identifies several spheres of critical engagement, the aim being:

> *to involve artists, researchers and academics in an open, critical and reflective dialogue around the free town Christiania, and to feed new creative and critical thinking back to the community and into the public realm globally. Christiania's insight and experience into local organization, alternative architecture, lifestyle, culture, sustainable environments, quality of life, democracy and innovation is unique in the world and could generate important knowledge that may inspire alternative urban thinking* (CRIR, 2014).

The programme relies on access to a vacant house that can be run on a non-profit basis. Visiting researchers are required only to meet the costs of utilities and their own daily subsistence. A house has been made available since 2004, with short interruptions caused by relocation from one house to another, and to allow for necessary repairs. This has been possible with core funding from the Christiania common purse and support from the local area of Mælkebøtten.[2] At regular area meetings Mælkebøtten residents have taken the collective decision both to sacrifice the dwelling and forego payments to the area purse that would otherwise be made if the house were to be inhabited by a permanent member of the area.

This paper benefits both from "insider" observations (gained by living in the CRIR house as a participating researcher on four separate occupations, 2010–2013) and "outsider" observations, based on examining the influence of CRIR from a UK university base. Conducting research from the CRIR house facilitated access to project archives, some texts in English and some translated from Danish. Archival data included guest entries in the "day-book" hand-written in English, largely as a second language. This reflects a CRIR participant profile spanning more than 20 countries, with interests and engagement in Christiania ranging from psychopharmacology and computer science through geography, politics, law, and film-making, to animal behavioural studies. A variety of recorded data were scrutinised, such as documentary films, photographs, oral testimonies and printed publications stored on the premises. This included six films of various descriptions that have been made by CRIR participants, produced in English. Several prize-winning films on Christiania, produced by the Christiania-based film-maker Nils Vest, provided additional context. Short films on Christiania found on YouTube, Vimeo and other public domains are too numerous to report here. This is not to underestimate the power of the internet as a place where impressions, ideas and competing opinions flourish (Gauntlet, 2011). Instead, retrospective analysis of a decade of CRIR media "output", combined with

2   Christiania is organised into 14 discrete areas. This has led to different local reputations, with housing allocation strategies distinguishing pusher enclaves and artist and activist areas (Amouroux, 2011). These diverse resident enclaves disrupt any easy understanding of Christiania and the extrapolation of a template from which to reproduce Christiania's elsewhere.

personal observations and ethnographic interviews, illuminates the way that impulses of utopian imagination and collaboration are shaped by, and flow through, the lived experience of the inhabitant. Interviews were conducted (in English) with members of the steering committee, other CRIR participants, and residents who are regularly interviewed by CRIR researchers and the Danish media. Finally, a Danish language research assistant was recruited (who was herself raised in Christiania) to review and code a sample selection of the *Ugespejlet* (Weekly Mirror), Christiania's free newspaper, to extract key categories of inside-outside connection to Christiania and CRIR, translated into English.

Figure 1 represents a synthetic analysis of the assembled archive and interview data. Drawing explicitly on the multi-dimensional logic of networking first articulated by Castells (1996), it identifies nine "hub" network intersections of practice and association, variously bridging formal and informal and "real" (people, place, projects) and "imagined" (sensory and spiritual) domains of learning, activity, organization and experience. At the heart of the network is the analytic space of CRIR (shown as hub B2), representing both the physical space of the research house and the virtual realm of administrative organizing and knowledge dissemination. The "geography" of this network space of flows and hubs of interaction (showing how connections are reproduced *through* CRIR) represents a more-than-material landscape that is not territorially limited (e.g. to Copenhagen or Denmark). Christiania exists as a physical place, represented by a horizontal band embracing B1, B2, B3, while it is at the same time co-constituted in imagined and debated articulations within and between a duality of formal (A1, A2, A3) and informal (C1, C2, C3) spheres of association, planning and organization. To some extent it is possible to read into the formal and informal realms an evocation of the global north and the global south. Unlike the way that the "information sharing infrastructure of mobile policies" is largely restricted to Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, the UK and the USA (Ward, 2007, p.661), Christiania's network space of flows corresponds with communities of practice and travelling ideas around the world; notably Mexico, Cuba, Ghana, Latin America, Cuba and Iran) (Christianiafeed, 2015). Figure 2 reinterprets this same network as a set of descriptions (illustrative rather than exhaustive) for each of the nine hubs, with examples of typical activities and organisations.
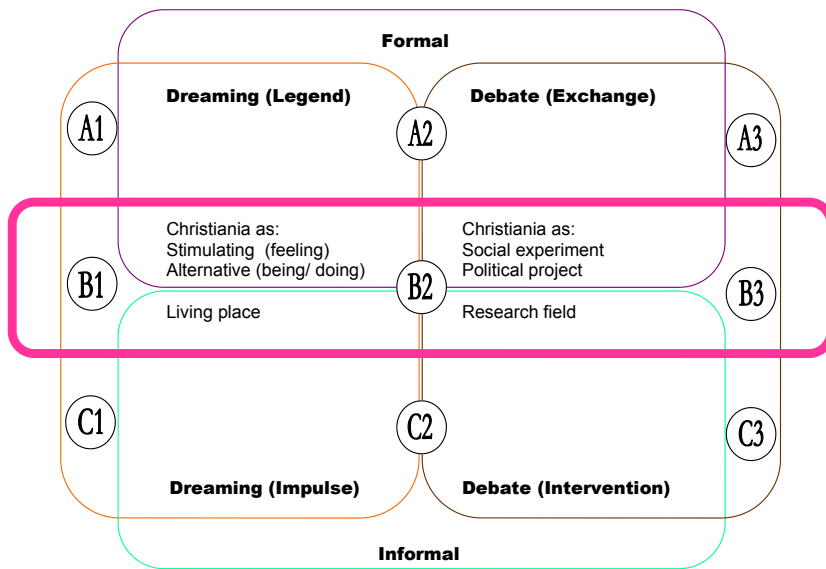
Figure 1
A network space of flows illustrating the influence of the CRIR programme: Christiania as an idea and a place.

A1 Counter-culture Free festivals (e.g. Burning Man, USA) DIY cultures and self-building	**A2 Cultural exchange** Christiania Cultural Group (Kulturforening) Svenholm, Denmark Ruigoord, Netherlands Findhorn, Scotland Metelkova, Lithuania Modena autonomous	**A3 Communication and engagement** Ugespejlet (Christiania's weekly free newsletter) Christiania tv Folkeaktie (folk share) _FLOW 1_
B1 Enchantment Soliloquies in Ugespejlet Visual images on public domains (e.g. flikr, YouTube)	**B2** Participation & learning CRIR as a house and a process of introduction; a repository of knowledge; a virtual network and community of interest; and critical interventions in Christiania discourse	**B3 Collaborative projects and external support** KAB collaborative housing cooperative Supertanker National Museum Urban Pilgrims
C1 Impulse and orientation Utopian imagination; educational tourism; subaltern indigeneity; notions of common land/common wealth. Ecology and social justice	**C2 Informal urbanism and non-capital movements** Global Ecovillage Network (GEN), LØS (Danish Network Association of Ecovillages) Squatter movement	**C3 Direct action and DIY social change** Christiania LA21 Climate Bottom

Figure 2
"Key" to the "hubs" identified in Figure 1 with examples of activities and organisations describing the formal-informal associations involved.

Since 2004 more than 80 visiting researchers (activists, architects, artists and academics) have undertaken some form of participatory action research via CRIR, making this Copenhagen's longest running independent residency programme. Researchers have typically been recruited through the web-site and steering group, by word of mouth, and by advertising through "sibling" sites such as Spatial Agency (an Anglo-Dutch group applying actor-network-theory to a new architecture movement) (Schneider and Till, 2009); and Cultura21, an informal international network that advocates cultural fieldwork for sustainability coordinated by a team from Berlin, Copenhagen, Mexico-City and Paris. Applicants are invited to submit an outline proposal to live in the CRIR house, usually for a period of 1–4 weeks, with the expectation that they will share their findings as creative commons. Research output often takes the form of a public event such as a film preview, seminar presentation, or exhibition, with the steering group providing access to one of several Christiania venues such as the Museum of Art (Gallopperiet) and cinema (Fabriken / Byens Lys).

In the early days, members of the steering group took turns to serve as a "mentor" to individual CRIR visitors and strenuous efforts were made to suggest introductions and connections between people and projects. In this sense, there was a conscious effort to cultivate a community of practice that flowed in and out of CRIR in collaboration with a pool of actively engaged residents and external organisations. This follows from an understanding that creative thinking, new ideas and learning rely less on a straightforward exchange of information than on shared experience (feeling and doing) and dialogue. It is another departure from the way that "mobile policies" are understood to travel through an information sharing infrastructure, circulating printed documents and power-point presentations, that is largely dialectic rather than dialogic (Ward, 2007, p.661; Sennett, 2012, p.x).

It is important to recognise that CRIR is one of multiple intersecting hubs of knowledge production.

As Figure 1 indicates, there are plentiful efforts within Christiania to "reach out" and engage with the wider world, but they are fragmented by the absence of an official spokesperson and by competing interests. It was explained to me in a personal interview with Ella that this "disorganisation" can result in unexpected creativity:

(Christianites) think (that outreach) should be done (to explain how things work, that we pay our taxes and we're not violent) but it's never really organised. Most (Christianites) are busy running their daily lives. And then there are a few who are devoted to CRIR or specific areas of interest like the Culture Group (Kulturforening). But then there are also all these informal things like someone just went to Dhaka on some art exchange and then recently a music group went to the Karlsoy festival in Norway; they drove a bus out like as a Christiania roadshow. All these different events (Ella, interview with author).

This reinforces the co-constitutive significance of formal and informal spheres of planning and organization. While CRIR is widely respected for analytic questioning, for instance, the cultural exchange of Kulturforening (A2) runs a variety of events to "make" culture. For example, it is active in organizing cultural exchanges with the cultural quarter of Ruigoord in Amsterdam, the idea being to "develop and expand Christiania values...as far away as China and Korea...as a social experiment that has grown into a reality" (Britta Lillesøe, CRIR archives, CRIR, 2014). Moreover, the CRIR archives include a document by Britta Lillesøe, of Kultureforening, listing (in 2006) all the places, organizations, and individuals within Christiania considered to be contributing to its cultural production in the broadest sense. On this list, she identifies 26 venues (shops and businesses) and 110 individuals (including singers, performers, film producers, poets and architects).

Many of the same names and faces crop up in CRIR films, books and ethnographic projects. Public events (such as an October 2007 "retrospective" celebrating 17 CRIR projects) tend to attract a small audience of the same actively engaged residents who participate in the co-production of knowledge. While each story is equally valid as a partial truth, there is the sense of a dominant narrative being laid down for posterity. Hiding unpleasant stories is widely recognised as a "hidden transcript" of resistance, a survival strategy of informal urbanism in a life lived under pressure (Scott, 1990). The practice of steering guests and external enquiries to a "representative Christianite" is widespread. As Ella explains:

(outreach) is a duty almost but it doesn't seem to be a duty that's shared 100% not only because some are unwilling but some are not called to tell their story.... And some say we should watch out because if we only look for people who are willing to be active when they move in (as spokespeople) then what if all the weirdos suddenly disappear? We need them too to make this place what it is (Ella, interview with author).

There have always been different perspectives, and one response to feeling under siege from a hostile press has been to close ranks. During turbulent "legalization", it is widely held that perceived threats have shifted

from external to internal interests. These testimonies are continually evolving, often better understood in retrospect: the distinction for CRIR is the opportunity for mature reflection and critical engagement.

CRIR has also come to be associated with cultural exchanges that have spun out of connections made through the impulse and orientation of an individual or group applying to live in the house (see Figure 1, C1), or through participation in a particular activity, such as in the summer of 2006 when a camp of volunteers (15 young people from 12 countries) worked on gardening projects while keeping a diary about their experience of shared living (B2), and with ongoing correspondence and engagement after leaving Christiania, such as through the *Ugespejlet* or Folkeaktie (A3). Illustrating this point is a diary entry that communicates wistful yearning to transmit the spirit of Christiania: "we really would like to have another Christiania in our cities (of Berlin and Barcelona) but probably it wouldn't be the same". A similar impulse prompted Miriam Golja to apply to CRIR from the squat where she lives in AKC Metelkova, an autonomous social centre in the middle of Ljubljana, Slovenia, which, like Christiania, is an occupied site of former military barracks (Golja, 2010). Moreover, it was a shared experience of informal urbanism (C2) that brought artists representing the Gängeviertel (12 occupied houses of Hamburg) in 2013 to learn from living in the CRIR house (B2) while curating an exhibition on squatting in the Galloperiet (A3).

Engagement in CRIR is intended not only to arouse and instil deeper understanding of Christiania from personal experience but also to offer something back to the resident population and wider debate. This is illustrated by collaboration with external Danish organisations and institutions (such as the National Museum and the KAB collaborative housing cooperative) and others with whom the steering group maintain links overseas (such as London based Public Works) (B3). The extent to which Christiania and CRIR represent "space to think with" is evident in the way that the Physical and Astronomy department of the University of Copenhagen promotes the Science and Cocktails series held at Byens Lys as an outreach activity of the department "in collaboration with Christiania". It is through this series that a London professor of psychopharmacology came to write in the CRIR day-book that "Giving a talk on cannabis here was a real high point of my career!"

Following the flow

There are numerous "flows" that can be traced through the archives and assembled CRIR projects that cumulatively illustrate a network of influence in Figure 1. Illustrating just one example is the nine years it took for Richard Jackman and Robert Lawson, adopting the company name "Bus no. 8", to produce the film "Christiania – 40 years of occupation". The time-space geography of this particular "flow" begins on the US West Coast

in 2005, with Richard Jackman challenging the role of the "expert" during his architectural training (utopian impulses, C1 and counter-cultural associations, A1). Inspired by working on a participatory design-build project with the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, he decided to conduct his graduate project on "alternative building cultures" choosing Christiania because of its iconic reputation. He began to learn Danish at the Nordic Heritage Centre in Seattle as preparation. Following from what he had witnessed of indigenous American Indian attitudes to the global commons (C1), he was interested in the implications in Christiania of people controlling their own physical space. Woven into this orientation toward participatory democracy was his experience of grassroots Aids activism, and this was reinforced while living in the CRIR house by introductions to residents of the Bøssehuset (Gay House). After completing his first CRIR project "Building Anarchy" (Jackman, 2005), he returned in 2006 with Robert Lawson, proposing to make a feature length documentary, initially with the working title "Our heart is in your hands".

Initially the project was dreamed up through stories of Christiania already in circulation, including those about the famous Bus no. 8. These stereotypes became unsettled by the experience of living in the CRIR house, allowing deeper insights to develop from direct experience of Christiania's multiple realities at a key moment in history (in the run-up to legalization). On two visits (2006 and 2007), the two Americans became sufficiently "embedded" (B2) that they could cycle around with cameras strapped to their handlebars in a community that is often wary of cameras (the "No Photo" sign is emblematic of Pusher Street). Once filming was complete they returned to the USA to raise money for post-production editing. This took several years, during which time they continued to engage with the real and imagined "Christiania effect", developing a crowd-funding platform to raise money with the incentive of Folkeaktie (A3). The film was completed in February 2014 and previewed in Christiania in the Byens Lys in March 2014. Regular screenings have followed (mostly in North America but also in New Zealand, Denmark, Hungary and Estonia) typically hosted by international architecture schools and urban design film festivals.

In terms of "impact", this may complete this particular "flow", but it is important to recognize that the travelling idea is neither one-dimensional nor defined by "insiders" and "outsiders" in isolation. We learn from connections variously attributed to CRIR activity that patterns and flows of association intersect with network relations. It is again constructive to reflect on the work of Simmel (1903) to highlight complex patterns of informal urbanism and social autonomy. For example, problems tend to be solved by drawing on a variety of information sources "rather than from some power elite or single brain" (Hamdi, 2004, p.xvii). The multiplicity of relations at work suggests at least three interlinking patterns; of events, of spaces, and of dialogue. The pivotal position of the CRIR house at the

heart of the network demonstrates the extent to which these patterns thrive on co-present association, reinforcing what Simmel conceives as Geselligkeit.

Communicating enchantment

The analysis presented here challenges the metageographic (birds-eye) view of information sharing technologies usually attributed to the network society. In Christiania, we find dynamic channels of communication that are better characterised by the power to enchant or inspire; whether in alignment with a new social movement (e.g. squatting), ideological or spiritual affinity with indigenous cultures, or the "impulse" of utopian dreaming – none of which can simply be reduced to the exchange of information or conventional "learning". In this respect, it is constructive to understand the "impulse" of desiring a different, better future, for instance (C1), as a utopian method of thinking differently that involves criticism and creativity (Levitas, 2007; Sargisson, 1996). This is equally the case for *Ugespejlet* even though this medium is ostensibly produced to communicate news (A3).

The *Ugespejlet* crops up frequently in the network space of flows, especially for researchers seeking (from CRIR and elsewhere) to engage Christianites in conversations that add "authentic insights" to school or college projects. It is unclear whether research requests ever elicit much of a response, but the frequency of these requests bears witness to the widespread belief that the *Ugespejlet* is a significant public forum. In effect, it offers intimate access to "insiders" and "outsiders" alike.[3] Recognition that *Ugespejlet* engages with the heart of Christiania is such that when the Danish Queen was given a People's Share for her birthday in 2012, her secretary submitted a letter of thanks (Ugespejlet, 2012a, p.1). Similarly, a "Living Nordic Design" showroom posted a request "looking for Christianites to participate in articles about the kitchen good life, to be used in their catalogue. (They) need interesting and different personalities who would be interested in participating and thereby help spread a positive story about Christiania" (Ugespejlet, 2012b, p.25).

The CRIR archives bear witness to the way that all major issues and debates are openly aired in the *Ugespejlet* and reinforced through daily debate in Christiania's public space. Perhaps the best illustration of the *Ugespejlet* as an affective space of flows is the fact that "love letters" are submitted as an expression of yearning for connection. For example, "outsiders" variously submit letters requesting a way to live in Christiania for a while (a house-swap for example): "hello we are a group of 11 student which would like to spend our holidays in Christiania (sic)" (Ugespejlet, 2014, p.44); "Margit is offering to mind plants and cats while people are on holiday" (Ugespejlet, 2002, p.20). Residents are similarly known to send soliloquies. This is illustrated in "A native American looks at Christiania":

3   Anything received for the newsletter by the 4pm Wednesday deadline (by email or by hand) is published, unless it is anonymous.

As an American Indian, I feel no allegiance to any of the world's na-tion-states. [...] but I love Børneengen, the small community of Chris-tiania where my partner has lived for 23 years. Christiania exists be-cause people fought for it, not with violence, but with determination and passion. It was something they believed in deeply. A commitment to a different and better society. [...] We American Indians have a lot of experience with broken treaties. Governments change and often do not honour their commitments. I have fears this could happen here. What I want to tell the people of Denmark is that the government does not know better. The whole tendency of governments everywhere is to make the world uglier, noisier, more polluted, more stressful, with more conflict and inequality. [...] It's a bleak, impersonal, institutional-ised world out there. But not in Christiania. [...] I want to tell the Danish people: be proud of Christiania [...] (Ugespejlet, 2002, p.20).

Concluding remarks

This paper questions the extent to which neoliberal assumptions cir-cumscribe how, in formal planning, what "counts" in attempts to instru-mentally develop "liveability" is determined from highly selective evi-dence, knowledge, and expertise. In turn, this challenges the neoliberal discourse of "influence" and "impact" that restricts what planners and policy makers learn from orthodox information sharing, international ar-chitectural awards, and visits to "flagship" urban regeneration projects. By contrast, Christiania is affectionately described as "loser's paradise". It represents something that cannot be found in any other capital city in the world. Yet, increasingly, planners and politicians seek instrumental ways of both normalising and imitating Christiania's intangible liveabil-ity. From its enduring struggles for autonomy we learn that instrumental attempts by planners to imitate these intangible qualities can threaten the fragile cultural ecosystems on which they flourish. Thus, it is neces-sary to understand the relationships between informal and formal ur-banism as a multiplicity of openness to tactical innovation. Instrumental "tools" intended to engineer "liveability" risk undermining the intangible qualities that formal planning benefits from but cannot in turn create or maintain.

Drawing attention to the output of the CRIR programme, the analysis highlights similarities between formal and informal information sharing networks. In the formal realm, Copenhagen based Gehl Architects argu-ably export Nordic design strategies and building projects around the world through the various functions of subsidiary studios, lecture tours, books and prizes. Jan Gehl's international reputation is such that his firm of architects has been commissioned to recreate his brand of human-istic urbanism in London and New York, the Australian cities of Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne, and the US West Coast cities of San Francisco and Los Angeles (Matan and Newman, 2012). Yet the analysis shows that

Christiania also exerts far-reaching influence, beyond this physical site, as an idea of autonomy that captures the imagination. With respect to CRIR, this is evident in a non-hierarchical assortment of actors, networks and initiatives, including subsidiary communities of interest and practice, lectures, publications, films and awards.

Arguably, widening the scope of the travelling idea challenges what is deemed "relevant" for planners and politicians to learn from. It suggests that we need to develop analytic approaches that bridge cultures of planning and autonomy, recognising, after Simmel, that the "play-form" of association is vital for introducing novelty and disruption to otherwise routine public spaces of social interaction. By providing a dedicated research house, CRIR cultivates an intellectual space (and a space to think with) for people inside and outside the resident population to reflect back over Christiania's legacy. As the findings demonstrate, this opens a space of flows through dialogues that straddle external scrutiny and internal reflection. In turn, while the CRIR legacy may be regarded as celebratory and wistful, it clearly demonstrates a process of co-production and critical reflection that warrants closer attention.

Crucially, the effort to understand Christiania's place in the world is complicated by multiple spheres of influence (that are transversal, translocal, real and virtual). On one hand, Christiania is peculiarly rooted in the messy, fleshy territory of "living together" in a way that activist social movements are not. Malcolm Miles (2008) observes from his own visit that "walking in Christiania (spring 2007) from a riverside path was idyllic...I recall the ordinariness of domestic life" (p.195). Living for a while in the CRIR house can trigger reluctance to step outside this cocoon. On the other hand, the "Christiania effect" can be described in magical terms, as an embodied and enacted spirit that transcends a territorial place (Manghezi, 2012). It can arouse a sense of enchantment that many visitors hold and carry with them into subsequent encounters. This evokes the transformational impact attributed to intentional communities and autonomous societies elsewhere. In the UK, for instance, feminist activists who lived for a time at the anti-nuclear peace camp of Greenham Common in the 1980s reported that they "carried the spirit of Greenham home" such that shared experience of collective action permanently altered the way they viewed the world (Roseneil, 1995). By drawing comparisons between Christiania, and evidence and theories of informal urbanism, we gain a more radical and nuanced appreciation of the travelling idea and the multiplicity and co-constitution of formality and informality.

Acknowledgements

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