

# INDYPENDENT READER

*toward building a new society on the vacant lots of the old . . .*

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[Home](#) > [Dispatches Against Displacement](#)

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## Dispatches Against Displacement

Submitted by john on February 12, 2009 - 07:45

In nearly every major U.S. city, the displacement epidemic is destroying communities and reshaping the urban landscape into zones of exclusion and elitism. An avalanche of eviction notices and redevelopment efforts fractures working class neighborhoods, particularly those of color. The causes lie far beyond bad landlords and poor public policies. Twenty-first century displacement is intricately tied to shifts in the global economy, where de-industrialized cities must continually re-invent themselves as high-end construction temporarily replaces the vanished factory, and forced migration and displacement intensifies.

Within this, politicians and policy makers also rely on displacement as a method of policing, thinning, and managing low-income people and the surplus population. Yet every action has its reaction, and people's organizations challenge and confront the real estate industry. Together, these campaigns call into question exactly who has the "right to the city" and suggest an alternative urban life rooted in economic and racial justice.

Dispatches Against Displacement, a forthcoming book from AK Press examines the struggles for the city and asks how they might be combined, strengthened, and critically examined in order to forge an agenda for land-reform within the United States. This panel with editor James Tracy and other contributors to the book will examine these issues.

### Taxonomy upgrade extras:

[displacement](#) [1]

[gentrification](#) [2]

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### Links:

[1] <https://indyreader.org/category/city-from-below-topic-tag/displacement>

[2] <https://indyreader.org/category/city-from-below-topic-tag/gentrification>