



# Planning in Ten Words or Less: A Lacanian Entanglement with Spatial Planning

By Michael Gunder, Jean Hillier

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This book takes a Lacanian, and related post-structuralist perspective to demythologize ten of the most heavily utilised terms in spatial planning: rationality, the good, certainty, risk, growth, globalization, multi-culturalism, sustainability, responsibility and 'planning' itself. It highlights that these terms, and others, are mere 'empty signifiers', meaning everything and nothing. Based on international examples of planning practice and process, Planning in Ten Words or Less suggests that spatial and urban planning is largely based on the construction and deployment of ideological knowledge claims.

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#### Review

'This book is essential reading for all planning practitioners and theorists. It is well written and thoroughly researched. It has a comprehensive bibliography and it should be required reading for all planning theory courses.' Australian Planner 'This is an important book written by two of the world's leading planning theorists...a must read for all urban and regional planners and others seeking a theoretical framework that provides an understanding of the complex concepts that planning practitioners deal with on a daily basis.' Urban Policy and Research 'Whether or not one agrees with applicability of Lacanian psychoanalysis to spatial planning, this book is essential reading for planning professionals. This stimulating work draws on a range of literature and offers the startling conclusion that the ten most used terms in spatial planning are empty signifiers, empty rhetoric. A reader may occasionally be disturbed by the authors' global worldview. But, against the backdrop of economic and social turmoil, they are on the mark in arguing that planners - like everyone else - should work toward a just goal - that of the emotional, intellectual, and material wellbeing of the "global Other".' Antti Talvitie, Helsinki University of Technology, Finland 'This is a remarkable book...The authors' command of the literature is simply amazing, and the tutorials that they run must be very stimulating.' Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design

#### About the Author

Dr Michael Gunder is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. Professor Jean Hillier is Associate Dean, Sustainability and Urban Planning at RMIT University, Australia

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