

Right to the City/Right to Landscape:

From an Elitist to a More Just Urban Landscape in California's East Bay Area



A talk by

Don Mitchell

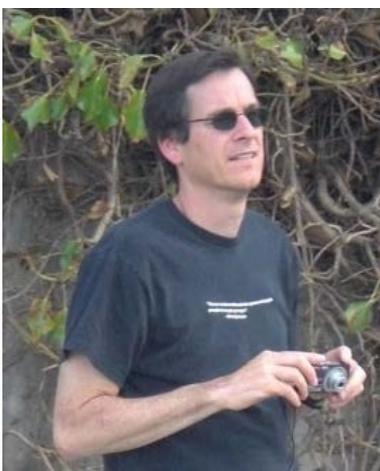
**Professor of Geography
Syracuse University**

Thursday July 9 2015

3:30 - 5:30 pm
(followed by the reception)

Beit Zatoun
(612 Markham St. @ Bathurst
station)

Both political ecology, especially as it has sought to come to terms with the politics of environmental racism, and critical landscape studies have shown that any landscape is situated within structures operating at other scales. Sometimes the key determinant of a process, outcome, or landscape morphology in one locale takes place somewhere far removed from where its effects are felt. Yet movements for both the right to the city and the right to landscape tend to adopt an overly *localist* approach to the production of space. In this paper, I will draw on an unlikely example – the evolution of the Town of Moraga, a nearly all-white, upper class “bedroom community” in the San Francisco East Bay Area – to examine how highly exclusionary landscape development and politics can be reformulated through a critique of the uneven possibilities for social and racial justice in other parts of the region, particularly the historically black city of Oakland. Since Moraga’s elite landscape relies on the possibility of ghettoization in cities like Oakland, I will argue that a truly *political* ecology – and economy – would be one that understands the struggle for the right to landscape always to be conjoined with the struggle for a right to the city.



Dr. **Don Mitchell** is Distinguished Professor of Geography at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University in New York. He is a prominent Marxist geographer, and has published numerous articles and books on various topics including public space, homelessness and rights (to the city); landscapes and migrant labor; and culture, law and radical geographical politics. In 2011, Dr. Mitchell was awarded the James Blaut Award in recognition of his theories of socio-spatial injustices of capitalism as well as his activism.

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