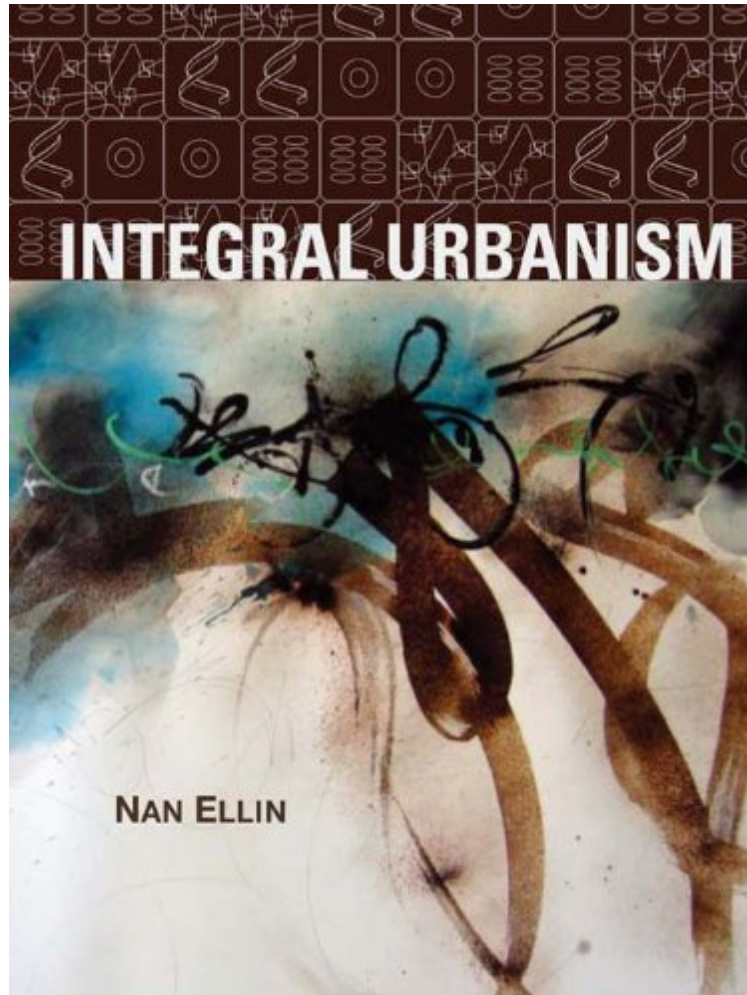


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Integral Urbanism

Nan Ellin

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Nan Ellin : Integral Urbanism before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Integral Urbanism:

4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Qualities for a sustainable urbanism
By Besim S. Hakim
Nan Ellin says that "Urban design success should be measured by its capacity to support humanity", and " an Integral Urbanism offers guideposts along that path toward a more sustainable human habitat." To accomplish this, Integral Urbanism must embody five qualities: Hybridity, Connectivity, Porosity, Authenticity, and Vulnerability. The author briefly summarizes the definition of these terms (condensed by this reviewer) as follows: Hybridity and Connectivity bring activities and people together, rather than isolate objects and separate functions. Porosity preserves the integrity of that which is brought together while allowing mutual access through permeable membranes. Authenticity involves actively engaging and drawing inspiration from actual social and physical conditions with an ethic of care, respect, and honesty. And Vulnerability means to relinquish control, listen deeply, value process as well as product, and re-

integrate space with time. This is what the essence of the book is about. The brief chapter following the Introduction for the book is titled: What is Integral Urbanism? Followed by a chapter on the five qualities of an Integral Urbanism, then the bulk of the book is devoted to detailed chapters on the five qualities of Integral Urbanism that the author has devised to achieve her goals. In the Conclusion Ellin discusses her findings and summarizes her arguments under the umbrella of the following terms: Convergence, Clearing Blockages, Alignment, and Across the Fissures. The book is embedded in the architectural/urban design disciplines and thus should be most welcome by practitioners and academics in those fields. Although the concepts are universal and are relevant across disciplinary boundaries, it remains to be seen if outsiders in other fields can take the author's argument and integrate it within the ideological/technical milieu of their disciplines and professions. If that occurs then Ellin's contribution would truly be significant to society and its built environment. The author clearly recognizes this when she says (p. 142): "Although Integral Urbanism pertains specifically to urban design, its five qualities might effectively apply to governance, homeland security, management, business, education, mediation, technology, the healing arts and sciences, and the other expressive forms of culture." Let us hope these qualities will spread via Ellin's book.

7 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A contemporary manifesto for change
By M. Wagner
It can be frustrating at times reading "Integral Urbanism," because the ideas seem at the same time so obvious and yet so far from the minds of the policymakers, developers and other economic interests who form our modern cities. This is a clearly-written, concise and important document for a country in the midst of an urban/suburban crisis. It lays out an extremely clear framework to apply to urban planning without ignoring economic, human or even scientific realities. It is a contemporary companion to Jane Jacobs' seminal works but folds into that critical strategies about sustainable urbanism. To say it should be read by every architecture, landscape architecture and urban planning student or professional would be short-sighted (though make no mistake - it should be). This is a book that I could only hope to find on the shelves of our policymakers and political leaders.

Integral Urbanism is an ambitious and forward-looking theory of urbanism that offers a new model of urban life. Nan Ellin's model stands as an antidote to the pervasive problems engendered by modern and postmodern urban planning and architecture: sprawl, anomie, a pervasive culture - and architecture - of fear in cities, and a disregard for environmental issues. Instead of the reactive and escapist tendencies characterizing so much contemporary urban development, Ellin champions an 'integral' approach that reverses the fragmentation of our landscapes and lives through proactive design solutions.

"Ellin is an integrator, finding connective tissue and illustrating ways to find it ourselves... Ellin offers a bold, fresh vocabulary for interpreting and understanding the interconnected systems that shape our places. If anyone is still looking for a new urbanism, looking through Ellin's lens of an integral urbanism captures a stable, elegant perspective on the fluctuating, uncertain ways that we order chaos." nbsp;